

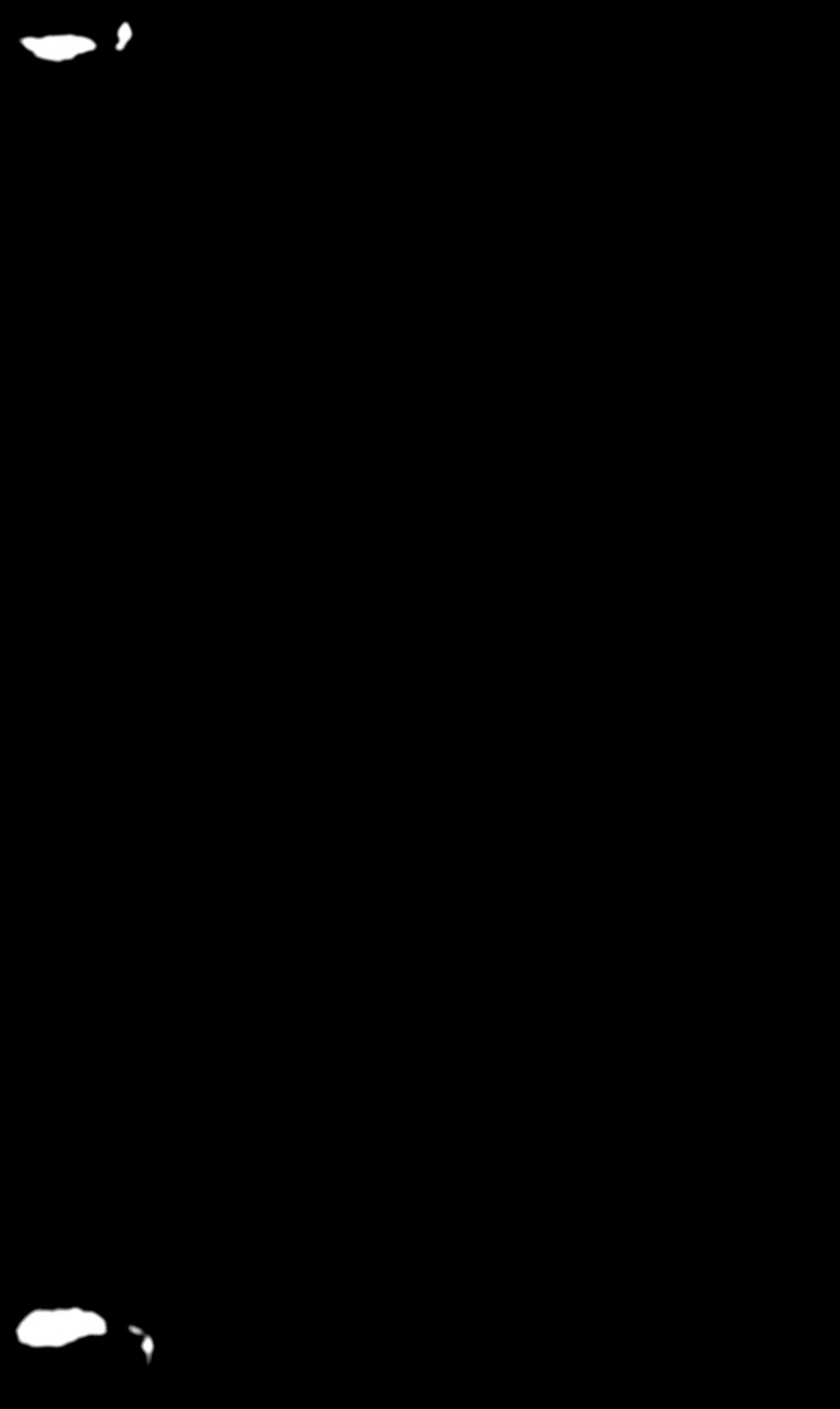


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AN

EXPOSITION

UPON

THE SECOND EPISTLE GENERAL

OF

ST. PETER.

BY THE REV. THOMAS ADAMS,

RECTOR OF ST. GREGORY'S, LONDON.

A. D. 1633.

REVISED AND CORRECTED

BY JAMES SHERMAN,

MINISTER OF SURREY CHAPEL.

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TO THE

TRULY NOBLE AND WORTHILY HONOURED

SIR HENRY MARTEN, KNIGHT,

JUDGE OF HIS MAJESTY'S HIGH COURT OF ADMIRALTY, AND DEAN OF THE ARCHES COURT
OF CANTERBURY.

NOBLE SIR,

The merchant that hath once put to sea, and made a prosperous voyage, is hardly withheld from a second adventure. It hath been my forwardness, not without the instinct of our heavenly Pilot, the most blessed Spirit of God, to make one adventure before; for he that publisheth his meditations, may be well called an adventurer. God knows what return hath been made to his own glory; if but little, (and I can hope no less, though I have ever prayed for more,) yet that hath been to me no little comfort. I am now put forth again, upon the same voyage, in hope of better success. For my commission I sue to you; who have no small power, both in the deciding of civil differences, and in the disposing of naval affairs, and matters of such commerce; being known well worthy of that authority in both these ecclesiastical and civil courts of judicature; that you would be pleased to bless my spiritual traffic with your auspicious approbation. I dare not commend my own merchandise; yet, if I had not conceived somewhat better of it than of my former, I durst not have been so ambitious as to present it unto you; of whose clear understanding, deep judgment, and sincere integrity, all good men among us have so full and confessed an experience. Yet besides your own candid disposition, and many real encouragements to me your poor servant, this may a little qualify my boldness, and vindicate me from an over-daring presumption: that my aim is your patronage, not your instruction; not to inform your wisdom, which were to hold a taper to the sun; but to gain your acceptance and fair allowance: that under your honoured name, it may find the more free entertainment, wheresoever it arrives; which (I am humbly persuaded) your goodness will not deny. That noble favour of yours, shining upon these my weak endeavours, will encourage me to publish some maturer thoughts, which otherwise have resolved never to see the light. The sole glory of our most gracious God, the edification and comfort of his church, with the true felicity of yourself and yours, shall be always prayed for, by

Your ever honoured Virtue's
humble and thankful servant,

THOMAS ADAMS.

PUBLISHER'S ADVERTISEMENT.

The following Works are offered to Subscribers for the Three Volumes at 25s. 6d., and separate volumes at 10s. ; after publication the price of each volume will be raised to 12s. :—

I.

A COMMENTARY ON THE SECOND EPISTLE GENERAL OF ST PETER,

By the Rev. THOMAS ADAMS, Rector of St Gregory's, London, (1633,) (in October 1862.)

II.

A COMMENTARY ON THE PROPHECY OF HOSEA,

By the Rev. JEREMIAH BURROUGHS, Rector of Tivetshall, (1643,) (in January 1863.)

III.

A COMMENTARY ON THE GENERAL EPISTLE OF JUDE,

By the Rev. WILLIAM JENKYN, Rector of Blackfriars', (1653.)

A COMMENTARY ON THE EPISTLES TO THE PHILIPPIANS AND COLOSSIANS,

By the Rev. JEAN DAILLE, Minister of the French Reformed Church at Charenton, (1639,) (in April 1863.)

IN publishing a new edition of the above important Works at little more than one-third of the previous cost, it is only due to the memory of the late Mr SHERMAN, by whom they were ably edited, and whose property they were, to give publicity to the following letter :—

12 PARAGON, BLACKHEATH, July 1861.

DEAR SIR,—I am very much delighted with your Prospectus for a Series of the Writings of the Puritan Divines. You are aware that I republished several volumes of their writings some years ago, such as "Adams on Peter," &c. The plates of these Works are quite perfect, and equal to new. Should you be disposed, as in the case of the "Parker Society," to allow a difference of size in the volumes you publish, I shall be glad to present you with those plates, so that you may be able to furnish them to the Public in your Series at a much cheaper rate than they have ever been published before. If you think well of the proposal, and are disposed to accept the plates as an entire free gift to your Series, I shall be happy to give you an order for the plates immediately. As this comes from what I believe is my dying bed, what you do must be done promptly.—I am, dear Sir, yours truly,

JAMES SHERMAN.

J. NICHOL, Esq.

It was stated in the original Prospectus of the "Series of Standard Divines" that it was not intended to include in it any of those Standard Works which had recently been republished, but to confine the Series to reprints of works which had become rare, and which, by the general consent of students of theology, were esteemed of great value. The Commentaries edited by Mr Sherman were in consequence not regarded by the Publisher as being within his range; but on the receipt of the above letter, he gladly expressed his readiness to bring out a new edition of them at as cheap a rate as the "Standard Divines." He has endeavoured to fulfil Mr Sherman's wish, and though the Works are already in the possession of many pastors, he trusts that Mr Sherman's generosity will enable many more to obtain the Works at the reduced price at which they are now offered, who could not easily afford the cost at which they were originally published.

The Publisher embraces this opportunity of stating, that so soon as the unhappy struggle which exists in America is brought to a termination, and the usual business relations with that country are restored, it is his intention to carry out his plan of reproducing the Commentaries of the Puritan period, uniform with the "Standard Divines." The almost total arrest on the sale of books which has taken place in the States of America renders it necessary to postpone any important undertaking regarding which it might fairly be estimated that in ordinary circumstances the demand would be as great on the one side of the Atlantic as on the other. It is hoped that the time is not far distant when peace will be restored, and co-operation again secured between the two countries in all those relations which hitherto have led to results so important.

EDINBURGH, OCTOBER 1862.

AN

EXPOSITION

OF

THE SECOND EPISTLE GENERAL OF THE HOLY APOSTLE

SAINT PETER.

CHAPTER I.

VERSE 1. SIMON PETER, A SERVANT AND AN APOSTLE OF JESUS CHRIST, TO THEM THAT HAVE OBTAINED LIKE PRECIOUS FAITH WITH US THROUGH THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD AND OUR SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST.

THE books of the New Testament have been distinguished into three kinds; Historical, Doctrinal, and Prophetical. 1. Historical; such as contain the birth, life, death, and resurrection of our blessed Saviour, with his divine sermons, and miraculous actions, written by the four evangelists; seconded by the memorable and famous story of the Acts of his Apostles. 2. Doctrinal; such as concern our instruction in the knowledge of Christ, and teach us the way of salvation. These are the Holy Epistles of St. Paul, St. James, St. Peter, St. John, and St. Jude. 3. Prophetical; such as foretell the estate and condition of the church militant to the end of the world; of which kind is the Revelation of St. John the Divine. Yet doth not this distinction debar the history from altogether meddling with prophecy, nor the prophetical part from touching upon history, nor the doctrinal part from the use of both the former. So the evangelists, that wrote the story of Christ, do nevertheless abound with heavenly doctrines, containing in them the life-giving of that supreme Bishop of our souls. Neither are they without plentiful predictions; as of the destruction of Jerusalem, and the end of the world. So the holy apostles in their epistles, together with their doctrines, by which they build up the church, do also prophesy of future things; as St. Paul doth of the calling of the Jews, and of the coming of antichrist; and the last chapter of this present epistle hath been aptly called St. Peter's prophecy.

Concerning which, there have arisen two ancient doubts, like clouds to obscure the light of truth. Some have questioned the authority of this epistle; others, the author. 1. For those that have contradicted the authority of it, excluding it out of the number of canonical books, Eusebius, (Hist. 3. cap. 25.) Nicephorus, (Lib. 2. Hist. 3. cap. 46.) Hierome, (De Viris Illust. in Petro.) and Gregory, (Hom. 18. in Ezck.) make mention of them. They tell us of some such quarrellers: they tell us not their names: such there were, but who they were they do not say. Therefore, let their opinion be buried in the dust

with them; for this book lives while they are dead. 2. For the author: some have denied it to be St. Peter's; and to this error the supposed diversity of the style hath induced them. As if the same author might not diversify his style upon due occasion, according to the difference of the matter or argument upon which, or difference of the person to whom, he writes. The Epistle to the Hebrews is of a more accurate style than St. Paul's other epistles; yet by a universal consent it is agreed upon to be St. Paul's. Certainly the author of this must be some grand impostor, if he were not one of those three apostles that were present at Christ's transfiguration upon the mount, Matt. xvii. 1, where he solemnly professeth himself to have been. The three witnesses of Christ's clarification there, were Peter, and James, and John; no man affirms James or John to be the author of this epistle, therefore it must be Peter. And if he were not the author of it, with what impudence should another secretary call himself, "Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ!" To allege that Paul, writing to the Galatians, doth plainly testify, that he withstood Peter to the face, and that he was to be blamed, Gal. ii. 11, therefore it is not likely that Peter would write so fair an encomium of Paul, 2 Pet. iii. 15; such critics are far from the sanctified spirit of an apostle: for they, without respect for their private affections, or particular praises, sought only the truth of the gospel, and the glory of their Master Jesus Christ.

The majesty of the Holy Ghost appears in every line of it, therefore the authority is indubitate. The name prefixed warrants it to be St. Peter's, therefore we cannot deny the author. It remains only that we directly come to the matter: in which proceeding, the Spirit of illumination direct me to write, and the Spirit of sanctification direct you to read; that all of us, believing and living according to the holy doctrine delivered, the name of God may be glorified, and our dear souls everlastingly saved, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, &c.

WHEREIN we find a double description: 1. Of the author, who sends: "Simon." &c. 2. Of the persons to whom the salutation is sent; "To them that have obtained," &c.

1. The author describes himself by

His name, Simon Peter.

His condition, A servant.

His office, An apostle.

His Master, Jesus Christ.

His name shows him humble, his condition holy, his office gracious, by his Master who is glorious.

"Simon" was his proper name, given him at his circumcision. It is observable, that this Simon was commonly a happy name in the Scriptures. There was Simon Zelotes, a zealous man; Simon a tanner, this Simon's host, a charitable man; Simon of Cyrene, that helped Christ to bear his cross, a compassionate man; and Simon Peter, a sanctified man. Not that grace is tied to names; for there was a Simon Magnus, a sorcerer, a witch, little other than a devil; but the favour of God makes any name as happy. No man hath now the mystery of his fortune written in his name. Names are not prophetic, much less magical. The civil use of names is for distinction, *nomen quasi notamen*: the religious use hath by good antiquity been observed at our baptism.

So oft as thou hearest thy own name, call to mind the covenant between God and thyself in holy baptism; when God promised on his part to be thy God, thou on thy part to forsake his enemies, and to dedicate thyself to his service. It is a wretched forgetfulness not to remember thy own name. What can he remember that forgets himself? It is pity the sacramental water was ever spilt on such a face, as forgets himself to be a Christian.

Whatsoever thy name be, let thy heart be Simon's. It is said to signify, hearing, or obeying: so do thou confess, profess, love thy Master and Maker. Confess him with thy mouth; profess him with thy life; love him with thy heart. So thou shalt have Simon's *omen*, though not Simon's *nomen*. Albeit thou be not called Peter, thou shalt be saved with Peter. Thus shall Christ bless thy name with a good report upon earth. "The memory of the just is blessed," Prov. x. 7; with better reward in heaven, by writing it "in the book of life," Luke x. 20.

"Peter" was his surname, given him by Christ himself, who was in this sense his Godfather. "When Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jonas; thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone," or Peter, John i. 42. St. Matthew seems to insinuate that Christ gave him that name in allusion to that rock of his confession, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church," Matt. xvi. 18. But then Peter seems to be that rock on which the church is built. Not so; Peter, in making this confession, "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God," either spake before the rest, as Ambrose; or for the rest, as Augustine; he was prolocutor, or mouth of the rest. Then fore what was promised to Peter, pertained to the whole college of the apostles. To this exposition runs the stream of the fathers. If thou confess with Peter, if thou be Christ's disciple, thou art Peter, thou art a rock. (Origen, Hom. i. in Matt.) Peter is derived from the rock, not the rock from Peter; as Christ fetcheth not his name from a Christian, but a Christian from Christ, (Aug. Tract. 124. in John.) But we "are built upon the foundation of the apostles

and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone," Eph. ii. 20. Our foundation is in heaven. Aristotle said, that a man is a tree growing with the root upward; so the church is a house turned upside down; for the foundation is above. "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ," 1 Cor. iii. 11. Peter in this kind is not the rock of the church; time was he seemed rather to be a wave than a rock, when Christ said to him, "Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offence unto me," Matt. xvi. 23. Let Peter have his desire, and his Master shall not die; so Peter himself and the whole world had been lost. This defeats the pope of his infallibility of judgment.

Thus Peter is a name of addition, imposed by our Saviour on Simon. Divers of the papists have derived the authority of changing the pope's names from hence, because the two chief apostles had their names changed; Saul into Paul, Simon into Peter. But Lorinus the Jesuit denies this to be the ground of their mutation. Indeed there is a double difference:—for authority, the apostles changed not their own names, but God; for effects, their natures were changed with their names, a privilege that few popes had the happiness to demonstrate. Though Sylvius, elected pope, could disclaim his wanton and idle books, and seem to promise future gravity, "Forget, Æneas, and receive me a pious father; yet the new names have not altered the old conditions, they have proved the same men still. The first alterer of popes' names is held to be Sergius II. whose proper name was *Os porci*, a swine's countenance; the name would have served, had he separated his swinish properties. Divers others followed, but they lost not their former vices. One of their own brings a testimony against them; that of all Christians Italians are the worst; of all Italians, the Romans; of all Romans, the priests; of all priests, the cardinals; and commonly the most lewd cardinal is chosen pope; yea, some have objected, and they stick not to grant, that a man that is not a member of Christ, may yet be head of his church.

Though change of names import an excellency of grace, yet not a singularity. James and John were sons of thunder; were none so but they? Barnabas, son of consolation; none so but he? Peter, a rock; no rock but Peter? Israel, called so because he was strong with God; yet so was Abraham and Moses. Whereas some observe, that our apostle puts in two words into the epigraph of this epistle, which he left out in the former, "Simon" and "servant;" and that our Saviour did usually chide him by the name of Simon, but commend him by the name of Peter; whence they observe, it was Simon that erred, not Peter, his person, not his office. So, "Simon, sleepest thou?" Mark xiv. 37. And in his confirmation, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?" John xxi. 15; repeating that word Simon thrice. But they forget that, "Get thee behind me, Satan," Matt. xvi. 23; not Simon, but Satan. Indeed Peter's name was not changed, but only he had one added: he was still Simon, but withal Peter. Abraham was not afterward called Abram, but Abraham; but Peter still was called Simon. So here he styles himself, Simon Peter. The Jesuits say, he was always after called Peter. I cannot call them the fathers of lies, that were to do the devil wrong; but the sons of lying, I am sure he is many times after called Simon.

But will they now disjoin these two names in one man? I wonder, when Simon sinned, whether Peter was guiltless? If *Os porci* had been damned, what would have become of *Sergius secundus*? Thus the poor shepherd said to the great bishop of Colcine;

admiring his pomp as a prince, when his calling was but a bishop. Some replied, that he wore not such robes as he was bishop, but as he was prince. Yell but, quoth the shepherd, if the duke should go to hell for pride, what would become of the humble bishop? Their names cannot secure their persons, not though they were *pri nominis*. And yet as their lives have commonly been ungodly, so the name of piety hath been least usurped among them; for there have been but five *Pii*. Here observe three circumstances.

1. The apostles did prefix their names to their epistles. Indeed neither did Moses set his name before his book, nor the evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, before their Gospels; because they, writing to those that were present, had no cause to put to their names; but the apostles, writing to those that were far off, could not well avoid it in their epistles. (Chrys.) But why then did Paul suppress his name writing to the Hebrews? That apostle was not in their books, they had no good affection toward him; so that finding his name in the frontispiece they might haply have rejected the Epistle, and not vouchsafed to read it. The apostles could not always instruct men by sermons, as did the prophets; nor by commentaries, as the evangelists; nor by dialogue, as Job; but writing to remote persons and places, they were compelled to signify their mind by letters; and the form of an epistle requires a prescription of his name that sent it. They prefixed their names, therefore, that it might be known by what authority such letters were written, and with what certainty of credit they are to be received. For as no prophecy, so no epistle of the Scripture is of any private motion, 2 Pet. i. 20. The pen a quill, the writer an apostle, but the inditer the Holy Ghost. This binds us to believe and obey these sacred writings. He that will not believe what is written shall feel what is written. Read the history, lest thyself be made a history, and an ensample to the reading of after-times.

2. The apostles did prefix, not suffix, their names, according to our custom in our familiar letters. Let no man herein tax them with a proud pretension, for where God's Spirit is the dictator we must look for no compliments. And though in themselves they were the most humble men upon earth, yet being to write in apostolic right, in the name of Jesus Christ, and to signify themselves such as he had chosen to lay the foundation of the evangelical church, it was fit and necessary they should prementation their names and office. Paul endured all reproach to his own person patiently, yet did still magnify his office, lest the contempt of the apostle should prejudice the majesty of the gospel.

3. They prefixed their names, though upon them stuck some blemishes; to show that albeit themselves were guilty of manifold infirmities, yet the gospel they delivered was pure from all imperfection. The blots of the writers were no blots to the things written. Paul was a great sinner; Peter, a greater. Apostasy in Peter was greater than persecution in Paul; the one a sin after knowledge, the other before; the one was done of ignorance, the other against conscience; yet Peter still speaks his name. Human pens are dipped in the oil of ostentation, not Scriptural pens; they spit in their own faces. Moses wrote his own incredulity; David, his own bloodiness; Jonah, his own repining at that mercy without which he had been most miserable; as if they acknowledged themselves not only to have erred after the manner of men, but even to have sinned after the manner of evil men. This they did, that none of God's glory might cleave to their earthen fingers. Let this teach both you and us.

You of the laity, not to patronize your sins upon the example of others; as if you would fortify your profaneness from the infirmities of your teachers. The falls of the saints are recorded, not as warrants to encourage our wantonness, but as cautions to prevent and retard our precipices. 1. Wicked men love that in the saints, which the saints never loved in themselves, vices; and shall a man make their foil his jewel, their shame his glory? 2. Thou speakest of their sins, but not of their repentance. When Theodosius excused a foul fact, because David had done the like, St. Ambrose makes this answer; Thou that hast followed David in his exorbitance, follow him also in his repentance. Hath thy mouth denied with Peter, let thine eyes weep with Peter. 3. They look on the evil of good men, whereas they should rather look on the good even of evil men. Noah's virtues are not Ham's admiration, but his drunkenness is his sport. Like flies, that skip over all the sound parts of the body, and light upon sores and ulcers. The cloud that waited on the camp of Israel, was light towards themselves, dark towards their enemies; it saved them, drowned the Egyptians. Let every Christian follow the light part; that shall guide him, the other will deceive him. 4. By disregard of the minister's person they evacuate the force of this doctrine. Therefore God usually plagueth the contempt of his preachers, by the invalidity of his own ordinance upon their souls. "When ye come into an house, salute it. And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you," Matt. x. 12, 13. Let us rather take the best, than make the worst, of good men's lives.

Us of the ministry, to preserve zeal and humility. "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine," 1 Tim. iv. 16. To thyself, how thou livest; to thy doctrine, how thou teachest. But still, after our best endeavours, to ourselves, weakness and shame, to God, the blessing and glory. He hath a pulpit in heaven, that teacheth the soul, that toucheth the conscience. It is he only that mellows the heart, and softens it with fitness for the impression of any sermon. Thus for his name, now for

His condition, "a servant." Hugo observes, that he doth omit this title in his former epistle, which he inserts here: but I do not like his reason. Because, saith he, there he spake of persecutions and troubles, which ought not to be borne with slavish cowardice, being rather honours than miseries. Indeed Christ's cross must be borne with a courageous mind; but still this sufferance rather insinuates than exempts service; for they properly belong to all those that faithfully serve God. "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution," 2 Tim. iii. 12. They are laid on them as it were by a fatal kind of destiny, because they are the Lord's servants. For outwardly there are generally in the world poor saints, and prosperous sinners. Neither is filial service a thing that does hinder patience, but beautify it and help it. This reason then wants the weight to be received.

Yet I confess there may be something in it, and a cause may be rendered why the apostle here useth that formerly omitted title. True it is, that when God dictates, the will of the writer is a sufficient reason for the scription. But in the holy Scriptures nothing is done by chance: every word, syllable, point, hath the efficacy: no blot ever fell from the pen of the Holy Ghost. There be reasons, though our shallow understandings cannot reach them.

1. Perhaps this may be a reason: our blessed apostle wrote this, knowing his dissolution to be at hand; as he confesseth, "Knowing that shortly I

must put off this my tabernacle, as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me," ver. 14. Therefore he comforts his own soul in this title, as old Hilarion did after him: "These seventy years and upwards thou hast served the Lord, therefore now go forth, my soul, with joy, &c. Thou hast served the Lord in life, in death he will crown thee. "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word," Luke ii. 29.

2. Perhaps in regard of others he useth it: for he writes of the coming of Christ to judgment; which shall be a blessed day to those, whose consciences can witness with them that they have served God. When rebels shall be cast to the prison of rebels; then, Come, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord, Matt. xxv. 21. "Then all hearts shall confess. It was not in vain, nor without profit, that we have served the Lord, Mal. iii. 14: for "they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels: and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Then shall ye return, and discern between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not," ver. 17. Man serveth God; God saveth man. When the wicked shall acknowledge the godly, with groaning and anguish of spirit: "We fools accounted his life madness, and his end to be without honour: how is he numbered among the children of God, and his lot is among the saints?" Wisd. v. 3—5. Thus, as on earth the sergeant at law is often made a judge; so, "That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel," Matt. xix. 28.

3. Perhaps because the time of his service was now almost ended, and therefore he might more boldly style himself, the servant of Christ: for, let not him that puts on his armour boast, but he that puts it off. He may now look sweetly both ways, with comfort to his life past, with joy to his reward to come. It is good for a man to accomplish his life before he ends it. The young man is happy that lives well, but the old man is blessed that hath lived well. Praise the mariner that brings the vessel safe into the haven. Blessed soul, that hath passed the apprenticeship of service, and is now gone to be made free in glory. There are two special observations in this title, "servant;" Christ's excellency, and the apostle's humility.

1. This extols the dignity of Christ, that so famous an apostle creeps to him on the knees of lowliness; Lord, I am thy servant. The world esteemed him without form or comeliness; and when they see him, without beauty, that they should desire him, Isa. liii. 2. The psalmist speaks in his person: "I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people," Psal. xxii. 6. "To the Jews a stumblingblock, to the Greeks foolishness, 1 Cor. i. 23. But Peter styles himself, the servant of him that was crucified. Indeed, the service of Christ is the honour of the Christian. Our Saviour admitted and accepted this just honour: "Ye call me Master, and Lord; and ye say well, for so I am," John xiii. 14. Many in the world arrogate great dignity to themselves, because so famous men are their servants. Absalom might vaunt of his victories; the Turk of his bashaws; but let all serpents be laid down at the foot of the Lamb; all sheaves bow to the sheaf of Joseph; all crowns be subjected to him that is crowned with unspeakable glory for ever.

2. This is a clear remonstrance of St. Peter's humility: a famous apostle; some have given him more, the primacy of the apostles; yet what is his own title? "a servant of Jesus Christ." The godly

are no further ambitious, than to belong to Christ. There is a great suit to be retained in the service of princes; but the best is, to serve the Prince of princes. What need he wait upon a channel, that may dwell by a whole river? or serve him that serves, when he may serve him that reigns? A poor estimation of ourselves, gives us the richest estimation with God. When thou wast little I then made thee great, 1 Sam. xv. 17. Abraham says, I am not worthy, &c. God dignifies him to be the father of them that believe. When the lot was to be cast for an apostle to supply Judas's room, two were appointed, Joseph and Matthias, Acts i. 23. Joseph, of three appellations: Joseph, the son of rest; Barsabas; and Justus, surnamed so for his equity. Yea more, he was the Lord's brother; "Are not his brethren, James and Jesus," &c, Matt. xiii. 55; that is, Christ's near kinsmen. Matthias, but twice named in the Scriptures, both times in that one chapter, Acts i.; yet the lot fell upon Matthias, Matthias signifies, A little one; so the gospel appointed for the day of his feast and memory, commands little ones; "Thou hast hid these things from the wise, and hast revealed them to babes," to little ones, Matt. xi. 25. Notwithstanding the great titles and privileges of the other, God sent the lot upon the little one, it fell upon Matthias. He that seems little in his own eyes, is the greatest in God's account. It hath been the humble and blessed acknowledgment of the saints, that they are servants. Though we be new-born to our Father's inheritance, yet now we are in our bondage. "The heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all," Gal. iv. 1. Men make difference of their servants, children, and friends; God none. His friends must serve: "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you," John xv. 14. Children must serve; even the Son must serve him, Mark iii. 11. Every Christian soldier's scutcheon must be, Patience, and his motto, I serve. Yea, not only saints, but angels are glad of this title: "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation," Heb. i. 14. When St. John would have worshipped before the feet of the angel, he replied, "See thou do it not, for I am thy fellow-servant," Rev. xxii. 9. And let me go yet higher; the natural Son of God, and that by an eternal generation, put on him a serviceable nature; he "took up on him the form of a servant," Phil. ii. 7. He was so formed, so habited to service, that he endured all sorrow, and fulfilled all righteousness. Art thou better than apostles, better than angels, better than the Son of God himself, O proud dust, that thou despised the title of a servant?

I cannot so briefly pass over that, wherein we must dwell all our lives, the service of God; let me consider in it three things; the liberty, the dignity, the reward.

The liberty must be weighed, both in the will of the agent, and in the freedom of the action.

It is a voluntary service; constrained obedience is not worth a thank-you. The wickedest reprobates, yea, the very devils, must needs serve God; but can expect no wages but hell. We know there is a necessity, that shall draw him against his will, whom command cannot lead with his will. Either God's will shall be done by thee, or be done on thee; but howsoever, it shall be done in thee. Therefore the noble disposition is led, not forced. They are slaves, whom the fear of plagues only terrifies from rebellion. But this servant willingly puts his neck into Christ's yoke; he denies his own lusts, his own gains, his own pleasures, his own self. "Behold, we have for-

saken all, and followed thee," Matt. xix. 27. A good servant hath these properties: a quick eye, a listening ear, a ready foot, a working hand, an honest heart.

A quick eye; attending the least beck of his commander. "As the eyes of servants look to the hands of their masters; so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God," Psal. cxliii. 2. Paul speaks of eye-service, "Servants, obey your masters, not with eye-service, as men-pleasers," Col. iii. 22. This is a fault with men; but let us serve our God no longer, no further, than he sees us; it is enough, his eye is never off our hands, our hearts. "Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me. If I say, The darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me," Psal. cxxxix. 7—11. Heaven hath the presence of his glory, earth of his providence, the sea of his wonders, the darkness of his light, hell of his power; no where to avoid his sight. Heaven, earth, sea, hell; all places named but purgatory; perhaps God is not there. If he fills all places, and not purgatory, rather than doubt his omnipresence, I will believe there is no purgatory.

A listening ear; such a one as Eli taught Samuel to find, when God calleth; "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth."

A ready foot: an obedient servant makes no delays. God's Spirit often useth the phrase of rising early; Abimelech rose early to tell his dream, Gen. xx. 8. Abraham rose early to sacrifice his son, chap. xxii. 3. Elkanah and Hannah rose early to worship God, 1 Sam. i. 19. Job rose early to sanctify his children, Job i. 5. We say with the sluggard, By and by, Lord: this same dilation hath no measure. The service shall find no thanks, that found no readiness. A good work, the longer it sticks in our fingers the less acceptable.

A working hand: the life of service is work, the work of a Christian is obedience. The centurion describing his good servant, said no more but thus, I bid him do this, and he doth it, Matt. viii. He that worketh not, is not God's labourer, but his own loiterer. We are all masters of servants, or servants of masters; or servants to the state and commonwealth, or commanders of such servants: some may be all of these, all are some of these. We know what we require of our servants, what our masters required of us. It were an easy thing to be a servant, if service consisted only in kissing our hands, in making courtesies, in taking wages, and wearing liveries. Many wear Christ's livery, all live upon Christ's trencher, but most have gouty fingers, they will do no work in God's service. There is an habitual service: so the slave while he eats or sleeps is in service still. But the actual service pleaseth God, which consists in holiness and righteousness before him, Luke i. 75. Many thus call themselves, but God doth not call them so. It is an everlasting rule, Ye are his servants to whom ye obey, Rom. vi. 16. There is much service in the world, but it is to a wrong master; but such can God point out, and put out; and order it, like Jehu, when he inflicteth vengeance on the world, not one servant of the Lord be among them, 2 Kings x. 23. If any think to pass in the crowd, and press among God's servants, without their cognizance, the wedding garment, a question shall be asked them whereat they shall stand speechless; How came you in hither? Matt. xxii. 12.

An honest heart: and to make up this is requireable the accession of two things, sanctity and resolution.

For sanctity: God that hath given thee a whole

heart will not be served with a piece of it. Some make show *severe*, when indeed they study *severe*; as Herod, Let me come to worship the child, when he meant to worry the child. They are like the Philistines' temple; there is the ark, but Dagon too. Or like the temples of Egypt, fair without, but within full of crocodiles. The eye is in the pulpit, the heart in the warehouse. Rotten kernels under fair shells; full of Herod's and Naaman's exceptions, In this forbear us. What show soever be made, there must be some hidden good within. The oak that is rotten at the heart, will never be good for building. Say to the hypocrite, as Simon Peter did to Simon Magus, Thou hast no part nor lot in this comfort: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God, Acts viii. 21.

For resolution: there must be no reasoning, no disputing; let no man dare to "speak to the Almighty," or "desire to reason with God," Job xiii. 3. It is too far, if, with Jeremiah, any man put him to his Wherefore; "Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper?" Jer. xxii. 1. Abraham told not his wife, when he went to offer Isaac. Paul conferred not with flesh and blood, when he went to preach among the heathen, Gal. i. 16. The Jesuits commend blind obedience; and call the novices that examine their impositions, *Searchers*. They exact a condition of their inferiors, as Nahash did of the Gileadites, that they may thrust out their right eyes, 1 Sam. xi. 2; otherwise allow them no covenant of peace: yea, they put out both the eyes of their people. To God this blind obedience is good, taken in that sense, without asking a reason. When man commands, inquire what is bidden, not, who bids. When God commands, consider who charges, not what is imposed. Believe what God saith, though in our thought impossible; do what he commands, though in our judgment unreasonable. Galerius Maximus, seeking to pervert that blessed Cyprian to idolatry, wished him before sense of punishment to bethink himself; Take heed you do not cast away yourself. His answer was short, but resolute; The case is so clear that it refuses deliberation. Say goods, liberty, life itself is hazarded, yet God can reward all. The apostles were cited by Christ to Jerusalem, and commanded not to depart thence, but to wait for the promise of the Father, to receive the Holy Ghost, Acts i. 14. They never allege, Is not this that Jerusalem which was a provocation to anger from the first building; the slaughter-house of the prophets: the common sink or sewer of all sins; yet wet with the blood of our Master Christ? Why Jerusalem? Is not any other place fitter? No, they dispute not, but go thither with joy; what danger or unlikelihood soever might affront them, they put on the resolution of Esther, If I perish, I perish. But there can nothing be lost that we piously trust God withal.

For the liberty of this service: know that God's servant is the greatest free-man. He that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's free-man, 1 Cor. vii. 22. The good man is free, though he serves; the evil is bond, though he reigns. (Aug. de Civit. 10. lib. 4.) Nor is the vicious person the slave of one man; but, which is more grievous, he hath so many masters as he hath vices. Wouldst thou have thy flesh serve thy soul, let thy soul serve God; thou owest to thy King the right of government. Serve therefore willingly, and be free continually.

For the dignity of this office: the saints have ever had a holy pride in being God's servants; there cannot be greater honour than to serve such a Master as commands heaven, earth, and hell. Do not think thou dost honour God in serving him; but think how God honours thee, in vouchsafing thee to be his ser-

vant. David could not study to give himself a greater style than, "O Lord, truly I am thy servant; I am thy servant, and the son of thine handmaid," Psal. cxvi. 16: and this he spake, not in the phrase of a human compliment, but in the humble confession of a Christian. Yea, so doth our apostle commend this excellency, that (if we note it) he sets the title of servant before that of an apostle; first servant, then apostle. Great was his office in being an apostle, greater his blessing in being a servant of Jesus Christ: the one is an outward calling, the other an inward grace. There was an apostle condemned, never any servant of God. Judas preached to others, not to his own heart; he healed their bodies, not his own soul; wrought miracles upon others, not upon himself; cast out devils, yet himself was cast out as a devil. All which justifies that of Samuel, "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams," 1 Sam. xv. 22. Prophets have been excluded: many say, Lord, Lord, we have prophesied in thy name; to whom it is answered, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity, Matt. vii. 22, 23. But never were servants excluded. For the other, their book and clergy cannot save them: it will be demanded of them at that day, not what books they have read, but what life they have led; not what they have taught others to do, but what they have done themselves. (Bern.) God by this title commends Job, the greatest man of the east: "Hast thou considered my servant Job?" Job i. 8. Paul calls James the Lord's brother; "Other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother," Gal. i. 19. James calls himself the servant of Christ; "James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ," James i. 1; quite leaving out the remembrance of that other style. If it were such a noble privilege to be a servant to Caesar, and free of the Roman state, that the captain confessed, with a great sum of money he obtained that freedom, Acts xxii. 28, what an honour is it to serve the King of kings! The good emperor Theodosius held it more noble to be a member of the church, than head of the empire. It is better to be God's servant, than lord of all the world. This is the dignity: now for

The reward: it is immense and glorious. "Bread, correction, and work, are for a servant," Eccles. xxxiii. 24. For bread: God gives us our daily bread; we are all at his keeping. For correction: he chastiseth us, because he loveth us, 1leb. xii. For work: he sends us to work in his vineyard, Matt. xxi. We have from him protection and provision. For protection: If God be with us, who can be against us? Rom. viii. 31. For provision: Even the hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, Luke xv. 17. But what is all this to that future glory, which was from everlastingness prepared for those servants? I know, they do not ever speed best in this world. Out of a related story let me draw this conclusion in earnest. A servant convicted of some misdemeanour before a magistrate, besought some favour for his master's sake. Why, whom do you serve, said the magistrate? I serve God, said the delinquent. With that his mitimus was quickly made; Away with him, he scoffs at authority. Not long after a great lord sends for enlargement of this his servant. The magistrate, upon the receipt of the letters, sends in all haste for the prisoner; of whom he frettingly demands, why he told him not that he served such a lord? The servant answered, Because I thought you cared more for the Lord of heaven. You say this is but a fable: you count him a fool that makes it a moral. Would to God it were but a tale, and that our courses did not justify it. Well, though our reward be short on earth, let us look for

it with comfort in heaven. Ambrose said on his death-bed, We are happy in this, we serve a good Master. "Where I am," saith Christ, "there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour," John xii. 26. If we have done good and faithful service to him, we shall hear him say to us, Well done, good and faithful servants; enter into the joy of your Lord, Matt. xxv. 21: and this joy be to us all.

"An apostle." Here he specifies his office; where observe two things.

First, He joins together service and apostleship; and that for two reasons. 1. To distinguish and exemplify his calling; for every man that is a servant of God, is not an apostle of Jesus Christ. "No man taketh this honour to himself, but he that is called of God," 1leb. v. 4. There must be a calling; or else sin will answer when it is questioned, as Satan did when he was conjured, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?" Acts xix. 15. Christ himself did not preach publicly, till he was declared by God to be the great Prophet of the world; and had his confirmation from heaven, with, Hear ye him. Neither is it enough to say we are all priests, Rev. i. 6; so we might say we are all kings, and turn rebels. There must proceed a mission and commission; or else whosoever runs abroad had better have stayed at home. 2. To show that apostleship was a matter of service; as an honour, so a burden. None are called into God's harvest, but "labourers," Matt. ix. 38; Christ never bade us pray for loiterers and lookers-on. As earthly kings have some servants in ordinary, others extraordinary: all Christians are God's sworn servants extraordinary, so vowed in holy baptism, to serve him all the days of our life. By professing the true faith we wear Christ's livery, and by exercise of charity, the cognizance of that livery. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another," John xiii. 35. Princes and preachers are God's servants in ordinary: the magistrate is (as it were) a finger of God's hand; the minister, a steward in his house. Though, in a large sense, all are the Lord's ministers; and it is usually said to those three states, *Tu supplex ora, tu protege, tuque labora*. The prince must govern all, the priest pray for all, the people work for all; yet strictly this office, as it hath especially the name of ministry, so it hath the nature, for it consists in service.

Secondly, It was the custom of the apostles to magnify their office. So Paul to the Romans. "Inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office," Rom. xi. 13. And this they did the rather to weaken the credit of false intruders. "Am I not an apostle? am I not free? have I not seen Jesus Christ?" 1 Cor. ix. 1. Our Saviour himself accepted this honour. "Ye call me Master and Lord; and ye say well; for so I am," John xiii. 13. Is the term (minister) contemptible to any? That Christ who must save you, or you shall never be saved, calls himself a minister. "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister," Matt. xx. 28. If therefore men are bound to glorify the good master even in the evil servant; and not only to "know them," but "to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake," 1 Thess. v. 12, 13; then much more "let the elders that rule well be" (yes, they are, but also be) "counted worthy of double honour," 1 Tim. v. 17.

"Of Jesus Christ." Here he declares his Master; where three collections arise.

1. They were apostles of Christ; for none ever called themselves apostles of God the Father, because Christ himself only was the Father's Apostle. He had other pastors under him, but he was that great Shepherd

and Bishop of our souls. He sent others, but him hath the Father sent.

2. Christ only hath authority to make apostles: he chose them to the work, that could enable them to the work. Therefore none ought to take this charge upon them, unless they be either mediately or immediately called of God.

Some have no calling either of God or men, but run on their own errand. "I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran: I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied," Jer. xxiii. 21. Let them that set them on work pay them their wages. "He that entereth not in by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber," John x. 1. Either, like the Sodomites, they cannot find the door; or, like the Jesuits, they will not find the door. These latter have run as far as the Indies; but who sent them? These merchants went not to fetch sheep to Christ's fold, but to shear their wool and flay their skins. They were not apostles, but alchemists; they went to fetch gold. I have heard much talk of their miracles; if I had all faith, even to remove mountains, I could not believe them. But whatsoever their miracles were, I am sure their morals were naught. The poor Indian refused (after all their commendations of celestial glory) to go to heaven if the Spaniards should be there.

Some are called of God without man, by an immediate vocation. So were the twelve apostles by Christ in his state mortal, Paul in his state immortal, Acts ix.

Some are sent of men without God. So Jason and Menelaus sought the priesthood by unlawful means of Antiochens; so Jeroboam made his priests. Alliance, favour, simony, have brought men of bad learning and worse living into the ministry; which made one to say, that horses were more miserable than asses, in that horses went post to get asses preferment.

Others are sent of God by man. So Joshua was ordained of God by Moses, Timothy and Titus by Paul, the bishops in Crete by Titus. For "how shall they preach, except they be sent?" Rom. x. 15. They that in these days go without this warrant climb in at the window; and that we know is no fair possession of the house. He that enters in at the windows shall be cast out at the doors. God seals his approbation of the church's calling, and answers it in the conversion of many souls. So that an industrious pastor may say to his people, "If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you: for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord," 1 Cor. ix. 2.

3. They came not in their own name, but in Christ's: "an apostle of Jesus Christ." We are ambassadors for Christ, and God doth beseech you by us, 2 Cor. v. 20. We are tutors, not for ourselves, but for him; desiring to espouse you to one Husband, and to present you pure and chaste virgins to Christ, 2 Cor. xi. 2. We preach not ourselves, but Christ: neither our own glory, nor our own gain. Not our own glory: God is glorified in our infirmities. Woe unto us if we arrogate that, whereof God is so jealous that he will not give it to another! Not our own gain: we would then take any profession rather than this. There is no calling wherein a man may not live better, and grow rich sooner. A cluster of law is worth a whole vintage of any other profession. Indeed in Rome, and throughout the papal jurisdiction, where respect of gains, not of pains, guides men's dispositions: where little learning and less honesty will serve to bear up, and to bear out, much worship, more wealth; there great riches is in clerical hands. It is their main policy, by blowing up other states to enlarge their own. Like the floods that made war against the woods; Let us subdue them all, and

make us more countries, 2 Esd. iv. 15. But for conscience, not a pope preached these nine hundred years; yet I hope they have not been poor. They have not Peter's net to catch the souls, but Peter's hook to take all the fishes that have silver in their mouths. It was said of Leo X. that whereas others were only popes but while they lived, he was pope many years after he was dead.

*Sacra sub extremâ si forte requiritis horâ,
Cur Leo non potuit sumere: vendiderat.*

John XXII. left behind him two hundred and fifty tons of gold: so that one wrote of him, *Erat pontifex maximus, si non virtute, pecuniâ tamen maximus*. Whatsoever he was in piety, he was the chief priest in money. They inveigh against us for providing for our own lawful wives and children; yet admire themselves for providing for their harlots, and bastards, and minions. They come into the church, as it were to a golden harvest. The friars were so long wilful beggars, that they had beggared all the Christian world. The Jesuits hate all other orders but the Capuchin: because the Capuchin asks nothing, the Jesuit would have all. Their artillery hath been thus wittily described; the Capuchin friars shooting from the purse, the Franciscans a little wide of it, the Jesuits hitting it in the midst. I know who said, "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?" 1 Cor. ix. 11. Yet let us win your souls, though we never have your purses; the gain of one soul is greater than the Indies. "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?" Yes, "ye are our glory and joy," 1 Thess. ii. 19, 20.

II. "To them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." Here he comes to the persons to whom this Epistle is written; wherein consider six circumstances:

The generality of the persons. To them, all them.

The qualifications of this generality, That have faith.

The excellency of this qualification, Precious faith.

The equality of this excellency, Like with us.

The means of this equality, Have obtained it.

The ground of this means, Through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

"To them," all them: here is the generality of the persons, for the word is indefinite. This is called a "general epistle," not in a metaphorical sense, as Paul calls the Corinthians, "Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men," 2 Cor. iii. 2; or as one calls Christ, an epistle sent us from God the Father; or as August. (in Psal. xc. conc. 2.) calls the Scripture, God's letter or epistle sent us hither, from that city to which we travel. But in a proper and usual meaning; a letter of a friend sent to his friends. It is called a "general epistle," not only, 1. Because the doctrine contained in it is orthodox and catholic; 2. Nor because the use of it is general: even to us, as well as to those to whom it was written; but, 3. Because it was not directed to any one man: as those of Paul to Timothy, Titus, Philemon; of John, to the elect lady, and Gaius; no, nor to one particular church, as those of Paul to the Romans, Corinthians, &c.; but to all the saints and worshippers of Jesus Christ, howsoever distressed, wheresoever dispersed, or whensoever despised; to all them that with humble faith and sincere repentance seek our Mediator.

For with God is no respect of persons. Behold that Lamb, which takes away the sins of the world, John i. 29. "Men and brethren, children of the stock

of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent." Acts xiii. 26. There is no difference of country, of condition, of estate. All which are exemplified by our Saviour Christ, Matt. viii. upon the Jew and the Gentile, the leper and the centurion. For country, the leper was a Jew, the centurion a Gentile. For condition, the leper a man of peace, the centurion a man of war. For estate, the leper poor, the centurion rich. I know the greater danger is to the rich, and the sweeter promises are made to the poor; yet let not the poor presume, nor the rich despair. The one may be poor in money, poorer in grace; the other may be rich for this world, yet richer for the world to come. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Jesus Christ," Gal. iii. 28. "To them all;" let no man deny his soul this comfort.

"That have faith." Here is the qualification. The definition and excellency of this grace I refer a little further. Here, that we may a little conceive the nature of it, we find it often called a "hand;" and that for two reasons: 1. As the hand fastens hold upon the object, to which the heart directs it; so faith apprehends Christ, with his blessed merits, whereby only we are saved. 2. As the hand is fittest for operation, and doth execute that business which no other member of the body can; so faith worketh godliness, and produceth those effects which no other grace in the soul can. For this purpose it hath an instrument, "Faith worketh by love," Gal. v. 6. The hand can receive a gift of itself, but it cannot cut a piece of wood without an instrument; but by the help of that it can divide or fashion it to pleasure. So faith can receive Christ into the heart, that most excellent "gift of God" the Father, John iv. 10; but for the duties of the law, faith of itself cannot produce them. Join love to it, and then it can; for faith working by love performs all duties to God and man. Now of this hand there be five fingers, which for method's sake we may order according to the letters.

There is fruitfulness, it is not barren; for "faith without works is dead," James ii. 20; nudifidians are nullifidians. We will never take her for a true lady, that hath not her gentleman usher before, and her servants following after. If you see not repentance going before faith, nor works attending on her, know it is not she. God deeds do batten faith. (Luther.) Faith hath the appellation from doing. (August.) Two syllables sound when we pronounce *fides*: the one is derived from fact, the other from God. (Bern.) Dost thou believe? Yes, I believe. Do what thou sayest, and that is faith. We may call faith a vine, virtues the branches, works the grapes, devotion the wine. False faith is like a sandy earth; ruin it never so much, no fruit ariseth.

There is appropriation of Christ; by faith he is made ours, by love we are made his. It was a piece of the philosopher's meditation, that that man hath all in himself that hath himself: the believer adds, he hath himself that hath Christ, and he hath Christ that hath true faith. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith," 1 John v. 4; yea more, it overcomes Christ himself. The world is overcome by faith, because it cannot withstand it; Christ is overcome by faith, because he will not withstand it. Christ in a duel overcame the devil, Matt. iv. A Canaanitish woman so overcame Christ himself. He yielded, "O woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt," Matt. xv. 28. This is able to smooth his countenance, though it be frowning; to tie his hands, though they be striking. The lion of this world

raged long, and still rageth, "seeking whom he may devour," 1 Pet. v. 8. "The Lion of the tribe of Juda" conquered him, Rev. v. 5. Now faith conquers the conqueror. How great is the power of faith, that overcomes him who overcame all! Thus is God pleased to let faith have a holy victory over himself: he loves this sanctified violence, and bids faith wrestle courageously with him, like Jacob; permitting his Almighty self to be conquered, and manacled from executing deserved vengeance. So Job, Albeit thou kill me, yet I will trust in thee; and because (saith God) thou dost trust in me, I will not kill thee. It were honour enough for faith to "subdue kingdoms," Heb. xi. 33, but to achieve the kingdom of heaven; enough to "stop the mouths of lions," but to vanquish that roaring lion, and to resist him, 1 Pet. v. 9; enough to "quench the violence of" elementary "fires," but to deliver from the eternal fire of hell; enough to "escape the edge of" men's swords, but to escape the sword of God's justice: oh the matchless virtue of faith!

There is imitation of Christ. Faith hath two eyes; one looks to Christ's merits, that we may be saved; the other to his righteousness, that we may be sanctified. In imitation there be two things, action and affection. Action; for it is not enough to commend and admire the pattern, but we must follow it. Affection; for it is not enough to forgive because we cannot revenge. (Zanch.) This is no sufficient imitation of Christ's love; for he can, if he please, bruise sinners to pieces, and "break them with a rod of iron," Psal. ii. 9. But we must forgive with a mind to forgive, and give alms with the mind of charity. Faith doth not think that heaven will fall into the lap, but endeavours to work out salvation, not without fear and trembling; and seeks to follow Christ to blessedness, the same way that he went thither.

There is trust in Christ; for there can be no faith in him without trust and dependence on him. This point, thoroughly examined, would call in question many men's faith. The covetous worldling dares trust Christ to raise his body, and to save his soul, and to give him the kingdom of glory hereafter; but he dares not trust him for his daily bread here. The fowls are fed and the flowers are clothed by him; and will ye vex your souls with solicitous cares? If ye do, may not Christ say truly, that ye are "of little faith?" Matt. vi. 30. Shall we trust God with our jewels, and not with the box? As if thou durst not commit thy children to his protection, thou serapest up wealth with the hazard of heaven and eternal peace; yet if thou be questioned concerning thy salvation, thou answerest, thy trust is in Christ. This is a false and deceiving faith: take heed, lest whiles he doth grant thee that wherein thou dost not trust him, worldly riches, he take away that wherein thou dost trust him, everlasting joy.

There is honouring of Christ; no man ever believed on him, but he desired to honour him. It is fit he should look for glory from us, as well as we look for glory from him. We honour the king under whom we enjoy our own with peace; we honour the physician that preserves the health of our bodies; we honour the soldier that defends us from our enemies; oh how much more should we honour him that saves our souls! We are bought with a price, therefore let us glorify him both in our bodies and spirits, for they are his, 1 Cor. vi. 20. "These be the five fingers of faith. Let us lay hold on Christ in life, that he may lay hold on us in death, and bear us up in his holy hand to everlasting glory.

"Precious faith." Here is the excellency of this qualification. As Athens was called Greece of Greece,

so faith may be called the grace of grace. It is precious in regard of the object, the subject, the act, the effect, the use.

1. In respect of the object; which in a larger acceptation is the whole Scripture, whereof every parcel must be believed, without diminution or addition. Strictly, this is Christ, who is not only the Word of God, but God himself in the word. "I am the way, the truth, and the life." Lord, how shall we go? Thou art our way. Whither shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. (Ang. Tract. 22. in Joh. cap. vi.) There is no way but by him, no light but from him, no life but in him. Christ is a mutual hand; to the Father one, another to us. A hand to the Father, by which he reacheth us; a hand to us, by which we reach the Father. The Father's mouth, whereby he speaks to us; our mouth, whereby we speak to him: our eye to see by, foot to go by; our pillar of fire by night, and cloud by day, guiding us through the desert of this world. It is a precious faith that lays hold on this precious object. "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him up from the dead," (not only dead, for so the Jews believe him, but risen again, for that is the faith of Christians; if thou have this faith,) I tell thee from Paul, and Paul from God, to the comfort of thy soul, thou art presently justified, and shalt be everlastingly saved. "For the Scripture saith," (it is not the promise of man, but the assurance of God,) "Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed." Rom. x. 9, 11. God forbid I should rejoice in any thing, "save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ," Gal. vi. 14. There is nothing wherein men usually rejoice, but the faithful find it in Christ. Doth any man glory in knowledge? I desire to know nothing among you, but Jesus Christ, and him crucified, 1 Cor. ii. 2. This is the blessed knowledge; for it is eternal life, John xvii. 3. Doth any man glory in honours? It is Christ that hath made us kings, Rev. i. 6. Doth another glory in riches? Christ is a treasure never failing, and "of his fulness have all we received," John i. 16. In liberty? Christ hath delivered us out of the hands of all our enemies, Luke i. 74. In princes' favours? The King of kings accepts us in him; "He made us accepted in the beloved," Eph. i. 6. All good things are to be found in him; therefore he is a precious object, and this a "precious faith."

2. In respect of the subject: the seat of faith is in the heart; "with the heart man believeth unto righteousness," Rom. x. 10. It is not placed in the mind and understanding only, but in the will and affections. Faith, as a knowledge, resides in the mind; as an assured persuasion, in the will. It is not a prattle of the tongue: Herod's tongue belies his soul. Men say what they believe, do not always do what they say. (Heming.) Nor is it a floating opinion of the brain, a contemplative speculation of mysteries; but a certain persuasion of the heart. There is a forged faith, and a forced faith: forged, in heretics, who will believe no God but one of their own making. They believe all that they do believe with a faith of their own, not with the faith of the elect, of the church. No oracle, no article of holy faith, but they will conceive it, and receive it, their own way, or not at all. This is rather an art of treachery than of faith. Forced, in devils; they acknowledge from their own horror, and against their wills, that there is a God. It was the relation of a reverend divine concerning an atheist in England: A young man was a papist, but soon fell in dislike of their superstition. He became a protestant, but that did not please him long. England could not content

him; he reels to Amsterdam. There he fell from one sect to another, till he lighted upon the Familists. The first principle they taught him was this, There is no God: as indeed they had need sear up their conscience, and dam up all natural light, that turn Familists. Hereon he fell to a loose life, committed a robbery, was convicted, condemned, and brought to die. At the execution he desired some stay, uttering these words, "Say what you will, surely there is a God; loving to his friends, terrible to his enemies." Even the lowliest reprobates, that spit in the face of Heaven, and wade as deep as Jesuits in blood, yet they shall have a forced faith. Though perhaps they say for the time, as Nero, *Verebor esse cum faciam, Deum?* When Seneca reproved him for his vices, and bad him live, that God might approve his actions; he answered, *Stulte, verebor esse, cum hæc faciam, deos?* Thou silly man, shall I fear thee who is a God, when I go about my villanies? But they shall one day believe and feel. There may be atheists on earth; there are none in hell: no sooner come thither, but they know, to their endless sorrow, that there is a God. Bellarmine saith, that the faith of reprobates and devils is a right and true faith in regard of the object. (De Justif. lib. 1. cap. 15.) And Augustine, comparing Peter's confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," Matt. xvi. 16, with the devil's acknowledgment, "I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God," Mark i. 24; saith, that though Peter for this was commended, and Satan expelled; albeit the same confession was beneficial to the one, and not to the other: yet the faith in both was not false, but true; not to be denied, but acknowledged; not to be detested, but approved. (De unico Bapt. contr. Petil. cap. 10.) Let this faith be granted true, so far as it goes; yet as it hath many other differences, so this one especially. The faith of reprobates and devils is compelled by the demonstration of the signs; faith of the elect, by the evidence of the Spirit. Theirs against their wills, ours from the ground of our hearts; for that is the seat and subject of all approved faith.

3. In respect of the act: it believes on Christ. There be three degrees or faculties of faith, as the school speaks out of Augustine. First, to believe there is a God; and this is a faith incident to devils. Next, to believe God; to credit the history of the gospel, and to assent that what God saith is true. This is called an historical faith, and may be in reprobates. Last, to believe on God, which ariseth from both the former, and as Chennitius says, doth presuppose and comprehend both the former. The faith of a reprobate is a true faith specifically. A spark of fire is true fire, though it be not able to warm: a drop of water is true water, though it be not able to carry a vessel: a little sprig may be a true cedar, though it be not yet fit for timber. That fig tree which our Lord cursed, though it bare no fruit, was a true fig tree. As the Israelites required to go three days' journey in the wilderness, before they did offer sacrifice, Exod. iii. 18; so faith hath three degrees before it come to that perfection as may justify the soul. Saving faith in a man hath this precious act, to rely on God's mercy in Christ for his salvation. He disclaims not his part in Christ, as the devils, "What have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth?" Mark i. 24; nor loseth it, as reprobates, "He that believeth not is condemned already," John iii. 18. But he challengeth his portion in the blood of Christ. "I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine," Cant. vi. 3. His body is in heaven, there I shall find it mine; his divinity on earth, there I do find it mine; his gospel in my ear, to beget him mine; his sacrament in my eye, to confirm him

mine; his Spirit in my heart, to assure him mine. Angels are mine, to fight for me; prince mine, to rule for me; church mine, to pray for me; preacher mine, to feed me. "Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephus, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come:" all are ours, and we are Christ's, and Christ is God's, 1 Cor. iii. 22.

This faith doth not only, with reprobates, believe the major of the gospel, that Christ is salvation; but the minor, with Mary, that he is my Saviour. The devils believe much; but they cannot believe their own reconciliation. (Bucer.) Therefore, saith James, they "believe and tremble," Jam. ii. 19. Fear is the child of unbelief, saith Basil, in Psal. xxxiii. "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?" Matt. viii. 26. Why are the apostles called timorous, but because they were of little faith? But "being justified by faith, we have peace with God through Jesus Christ," Rom. v. 1. "In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him," Eph. iii. 12. A traitor condemned to death, knows the king, and his prerogative royal, that he is able to pardon; his disposition, that it is mild and merciful; yea, he knows that the king hath forgiven many such offenders. But now for himself, he hath no friends to the king; no word from the king to warrant his pardon; no hope, if he should entreat favour, that himself was a fit subject for this exercise of mercy. Still he trembleth; he feels himself miserable, though he know the king to be merciful. So the reprobate knows God's omnipotency; "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean," Matt. viii. 2; he knows his infinite mercy, that it reacheth unto the heavens, and his faithfulness unto the clouds, Psal. xxxvi. 5: he knows God hath forgiven many, David for adultery, Solomon for idolatry, Peter for apostacy, Paul for blasphemy. But for his own part, he hath no friend to God, no mediator betwixt God and him, no Christ to speak for mercy; he hath no word whereby he can apply this mercy; no hope that mercy would come upon his submission and seeking. He wants that justifying faith, to do this precious act of application. A man is deeply in debt, in no case to pay; he hears and believes, that his creditor is an honest man, that he hath dealt mercifully with others; remitted a third, half, the whole debt; but he hath neither promise from his creditor, nor persuasion in himself, that he will deal so kindly with him: for all this, he fears arrest and imprisonment, without bail, mainprize, or any hope of deliverance. The wicked is deeply run into God's debt by his sins, (yea, every man is taught to pray, "Forgive us our debts," Matt. vi. 12.) for which he is subject to convention, conviction, condemnation. He knows how this Creditor dealt with a servant, Matt. xviii. 27; because he had not to pay, the Lord was moved with compassion, and forgave him the debt. But this reprobate, through want of applying faith, hath no promise, no security, no hope that he shall be freed: but he fears the prison, where if he be once clapped under the hands of that cruel jailer, the devil, he cannot depart thence till he hath paid the uttermost farthing. It is then a "precious faith," that hath this powerful art to believe a man's own reconciliation.

4. In respect of the effect, because it hath precious consequents. Amongst many, consider five sweet fruits.

(1.) Peace with God, which is produced by that faith which justifies us. Receive peace, and be blessed; believe, and thou hast received it. Upon our apprehension of Christ by faith, follows his satisfaction for us; upon this satisfaction, we have remission; upon remission, reconciliation; upon reconciliation,

peace. There is no quarrel against us in heaven; nothing but peace and joy, because we have truly believed.

(2.) Peace with our own conscience. When that stern sergeant shall take thee by the throat, and arrest thee upon God's debt, Pay that thou owest; let thy faith plead, I have paid it. How? Produce thy acquittance, that bloody acquittance, sealed in the wounds of thy Saviour, and given to thy faith. This shall turn the frowns of thy conscience into smiles; and that hand which was ready to hale thee to prison, shall now embrace thee with joy, encourage thee with kindness, and fight for thee with conquest.

(3.) Victory: faith knows no other language but victory. I have kept the faith, now is laid up for me a crown, 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8. It "subdued kingdoms," even the kingdom of the devil, there is victory; "wrought righteousness," though the world and sin withstood it, there is victory; raised strength out of weakness, there is victory over nature; "turned to flight the armies of the aliens," there is victory over malice and hostility; raised the dead, there is victory over the grave; with patience and greatness of spirit, it endured mockings, scourgings, &c. miseries worse than death, there is glorious victory, Heb. xi. 33-35. It "overcomes the world," 1 John v. 4; it overcomes the prince of this world; "Whom resist steadfast in the faith," 1 Peter v. 9. It quencheth all the "fiery darts of the wicked," Eph. vi. 16. They are darts in respect of their sharpness, and fiery for their violence; one sin kindling another, drunkenness adultery, adultery murder. The whole world lieth in wickedness, set on fire of the devil. Yet faith quencheth all: though they were as fiery as the gunpowder treason, yet this shall bear them off, beat them off, and infatuate their malice. It is a shield, this faith; this shield covers all, head and heart, understanding and will, that neither the mind be confounded, nor the affection amazed. (Royard.) Yea, faith overcomes the King of heaven himself; appealing from God justly offended for sin, to God sweetly pleased for Christ. (Diez.) It is able to remove mountains; the great hills of distrust, the great heaps of iniquities: therefore "precious."

(4.) Good report: all those saints through faith obtained a good report, Heb. xi. 39. They say, *Non patitur ludum fana, fides, oculus.* A man's credit, faith, and his eye, endure no jest. Yet let thy faith be sound; and though injury wound thy eye, ignominy thy fame, yet thy faith shall make all whole. That man's righteousness, through all clouds, shall break forth as the sun, and his integrity shine like the noon-day. All unjust aspersions are but as rubbish; they may seem to sully him for a while, that he may shine bright for ever. How little is that man hurt, whom malice condemns on earth, and God commends in heaven! Let the world accuse us, so long as our God doth acquit us. I suffer these things, and am not ashamed; "for I know whom I have believed," 2 Tim. i. 12. "For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth," 2 Cor. x. 18. Let God justify, and let all the fiends on earth or in hell accuse.

(5.) It blesseth to us all other blessings: "He that putteth his trust in the Lord shall be made fat," Prov. xxviii. 25. Without this faith, we are accountants for every thing we receive, to a bit of bread. There is no right to the creatures but by Christ, no right to Christ but by faith. Without this, as much horror as honour; no less wretchedness than wealthiness. But faith makes thy dignity comfortable, thy wealth helpful, thy wife, children, friends, delightful; because what thou usest in the world, thou enjoyest in the Lord. Yea, it blesseth even crosses and curses.

(Fulgent.) Thou wantest a garment for thy body : faith gives thy soul a rich one, the righteousness of Christ : thou lackest a house to dwell in ; thou dwellest by faith even in the Lord Jesus, and he dwells in thee. If thou want bread, it reacheth thee the bread of life ; if friends, it assures thee the favour of God, and the inseparable company of the Holy Ghost ; if health, it performs to thee everlasting life. Let me say with Seneca in another sense, I had rather want fortune than want faith. Whatsoever worldly thing be lacking, faith can supply it ; but if faith be lacking, who can supply that ? Faith keeps us for ever from that mourning note, We have been happy.

5. In respect of the use ; faith clears our ways as we go, cheers our hearts as we work, perfumes the places where we rest, and refines our actions from that dross and feculence, which would else make them odious in God's sight. For " whatsoever is not of faith is sin," Rom. xiv. 23. Faith, like John the Baptist, pointeth to the " Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world," John i. 29. Without this, God is no hearing God, no helping God, no saving God, no loving God at all. The Spirit shall convince the world " of sin," saith Christ, " because they believe not in me," John xvi. 9. All sins are retained to unbelief, remitted to faith. Faith is the nest of good works, saith our church (Homil. 1. of Good Works) : let our birds be never so fair, our actions never so glorious, they will be lost, except they be brought forth in faith. This is the nest, where the sparrow and swallow may lay their young, to keep them safe ; even faith, which is close by " thine altars, O Lord of hosts," Psal. lxxxiv. 3. Heretics and hypocrites may produce many goodly acts and honourable deeds ; but wanting this nest of faith, they have no where to lay their young. Therefore, as the lawyers speak, their works are damnable with their persons. A recusant in coming to church against his conscience, rather to satisfy the law than to sanctify his soul, is guilty before God, because that work was not done in faith.

Now a short corollary, or recollection of all these scattered branches to their root. Faith is precious. Conceive it some precious jewel : " Thy cheeks are comely with rows of jewels, thy neck with chains of gold," Cant. i. 10. Gregory Nyssen makes one of those chains to be sound and religious faith, which is made of the pure gold of divine knowledge. (Orat. 3. in Cant.) And to this pure and golden chain he applies Prov. i. 9, " They shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck." This is the richest collar that can adorn any soul. It is an ornament to all trimmings, for nothing is so garnishing and gracing, that it can become us without this. (Salvian.) It is a jewel given us out of God's own treasury. Though faith be not itself eternal, yet it shall make all those blessedly eternal that have it. It is brought by the best messenger, God's Spirit : not the worstiest man on earth, not an angel from heaven, is dignified to bring this treasure ; but only the Holy Ghost. It is laid up in the best coffer, in the sanctified heart : no treasure-house is good enough for this jewel, no cabinet, but the heart. Lastly, it gives us the place it came from : it came from heaven, and it brings heaven with it. It is Christ's wedding ring ; to whomsoever he gives it, he gives himself with it. It is beyond all estimation precious : it brought us more lands and revenues than the whole Indies. This is Mary's choice, that better part that shall never be taken from us.

" Like precious faith with us," I come to the equality, or rather parity, of this excellence ; " Like with us," The faith of the poorest believer is as precious as the richest. Peter is above them in office :

in the effect and fruit of his office they are like him. But Peter was thrice confirmed, and that by the mouth of Christ himself, to make him strong : how then could they have faith like him ? The comparison is not of the quantity, but of the quality of faith : nor doth he say, they had obtained the same measure and degree of faith which he had himself, but the same kind of faith ; not so much, but such faith. The act of faith is to apply Christ to the soul ; and this the weakest faith can do so well as the strongest, if it be true. A child can hold a staff as well, though not so strongly, as a man. The prisoner through a hole sees the sun, though not as perfectly as they in the open air. They that saw the brazen serpent, though a great way off, yet were healed. The poor man's " I believe" saved him ; though he was fain to add, " Lord, help my unbelief." So that we may say of faith, as the poet of death ; that *dominus servis, et sceptrum ligonibus equal*, it makes lords and slaves, apostles and common persons, all alike acceptable to God, if they have it.

I confess, that this excludes not the degrees of faith : there is a little faith, Matt. vi. 30 ; and there is a great faith ; " O woman, great is thy faith," Matt. xv. 28. God deals in spiritual proceedings, as in natural, to extremes by the mean. We are not born old men ; but first an infant, then a man, then old. We are conceived of immortal seed, born of the Spirit, so go on to perfection. There is first a seed, then a plant, then a tree. We get not at one jump into heaven, nor at one stroke kill the enemy. A little faith doth not a little good at some times ; as in the beginning of conversion, or in the storm of an afflicted conscience. Peter was strong, when he resolutely protested his infallible adherence to Christ ; " Lord, to whom shall we go ? thou hast the words of eternal life," John vi. 68. Peter was weak, when he sat by the fire in the high priest's hall, and denied his Master ; and when he dissuaded Christ from suffering for us, " Be it far from thee, Lord," Matt. xvi. 22. But where God gives great means, he looks for great measure ; according to his portion of grace, he expects our proportion of goodness. It is enough for them that see only a glimmering of the gospel, to be but dwarfs in belief : we have the sunshine, and therefore must have growth ; and be higher by the head, as Saul, if not than all the children of Israel, yet than all the sons of Rome, whose faith is so hoodwinked with enforced ignorance, that they cannot see further than their popish doctors will give them leave. Thus there may be degrees of faith : Lord, increase our faith. " Him that is weak in the faith receive ye," Rom. xiv. 1. Endeavour that your faith be increased, 2 Cor. x. 15. Grow from faith to faith ; yea, from one measure of faith to another. Yet the least faith (shield it from weakness of truth, though it have truth of weakness) is as precious to the believer's soul, as Peter's or Paul's faith was to themselves ; for it lays hold upon Christ, and brings eternal salvation. In this similitude of faith, we find three observations.

1. The universality of God's mercy without difference of persons ; that admits all sorts of men, without any acceptance or exception of sex, state, nation, or condition, into the same covenant of mercy, and precious object of faith, that the glorious apostles had. Here the unspeakable goodness of God is commended to our meditation : whereas he might in justice have left us in our superstitions and infidelity, of his infinite goodness he hath called us to the same profession of the gospel ; and to a faith of the same price and reward with his own choice servants : " In every nation he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him," Acts x. 35. Other lords cannot reward all their followers, as being poor and unable ; or will

not, as being base and illiberal; but our Lord is immense in majesty, and propense in mercy; good in greatness, and great in goodness, of great goodness. Poor Bartimaus begging, rich Zaccheus climbing, old Simon in the temple, young John in the womb, covetous Matthew at the receipt of custom, the loving centurion building a synagogue, the people watching under the cross, the thief hanging on the cross; "This day thou shalt be with me in paradise." For, whosoever believeth on him shall not perish, John iii. 16; no, not although they were of the number of his crucifiers.

2. The apostle's humility and charity: he acknowledged the poorest saints to have "like precious faith" with himself. Many Miriams are proud of the Spirit, despising their poor brethren: St. Peter matcheth them with himself. They are as dear in the Master's blood, therefore as dear in the servant's love. "Bear ye one another's burdens," Gal. vi. 2. In other buildings, one stone lies upon another, all upon the foundation: so let us support the weight one of another; and the foundation, Christ, support us all. The pebble must not envy the marble, nor the marble despise the pebble: the pin in the temple serves for use, as well as the pinnacle. "The members should have the same care one for another," 1 Cor. xii. 25: Christian shoulders should bear the weakness of others. The rich and the poor are piled together in God's house: the burden of the poor is beggary, the burden of the rich his superfluous estate. Now if the poor lie upon the rich, and the rich be contented to sustain the poor; here the rich hath his burden lessened by giving, and the poor hath his burden eased by receiving. (August.) If a brother be fallen, do not you trample him down, but help him up; relieve and "restore such a one in the spirit of meekness," Gal. vi. 1. When thou hearest thy brother to have lapsed into some grievous fault, pity him, pray for him, recollect him, saying, He fell yesterday, I may fall to-day. As Augustine, when he saw a poor miserable man, took occasion to admonish himself and the company: *Ad sumus, aut fuimus, et possumus esse quod hic est*, We have been, or may be, as wretched as he.

3. This comforts our fainting hearts: there are many gusts, and storms, and floods, that attempt the overthrow of our faith; be our house founded on the rock, it shall never be demolished, Matt. vii. 25. Sense of sin may be often great, and more felt than grace; yet not to be more than grace. A man feels the ache of his finger more sensibly than the health of his whole body; yet he knows that the ache of a finger is nothing so much as the health of the whole body. The sun under the clouds is still a sun; the fire in embers, still fire; the sap is shut up in the root, and confined thither by the cold of winter, that it cannot show itself in production of leaves and fruits, as in the spring, yet is there still life in the tree. So in the distressed heart, during the storm of affliction, there is still some hidden grace, some spark of fire in the smoking flax, which the Lord Jesus will not quench. Though thou be wounded with God's own arrows, that seem to drink up thy blood; although thy own sins be presented to the eye of thy soul; though the serpent (to increase thy terror) put forth his dismal countenance; yet, earnest thou believe? take comfort, there is more health in the Seed of the woman, than there can be venom in the head of the serpent.

"That have obtained like precious faith;" here is the means of this equality, they have obtained it. Not by our own merits; there was no congruity of nature to receive this precious treasure: we are not born, but new-born, Christians. It is indeed natural to every one, like Simon Magus, to think himself some great man, Acts viii. 9; either the man, or

somebody. Luther was wont to say, that every man by nature hath a pope bred in his belly, too great an opinion of his own worth: we are Narcissus-like, enamoured of our own shadows. Righteousness is almost the only cause of unrighteousness; righteousness in opinion, of unrighteousness in deed; we think ourselves so just, that we make little reckoning of Christ, for want of whom we remain unjust still. But the highest mountebank in his proffers, is the lowest dwarf in his merits. Not by our own purchase: many have so obtained lordships and manors; as the captain bought his burgess-ship, with a great sum of money, Acts xxii. 28. Wert thou as glorious as an angel, thy meat as good as mamma, thy garments richer than Aaron's ephod, and thy breath sweeter than the perfume of the tabernacle; yet all this could not get thee faith, nor give thee title to the kingdom of heaven. "Thy money perish with thee," that thinkest the gifts of God may be bought with money, Acts viii. 20.

But we obtain it by God's mercy; for it is given us for Christ's sake to believe, Phil. i. 29. Faith is the fair gift of God; not only the grace of faith, but the very will of believing is God's work in us. If any ask, saith Augustine, Why this man is converted to believe, that man not convinced to believe. I answer with St. Paul, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!" Rom. xi. 33. If any man dislike this answer, let him seek better; but beware lest he find worse. "By the grace of God I am what I am," 1 Cor. xv. 10. All the good we have, is either God himself, or what comes from him. (August.) All my goods, O Lord, are thy gifts. He that shall reckon to thee his merits, doth no more but reckon thy mercies.

"Have obtained;" they have obtained it by lot, so the original imports; so it is said of Zacharias, "his lot was to burn incense," &c, Luke i. 9. So that we read, "He made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance," unto the part of the lot "of the saints in light," Col. i. 12. Not that we draw these blessings by a lottery, or imaginary fortune, but by the ordination of God; for though the lot be cast into the lap, yet the whole disposition thereof is of the Lord. It is therefore called our lot, because the Lord hath designated it to be our portion. Though the land of Israel were divided by lot, yet the Lord had decreed in himself, and told Joshua, what lot and portion every tribe should have. There is a threefold lot belongs to the faithful. 1. The lot of the saints is the sufferings of the saints. "The rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous," Psal. cxxv. 3. It is their lot to have the rod, not the rod of the wicked; or if it salute them, it shall not dwell with them. "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution," 2 Tim. iii. 12; it is their inevitable lot to be chastised on earth; it is their lot to be saved in heaven. 2. The lot of the saints is not only that light and happiness they have in this world. The lot is "fallen to me in pleasant places, yea, I have a goodly heritage," Psal. xvi. 6. When David sat at the sheepfold, the kingdom of Israel was given him by lot from God. But more specially faith, grace, and sanctification; which gives them just right and title to the inheritance of glory. Thus heaven is their lot now, a lot drawn out of the bloody side of Christ; though not in possession, yet in succession. They have the earnest of it; let them grow up to stature and perfection, and take it. The inheritance is the eldest son's lot, even while he is a child. 3. Lastly, they have the lot of faith, that they may have the lot of salvation. Hell is the lot of the wicked: "Behold at evening-tide trouble; and before the morning he is not." This is the por-

tion of them that spoil us, and the lot of them that rob us," Isa. xvii. 14. Therefore it is said of Judas, that he went "to his own place," Acts i. 25. "Upon the wicked God shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup," Psal. xi. 6. But the lot of the righteous is faith, and the end of their faith the salvation of their souls. God gives them heaven, not for any foreseen worthiness in the receivers, for no worthiness of our own can make us our fathers' heirs; but for his own mercy and favour in Christ, preparing heaven for us, and us for heaven. So that upon his decree it is allotted to us; and unless heaven could lose God, we cannot lose heaven.

Here then consider how the lottery of Canaan may shadow out to us that blessed land of promise whereof the other was a type. The allusion may be led on through three principal passages; the preparation, the qualification, the possession.

1. For the preparation: Canaan was not a new-made country, out of barren and uninhabitable deserts; but was already furnished to their hands: nature had enriched it with commodities, and industry beautified it with buildings and maturities; which were not done by the Israelites. They came to goodly cities, which they builded not; to houses full of all good things, which they filled not; to wells digged, which they digged not; and to vineyards, which they planted not, Deut. vi. 11. So heaven was prepared of old; "Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world," Matt. xxv. 34. That glorious city, whose wall was of jasper, and the fabric pure gold, the foundations of precious stones, Rev. xxi. 18, 19, was neither formed nor furnished by the saints; but the builder and maker was God, Heb. xi. 10. So Paul; it is the "building of God, an house not made with hands," 2 Cor. v. 1. God made it for his chosen; and as the Canaanites were cast out, that the Israelites might enter, so the Lord hath thrown the devils out of heaven, that elect men might dwell there.

2. For the qualification: as none had right to Canaan but the children of Abraham according to flesh, so none have right to heaven but the children of Abraham according to faith. This qualification stands in our Captain, and in our combat. For the captain, they had Joshua, we have Jesus. Though there were a Canaan, there would have been no lot without a Joshua: though there be a heaven, there would have been no room for us in it without a Jesus. The lot of every tribe was known to Joshua; the portion of every saint is purchased by Jesus. Joshua had the city which he asked for himself, Josh. xix. 50. Jesus obtains whatsoever he asketh for us: "Ask of me, and I shall give thee," though thy demand be more than Herod's offer, half my kingdom, though it be "the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession," Psal. ii. 8. For the combat; Canaan was given to Israel by promise, yet they could not enter it without a combat; they fought many sore battles, before they were settled in a victorious rest. So must the kingdom of heaven suffer violence, before it afford residence; and we must be content to war with greater giants than the sons of Anak, even with principalities and powers, before we triumph. Let us hear the country in our minds, and we shall find courage in our hearts. Caleb dares fight with the Anakims, if Joshua give him Hebron, Josh. xiv. 13; and complaining Ephraim enlarge his territories, if Joshua promise them the wood country, chap. xvii. 18. If Dan complain of too little room, let him fight it out for more; let him conquer Leshem, and possess it, chap. xix. 47. Christians must not pine and repine,

that others exceed them in graces; but buckle on the arms of faith, and with a reverent courage strive for more. Nor is it a good argument that we share the lot of faith, if we strive only for ourselves; Christians thus truly qualified seek also the salvation of others. The Reubenites, Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh had their lot allowed already; yet were they not suffered so to rest, but to pass before their brethren armed, all the mighty men of valour, and to help them, Josh. i. 14. Nor is it enough for Peter and Paul to comfort themselves in the security of their own salvation, but they must labour the conversion and confirmation of their brethren. Thus are they qualified, to whom the lot of faith, and of eternal life by faith, is ordained. Heaven is not for every one, but for the saints: would any man have a lot in Canaan, let him be sure he be a true Israelite. It is not the bare hope and probability of a little, that can give the soul the satisfaction of comfort. For a man to stand to the courtesy of his minister, for all the knowledge which he requires in heavenly blessings, had been for an Israelite to take it upon trust of the spies, who were sent to view and report the goodness of the land, and never to enter it himself.

3. For the possession itself, no mortal eye hath seen it, nor ear hath heard it; blessed souls, whose lot it shall be to enjoy it! But I leave this point to your meditation; for our apostle speaks here of the preparing lot, not of the possessing lot. Let us get the lottery of grace, and we shall be assured the lot of glory. But, alas, how slowly do we go about this holy business! Joshua was fain to chide the seven tribes, for neglect of their inheritance; "How long are ye slack to go to possess the land, which the Lord God of your fathers hath given you?" Josh. xviii. 3. We may be all thus justly reprov'd; how long defer we to make sure our election, and to get the earnest of everlasting life?

Thus we have considered this precious jewel of faith, and how we have obtained it; by no worthiness of our own, but by lot: that is, the free gift and disposition of God, who gives it, or denies it, according to his own good pleasure. If he have given thee this lot of believing, the thanks be to him: if thou draw a blank and dost not obtain it, yet he hath done thee no wrong: who shall command that independent Proprietary to give away his own?

"That have obtained" it: here is matter of correction, of direction.

First, This corrects the error of two sorts.

1. Such as have not obtained faith; who think that they may believe when they list: respecting only the sufficiency and indulgence of God; not regarding the obduration of their own hearts, and their indisposition to receive it. Whatsoever is received, is received according to the measure and capability of the thing which receives. Stones and sand will not be leavened, but meal. There is matter in the rock to build a house of; not form and proportion, till it be hewed out. Those five foolish virgins, Matt. xxv. thought they might get oil at their pleasure; but because their lamps were out, themselves could not be let in. Many think, whosoever they lost their faith, they shall find it on their death-bed. But let no man promise himself that, which the gospel doth not promise him. If they cannot find it in the church, they will hardly find it in the chamber: if the ordinary means to beget faith have not wrought it, how shall it be taken when it is not offered? But saith Augustine, Faith is in a man's power: but that father never meant that an infidel can believe when he list, but when God gives him that list man's will is not compelled. As he adds, When a man's will is to believe, he does believe. But

whence hath he that will? The finger of God moves his will. Faith is a voluntary persuasion of absent things, saith another. But "it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." Rom. ix. 16. God must give the will, act, effect, and all. The fathers never averred, that an unbeliever can make himself a believer by his own power; but when God hath given him the power of faith, he can then believe. "Without me ye can do nothing," saith Christ, John xv. 5: not a very little, but nothing at all. The members must be set in the body, before they can execute any offices for the body; neither are they members because they are working, but are therefore working because they are members. The tree brings forth the fruit, the fruit doth not bring forth the tree. Papists in their congruities, and libertines in their potentials, run too much upon a very base figure, the cart before the horse; merit before mercy. Do not think to believe so easy a matter: the death of Christ darkened the sun, shook the earth, clave the rocks, opened the graves, and raised the dead; yet did not put faith into the Jews' hearts. It was a great miracle for God to be born of woman; a great miracle, for a virgin to bear a child, and still to remain a virgin; but the greatest miracle of all is, for a man's faith to believe these things. Bernard makes this to be the most wonderful mixture and composition of the three. First, God and man, a strange union; that he should begin to be man, who is God without beginning, without ending; Divinity and humanity in one individual person; this is very mystical. Next, a mother and a virgin; that she should be a virgin still, which was now a mother; that she should be a mother, which remained a pure virgin; this was singularly admirable; maternity and virginity at once in the same individual person. Lastly, man's heart and faith; a natural understanding, and supernatural objects mixed together. Fire and water would sooner be reconciled than these two, without the supernatural combining work of God's Spirit. This is the most wonderful mixture and mystery. This faith is no easy thing to obtain. Thou mayst fall off from thyself, not recover thyself: he only that made thee can restore thee. (August.) Faith is God's gift; no man can obtain it, if he detain it.

2. Such as have obtained it, that they be not proud of it. "What hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" 1 Cor. iv. 7. Let not the most famous disdain the meanest, nor the meanest repine at the mightiest: insolent and malice are enemies to grace and faith. "Be not high-minded, but fear," Rom. xi. 20. Pride was the first sin that ever was in the world, and it shall be the last. As other infirmities decrease in us, so pride doth increase. Though he abounded with many virtues, yet he lost all by his self-conceitdness, saith Chrysostom, on that Pharisee, Luke xviii. 11. "God, I thank thee," (for he was not a petitioner, but a proclaimer,) "that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican." Yet he was all these; an extortioner, for in relying on his own merits, he did rob God of his glory, and extort that from him which he will not give to another. Unjust, in condemning the publican without due proof; so being himself a guilty person worthy to be condemned, he usurps the office of a judge, and censures another. An adulterer, in being wedded to vain-glory, and enamoured of popular applause: leaving the humble and chaste love he owes to God, he runs a whoring after his own proud inventions. St. James calls them adulterers that embrace the friendship of the world, Jam. iv. 4. Thus he was like a bad

mill, that keeps a great clacking and grinds little, (Jerome.) Howsoever all sins may be said to be in the devil, in respect of guiltiness; yet only pride is in him, in respect of his desire, saith Thomas. His darling sin, his character, is pride. Hens use to cackle as soon as they have laid their eggs, and by this means they are instantly taken from them. The proud man may do some good works, but by his clacking and boasting he looseth them. The pharisaical papists have haply laid some eggs, but they so cackle them that they quite mar their market. Poor men advanced, and growing proud, are like clouds drawn up on high by the sun; and when they are there, they darken the sun that drew them up. God may say to them, as Sarah spake to Abraham concerning Hagar, I have given thee my handmaid, and now I am despised in thine eyes. But it is certain, they have least faith that think they have all faith. Men that make themselves so sure of heaven, that they will scarce change places with the departed saints, may perhaps wish themselves one day in the poor publican's case and place; "Lord, be merciful to me a sinner."

Thus much for the reproof of those two errors; one in the defect, the other in the excess; neither whereof have indeed obtained faith. Now for direction to those that have obtained it: this twofold.

1. Learn to acknowledge the Author. Hast thou obtained that precious jewel denied to thousands, be the more thankful. As Thales Milesius asked no other reward of his readers, but, Where thou readest me, acknowledge me: so God requires of his creatures, that where they find the benefits, they thankfully acknowledge the Benefactor. God hath kept nothing to himself but his glory, and this he will not give to another; as Pharaoh gave all to Joseph, only excepting the throne; yet in this glory we are too forward to be sharers. When the Babylonians heard the music, cornet, dute, harp, &c. they fell down and worshipped the idol, Dan. iii. 7. So men, when they hear the music of their own praises, idolize themselves, and worship a golden calf. The wife is bound to be chastely reserved to her own husband, and not with a tempting dress to invite adulterers. Vain-glory tricks us up, not for God our Husband, but for strange lovers: he will acknowledge no such wife. Joab sent messengers to David, that he should bring in his forces and take Rabbah: his reason was, "lest I take the city, and it be called after my name," 2 Sam. xii. 28: not Joab thy servant, but David the king, must have this honour. So God cannot endure that his creature should divide the glory with himself; give him all willingly, or he will have all in despite of thee. Let thy thankful acknowledgment go up, that his great bounty may come down.

2. Learn to preserve what thou hast gotten. "That which ye have already hold fast I come," Rev. ii. 25. This was St. Paul's happiness, that having finished his course, yet he had still "kept the faith," 2 Tim. iv. 7. The loss of faith is a dangerous shipwreck, 1 Tim. i. 19: if it be possible, save your vessels, save your goods, save your wares, save your bodies; but though you lose all, save your faith, save your souls. Imagine thyself a vessel; the sea this world, thy freight faith. There is a man of war against thee: the bark is diffidence: the soldiers, atheism, heresy, schism, profaneness; the charged cannons and ordnance are pride, lust, hypocrisy, to which drunkenness is the master-gunner, and gives fire. The arch-pirate is the devil, who so violently assaults us, and boards us with his temptations, that often we are fain to blow up our decks, lose some of our necessary appurtenances; glad, like the young man in the gospel, to save ourselves, though we leave

our case behind us. There be also rocks of persecutions, and gulfs of errors; horrible gulfs in the sea of Rome, dangerous swallows about Amsterdam. When opinion goes before us, it is a great question whether truth will follow us. Look to thy faith. Shipwreck thy faith, and drown thy soul. Cast Judas out of the ship, and take Jesus in. That ship is troubled that harbours a traitor: the ship is safe that hath in it the Saviour; now he hath Christ that hath faith. If therefore by faith thou be freed from the bondage of Satan, take heed lest by laying down this refuge thou be again captived. Let not the world, like a crafty thief, steal away thy faith: look to your faith, ye covetous; forsake not the word to embrace the world. Be not like plagues, which have a black side as well as a white: when their turns are once served by the white, they instantly show you the black. Though the faith of Christ be in their mouths, the love of the world is in their hearts. Let no extremity of sorrows or sufferings enervate thy faith. When a lewd malefactor, being condemned to die with just Phœon, railed at the judge, the law, his enemies, and looked on death with terror and amazement, he thus cheered him with encouragement, Dost thou grudge to die with Phœon? O thou faint-hearted professor, dost thou grudge to die with Christ, or for Christ? Keep thy shield of faith, and thou shalt victoriously march with the saints on earth, and triumphantly sing with the angels in heaven. Faith obtained, faith retained, shall without fail advance thy soul to eternal glory.

"Through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Christ." Here is the ground of this means, the justice of our Redeemer. Some read these words by disjoining them; of God, and of our Saviour. This reading may stand where righteousness is referred to God, as to the cause efficient, and to Christ, as to the cause meritorious. Augustine admonisheth us of the Trinity here, and teacheth us to collect it from such places. By the name of God he understands the Father, by Saviour the Son, by grace and peace the Holy Ghost. But with St. Ambrose, they are better read together; and this is plain from the Greek context, where all are contained under one article. Aquinas thus: of God, that is, of Christ, *secundum divinitatem effective*: of our Saviour, that is, of Christ, *secundum humanitatem meritorie*. But I leave that as too curious, and take the words to be construed only copulatively; answerably to that of Paul. "Looking for the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ," Tit. ii. 13. Here can be no distinction of persons thought on: for it is the great God that appears in judgment; but no person of the Deity properly appears in judgment at the last day, but Jesus Christ. "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son," John v. 22: therefore Christ is there called the great God. For the Mediator betwixt God and man, is perfect God and perfect man; and yet not two, but one Christ: one not by confusion of substance, but by unity of person, as Athanasius.

Here is then full testimony that Christ is God, against the Arians. But when I read that Evardentius reports; how many of the Polonians have derogated from this eternal Deity of Christ, and that from the writings of Calvin, and other Reformed Catholics; I must sigh with Polycarpus, Good God, what times do I live in, to read and hear such impious and impudent slanders! Let any indifferent man judge, whether they or we derogate more from our Saviour Christ; we in resting our whole salvation upon him, or they in joining other saviours with him. They say, that if God will bear half the charges in co-oper-

ation, we may merit our own glory, fulfil the law, have works to spare for our neighbours; whereof Rome hath such store, that she can spare England some out of her superfluity, if we will pay for them. But that we think, as when one boasted how fair a she-slave he had bought for a pound, another answered that she was too dear of a groat; so if we should bestow our moneys on such supererogatory stuff, every pennyworth would be worse than other. We teach that our best actions are full of sin, our satisfactions debts; that no merit can do us good, but the merits of Jesus Christ. Whether of us more wrongs our Saviour? No, let them take their own egg out of our nest; we never laid it, we will never hatch it. He is "over all, God blessed for ever. Amen." Rom. ix. 5. He is the God of salvation, and he shall be found a God in judgment. They that have denied it in their mortal flesh, shall acknowledge it in immortal fire. I cannot say logically, what he is, but who he is: there is no logic sufficient to express Christ. No man can speak of the light, but by the light. (August.) The best apprehension of him is negative: he cannot lie, he cannot die, he cannot deny himself. He is God of the Father, as a branch from the root, as fragrance from the pomander, as words from the soul, as light from the sun. Man of the virgin, by overshadowing of the Holy Ghost, who withal hath cast a shadow over this mystery. Man, not by taking man's nature into his own nature, but by taking man's nature into his own person. But in all this, I will rather humbly acknowledge my ignorance, than proudly profess my knowledge. Therefore, as the philosopher sitting on the bank of a river, and observing it to ebb and flow seven times a day; because he could not by philosophy find out the hidden cause, he threw himself headlong into it, with these words, Because I cannot conceive thee, do thou receive me. So I offer myself in all humility to Christ, God and man, my blessed Saviour; O Lord, I cannot comprehend thee, do thou therefore comprehend me for ever.

"Through the righteousness," &c. Upon this ground let me build five instructions, or conclusions, which are naturally deduced from it.

1. All grace to our souls, all good to our bodies, all peace that may concern this life or that to come, is derived to us through the righteousness of Christ. Whatsoever good descends from God to us, is granted through Christ: what good ascends from us to God, is accepted through Christ. We are elected in Christ, redeemed by Christ, ingrafted to Christ, saved for Christ. God gives to all gifts; but they are only true comforts to those that enjoy them through Christ. David out of the great love he bore to Jonathan, which was "passing the love of women," was also loving to Mephibosheth the son of Jonathan, 2 Sam. ix. 7: he set him at his own table, and restored him all the land of Saul his father. Mephibosheth was lame and decrepit, yet David loved him for Jonathan's sake. Infinite is the love of God to his own Son, therefore he is called, the Son of his love, Col. i. 13, in whom he is well pleased. We are lame and deformed, warped, wicked, wretched: there is nothing in us that he should desire us; yet he restores us all the lands our father Adam lost, yea, and ten thousand times more than ever he was owner of; and will one day set us at his own table, yea, in his very throne, Rev. iii. 21, and make us partakers of his glory. So did David to Mephibosheth for Jonathan his father's sake: so doth God to us for Jesus his Son's sake. Consider man in a four-fold estate; *confectionis*, as he was made; *infectionis*, as he was marred; *refectionis*, as he was repaired; *perfectionis*, as he shall be accomplished; and see how all mercy still

came to us through Christ. First, God made man happy, because holy; without misery, because without iniquity. This I have found, that God made man righteous, Eccl. vii. 29; and in that righteousness he had the image of God, Eph. iv. 24. If a glorious heaven above him, a fruitful earth under him, command of the creatures below him, the guard of angels about him, the peace of conscience within him; if all this could make him happy, he was not scanted. He was created thus through Christ. "By him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible," &c. Col. i. 16. Secondly, Man stood not thus long; he fell from his holiness, so from his happiness; he lost the favour of the Creator, the service of the creature; a curse fell upon him for his sins. Lo, now he lies weltering in his own gore, who shall heal him? God redeems him through Christ; he "so loved the world that he gave his only Begotten Son," John iii. 16; he sent him to do it. Behold him hanging, bleeding, dying upon the cursed cross to save us. Thirdly, A Redeemer is come; what is man the better for it, if he hath not power to believe on him? Faith he can have none, if it be not given him through Christ. It is given to you in the behalf of Christ to believe, Phil. i. 29. Again, Lord, help; for Christ's sake grant us a third mercy: make us believers, or we are never the better; we had as good have no Saviour, as not have him our Saviour; and ours he cannot be, unless himself make us his. Lastly, For the state of perfection and immortal blessedness, it is through Christ. There is laid up for me, saith Paul, a crown of righteousness; and not for me only, but for all those that love his appearing, 2 Tim. iv. 8. Who shall give this to us? "The righteous Judge;" and that is Jesus Christ. Thus all good comes to us through Christ.

Again, all our good is accepted only through the righteousness of Christ. Our very persons are "accepted in the beloved," Eph. i. 6. If our persons, then our good actions. If we pray, he chargeth us to do it "in my name;" then we are sure to speed; God will give it you, John xvi. 23. He prayeth for us, as our Advocate; he prayeth in us, by his Holy Spirit; is prayed to of us, as our "everlasting Father," Isa. ix. 6. (August. in Psal. lxxxv.) We pray unto him, we pray by him, we pray in him. "I am the way, the truth, and the life," John xiv. 6. "I am the way, you come by me; I am the truth, you come unto me; I am the life, you shall dwell for ever in me. He is the beginning of salvation, therefore the way; the midst of salvation, therefore the truth; the end of salvation, therefore the life, saith Ferns. The way of them that begin, the truth of them that go forward, and the life of them that are perfect. In matter of disputation with atheists or heretics, concerning God's wisdom, majesty, power, &c. exercise all thy wit and industry, to convince the adversary. But when thou comest into another school, to wrestle with the devil, with the law, with sin and death, in the matter of thy justification; then fix thy eye upon no god, but the person of the Godhead incarnate; "B. hold the Lamb of God, that takes away the sin of the world." God's seat is said to be compassed about with a rainbow, Rev. iv. 3. The rainbow was a sign of his covenant made with man; here, doth signify his perpetual mercy to us in Christ. If he should mark what is done amiss, who is able to stand? If he enter into judgment with us, no flesh living shall be justified. But here is our comfort, there is a rainbow about the throne; he can look away upon his church, but through the rainbow, through Jesus Christ. Hence it is not to us a terrible throne; but a throne of grace, so full of mercy, that we may boldly come unto it, Heb. iv. 16. Though

out of the throne proceed lightnings, and thunders, and terrible voices; though there be seven lamps of fire burning before it, Rev. iv. 5; yet all is well so long as there is a rainbow about it. Thus all good things come to us in Christ; that we may humbly acknowledge, and heartily sing with Paul, "Of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen," Rom. xi. 36.

2. The faith of a Christian is well-grounded, upon the righteousness of Christ. "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ," 1 Cor. iii. 11. That house of faith only shall stand, that is built on this rock, Matt. vii. 25. Neither the rain that falls in whole showers of prosperity, nor the voluminous floods that roar out persecutions, nor the adverse winds that blow with the loudest violence of opposition, shall overthrow that house, because it is founded on a rock. "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock" (which thou hast acknowledged to be the Son of the living God) "I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it," Matt. xvi. 18. Though Stephen Gardiner, apostatized, did read that text with the pope's spectacles, in the days of Queen Mary, and made the pope supreme founder of faith; yet formerly, in the days of King Edward the sixth, he preached it otherwise, that the rock was only Christ. Saith Augustine, The foundation of God's house in man's heart, is faith. First place the foundation, then rear up the building; the instruments of which edifice are the word and sacraments. Here is no place for traditions of men, or constitutions of popes; the ground of faith is the righteousness of Christ, not our own merits. If in thy garden any grace or good works spring over the wall, and sanctify challenge to itself a prerogative of merit; deal with it as the gardener doth with superfluous branches, prune it off; or as Torquatus with his overventurous son; cut it down with the sword of the Spirit for daring beyond the commission. The justice of Christ is the sole compass of faith: our adversaries oppose this both with pens and tongues, violently in the schools, invectively in the pulpits; but come they to their death-beds, to argue it between God and their own souls; then grace, and grace alone; mercy, and only mercy; Jesus, and none but Jesus. This their great belwether is driven to confess: By reason of the uncertainty of our own righteousness, and the danger of vain-glory, the safest course is to put our whole trust and confidence in the only goodness and mercy of God. (De Justif. lib. v. cap. 7.) But perhaps Bellarmine spake this as a mere Jesuit; and afterwards being made papable, he was willing to retract and unsay it.

God threatens to destroy the world with a flood, because the imaginations of man's heart were evil continually, Gen. vi. 5; and God promiseth no more to curse the ground for man's sake, because the imaginations of man's heart are evil from his youth, Gen. viii. 21. The same reason, that is alleged why God will not spare the world, is also alleged why he will spare the world. It serves to prove, that not man's merit, but God's mercy, is the cause why confusion is withheld. "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed," Mal. iii. 6. Let them trust in their own works; our souls believe on this ground, the righteousness of Jesus Christ. This is the faith, and thus grounded, that our church commends, that God requires: in this we live, in this, and for this, (if need be,) let us die, that we may live for ever. Let the memory of her be blessed, even that our Deborah, who of all true-hearted English are glad to hear. She was truly

the defender of this true, ancient, catholic, and apostolic faith: she reared up the preaching of this faith, she maintained this faith, she lived in this faith, in this faith she died; applying to her own soul the mercies of God through the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

Let this teach every soul humbly to cast himself down at the feet of Christ, and to be beholden to him only for his salvation. Our best works are but blanks, and when they come before him shall blush for shame. Let us then go out of ourselves, and know that we are only saved by the righteousness of our Lord Jesus.

3. We collect hence, that it is not faith which properly saves us, but the righteousness of Christ whereon it is grounded. "For by grace are ye saved through faith," Eph. ii. 8; by grace effectually, through faith instrumentally. The hand is said to nourish the body, not of its own nature and virtue, but because it is an instrument to reach meat to it. It was the blood of the paschal lamb, for which the destroying angel passed over the Israelites' houses; faith only sprinkles the posts. We are not justified only for the act and quality of believing; it is the justice of Jesus that justifies us, which faith apprehends. Faith brings the cripple to the Beautiful gate of the temple, Acts iii. to the word and promises of the gospel; and there it is able to receive (though with a sick hand, yet with a hand) the arms of grace, Christ's merits and mercies. It was the brazen serpent that healed, not the eye that looked on it; yet without a looking eye, there was no help to the wounded party by the promised virtue.

4. Observe, that faith had need of a good foundation, for it is a heavy and weighty building. All other virtues lie upon faith, as their basis. Hope upon faith, for no man hopes for that which he believes not: as patience is the daughter of hope, so hope is the daughter of faith. Repentance lies upon faith; for how should contrition for sin be admitted, if remission of sin were not believed? Charity upon faith; why should we part with our goods for God's cause, if we believe not that God would with everlasting charity embrace us? Faith bears a great weight; yet the righteousness of Christ bears that and all. How great is faith, that is able to bear up such a burden! how much greater is Christ, that is able to bear up faith!

Our sins are of infinite number and pressure. Doth any man extenuate them with a self-flattering mitigation; think that he hath but a few, and few shall not bring him to judgment? No; they are infinite in number, heinous in nature, swelling in measure; the sands of the sea, hairs of our heads, stars of heaven, are sooner reckoned. No soul of itself is able to stand under them: the wicked shall one day find them so heavy, that they will think rocks and mountains far lighter; crying to the rocks, Fall on us, and to the mountains, Cover us, Rev. vi. 16. Now faith takes all this burden upon her shoulders; she brings it to Christ, and he takes it upon his shoulders; being confident of his fidelity, that it shall answer the invitation and promise of his mercy: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," Matt. xi. 28.

Our miseries are many and mighty, dejecting us under the load; we know not how to bear them. We bring this burden also, and lay it upon faith, and faith lays it upon Christ. Some are afflicted in reputation, as Susanna; others in children, as Eli; some by enemies, as David; others by friends, as Joseph: some in body, as Lazarus; others in goods, as Job; others in liberty, as John. In all extremities let us send a messenger to Christ for ease, faithful prayer.

If faith can but carry the burden to him, he will carry it for us and from us for ever.

Our cares are many and mighty; too great a load for ourselves to bear. Fear of what may come, expectation of what will come, desire of what will not come; no redress of all these in ourselves: what flesh and blood can support this burden? None; therefore faith takes Christ's word, and lays all these doubts or sorrows upon his righteousness, that whosoever hath found trouble in the world, may find rest in the Lord.

Our sicknesses, our pains, our departures, are heavy. Christ hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. We have all erred like sheep, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all, Isa. liii.

4, 6. When death, that proud champion, comes in his fearfullest shape to affront and affright us, faith hath recourse to the righteousness of Christ, and beseecheth him to help us with this burden, to ease the pangs and sweeten the bitterness of death, and he doth it.

5. Lastly, we infer, that our salvation stands sure in the Lord, because it hath this ground, the righteousness of Christ. God doth not trust us with our own life, but hides it in his Son Jesus. "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God," Col. iii. 3. Otherwise, if it were in our own hands, we should easily be tempted to sell it; as Adam did for an apple, and Esau for a mess of pottage. But *ponitur in tuto, quia reponitur in Christo*, it cannot but be safe, which the Lord keeps. Happy soul, whose treasure is thus laid up, where no rust or moth can corrupt it, no thief break through to steal it! An English merchant that trades in Turkey, does not build or plant in Turkey, but transports all for England. The burgesses of heaven may admit some slight traffic in this world, but they lay up all for their own country. What folly is this for a man, to hoard up his treasure there, where he is sure he must not continue; and not to convey it thither, where is continuance for ever! (Chrys.) If earth should vanish and nature dissolve; yea, if heaven pass away with a noise, and the elements melt with heat, *ruat orbis, et ortus*, I will look to the righteousness of my Saviour Christ, and stand upright. Let all our enemies do their worst, the devil tempt, the world afflict, sin menace, death affright; yet faith shall vanquish all through the righteousness of Jesus Christ. He is righteous that hath promised. "It is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels," 2 Thess. i. 6, 7. Let no man dare to call the righteousness of Christ into question: woe unto him that shall make God a liar! Shall he say, Whosoever believes shall be saved, and shall we doubt? Shall we annihilate his cross, evacuate his blood, run into the fire from whence we are ransomed, and die past hope? God forbid it, and the faith of our own souls forbid it; there is assurance of salvation through the righteousness of Christ.

VERSE 2.

Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord.

THE person saluting, and the persons saluted, are considered; the salutation itself follows, "Grace and peace," &c. This form of salutation is usual with the apostles, and useful for us. Whereby they ex-

press the true exercise of their office, to bring grace and peace in their mouths. In the salutation consider,

I. The matter, Grace and peace.

II. The measure, Be multiplied unto you.

III. The manner, Through the knowledge of God, &c.

I. "Grace and peace;" this is the matter. It hath been an ordinary custom in the Jewish, pagan, and Christian world, to begin their letters with salutations; and in these to wish their friends that they thought the best good. Some wished prosperity, others health and joyance, others summed up all in a contented mind. Some wrote, *Cura ut bene valeas*; others, *Cura ut bene vivas*. One wisheth soundness to their bodies, another integrity to their lives. All those were far short of that true blessedness, which the apostles saw to be in Christ Jesus: therefore, Grace and peace be to you; this *salus*, and *pax*; this was so good there could be no better; this was so much there need be no more. This is a short, but effectual prayer frequently used in the Scriptures, and not seldom in our liturgy. Such are, The Lord be with you, &c. Those over-devout and factions Pharisees, that love long prayers and short good deeds, call these short ejaculations, shreadings. But one well answers them, that these shreadings and lists are of more value than their northern broadcloth that shrinks in the wetting.

We are here taught the Christian use of salutations, blessings, and gratulations: such godly compliments are not to be neglected. It is the brand of the church's enemies, "Neither do they which go by say, The blessing of the Lord be upon you," nor, "We bless you in the name of the Lord," Psal. cxxix. 8: therefore they are cursed; "Let them all be confounded that hate Zion," ver. 5. Good men have ever used them: Boaz to the reapers, "The Lord be with you. And they answered him, The Lord bless thee," Ruth ii. 4. A glorious angel thus saluted Gideon, "The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour," Judg. vi. 12. An archangel to a poor virgin; "Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women," Luke i. 28. St. Paul spends a whole chapter in salutations: Romans, the last. What people had not their own forms of saluting? the Idumeans, *Dominus vobiscum*; the Ethiopians, *Pax vobis*; the Hebrews, *Ave*; the Romans, *Salve*. Superiors must perform this duty to inferiors; inferiors in reverence to superiors: all in love one to another. There is a generation of men that teach it is unlawful to salute men with, Good day, God be with you, or, Peace be to you. They will salute none with a good wish unless they know his business. As if every man's business required so little haste, as to tarry the leisure of their acquaintance. If all men should pledge them in their own cup, they might pass their whole life without a God speed. They say, We cannot tell whether he goes, or about what; it may be he is going to the tavern to be drunk. It is but a peradventure that he is going to be drunk, but without all peradventure thou art not sober, that darost so rashly judge thy brother. It is a rule in law and love, Every man is to be reputed honest till he be disproved. "Charity thinketh no evil," 1 Cor. xiii. 5. In Friesland there was a false prophet, one George David, who called himself God's nephew; and said, heaven was empty, and that he was sent to choose some to fill it. We have some separatists such mad prophets, that will elect and damn whom they please. But as themselves say, the pope hath no authority to make saints; so we say, they have no authority to make devils. As many of the pope's saints are reprobates in hell, so many of their reprobates are saints in heaven.

But they object, that Christ for greeting taxed the Pharisees; "They love greetings in the markets," Matt. xxiii. 7. I answer, he taxed their ambition, not their gratulation; he blamed not their affection, but their affectation. It was the direct charge, "When ye come into an house salute it," Matt. x. 12. But St. John forbiddeth the elect lady to give some men the God speed; "For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds," John ii. 11. The answer is easy. The apostle spake of some notorious apostates and dangerous heretics: now to salute such might induce some familiar conference, which he would not have the good lady admit. So Cyprian, Let there be no commerce with them; but receive them not to thy private house, that will not communicate with thee in God's house. She might be weak and simple, they strong and subtle. For there are some that "creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts," 2 Tim. iii. 6; and then the best way is to shut them out of doors. But is every man a heretic, that we should so blanch him? But they plead further, We know not every passenger to be a brother. The greater their pride, that think themselves too good to brother with them that are baptized into Jesus Christ. Charity would presume all those that are washed in the same sacramental water with ourselves, to be our brothers. Indeed, to declare them truly, they think no man their brother that holds with ceremony, decency, and discipline. But St. Paul tells them, that the true bond of unity is not one ceremony, nor one policy, nor one discipline; but "one Lord, one faith, one baptism," &c. Eph. iv. 4. There is difference between another discipline and another doctrine. But, lastly, they allege, that in these short passages men talk of God, but think not of him, and so take his name in vain. Nay, but is not this rather to take God's name in vain, to avouch so uncouth an error? Why shouldst thou think that men think not of God, "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?" 1 Cor. ii. 11. Yield that there is sometimes less intention in these short blessings than in settled devotions: what then, shall we forbid men to pray, because their minds are often wandering; or children to say grace, because they do not perfectly understand? Certainly it is good to inure the mouth to gracious speeches. Thus Elisha dismissed Naaman, "Go in peace;" though he did not approve his fact, yet he bids him farewell: "Go in peace," 2 Kings v. 19. If thou dost wish this good to an evil man, thou art never the worse, though he be never the better. "First say, Peace be to this house. And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall turn to you again," Luke x. 5, 6. So David prayed and mourned for his enemies; and though he could not be heard for them, he was heard for himself, "My prayer returned into mine own bosom," Psal. xxxv. 13. If the saluted be going about some bad enterprise, yet our blessing hath more likelihood to reclaim the error of our brother, than to proclaim any error of our own. If God be with him, his bad purpose will be diverted from the execution: our prayers shall not further, but hinder, his intended wickedness.

We are further taught here to use good forms in saluting. "Grace and peace," gracious, not grievous; holy, not hollow: blessings, not curses; not an execration instead of a benediction. There be idle, profane, and unrelishing compliments: either through curiosity or enmity, Christian salutations are thought gross. Instead of, God be with you, I kiss your hand, I am your slave, &c.: these are the elegancies of our times. Indeed there is one salutation left us,

and frequent with us, good in itself, if it had the luck to light into good men's mouths; it is, God save you. But as it hath been satirically observed, these days are not altogether uncharitable; for whereas God chargeth men to love others as themselves, many love others better than themselves. You shall have a ruffian salute another with, God save you, sir; but after some strange attestations, swear away himself with, God damn me, sir: so he wishes his friend saved, himself damned. How wretched is it, and unbecoming the tongue of a Christian, when a curse comes instead of a blessing! When a master shall curse his servants; as if God's curse could not come to his house, but through his own lips! But when it comes to this, that parents curse their children, oh fearful! The child kneels for a blessing, the father gives it a curse. If we wish the plague and such noisome diseases to them that live with us, how should we escape it ourselves?

Let us always therefore wish well to our friends, Grace, peace, and salvation; yea, to our very enemies, "Bless them that curse you," Matt. v. 44. For if grace comes, though before they were evil enemies, now they shall be neither evil nor enemies. You see now the sweetness of the apostle's benediction: Origen thinks no whit inferior to the blessings pronounced by the patriarchs; as the blessing of Noah upon Shem and Japheth, Melchisedek's upon Abraham, Isaac's upon Jacob; because they blessed by the same Spirit. For St. Peter might say with St. Paul, "I think also that I have the Spirit of God," 1 Cor. vii. 40. Only it was not usual in the Old Testament to use this blessing of grace; "for the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ," John i. 17.

"Grace and peace;" this is the voice of the ministers of the gospel: so Christ directed them, Peace be to you, Luke x. The prophets began with woe: Woe to a sinful nation, Isa. i. The Lord hath a controversy with the land, Hos. iv. For three transgressions, and for four, &c. Amos i. But the gospel begins. Fear not, for I bring you tidings of great joy that shall be to all people, Luke ii. 10. We have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father, Rom. viii. 15. They come not with bitter violence, like those two hot disciples, whom nothing could content but fire from heaven. But is there not a time to reprove, as well as to comfort? Yes, there is a season when that still voice that came to Elijah, the voice that thou hearest behind thee, Isa. xxx. 21, those low whisperings, can do no good. And then God is content we should derive from his throne thunderings, and lightnings, and louder sounds, Rev. iv. 5. When Israel in Moses's absence had turned beasts, and carved an idolatrous image, Moses did not dance after their pipe, and laugh at their superstitious merriment; but with great zeal reprov'd their folly, and with indignation confounded their idol. "Behold, all the earth sitteth still, and is at rest," Zech. i. 11. The people sit down to eat and drink, and rise up to play, 1 Cor. x. 7. If this be the world's state, we should be false prophets to cry nothing but peace. If your lives proclaim wars against God, we must denounce God's wars against you. We would fain at every sermon say nothing but peace to this audience, but our God says, "There is no peace to the wicked." We would sing with the angels, "Peace on earth, and good will towards men;" but "how shall we sing the Lord's songs in a strange land?" Psal. cxxxvii. 4. We have preached honour, and peace, and salvation, and an incorruptible crown of glory, and were not regarded. What remains then, but to preach fire from heaven, mists, and clouds,

and darkness, and torments for days and nights, and eternal generations of years? We have sung, "With thee, O Lord, is mercy, that thou mayst be feared;" now we change our note, With thee is vengeance, that thou mayst be feared. If the spirit of gentleness can do no good, a rod must come. If the songs of Zion cannot mollify, the thunders of Sinai must terrify. A man is desperately sick; another tells him of great riches, of lordships, and manors, and fair purchases; alas, this is an unreasonable speech; he answers, First restore me to health, then talk to me of wealth. Men's souls are sick of sin, and at death's door: never tell them of heaven and an immortal kingdom, till they be first recovered from the jaws of hell, and delivered out of the snare of the devil: first humble them by the law, then revive them with the gospel. Let us see your humiliation, your repentance; let us hear your groans, we will then give you comforts: we dare not apply the oil of consolation, till we have scoured your festered wounds with the sharp wine of reprehension. When we behold your cheeks blubbered with tears, your hands beating your breasts, your cries resounding at heavens-gates for mercy; then is the time to say, Grace and peace unto you.

"Grace." To omit the divers acceptations of grace, by it is generally meant, the receiving of the sinner into the covenant of mercy, into God's favour by Christ. It is our second birth: our first was, of the lust of the flesh; our second, of water and blood by the Holy Ghost. Thus are we changed into other men. As in the resurrection we shall be the same and not the same; the same in substance, and not in quality: so in our first resurrection by grace, a man is the same and not the same; the same for constitution, not the same for disposition. For before our hearts were proud, now they are made humble; before covetous, now charitable; before set on worldly delights, now on the righteousness of Christ, and the invaluable riches of a good conscience.

Christian virtues are not natural; a man is not more born with grace in his soul, than with apparel on his back. "There is none righteous, no, not one," Rom. iii. 10. If there were, what need was there of a new creation? The philosophers said that nature had the sparks and seeds of virtue in it. But St. Paul says, "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing," Rom. vii. 18; but if there be any good in me, "by the grace of God I am what I am," 1 Cor. xv. 10. The Rhemists quarrel with St. Paul for calling concupiscence a sin, which he proves to be a breach of the last commandment. "For I had not known concupiscence, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet," Rom. vii. 7. They have in their catechisms put out one of the former precepts, and to make up again the decalogue, and number of ten, they have cut the last precept into twain. There, to serve their turns, they make of the last commandment two; here, to serve their turns, they make of it none. They are great patrons of nature in their doctrines, and enemies of grace; yet nature is not so much beholden to them neither: for they take children from mothers, obedience of subjects from kings, care of preservation from a man's self; hurry them into damageable, yea, damnable precipices; and dissolve all natural combinations. Their Jupiter Capitolinus must drink nothing but human blood. Yet they are all for nature, as if they cared not for grace.

There is a grace that works freely, but not effectually; which may be had, and lost; and this is short of the apostle's wish. There is a grace that makes him acceptable to God that hath it; this the apostle wisheth, and it can never be lost. It is the living

fire of the Spirit, that can never be quenched. I will send you a Comforter, that shall abide with you for ever, John xiv. 16. But how did the grace of this Spirit abide in David and Peter, in the midst of those fearful lapses, which might be called in respect of manners, plain apostacies? The grace was shaken in them, not shaken out of them: it was moved, not removed. There was a weakening, not annihilation of grace. This is that grace, which makes our bodies the temples of the Holy Ghost; whereas sin renders them the devil's kitchens.

"Grace:" what need the apostle wish this to them that already had it? for all they that have received the gospel, have also received grace. To this we answer diversly: 1. By grace in these apostolical benedictions, Ambrose only understands the remission of sins; a certain gift of the soul which makes men acceptable to God: but no gift of the soul can make it acceptable to God, but only his favour in Christ. The poets took grace for a delectable beauty, sightliness, or trimness of behaviour. But divinity teacheth us, that it is the favour of God towards us in his Son Jesus; "By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand," Rom. v. 2; that is, the favour of God. It is his "grace wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved." And "we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace," Eph. i. 6, 7. In a word, grace is *beneficence*, like John Baptist, it looks two ways; and is taken so especially, first, for God's favour, whereby we are made just; then for the gifts of the Spirit, whereby we are made holy: that is the mother, these the daughters; that *χαρις*, these *χαρισματά*. Now then here is grace taken in the effects: as Paul, "Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus," Eph. vi. 24. Now all they that love the Lord Jesus, have the mother grace, that is, the favour of God; therefore the apostle wisheth the multiplication and confirmation of the daughters, the blessed effects of this favour. If any man object, What needs man more than the grace of God? I answer, the grace of God that justifies hath neither more nor less, admits no latitude, as being absolute and perfect in itself; for a man cannot be more than justified. But the grace of God that sanctifies, needs continual increasing. The talents intrusted by the Lord to his servants, Matt. xxv. 15, are graces given; the husbanding, trafficking, and thriving with those talents, is the improvement of those graces. I hope there is no man hath so much grace in his opinion, that he will scorn or refuse another's appreciation. The grace of Jesus Christ be with thee.

This is one answer; that grace may be very well wished to them that already have it. But, 2. That distinction which St. Paul himself implies, Rom. vi. betwixt being in grace, and being under grace, doth yet more contentfully satisfy. For, as Augustine said, it is one thing to walk in the law, another thing to walk under the law; so it is one thing to be under grace, and another to be in grace. To live under grace is opposed to the state of the law: "Ye are not under the law, but under grace," Rom. vi. 14. To live in grace is opposed to the state of sin. How shall we, that by grace are dead to sin, live any longer therein? ver. 2. There are four differences:

Some are in grace, but not under grace.

Some are under grace, but not in grace.

Some are neither in grace nor under grace.

Some are both in grace and under grace.

1. Many prophets and holy men of the first times lived in grace, but not under grace. They desired to see the day of Christ, and to hear such things as we have heard, and were not suffered, Luke x. 24;

yet were they saved by faith in the redemption to come, and led their lives in the grace of Christ.

2. Many in our times live under grace, but they live not in grace; hearing the gospel, and receiving the grace of God in vain, 2 Cor. vi. 1. They have *nomini gratia* in their heads, and *forma gratia* in their dissembling professions, but not the truth of grace in their hearts. They are in the light, but the light is not in them. They have accepted the show, but denied the power of godliness. They say they are grace's, but grace is none of theirs.

3. The unbelieving Gentiles were neither in grace nor under grace. Not in it, for they walked after their own lusts. Not under it, for they were "without Christ, and strangers from the covenants of promise," Eph. ii. 12. The sun was not risen to them, they could not see it.

4. They that now believe are both under grace and in it. Under it, as released from the damning power of sin; for there is no damnation to them that are in Christ, Rom. viii. 1. In it, as delivered from the reigning power of sin; that they no more obey it in the lusts thereof. The God of all mercy be blessed, that hath given us this grace; and may our thankful hearts ever acknowledge it. For we "are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God," Eph. ii. 19. Christ now speaks to us by the mouth of his ministers, Come, servant, enter into thy Master's grace: one day he will speak by his own mouth, Enter into thy Master's glory.

"Peace" is also diversly accepted: here I take it specially for the tranquillity of conscience; that which follows righteousness. For the kingdom of heaven consists in "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost," Rom. xiv. 17. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God," Rom. v. 1. In the latitude it may comprehend all those things that conduce to our well-being. It is a sweet nature: *pacem te poscimus omnes*, who loves not peace? If any man hate peace, his neighbourhood, his company, his breath, his very sight is offensive to men. "My soul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace," Psal. cxx. 6. If some particulars be divided, and lose their peace, the general mourns. "For the divisions of Reuben there were great thoughts of heart," Judg. v. 15. Let it be the epitaph of anti-christ, Discord's common incendiary; as of Pope Sixtus,

*Non potuit sacrum vis ullo extinguere Sixtum:
Auditio tandem nomine pacis, obit.*

No war, no contention, could kill Sixtus; but when he heard the name of peace, he swooned and died. But let it be a Simeon's song, Lord, let thy servant depart in peace. There is peace external, peace internal, peace eternal. An outward peace of the world. "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men," Rom. xii. 18. An inward peace of the mind, consisting in the tranquillity of well-ordered affections, and in the conscience of a man's own innocence; *mens sancta, pars sanctita*. An everlasting peace of God; when the Holy Ghost dwelleth with us, and in us, John xiv. 17. This comes not alone, but hath before it, Take up my yoke, and you shall find peace, Matt. xi. 29; and, Take up my cross, and you shall have peace; and, He must be my servant, Luke ii. 29, and follow my word, and then he shall have my peace. And so I come from considering this sweet pair of graces asunder, to join them again together, as I found them; whence derive we three observations.

1. It is not enough to wish grace to the souls of our friends, but also peace; that is, health to their

bodies, and other temporal blessings. Nothing but grace? Yes, doubtless. Paul begins his Second Epistle to the Corinthians with grace and peace, and ends it with a farewell, 2 Cor. xiii. 11. Which demonstration of love extends as far as all manner of prosperity, for heaven or earth, for soul or body. Our Saviour's prayer was not only for grace, "Thy kingdom come," but also for "daily bread." St. John to his well-beloved Gaius, wished above all things that he might prosper, and be in health, as his soul prospered, 3 John 2. He that wisheth not well to his brother's body, never wished well to his soul. The good man's desire is for both, that there may dwell a sound soul in a sound body. And this not in a formal compliment, but an inward heartiness. For there are some that "speak peace to their neighbours, but mischief is in their hearts," Psal. xxviii. 3. And Judas had a "Hail, Master," as well as Gabriel a "Hail, Mary." We pray for you, only do you wish well to yourselves; cross not another's prayers for your own good.

2. The apostle puts grace before peace: so nature told us in the mouth of her great secretary, Aristotle, that justice is the elder sister to peace. Agreement in evil is not love, but conspiracy: such men have only the terror and guilt of conscience for their combination. The Scripture tells us, that "righteousness and peace have kissed each other," Psal. lxxxv. 10. Live righteously, and thou shalt have peace. (August.) "Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it," Psal. xxxiv. 14: nay, thou shalt not need to follow it, for it shall follow thee; peace will come of itself to seek righteousness. On the contrary, where is no love of goodness, there can be no goodness of love. We ask our watchman, as Joram did Jehu, "Is it peace?" 2 Kings ix. 22. He must answer, Alas, what peace, when there is no grace? There is many a Dives dreaming of nothing but ease and peace in his life; "Soul, take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry," Luke xii. 19. There is many a Balaam desiring nothing but peace in his death; but he must live in grace, that would die in peace. It is a vulgarism, Such a man died like a lamb, though perhaps he lived like a wolf. As though consumptions might not spend men's choleric humours, apoplexies stop the passages, which otherwise would not be fuller of pains than reluctations; as though palsies might not take away speech, lethargies dull, and dropsies drown, the vital spirits. There be many causes in nature to make men die quietly, not sanctifiedly. Sisera after a draught of milk was no more sensible of Jacl's hammer, than Holofernes after a tun of wine was of Judith's sword. But true peace will not sup where grace hath not broken her fast. Our peace below is a continual war against Satan; shall be above, an eternal victory over Satan. "Be diligent that ye may be found of God in peace, without spot, and blameless," 2 Pet. iii. 14. You see the way to be found of God in peace; it is to be furnished with grace, to be without spot, and blameless.

3. The apostle wisheth to us the best things, grace and peace. There be two fiends that torment us, sin and a bad conscience. Now grace delivers from sin, and peace doth quiet the conscience. By these two mentioned, may all graces and blessings be synecdochically understood: howsoever, where these are truly, the rest cannot be wanting. Jehoshaphat gave all his children portions and legacies, silver and gold; but he gave the kingdom to Jehoram. God gives the best to the best. Spiritual things from God in Christ are most to be desired of us, and they love us best that wish us these things. It is not pleasure our apostle wished them; pleasures are like

Jairus's minstrels, music in a house of mourning: there is more need of weeping and lamentations for our sins. Not security; for a wicked man's secure and untroubled mind is like the Dead sea, smooth and even at the top, but deep and deadly in the bottom. Not honour and advancement: this builds up many like Babel's tower, that their end might be confusion. Not riches: they are often like Absalom's hair, an ornament to hang himself; or an unruly jade, that knocks out his master's brains, when he hath once cast him out of the saddle. No, nor an outward pomp, and glorious pride of state and ceremonies: thus Rome hath lost the blood of her heart to paint her garments. These outward things may swarm together like those idolaters to the house of Baal, 2 Kings x. But if you ask, as Jehu did there, Is there not a servant of the Lord amongst them? is there not one grace among all that rabble and throng? No, never a grace: then must all the rest perish, as the worshippers of Baal fell by the sword of Jehu. None of these things our apostle wisheth; but that which truly makes happy, and brings with it enough of other comforts, grace and peace. This makes men equal to angels, and the want thereof casts down to devils. That which causeth a man to stand before princes, is noble birth, honourable valour, abundant wealth, oraculous wisdom, eminent place and offices. But that which makes a man stand boldly before the judgment-seat of God, is only grace and peace, the free and eternal favour of the Deity in the merits of Jesus Christ. To conclude this; as we say we have grace, let us lead gracious lives; as we would have peace, let us decline unrighteousness which dissolves it. And then God shall fulfil in your hearts St. Peter's wish; the grace of our Lord shall be with you, and the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall preserve your hearts and minds in Jesus Christ.

II. "Be multiplied unto you." I come from the matter to the measure of his wish, the increase and multiplication of these blessings. For the goods of this world, the best point of arithmetic is division: It is a better thing to give than to receive, said our Lord Jesus. But for heavenly and unpishering graces, the best point is multiplication. As he that for worldly riches doth not divide whilst he lives, shall find an empty quotient when he is dead; so he that for heavenly gifts doth not multiply in life, shall find his *summa totalis* in death, poverty, vanity, vacuity. Here observe two inferences.

1. That there is no plenary perfection in this life, for we must still be in multiplying our graces. Who cares to thrive, that thinks he hath sufficient? (Bern.) The highest saint on earth is but like the ark of the covenant, a cubit and a half high; perfectly imperfect when he begins, imperfectly perfect when he ends. When we have done all that is commanded us, we are not only confined to be, but also charged to call ourselves, unprofitable servants, Luke xvii. 10. There was a seet of puritans that thought themselves so full of grace, that they refused one petition in the Lord's prayer, "Forgive us our trespasses." And Philip Nerius conceited himself so full of God, that he used to say, Depart further from me, Lord, for I am holy enough; perhaps he thought, if God should pour in more wine of grace, it would burst the vessel; and that he was full before. He spake not with Peter's intention, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man;" but out of a plethora of pride, Depart, for I am sufficiently righteous. Nor as Elias, It is enough; take away my life from me, for I am no better than my fathers, 1 Kings xix. 4: but, It is enough, take away thy hand from me, for I am better than all my fathers; cease thy bounty, stay thy

hand from giving, I need no more. As Cain with his *major iniquitas*, confessed his sin greater than God could forgive; so this man with his *minor iniquitas*, esteemed his sin less than God need to consider. But as there is that maketh himself poor, yet hath much riches; so there is that maketh himself rich, yet is very poor. There is not a poorer wretch than Laodicean, that bragged she had need of nothing, Rev. iii. 17. They that think to overcome God with a thousand of their good works, God will come against them with ten thousand of their sins; a huge army; and one thousand sins will beat down ten thousand good works. "We will make thee borders of gold with studs of silver," Cant. i. 11. The world's fashion is to gild silver with gold, and to put the best side outward; but the manner of the saints is to overlay gold with silver, and to be like the king's daughter, most glorious within, Psal. xiv. 13. Moses had a glorious countenance, but he covered it with a veil: these have base and deformed minds, yet boast a shining perfection.

2. That we seek to multiply our grace and peace. He hath nothing, that thinks he hath enough. If Christ have healed thee of the palsy, he chargeth thee not to stand still, but, Take up thy bed, and walk, Matt. ix. 6. We must, like the Israelites, every day gather manna till the sabbath comes; be multiplying graces until our eternal sabbath in heaven. "In my Father's house are many mansions," John xiv. 2; thither must a Christian arrive, before he can sue out his discharge. Every thing now is either a chain or a chariot, a hindrance or a furtherance. O happy soul, that can make his thwarters that cross him, become his porters to carry him to the place of his rest; and can climb up by the ragged rocks of afflictions, to the victorious garrison of heaven. As God said to the man and to the woman when he put them into the world, "Increase and multiply;" so he blest his graces when his Holy Spirit sows them in our hearts. He that rests in the time of labour, shall labour in the time of rest. Let them both grow together, saith God, of the corn and tares, until the harvest, Matt. xiii. 30. Now if the tares grow so fast for the fire, let the good corn grow faster for the barn. The vessels wherinto Christ miraculated wine, were filled up to the brim, John ii. 7. The vessels of God's grace, which by a greater miracle are made to hold a celestial nature, must be full up to the brim. It is said of Stephen, that he was "full of the Holy Ghost," Acts vii. 55. Full? so was Christ only. The school answers, There are three degrees of fulness: 1. An apt or fit and meet fulness; as when a house is well furnished, we say it is full. 2. An equal or measurable fulness, when it is even with the content of the receiver; as a vessel is full to the brim. 3. A cumulate or heaped fulness, when it overflows the continent; such a fulness in Christ, in whom "dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily," Col. ii. 9. This filled his humanity with fulness of grace, the oil of gladness, above all his fellows, and for all his members: "and of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace," John i. 16. Our fulness then is sufficient, his superabundant. Now, this same aptitude may have in this life, but that aptitude is only to be expected in heaven.

Seeing this multiplying to fulness is required, let us not content ourselves with a vacuity, or with little more than will cover the bottom. There are some utterly empty, and void of the Spirit, Jude 19. What emptiness of grace is in many men's hearts! There are some that turn this grace into wantonness; as if God were bound to fill the vessel as fast as they empty it, or to multiply their peace when they spend

it in riot. You shall see every where a fulness of iniquity; a measure so heaped, and pressed, and thrust together, and yet running over, that

*Non habet ulterius quod eorum moribus addat
Posteritis,*

no after-generations can exceed them. Where is a vacuity of grace, must needs be a plenitude of sin. *Inopem me copia fecit*, Too much fulness keeps them empty. They have hands full, eyes full, mouths full, houses full, hearts full. Hands full of blood and bribes, Isa. i.; eyes full of adultery and covetise; mouths full of cursing and bitterness, Rom. iii. 14; houses full of spoils; hearts full of impiety: they multiply sins like the sands, but diminish graces. Two sorts are here reprobable.

1. Temporizers, that never multiply, but stand at a stay; neither ebb nor flow, but just standing water between religion and profaneness; neither hot nor cold, but lukewarm. Heat and cold have their uses, but between both is good for nothing but to trouble the stomach. They go about many things, but bring about nothing. They are all for the time, nothing for the truth. (Optat.) Like a top, that goes always round, but never goes forward unless it be whipped. Like a mill-horse, that runs about in a circle all day, at night you take him out where you put him in. Or like a door, that rides all day on the hinges, and keeps out or lets in visitants, but itself is never the nearer home at night. "Ephraim is a cake not turned," Hos. vii. 8; their cake is dough, it will never serve for bread at God's board. One propounded to Athenians this riddle, How a man and no man, with a stone and no stone, should kill a bird and no bird, sitting on a tree and no tree? He resolved it, That the man was a cunuch, the stone a punice, the bird a bat, the tree a fennel. The temporizer expounds that riddle in himself; for he is a Christian and no Christian, like that man and no man; his courage is no courage, like the punice, which is a stone and no stone; his profession is no profession, like that bat, which is a bird and no bird; (wherefore let him cast away either his wings or his teeth, and so become either a bird or a beast;) his conscience no conscience, like the fennel, a tree and no tree. His whole religion is like adulterated wine, some of the bastards; when the guest asks the drawer what wine it is, he presently replies, Sir, what would you have it to be? his religion is the same you would have it. The mustard hath the least seed, but grows up to the greatest tree; this man you would take to be the greatest tree, but his fruit is so small you can scarce see it. These time-servers love to play upon novelties, as Atalanta on the golden apples, and lose the prize. Among the unclean fowls forbidden, Lev. xi. one is the sea-mew, which we call the gull. Unclean, saith one, because it flies like a fowl, and swims like a fish. Not unlike the Syriphian frog, *Mili terra lacusque*. We have such fowls and unclean gulls, that fly in England with the wings of hypocrisy, and swim in the sea of Rome with the fins of idolatry. These stragglers be far from hitting the mark of salvation. When Hoguenes saw a laughing anchor about to shoot, he ran as fast as he could to the mark. The lookers-on demanded the reason. He answered, I stand here to make sure work, that he may not hit me; for this fowl never means to come near the mark. It will be hard for him that observes the time, to preserve the truth.

2. Revolvers, that do not multiply, but subtract; growing worse and worse; so far from acquiring graces they had not, that they lose them they had. Like Nebuchadnezzar's dreamed image, the head

might be of gold, but the feet were of clay or dirt; they have a muddy ending. In the Roman indications, the first year they paid gold as to the crown; the second year silver, for the soldiers' pay; the third year brass, for armour. So some have been in persecution golden saints, in peace silver professors, at last brazen or leaden worldlings. I have read of certain trees, that on the Monday have been growing in the forest, and before Sunday following under sail on the sea. Near to Calipolis there are by report certain trees, that shoot up apace, and grow in a short time to such height, as a man may from their tops see the city Ilium; and then they presently wither. These men spring fast at first, and seem tall cedars in profession; but when once they come to the sight of the city of God, then they waste away: not like the good tree, Psal. i. that brings forth his fruit in due season; but rather, when the season comes wherein fruit is to be gathered, they elude the Master's expectation. Rome, that was once so famous for the faith, yet apostatized: How is that faithful city become a harlot! It is a fearful saying, It is impossible for them who have been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, &c. if they fall away, to be renewed again by repentance, Heb. vi. 4-6. I suppose he means a moral impossibility: so great a difficulty, that, setting aside the almighty power of the Spirit, they cannot be recovered.

Let us then be like the sun and the moon, without retrogradations. There was an ordinance for the Israelites concerning their entry into God's house, "He that entereth in by the way of the north gate to worship shall go out by the way of the south gate; and he that entereth by the way of the south gate shall go forth by the way of the north gate:" no man shall go out the same way he came in, Ezek. xli. 9. So the wise men were charged to depart into their own country another way, Matt. ii. 12; teaching us a straight course, to go continually forward. It is but a poetical fiction, how Orpheus went to fetch his wife Eurydice from hell: which was granted him on this condition, that he should not look back upon her till he had brought her to heaven. But, *Flevit amens oculos, et protinus illa relapsa est*, he looked back, and lost her. It is a Scriptural truth, that Lot's wife, for looking back to her desired Sodom, was turned into a pillar of salt. Therefore, Remember that woman, saith Christ: that pillar of salt, that it may season thee, saith Augustine. It is observable, that Paul describing the whole armour of God, Eph. vi. and numbering all the pieces, makes no mention of a back curet for the Christian soldier. There is a helmet for the head, a corselet for the breast, a shield for the foreparts; but no guard, no regard of the back. It is a panoply, a complete armour, yet no defence for the back. Teaching us that we must never show our back in God's wars: we must rather die than fly; continuing faithful to the end; not leaving the banner of Christ, till we have gotten the full victory. When Bala fell into the hands of his enemies, his soldiers flying, and crying, What shall we do? he answered with noble resolution, Tell ye the living, that I die fighting; and I will tell the dead, that ye did escape flying. When William the Conqueror landed his army in Sussex, he presently caused his ships to be sunk, that there might remain no hopes of running back again; they must stand to it. Let us all learn to multiply our graces; he that spends of the stock and never increaseth, shall come to beggary. Be not enticed with every vanity, to forsake your first love. In temporal lendings, you think it scarce enough to have the surplussage of ten in the hundred: in spiritual things you think it enough and enough

again to hold your own. You lend one money; if he comes and tenders the principal without interest, you grudge at it: yet God lends you grace, and you come at last, with, Lord, behold thine own. You know the reward, Cast that unprofitable servant into outer darkness, Matt. xxv. 30. No, but let him that is righteous be righteous still; and let him that is holy be more holy, Rev. xxii. 11. Let us go from strength to strength, till we all appear before God in Zion, Psal. lxxxiv. 7.

III. "Through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord." I have done with the matter, and the measure; now come to the manner. *Ἐν ἐμπειρίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ*. Which intends not a mere and simple knowledge, but an acknowledgment, a reflective and doubling knowledge. By *γινώσκω* they understand such a knowledge of God, as was in the philosophers, poets, and naturalists; *vi natura congenita*, acquired by the light of nature. "That which may be known of God," &c. Rom. i. 19. But this *ἐμπειρία* is such a knowledge, as comes by God's word, which makes us wise to salvation. The word is accepted and read three ways. Ordinarily for knowledge. Sometimes for acknowledgment; "Acknowledge ye them that are such," 1 Cor. xvi. 18. Sometimes for knowing again. There is knowledge mental, sacramental, experimental. The first is by the light of nature; the second is by the power of grace; the third by the practice of life, and continual proving the favour of God. Of this knowledge more largely hereafter: here only observe two things.

1. The means of multiplying grace and peace in our hearts is knowledge of God. This is eternal life, to know God, and whom he hath sent, Jesus Christ, John xvii. 3. "They that know thy name will put their trust in thee," Psal. ix. 10. The cause of sin and ruin is want of knowledge: swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing abound, because there is no knowledge of God in the land, Hos. iv. 1, 2. Therefore Christ shall come "in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God," 2 Thess. i. 8. The want of the sun is the cause of darkness, the privation of knowledge the position of all ungodliness. Though it be true, that the knowing offender shall be scourged with sharper rods; (August.) yet many affect an ignorance not necessary, that they may sin with the more security. (Bern.) Will they not know? they shall feel.

2. There is something in grace and knowledge still wanting, that must be multiplied and increased; for we know but in part. Therefore a man should be often perusing and looking over his own evidence, as we review our assurances of worldly possessions, that he may be sure of the whole and every part of it; for it is dangerous to have any flaw or defect in our conveyance of salvation; which albeit it be ever sound on God's part, is not so on ours. The falls of a regenerate man much darken his knowledge: therefore when we have sinned, it is not enough to renew our repentance, but we must rub over and polish our knowledge. Men may know much in their understandings by thinking of it; but we must double this knowledge in our affections and hearts, by feeling it. For there is no knowledge so comfortable, as the experimental certainty of God's favour. Man's heart is like a vessel; the means of conveying knowledge to it is like a pipe; the Spirit of God like the wheel that pours the water into the pipe; the minister is the servant that opens the cock. Now the reason why our knowledge is so small, is either because the cock always runs not, or not in that measure, or rather because our vessels be stopped, or it runs out by leakage, or it runs over by reason of the former fulness, and repletion with the lusts of

this world: man's heart is so full of cracks and flaws, that it cannot hold the water of life.

"And of Jesus our Lord." There is no knowing of God with comfort, but through Jesus Christ. "No man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him," Matt. xi. 27. Otherwise we may know him a just and omnipotent Avenger; in Christ only, "the Father of mercies, and God of all comfort," 2 Cor. i. 3. "There shall no man see me, and live," saith God to Moses, Exod. xxxiii. 20. Woe to that man, who removing Christ, will attempt to comprehend God in his majesty! Without him, he that increaseth knowledge, increaseth his own sorrow, his own torment, Eccles. i. 18. In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, Col. ii. 3. By the Son is the Father known: "If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also," John xiv. 7. Other religions begin at the highest, the Christian at the lowest, God manifested in the flesh. He that will climb to heaven, must ascend by this ladder: begin therefore as Christ began, in the womb of the virgin, at the manger; then get up to the cross, and lastly mount up to the crown. Wouldst thou know God? run first to the cradle, embrace the infant; behold him sucking, growing, roaring, crying, dying; and thou shalt thus arise from knowing God in Christ by faith, to know him in himself by glory.

It is observable, that our apostle often gildeth his Epistle with the name of Jesus, and Christ. Twice in the first verse, once again in the second, four times after in the chapter. He runs upon this note, as David did upon mercy, Psal. cxxxvi. Little difference; for no mercy but through Jesus, and Jesus is all mercy. It is the sweetest music; angelical melody in the ear, evangelical harmony in the heart. St. Paul in his epistles mentions the name of Jesus four hundred and sixty times and upwards. Neither is this repetition only of love, but of necessity; for it is impossible that grace and mercy should be to us, but by Jesus Christ. If thou writest, I like not thy letters, unless I find them beautified with Jesus: if thou conferrest, thy discourse is without relish, if it be without Jesus. (Bern.) I had rather not be at all, than be without Jesus. (Anselm.) A reverend father was so ravished with the sweetness, and transported with the zeal, of this name, that he professed, I had rather be out of heaven with Christ, than in heaven without Christ. But our heart is far too narrow to comprehend this infinitely sweet Saviour, therefore I will end with that end of a divine sonnet: O Christ, I would fain receive thee; but

"Now I want space, now grace, to ease all smart;
Since my heart holds not thee, hold thou my heart."

Now as all grace and peace is from our Lord Jesus Christ, so let us ascribe all honour and glory to our Lord Jesus Christ, for ever and ever. Amen.

VERSE 3.

According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue.

THE connexion shall be forborn a little, and give way to the distribution. The whole verse may be distinguished into two generals:

I. The fountain; wherein observe,

1. The hope of the petitioner. According as he hath.
2. The ability of the giver, Divine power.
3. The liberty of the action, Hath given.
4. The necessity of the receivers, Unto us.
5. The universality of the gift, All things that pertain unto life and godliness.

II. The cistern; wherein observe,

1. The water of life; wherein consider,
 - (1.) Who, God.
 - (2.) What, Hath called.
 - (3.) Whom, Us.
 - (4.) Whither, To glory and virtue.
2. The pipe or bucket to draw and derive all to us, Through the knowledge of him.

The whole being thus let fall into parts, let us proceed orderly to take up the first, and view it. This is, the hope of the petitioner; which with a remarkable dependence knits this verse with the former, and begetteth this doctrine from the coherence: The experience of former mercy works a persuasion of future mercy. The apostle desired the multiplying of their grace and peace; and he grounds it on this hope, because the Lord hath already given them much. He hath begun, therefore he trusts that he will finish. There is no stronger argument of God's infallible readiness to grant our requests, than the experience of his former concessions. So David reasons, "The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine," 1 Sam. xvii. 37. This is the argument *a priori*, the voice of a strong faith, that persuades the conscience God will be gracious to him, because he hath been gracious. The prophet thus often comforted his soul: "Thou, O God, hast enlarged me when I was in distress;" therefore, "have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer," Psal. iv. 1. So, "Thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell;" therefore, "O turn unto me, and have mercy upon me," Psal. lxxxvi. 13, 16. Let the justiciaries deduce arguments from their own present merits, my soul from God's former mercies. Thou, O Lord, madest me good, restorest me when I was evil; therefore have mercy upon me, miserable sinner, and give me thy salvation. Thus Paul grounded his assurance; because the Lord had stood with him, and delivered him out of the lion's mouth; therefore the Lord shall deliver me still from every evil work, and preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom, 2 Tim. iv. 17, 18. Hence was his, "I know whom I have believed." The prophet's distressed soul cried, "Will the Lord cast off for ever? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? Hath God forgotten to be gracious?" Psal. lxxvii. 7-9. No, he recollects himself with the memory of precedent favours; "I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High. I will remember the works of the Lord: surely I will remember thy wonders of old," ver. 10, 14. Man useth to reason thus; I have been good to such a one, therefore he need not exact upon me, and over-burden my kindness. God thus; I have been liberal, therefore I will be liberal. To him shall be given; because the good he hath is but an earnest of God's greater bounty. He takes up man's soul as a poor beggar at his door, strips off her tattered rags, gives her a suit out of his own wardrobe, adorns her with rich jewels; and then, as if all this were too little, loves her still better and better; lastly, marries her to his own Son, and so interests her to the inheritance of glory. You see the foundation of the apostle's prayer, the experience of God's sweet nature, who multiplies his graces. Let not this point part with us till it hath taught us two things; to pray faithfully, and to live thankfully.

1. Let us pray in confidence that God will hear us

because he hath heard us. Come we boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, Heb. iv. 16. God's facility in his wonted grants gives us strong consolation. A noble princess asked a courtier, when he would leave begging : he answered, when she left giving. God never ceaseth to give ; let us never cease to beg. Who can go with more courage to the king, than the man experienced of his goodness ? But if we be so confident, how comes it to pass that we sometimes fail of our suits, and return denied ? I answer, the defect is in ourselves ; God is the same in bounty, but we are not the same in duty. We ask either bad things to a good purpose, or good things to a bad purpose.

Evil things, either evil in themselves, or to the petitioners. In themselves. One calls prayer, a request of convenient things. What a good father will not give, let a good son not ask ; not a serpent instead of a fish, nor a stone for bread, Matt. vii. 9, 10. We must not beg a serpent, lest it should hurt ourselves ; nor a stone, lest we should hurt others. That is not requested in the name of our Saviour, that is requested against the rule of salvation. (August.) The disciples asked many things, and had them ; but when they asked fire from heaven, they had it not, Luke ix. 54. If it be not fit for God to give, it is not fit for us to ask. If our will be not according to our weal, God denieth the form of our requests, and gives us the end ; he withholdeth the worse, and affordeth the better. Paul besought the Lord thrice that the thorn in the flesh might depart from him. God did not hear him in that particular, but heard him in the general ; " My grace is sufficient for thee : for my strength is made perfect in weakness," 2 Cor. xii. 8, 9. He was not quite delivered from the temptation in himself, but he was fortified with the sufficiency of God. The man sick of the burning fever cries to his physician for drink : he pities him, but does not satisfy him ; he gives him proper physic, but not drink. So God, saith Augustine, does not give us what we would have, but what we should have. Perhaps he crosseth us in our affection, but blesseth us in our salvation. The younger brother shall not have all his portion, lest he run to riot ; nor the gallant ever enjoy health, lest he be too proud. Thus a man is afflicted that he may be humbled ; and many sores are on the flesh that fewer sins may be in the soul.

Or when we ask good things, but to an evil purpose. So the envious begs honour, that he may revenge himself on his enemies. Young men ask health, that they may be strong for licentiousness. Others require great places and offices, and to have somewhat to do about the fire, that they may warm their own fingers. As if a man should be ambitious of the pretorship in the city, that so with mulets, amercements, warrants, and bribes, he may maintain his family, and never go to his coffers for money. Some desire learning, that they may be factious ; others riches, not to serve God, preserve the state, nor relieve the poor, but to grow fat with idleness, and domineer over their neighbours. " Ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not," James iv. 2. Ask not ! alas, we beg continually, yet cannot speed : the error is not in the want of asking. Where is it then ? " Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss," ver. 3 : you fail in your manner of requesting, therefore God doth not satisfy your desires. You ask and miss, because you ask amiss. No, we pray as earnestly, and with as devout affection, as others, yet speed not. Look a little further into the apostle's words, and your own hearts : ye ask, " that ye may consume it upon your lusts." Here is the reason, you beg good things to be wanton with them ; silver and gold to give unto Baal ;

corn and wine to riot. Perhaps you may faintly pray against that sin which you would be loth to lose. This is to pray in jest ; as Augustine speaks of his unconverted estate, that he desired God to cool the fire of his concupiscence ; but his tongue besought an extinction, his heart desired a satisfaction ; he had rather have it pleased, than expelled. He prayed indeed, but as if he were afraid lest God should hear him.

2. Seeing that God gives more where he hath given much, let us be thankful ; for how should God bless us with that we have not, if we do not bless him for that we have ? Let me be a little bold to enlarge this point of praising God. There is a six-fold manner of praising him ; mental, monumental, choral, cordial, vocal, and actual.

There is a mental praise, when we bear in our minds the favours of God : " I will remember the works of the Lord," Psal. lxxvii. 11. It was the wretchedness of Israel to forget his wonders : " They soon forgot his works," Psal. cvi. 13. What can he remember, that forgets the mercies of God ?

Monumental, when we erect trophies, pillars, and monuments, to continue the memory of God's deliverances : " This shall be written for the generation to come : and the people which shall be created shall praise the Lord," Psal. cii. 18. Thus Abraham and Jacob reared divers pillars, which were dumb catechisms to the posterities unborn ; answering the charge of God, and the practice of Israel : " Our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children, showing to the generation to come the praises of the Lord," Psal. lxxviii. 3, 4.

Choral, I call that praise which is framed to God upon instruments. " Praise him with the sound of the trumpet : praise him with the psalter and harp : praise him with stringed instruments and organs," Psal. cl. For this cause musical instruments are retained in our churches, that they may elevate our drooping affections to bless God. Let all our music, like David's harp, resound his praises.

Cordial praise, is that which enlivens all the rest, and comes out of a pure heart ; not hypocritically for fashion, but sincerely for devotion. This is that form of thankfulness God requires. If a man look into a pure fountain, he shall see there a reflection of his own image : in the pure heart God beholds an image of himself. If Caesar require his own image in his coin, shall not God expect his image in thy soul ? He loves little, that can tell how much he loves. Let all thy powers of body and soul do their best to bless God ; but let thy heart exceed all, and what they want in expression, let that make up in affection. " Bless the Lord, all that is within me : all that is within me, and all that is without me ; but especially that within me. " Bless the Lord, O my soul," Psal. ciii. 1, 2.

Vocal : let our lips praise him, and let not our tongues lie still. Sing to the Lord a new song ; show forth his loving-kindness in the morning, and his faithfulness every night, Psal. cxii. 2. God's glory will make a good man speak, even when terror itself hath commanded silence. Our Saviour cast out a dumb devil, and when the devil was cast out, the dumb spake, and the people wondered, Luke xi. 14. Many are possessed with this dumb devil ; their mouths open not to sound forth God's praises ; to hear one of them speak in Christ's cause, would make all the people wonder. I know that Satan's children are talkative enough : there are gaping devils ; like Demetrius, that think to carry it away, with " Great is Diana of the Ephesians." For this cause, I think, they were first called Roarers, whom Christ may well conjure, as he did that devil, " Hold thy peace, and come out," Mark i. 25. But Gregory

answers, He that sins horribly, and confesseth not heartily, though he roars much, yet holds his peace. To hear blasphemers wound and tear the sweet and sacred name of Christ would make a dumb man speak. Herodotus writes of Cræsus's son, being born dumb, yet seeing his father endangered in a battle, on a sudden cried out, O spare him, he is the king. So when God's glory is in question, what a numbness, what a dumbness is it, not to say, O spare him, he is the Lord! The tongue that yields not this defence, is tied by Satan, not loosed by God.

Actual, is when our lives praise God. Let your conversation be honest, that they, beholding your good works, may glorify God in the day of visitation, 1 Pet. ii. 12. So the Master had taught the disciple, Matt. v. 16, as the disciple taught us. We, like blind Isaac, cannot see your hearts, therefore we say, "Let me feel thee, my son." If your lives be rugged, like the hands of Esau, we will not trust your voices for the voice of Jacob. Have you righteousness? Seal it, and deliver it as your act and deed. Never say you praise God with your words, when you dispraise him with your works. (August.) "Honour the Lord with thy substance," Prov. iii. 9; this is substantial honour. God gave Samuel to Hannah, Hannah gave Samuel back again to God. Return part of thy riches to him, that gave all to thee. David loved Mephibosheth for Jonathan's sake. Is Jonathan gone? yet we have many Mephibosheths. The Lord disposeth his part of thy substance to his ministers, to his poor members: he increaseth thy part, for shame do not thou diminish his.

"His divine power." We come to the next circumstance, the ability of the Giver. Here is power, yea, divine power; not only great, but good. For mercy and majesty must meet together in the donation of all things that pertain to life and godliness.

It is power: God is almighty. "Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and in all deep places," Psal. cxxxv. 6. But is there nothing that God cannot do? Yes, he cannot lie, he cannot die, he cannot deny himself. He is for potent, not for impotent works. His almightiness consists in doing what he will, not in suffering what he will not. (August.) The doing of some things were an argument of weakness, not of power. For herein is a remonstrance of our might, not that we have ableness to sin, but to withstand sin. Therefore Augustine wisheth, that no man had any strength, but against wickedness. Let every man desire such power, that he may be strong in himself, and (after a strange manner) against himself, for his own good. For a dominion over oneself is greater than the grand seigniorship of Turkey. To be strong to sin is no credit for man; as it is no discredit for God that he cannot sin. Wee to them that are strong to drink! Isa. v. 22. Dost thou pride thyself in this strength? thou shalt howl for that glory. This power is the greatest infirmity. There are that oppress a man and his heritage, because it is in the power of their hand, Micah i. 1, 2. This strength to sin, is to be strong to go to hell. Commonly to beasts of the greatest power, is given the least immunity, and to those of the greatest immunity the least power. The ox hath strength, but tameness; the bee wildness, but weakness. Either they have power to hurt, and not will; or will to hurt, and not power. This is happy for us, but it would be more happy in respect of our sins, if God should take away from us either our will or our ability to do mischief. They say lions do not prey on yielding things. That thou canst do harm, and wilt not, is the praise of thy innocence; that thou wouldst do harm, and canst not, is the praise of God's providence. Saul would

kill David, and could not; David could kill Saul, and would not. The two disciples would command fire from heaven, but could not; Christ could command fire from heaven, but would not. *Posse et nolle nobile.*

It is divine power, as for the mightiness, so for the mercifulness: his goodness doth sweetly temper his greatness. Not only a power, but a good, gracious, divine power. "He abideth faithful, he cannot deny himself," 2 Tim. ii. 13. If we desire worldly wealth, he may deny us, for that is not himself. If we desire preferment, he may deny us, for that is not himself. If we desire revenge, he may deny us, for that is not himself. But if we desire grace, goodness, sanctity, mercy, he will not deny us, for that is himself, and he cannot deny himself. "No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly," Psal. lxxxiv. 11. Against this divine power there is no resistance: he is able to do whatsoever he will, yea, he is able to do more than he will. "Our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased," Psal. cxv. 3. He can do more than ever he was or will be pleased to do. His divine power could have made many worlds, his divine will hath decreed but one. The passengers in mockery had Christ come down from the cross, Matt. xxvii. 40; he was able to descend, and let the work of redemption alone; but he would not lose them to save himself, but rather lose himself to save them. The Father was able to have given him more than twelve legions of angels for his rescue, Matt. xxvi. 53; but he would not, but rather delivered up his Son to his enemies, to save his friends. So John Baptist to the bragging Jews, that pretended the fatherhood of Abraham; "God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham," Matt. iii. 9. His power is without limits, as his will is without injustice. His power teacheth us to fear him; his divine and gracious power, to love him; both together make for our humility and comfort.

The knowledge of God's power will humble the proudest heart. Was he able to make thee of nothing, to bring thee back to worse than nothing; how darrest thou displease him? "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God," Heb. x. 31; yet there is no way to avoid it, but by falling into it. Strive not to run from him by wickedness, but to run to him by repentance. "Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God," 1 Pet. v. 6: it is a mighty hand, humble yourselves under it, lest you be humbled by it. His power is so mighty, that it boots not a man to strive with him, for he was never yet overmastered. The wrath of a king is like messengers of death, and man quakes at his anger that can but kill the body; yet how little do we fear him that can destroy both body and soul in hell! Matt. x. 28. "Do we provoke the Lord to anger? are we stronger than he?" saith the apostle. Do we challenge him that can confound us? We are like to get little by such bargains. "Let him take away his rod from me, and let not his fear terrify me; then would I speak," Job ix. 34, 35. As if Job should say, There is no meddling with him so long as his sword is by him. First, Lord, take away thy weapons, and then let us talk together. It might be said of Jove,

*Si quoties percutit homines, sua fulmina mittit
Jupiter, et, quo tempore inermis erit,*

If for every sin of men he should send down a thunderbolt, either Vulcan's one-eyed Cyclops would be soon weary, or his stock of thunder soon empty.

*Mors ultor galeam quoque perdidit, et res
Non potuit servare suas,*

Mars's sword might be wrung out of his hand, and himself disarmed. But who hath resisted the Lord? Rom. ix. 19; who hath entered the lists with this divine power, and not measured his length on the ground? It is time for the poor child to quake, when he sees his angry father come with the rod. There is no struggling with it; the best way is to yield ourselves, and be silent: "I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because thou didst it," Psal. xxxix. 9. God tells revolted Israel, that in quietness they should be saved, Isa. xxx. 15; not by sight, nor by flight. Aaron was sorry for his two perished sons; but when Moses told him that God would be glorified before all the people, Aaron held his peace, Lev. x. 3. Peter was accused by the apostles for going in to the Gentiles; but when he made his defence, and rehearsed the matter from the beginning, proving that he was directed to that course by a vision, they held their peace, and glorified God, Acts xi. 4, 18.

The knowledge of this divine and giving power may comfort the most dejected heart. It gives us many consolations: 1. Concerning the salvation of others and ourselves: how desperate soever we judge their estates, by reason of their continual habit of sinning, yet this divine power is able to convert them. No man can seem to be further lost than the Jews, who are cut off from Christ through infidelity, upon whom the wrath of God is come to the uttermost, and a malice of sixteen hundred years burning is not wasted in them; yet, saith Paul, even they may be grafted into the olive again, if they abide not still in unbelief; and his reason is, because "God is able to graft them in again," Rom. xi. 23. But, alas, I have been frozen many years in the dregs of worldly lusts, and I do not find my heart yet thawed. I know this is a fearful case for a man to lie so long under the tyranny of the devil; yet despair not, apply the means of thy deliverance, strive to extricate and unwind thy soul from this maze of destruction, break thy heart with compunction for thy iniquities: this divine power is able to implant thee to the true Vine, and make thee a member of Jesus Christ. Thou shalt feel the "working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in heaven," Eph. i. 19, 20. What was the power which he wrought in Christ? When malice had spent itself upon him on the cross, and insulting death began to triumph over him in the grave, even then this mighty power raised him up. We are as dead in sin naturally, as any man in the grave corporally; can neither move hand nor foot: there was a power that raised him, there is a power that can revive us. All our care must be to find in ourselves the "power of his resurrection," Phil. iii. 10. 2. This comforts us in the midst of all afflictions: we are weak in ourselves, unable to stand under the lightest cross; but there is a divine power that strengthens us. Though it doth not nullify our sorrows, yet it doth fortify our patience; we are "strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness," Col. i. 11. 3. This comforts us in prayer. There is no speaking prayer but what is made in faith, and it is no easy matter to pray in faith: now the foundation of our faith is this divine power of Christ. Let us speak confidently with the leper, "Lord, if thou wilt thou canst make me clean," Matt. viii. 2. After the wisdom of Heaven had abridged all our necessities into six petitions, he binds up our faith with a reason, and bids us wait confidently for the blessings craved heartily; "for" (or because) "thine is the kingdom, the power, and" to thee be "the glory for

ever." 4. This comforts us against all oppositions, even those principalities that wrestle against us; the assurance of this divine power. Let not him fear a strong enemy against him, that hath a stronger Friend with him. If God be on our side, who can be against us? Let their force and malice strive which shall be greater, we shall overcome them all "by the blood of the Lamb," Rev. xii. 11. "Ye are of God, and have overcome them." Whom? All the adversaries of your faith and manners. How? "Because greater is he that is in you," that is, Jesus Christ by his divine power, "than he that is in the world," 1 John iv. 4, that is, the malignant spirit of temptation. Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, a place full of horror and amazement, yet will I not fear. Why so? Because thou, O Lord, art with me; thy rod and thy staff do comfort me, Psal. xxiii. 4. Lastly, let this hearten us to cheerful liberality; because whatsoever we lack or lose, there is a divine power able to require it. Thus Paul encourageth the Corinthians' bounty; because God is able to make all grace abound toward them, that they having all-sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work, 2 Cor. ix. 8.

"Hath given." I come from the faculty of the Agent to the liberty of the action: he gives. He doth not set, nor let, nor sell, nor lend, but give. The covetous landlord sets his tenements, the griping usurer lets his money, the wasting prodigal sells his estate, the charitable neighbour lends his goods; but the most liberal God gives. Thus doth God, Satan, and man, dispose their things. God gives, Satan sells, and man restores. God and Satan have two several warehouses. We come to the devil's warehouse, look on his wares, like them well; they have a fair gloss. The gloss of drunkenness is good fellowship; the gloss of adultery is good affection; the gloss of covetousness is good husbandry; the gloss of murder is good courage; the gloss of sedition is good reformation; the gloss of treason is good religion. To make good this gloss, his shop hath two false lights; man's law, and man's example. First, human laws; so we shall never be able to prove sin to be sin, unless we have an act of parliament for it. Next, human examples; and by that reason we shall never prove sin to be sin, till all great men become good men, and that will not be this two days. Well, men thus liking the wares, they come to the price: that is everlasting torment; dear, very dear! The devil is no such frank chapman, to sell his commodities for nothing. No; did he not offer Christ kingdoms upon free gift? No, they had a price set on them; it must be a crouch of his knee, he must worship the devil for it, Matt. iv. 9. He makes show of Robin Hood's pennyworths, and may forbear his debtors until death; but then lays a heavy execution on them, and condemns them to an everlasting prison. *Munera magna quidem præbet, sed præbet in hamo.* He puts forth large baits, but there be damnable hooks hid in them. A worldling is beset with exigents, he complains his wants. Satan promiseth ready help; Judas shall have money in his purse, Gehazi new suits to his back, Nero a crown on his head; but thus he possesseth their wretched hearts, from whence he is hardly ever untainted.

In God's warehouse we find Wisdom at the door, crying for customers: Come ye to the waters, come, buy wine and milk without money, Isa. lv. 1; yea, bread and fatness, ver. 2. Let us see the wares. First is water. Water! alas, a poor and plentiful commodity: cheap enough: every channel affords it. No; for first, literally, water was of great use in Palestine, a dry country. Poor Hagar with her little

boy were almost lost with thirst. How did her heart leap when "God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water!" Gen. xxi. 19. Isaac's herd-men strove with the herd-men of Gerar about waters; therefore he called the name of the well Esek, that is, Contention. Israel murmured for water, and were plagued for it. Water hath a manifold use; it serves for drink, for medicine, for washing, for purging, for boiling, for quenching, for fructifying. Water was held by some the beginning of all other things; *aquæ, quasi a quæ omnia*. It was esteemed a principal preserver of life, therefore called living, Gen. xxvi. 19. Isaac's servants found a well of living water; it is translated, *springing*, but the original gives it, *living water*. But it must be here understood in a spiritual sense: so the water that God gives is grace. "With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation," Isa. xii. 3. "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty" (which he expounds of grace): "I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed," Isa. xlv. 3. "Who-soever is athirst, let him take the water of life freely," Rev. xxii. 17. Next is wine. Is this so good? Wine is the nourishment of lust; the Manichees called it, the gall of the prince of darkness. No; wine is good, hath manifold benefits; it helps the stomach, nourisheth the body, whets the wit, cherisheth the heart, and cheers the whole man. Christ's first miracle in Galilee mentioned, was turning water into wine; and the last thing he used in the sacrament was wine. It is said to cheer God and man, Judg. ix. 13. Thirdly, bread: this is called the strength of man's life. It was a great curse God threatened to Israel, "I will break their staff of bread." Lastly, milk. The Tartarians were said to live with milk; Canaan is praised to flow with milk; therefore, "Desire the sincere milk of the word," 1 Pet. ii. 2. Bread necessary for life, oil for ornament, water for use, milk for nourishment, wine for delight. These are good wares. The water of regeneration, the wine of compunction, the bread of life, the oil of gladness, the milk of the gospel; who would desire better purchase? We like them well; what is the price? Nothing; a very easy reckoning. The Lord gives, and that better things for nothing than Satan will sell us for our souls. Those thrifty men, that try all shops for the cheapest pennyworths, why refuse they those rich blessings which God gives for nothing, and pay such a hard price for vanity and vexation? Men might pay nothing for the best of things; they do pay the best of things for nothing. In vain doth foolish man exchange good for evil, when he may exchange evil for good.

You perceive how God gives, Satan sells; now see how man restores; for that bounteous hand which bestows much on us, requires some restitution of us. Man should not sell, as Satan; he cannot give, as God; but he ought to restore, that is his part: this he may do, this he must do. To whom? To God for his own sake, to man for God's sake. To God; what is that? Thanks. "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits?" Psal. cxvi. 12. I will magnify and bless his name. That is, not to make his name great, but to declare it great. "Sing forth the honour of his name: make his praise glorious," Psal. lxxvi. 2. How can man make his praise glorious? By singing forth the honour of his name. This is a plain restitution, yet goes under the name of a contribution. So willing is God to accept man's duty, that he takes it as his bounty. The giver is more blessed than the receiver: in all other things we are the receivers, and he is the giver; only in thankfulness we are the givers, and he is the receiver. Respiration and expiration are in their vicissitudes alike; we can draw in air no

longer than we send it out. If we return no grace, we receive no grace.

To man: and this in matters either of equity or charity. Of equity: "If I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him four-fold," Luke xix. 8. This necessity Nehemiah imposed on Israel: first, by entreaty; "I pray you, let us leave off this usury." Next, by command, Restore to them their lands and vineyards, and the monies of your exactions. Then by an oath; he took an oath of them to perform this. Lastly, by a sacramental curse to the refusers, shaking the lap of his garment; "So God shake out every man from his house, that performeth not this promise, even thus be he shaken out, and emptied. And all the congregation said, Amen," Neh. v. 10-13. The very barbarians abhor the neglect of restitution. A great lady, being a widow, called to her an English merchant, trafficking in those parts, with whom she knew her husband had some commerce, and asked him if there were nothing owing to him from her deceased lord. He, after her much importunity, acknowledged what, and showed the particulars. She tendered him satisfaction, yea, (and after his many modest refusals, as being greatly benefited by the dead barbarian,) she forced him to take of her hand the uttermost penny; saying thus, I would not have my husband's soul go to seek your soul in hell, to pay his debts. Here was a fire in a dark vault, great zeal in blind ignorance; they saw by the candle-light of nature, what St. Augustine delivers for doctrinal truth. Where is no restitution of things unjustly gotten, there sins shall never be forgiven. Of charity: for even this is but a restitution. Give me, saith God, of that I have given thee: I ask not for thine, but for mine own. Give and restore; *Petimusque damusque vicissim*. If we do not give alms according to our power, God will sue us of an action of destiny. Why did you not give things that were mine by right, yours only by use and dispensation; whereof you were not proprietaries and lords, but accountants stewards? Matt. xxv. Reprobates will part with many things for a tormenting devil, and shall we restore nothing for our saving God? (Cyrian.) Most men think when they give, that God and man is beholden to them. Not so; they do not give of their own, but restore some of that God hath given them. For restoring they shall have recompence, for detaining vengeance.

I am fallen upon a point of giving; therefore, methinks, I should not be niggardly in it. God give me a tongue to declare it, and give us all hearts to practise it. Two things it readily teacheth us.

1. How to judge of all we have; as the Lord's gifts, not our own merits. It is a wretched thing, to use those things that are added to us, as if they had been bred in us. "What hast thou, that thou didst not receive? If thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" 1 Cor. iv. 7. God, saith Bernard, is the Author of merit; for he both applyeth the will to the work, and disposeth the work to the will. Thou dost good works; so much as is good in them is not thine, but God's. Man, for these things, is rather a debtor to God, than God to man. Thou canst not so much as give God thanks, unless God first give thee the grace of thankfulness. Thou canst not be patient under his hand, except his hand give thee patience. Why do we boast then, seeing that

Quæ non fecimus ipsi,

Ita ea nostra voco,

We cannot call those deeds ours which we have not done ourselves? "I laboured more abundantly than

they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me," 1 Cor. xv. 10. Still if we do good, we are beholden to God for it, not God to us.

2. To follow God's example, in being evermore giving good things. Beneficence is a royal office. It is a poor degree of comfort wherein many bless themselves, to do no ill; for goodness consists in the effect, not in the defect; nor is virtue glorious in being innocent from harm, but in being beneficial for good. I wonder what hope the oppressor hath to be saved; seeing he doth not imitate God in giving, but the devil in extorting. There are that give something to the poor, that they may take away more: this is not a charitable giving, but a subtle hunting; it is to put a good turn to usury. But give; this is God's precept, and must be thy precedent. Yea, though thou have little, give of that little. God esteems the little gift of a poor righteous man above the great alms of a wicked rich man. And that for two reasons. First, because it is of that which is justly gotten: so Zaccheus, Half my goods I give to the poor, and restore to them I have wronged four-fold, Luke xix. 8. Observe his words; I restore other men's goods, but I give mine own. Secondly, because he gives of a little; as the poor widow did her two mites, even all her substance. When the monks complained of want, and that their revenues fell too short for their maintenance, the abbot replied, that two companions came once together to sojourn in their monastery: they were entertained: their names were *Date*, and *Dabitur*; Give, and It shall be given you. Whilst these two lived amongst you, you all thrived: now you have thrust out *Date*, Give; and *Dabitur*, It shall be given, will not stay behind.

"Unto us." I come from the bounty of the Giver, to the need of the receivers: to us, that were,

1. Worth nothing.

2. Worthy of nothing.

1. To us, that had nothing; miserable beggars. And indeed what should be the object of mercy, but misery? Present thyself, O poor soul! a miserable creature before a merciful Creator. Say not with Laodicea, Rev. iii. 17, "I have need of nothing," but, I have nothing. God doth not only forgive us, because we have nothing to pay, Matt. xviii. 25; but he gives us, because we have nothing to live on. There are three sorts of poor and miserable men; some sing and are miserable, some cry and are miserable, some curse and are miserable. As the Italian says, Thus go a begging; the Germans singing, the Frenchmen weeping, the Spaniards cursing. Some are poor in the world, yet sing care away. When Augustus heard that a gentleman in Rome, concealing his broken estate, died so far in debt, he sent to buy the pillow whereon he slept. They do not take care how to come out of debt, but how to come into debt. Thus poor are many: yet they sing in taverns, and dance in theatres, though wretched beggars in heavenly graces. As it is in this world for temporal things, so for the world to come in spiritual things; poor men sing, and rich men cry. Who is so melancholy as the rich worldling? And who sings so merry a note, as he that cannot change a groat? So they that have store of grace, mourn for want of it; and they that indeed want it, chant their abundance. Others are poor and cry: so did Esau, because he could not recover the "blessing, though he sought it carefully with tears," Heb. xii. 17. These mad dogs bite the stone, without regard to him that threw it. Sorrow, like a needle, runs through their hearts, but hath no thread of faith in it, to sow them to Jesus Christ. They are worse in the state of this world, yet not

better in the state of grace. If God touch a Pharaoh, he will roar; you shall have him howl to his ending, not to his mending. The cloud of a corrupt heart, when it is squeezed and crushed with adversity, will haply pour down some drops; but to shed repentant tears in the midst of prosperity, this is like rain in sunshine. He that mourns for the cause of his punishment, shall mourn but a while: he that mourns only for the punishment, and not for the cause, shall mourn for ever. Lastly, others curse and are miserable, as Job's wife counselled him, "Curse God, and die." This is a desperate poverty, when men defy him that should make them rich. They answer God, as Daniel did Belshazzar, Keep thy reward to thyself, and give thy gifts to another, Dan. v. 17. They have a long festered ulcer; the Physician offers to cure it: but they madly thrust their nails into it; no, it shall not be healed. Such was our estate by nature; some were poor and insensible, others sensible but disconsolate, others sensible and desperate. We were all poor beggars, and had nothing, therefore had need of a giver.

2. To us, that deserved nothing. It is no wonder that God loved the angels, for they obey him; that he loved the irrational and insensible creatures, for they do not contradict him; but that he should be good to us, neither receiving, nor conceiving, nor desiring grace; that had not only a rebellion of will, but a will of rebellion; this was the wonder. This was not a love to us because we first loved him; but a love to us though we hated him. He loved us, because he loved us, in our creation, when we could not, in our redemption, when we would not, love him.

"All things that pertain unto life and godliness." I come from the necessity of the receivers, to the universality of the gift. "All things that," &c. This is that extent and latitude of his donation; who gives "to all life, and breath, and all things," Acts xvii. 25. No silver in Benjamin's sack, till Joseph put it in: no good in man, till God infuse it. Worldlings ascribe things to the goodness of their skill, or greatness of their pains. "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built by the might of my power?" Dan. iv. 30. They sacrifice to their nets, Hab. i. 16. But indeed every good and perfect gift comes from above, even from the Father of lights, Jam. i. 17. It is in vain that you rise up early, and go to bed late: for so he giveth his beloved sleep, Psal. cxxxvii.

2. All that pertain

"Unto life." Where we may either by life understand our natural life, together with all things that may preserve it. He put a soul to our flesh, gave birth to the child, nourishment after birth; bread when we were hungry, drink when we were thirsty, &c. To the wise man his wisdom, to the strong man his might, to the wealthy man his riches, Jer. ix. 23: wisdom, the good of the mind; strength, the good of the body; riches, the goods of fortune. He gives all, let us give him praise for all. He "giveth us richly all things to enjoy," 1 Tim. vi. 17. This is a large field to survey, let your meditations supply the defect of my speech. Who cannot say, "Thou art he that took me out of the womb: thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breasts?" Psal. xxii. 9. And because life is not only to live, but to live in health; therefore Job calls God, the Preserver of men. Bless him in all, for all, that gives all; he gives us all things that pertain to life, and reserves only this quit-rent. But by life here I rather understand our spiritual life; whereby we live to him, and in him, and whereby he lives in us.

To "godliness;" whatsoever conduceth to grace and glory. By his grace we come to godliness, and

by godliness to life. He provides not only temporally for us, that we may live here; but eternally, that we may live for ever. The things here-to belong are the graces and gifts of the Spirit. Some think that these principal graces are but seven: because it is said, "There were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God," Rev. iv. 5: prefigured by the stone with seven eyes, Zech. iii. 9; by the seven lamps of one candlestick, Zech. iv. 2; by the seven horns of one lamp, which are the seven Spirits of God, Rev. iv. 5. Some have numbered and deduced them from Isa. xi. 12: the spirit of wisdom, of understanding, of counsel, of might, of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord. But to make up the number, they put in the spirit of piety; for it is not there expressed; there are but six according to our account: we may say of them, as of the seven stars, *Quos septem dicunt, sex tamen esse solent*, Men say there are seven, but they are wont to be but six. But it is certain, this seven-fold number is put for an infinite number, all graces that belong to life and godliness. "No good thing will be withhold from them that walk uprightly," Psal. lxxxiv. 11. This is an immense fountain: the Lord fill all the buckets of our hearts at this spring, and give us capable souls, as he hath a liberal hand.

But now is there such a receipt, and must there not be an account? Yes, "To whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required," Luke xii. 48. If there be a receipt, there must follow a return: and that both in portion, the same; and in proportion, something answerable to it. If the thing given be much, the thing required is not little; and this shall be exacted in obedience, or extorted in vengeance. "After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them," Matt. xxv. 19; though it be long, yet at last to a reckoning. Whether the talent be hid in idleness, or wasted in riot, it shall be spoken for: "Give account of thy stewardship, for thou must be no longer steward." God is not like Pharaoh and his task-masters, that allow no straw, yet exact the full tale of bricks. He is unjustly taxed, to reap where he hath not sown, and to gather where he hath not strewed, Matt. xxv. 24. No, but if he hath planted a vineyard, and dressed it with careful cost, he looks for grapes. If God fill Joshua's heart with his Spirit, he will fill his hands with business. If St. Paul have abundant grace, he must have abundant labours. Every gift is obligatory; and whatsoever benefits us, *ipso facto* binds us. Now what shall we answer for the interest, that have misspent the principal? Have we received all, and shall we account for nothing? Yes, the books shall be opened, and there are set down all the particulars of our receipts and expenses. There is, Item, received strength, and laid out oppression. Item, received riches, and laid out covetousness. Item, received health, and laid out riot and drunkenness. Item, received garments, laid out pride. Item, received speech, laid out swearing and lying. Item, received sight, laid out lusting; or perhaps your sayings out are more. Item, so many score pounds laid out in malice and suits at law; so many hundreds in lusts and vanities; so many thousands in building great houses. Item, to the poor in our will to be paid at our death, forty shillings; to the preacher for a funeral oration to commend us, half a sovereign. Will this bill go current when God comes to cast it up? No, if these accounts be not mended in this life, we shall never have our *quietus* in the life to come. Let us then be good in our office, and make our reckonings even, that it may be said to every one of us, "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter

thou into the joy of thy Lord," Matt. xxv. 23. Thus he that gives us all things that belong to temporal life and godliness on earth, will also give us all things that belong to eternal life and glory in heaven.

"Through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue." We have considered the fountain, let us come now to the conduit, the means or meritorious cause, through which all these precious gifts are bestowed on us. This ever-flowing and over-flowing conduit is Christ, in whom dwells all fulness, Col. i. 19. Now for us, the more capacious a vessel of faith we bring, the greater measure of grace we shall receive. In this conduit observe two generals: the water of life, which is our effectual calling to glory and virtue; and the pipe or bucket to draw and derive it to us, the knowledge of Christ. In the former consider four circumstances: the Mover, the motion, the moved, and the term; who, what, whom, and whither.

1. Who hath called us. Christ; he only can call home sinners. I came to call sinners to repentance: I, not man, nor angels, Matt. ix. 13; Luke xix. 10. God only can of stones raise up children to Abraham. He that could turn stones into bread, can turn a stony heart into that mercy to give bread. He that could fetch water from a rock, can draw tears from our flinty hearts. Man may imprint a conceit, God only can work a consent. The preacher may unfold the mysteries of the gospel, and effect a knowledge in the brain; but he hath a pulpit in heaven, that preacheth to the conscience. To resign ourselves to the truth, here is the finger of God. You will say, It is easy to think. No, we cannot think a good thought of ourselves. Thought is free. No, the thought is God's bond-servant. It is easy to believe. No, for faith is the fair gift of God, Phil. i. 29. Yet, it is easy to will. No, it is he that worketh in us, both to will and to do, at his good pleasure, Phil. ii. 13. Man's will is a fugitive Onesimus; God must call home that runaway, subdue that rebel. Yet when we have begun, it is easy to continue. No, he that begun a good work in us, will perform it, Phil. i. 6. Jesus is the founder and the finisher of our faith, Heb. xii. 2. But we can suffer for him at our pleasure. No, it is given to us to suffer for his sake, Phil. i. 29. "Without me ye can do nothing," John xv. 5; *not little, but nothing*. But in him and through him all things: "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me," Phil. iv. 13. In ourselves we are weak captives; in him more than conquerors, Rom. viii. 37. "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land," Isa. i. 19. Yet it is neither of the willer, nor of the runner, but of God that shows mercy, Rom. ix. 16. "With my whole heart have I sought thee." Did he bend his own heart to it? No, but prays, "O let me not wander from thy commandments," Psal. cxix. 10. "I will run the way of thy commandments;" but when? "when thou shalt enlarge my heart," ver. 32. "My son, keep thy heart;" yet it is the peace of God that keeps the heart in Christ Jesus, Phil. iv. 7. God's imperative infers no potential, but an optative: Lord, give what thou biddest, and bid what thou wilt. The law chargeth obedience, but faith obtains forgiveness. "Turn us, good Lord; so shall we be turned." None comes to the Son, unless the Father draw him; and if the Father hath once given us into his hands, no devils in hell shall ever be able to pluck us out.

2. What is the action. "Hath called." There was a time when Christ came personally to call; he "went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard," Matt. xx. 1. He went out of himself, that he might come into thee, that he might

convert thee into himself. (Pontan.) He went out from his majesty that is invisible, to his mercy that is manifested in his works. Now he calleth at divers times, in divers places, and after divers manners.

At divers times. All hours of the day he is calling; at the first hour, the third, the sixth, the ninth, the eleventh, Matt. xx. In all ages of the world. Before the law he called Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham. Under the law, Moses, David, Isaiah, &c. Under the gospel, apostles, martyrs, &c. And now us, "upon whom the ends of the world are come," 1 Cor. x. 11. This is the eleventh hour at the least, 1 John ii. 18. He called some at the first hour; Samucl. John Baptist, sanctifying them from the womb. Others in the third hour, their youth; as young Daniel, St. John the evangelist. That little disciple Christ greatly loved. (Hieron.) Others in the sixth hour; as Peter and Andrew. Others in the eleventh; as Gamaliel, Joseph of Arimathea. Some not only at the last hour, but the last minute, as that one malefactor upon the cross: one, so that no man should despair; but one, so that no man should presume. Thus all the day long he stretcheth forth his hand to call us, Rom. x. 21. Woe unto us, if none of these hours can reclaim us! for then the night follows, wherein is no more calling to grace, but to judgment.

In divers places; some from their ships, others from their shops; Peter and Andrew fishing on the sea, Matthew fishing on the land. It is a great matter to convert a mariner forth of his ship, but a greater wonder to convert a publican forth of his shop. Some from the market, Matt. xx. 3; some from the hedges, Luke xiv. 23. Paul in his fury, "breathing out threatenings and slaughter," Acts ix. 1. Henry VIII. in his discontent: the pope denies his just divorce, hereon he justly denies the pope. Let none despair; he can call gallants at the court, ruffians at the tavern, covetous merchants at their warehouses; yea, he can call usurers at their banks. But indeed these last he seldom does call; those baptized Jews seldom repent. You have seen drunkards, thieves, and adulterers weep at a sermon; you never saw a usurer shed a tear.

After divers manners. First, by the preaching of the word; and herein he useth two bells to ring us to church, the treble of mercy, and the tenor of judgment. "Out of the throne proceeded lightnings, and thunderings, and voices," Rev. iv. 5. Lightnings, that illuminate the dark air of the world; thunderings, the menaces against corruption and vices; lastly, the sweet voices of comfort that preacheth liberty to captives, and proclaims "the acceptable year of the Lord," Isa. lxi. 2. One said, Our hearts are all of sin, but our ears are all of mercy: he that will please us with a song, must set it to the tune of the gospel; we can hear nothing but *Pax vobis*, and see nothing but *Ecce Agnus*; as if the law were of no further use, like an old almanac out of date. But we know that Moses and Christ met upon the mount, Matt. xvii.; not the law alone, nor the gospel alone, but Moses and Christ, the law and the gospel, are conjoined. Next he calls by his judgments; thus he heats our iron hearts in the furnace of afflictions; that *documenta* might be *documenta*, men's sufferings their instructions. That which makes the body smart, makes the soul wise. Doth God afflict us? he calls us to repentance; for "tribulation worketh patience," Rom. v. 3. Whilst we are thus exercised, either with sorrows inflicted, or with hopes delayed, God calls us home to himself. He often conveys holiness through the wounds of afflictions: the persecuted church flies like a dove to the clefts of the rock, Cant. ii. 14; nestles herself in the

wounds of Jesus Christ. Trouble is a messenger that speaks thus to us, Make your peace with God. Thou complainest that thou art afflicted on every side, groanest under thy burden, after many changed sides criest out of unremedied pain; alas, thou repentest not. Trouble came on this message, to teach thee repentance: give the messenger his errand, and he will be gone. Lastly, by mercies. Thus we have him frequently calling; he sows mercy upon us with a liberal hand. Now the patience and long-suffering of God lead us to repentance, Rom. ii. 4. God spares the sinner, but let not the sinner spare his sin. We have hard hearts, if the blood of the Lamb cannot soften them; stony bowels, if so many mercies cannot melt us. What was Pharaoh's greatest plague? Not the murrain on his beasts, nor the hail on his fruits, nor the blood in his waters, nor the blains on his flesh, nor the first-born slain in his families; but a hard heart. They write of a northern fountain, that turns all things it receives into stones; and a choleric stomach converts all meats into choler; so a hard heart turns even God's softest mercies into hardness.

Thus God calls. For Christ's sake let us go. It is "the voice of my Beloved," Cant. ii. 8; let us run to him. In the last and great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, &c. John vii. 37: stood up, that he might be seen; cried, that he might be heard. He is audible in his word, visible in his sacraments; in both he calls. "I stand at the door, and knock," Rev. iii. 20: he that is our door of entrance, knocks at our door for entrance. It is fit we should knock at his door, not he at ours. But if he does knock, let him not stand without, till his head be filled with dew, and his locks with the drops of the night, Cant. v. 2. He is the way in the truth, and the truth in the way, and in both the life. He calls, yet complains, "Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life," John v. 40. Go we then to him. Come to him and live, depart from him and perish. (August.) Let not Christ call in vain, nor his ministers say, We have laboured in vain, and spent our strength for nought, Isa. xlix. 4. Faith and repentance are two short lessons, yet Israel was forty years before they could learn them. If God call upon us, and men will not answer, they shall call upon him when he will not answer, Prov. i. 28. God shall say to the reprobates, Be it to you according to your deserts. To sin, is to depart from God; therefore, "Depart" from me: you loved cursing, therefore, depart, "ye cursed;" the fire of anger, of malice, of lust, hath burned in your hearts, therefore, depart "into fire:" you would have sinned everlastingly, therefore, depart into "everlasting fire:" you have hearkened to the devil's temptations, you must feel the devil's torments; into fire "prepared for the devil and his angels," Matt. xxv. 41. Abuse not his calling, lest he swear in his wrath that thou shalt never enter into his rest, Heb. iii. 11. He sends for us friendly, freely, frequently; let us make no excuses, lest he vow that none of those bidden guests shall taste of his supper, Luke xiv. 24. Many cry, O Lord, why hast thou forsaken me? to whom he replies, O man, why hast thou forsaken me? They say to the Almighty, "Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways," Job xxi. 14; therefore God shall say to them, "Depart from me, ye that work iniquity," Matt. vii. 23. They that forget God calling on him in health, shall be rejected calling on him in sickness. The groaning reprobate shall say, Come, Lord, to comfort; but God to him, Come, sinner, to judgment. Then, as Æneas for his lost wife, *Creusa, Nec quicquam ingeminans iterumque iterumque vocabis*; thou doubling thy cries, shalt call

for him that will not hear. But to the faithful and obedient shall be a sweet voice: "Come," for you desired to come: "ye blessed;" you loved blessing, and it shall be unto you; you have served, you shall reign: "inherit the kingdom prepared for you," Matt. xxv. 34.

3. Whom hath he called? "Us:" us miserable sinners; that were deaf, and could not hear him; lame, and could not meet him; blind, and could not see him; dead, and could not answer him. Us; far enough off, without God, without hope in the world. It was not sufficient, that he paid himself our debt in the blood of his own Son, and made a glorious treasury of his inestimable merits; but he must also call us to the participation: otherwise Christ might have been rich enough in merits, and God in mercies, and yet we still beggars.

4. To what? "To glory and virtue." Some read, *by* glory and virtue; others, *to* glory and virtue. The sense is good and receivable either way: a word or two of them both.

If we take it, *by* glory and virtue, the sum is this, Christ's calling is so effectual, when he joins with the word of his grace the grace of his word, that it shall work without control, it shall take virtual and glorious effects. God had a purpose to call the Gentiles; there were bars against it. "Go not into the way of the Gentiles," Matt. x. 5. "It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs," Matt. xv. 26. Yet when those children put from them the gospel, and judged themselves unworthy of everlasting life, it came to the Gentiles, Acts xiii. 46; God did effect it by glory and virtue. God promised that all Israel shall be saved, Rom. xi. 26. There were obstacles enough against it; the blood of Christ on their heads, they revile and curse him in their synagogues, they are wanderers on the face of the earth; yet they shall be brought to the fold, by glory and virtue. So it was with us. God had purposed the gospel to England, sealed up many souls there to eternal redemption. Were there no impediments? Yes; Queen Mary made a stop, put out the light, smote the shepherds, scattered the sheep, burned the professors, leagued with the Spaniard, yielded all to the pope: all is now bunged up in ignorance, the devil is jocund, men's perdition just as sure as he would wish it, saving only he must stay the time of their coming to hell. Yet shall there be no elusion of God's will; even then the patroness of superstition died; Queen Elizabeth of blessed memory was advanced into the throne; all the clouds of error were dispersed, God now lifts his church out of her swoon, dilates his kingdom, to save our souls, our fathers before us, our children after us; which the mercy of God continue to us and ours, so long as the sun and moon endure: all this by glory and virtue.

To glory and virtue, according to the common reading. How hath God already called us to glory and virtue? In two respects; in present being, and in hope. First, for our present estate we must understand by "glory," the honour of being Christians; by "virtue," the good life that becometh Christians; to both these we are called.

To glory. Is there any glory in this world belonging to a saint? any account of a man so mortified to temporal things? Are we not the refuse and off-scouring of all things? 1 Cor. iv. 13. Well, we have still a great glory by our calling, albeit carnal eyes cannot see it, or will not take notice of it. For if there were ignominy in thralldom, then is there glory in freedom. "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free," Gal. v. 1. We are not born free, but new-born free. It is great

glory for us (naturally) slaves, to be made by Christ free-men; but greater glory to be made kings, Rev. i. 6. So we that believe are truly noble, brethren and sisters to Christ, and so of the blood-royal of God. To as many as receive him, he gives right and privilege to be the sons of God, John i. 12. O happy Christians! let others boast their generation, we our regeneration. This is the best ornament of blood, the noblest part of the scutcheon, the fairest flower in the gentleman's garland. The youngest brother bears the arms of the eldest; so we of our elder Brother Christ. Not my blood, but my Christianity, makes me noble, said that noble martyr. Now this greatness is got by our littleness; the greatest glory comes by humility. If thou desirest glory, despise it; so thou shalt be most glorious. (Chrys.) The world hath the godly in derision, and a proverb of reproach; count their life to be madness, and their end without honour, Wisd. v. 3, 4; as the filth of the world, and the off-scouring of all things, 1 Cor. iv. 13. But no man is miserable because another so thinks him, but because he so feels himself. But the Lord hath called us to glory, and made us sons to a King, John iii. 2, brothers to a King, Heb. ii. 11, heirs to a King, Rom. viii. 17, yea, even to the King of glory. He were a poor sot, that would be ashamed of the alliance which the king should challenge of him; yea, poor is even that king that is ashamed of the Son of God, offering his brotherhood. Men are ashamed of thy kindred; the Lord Jesus hath called thee to glory.

To virtue, as well as to glory. "For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness," 1 Thess. iv. 7. All things are yours; not to abuse with riot, but to use with moderation, and to enjoy with comfort; because (by faith) ye are, and by obedience you are known to be, Christ's, and Christ is God's, 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23. The grace of God that brings salvation to us, teacheth us to live godly, righteously, and soberly, Tit. ii. 11, 12; that is the virtue wherunto we are called; to despise the world, and please the Lord. Our virtue is to fight with vanity; and our great happiness not to be overcome of happiness. (August.) He that denies himself and sticks to virtue, loseth his own which he could not keep, and getteth that happiness which he cannot lose. (August.) Now Christ that calls us to virtue, gives it. "Somebody hath touched me; for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me," Luke viii. 46. There is no virtue but it comes from him: the woman touched him, but it was not her finger, but her faith, that drew out that virtue. Nor was this virtue in his garments; for living they thronged him, dead they parted them, yet were never the better. So, many now may touch the bread of the Lord, yet not touch that bread which is the Lord, because their faiths and their fingers go not together. Thou art called to this virtue, come and take it; throng upon Christ for it, let nothing keep thy faith back. "The whole multitude sought to touch him: for there went virtue out of him, and healed them all," Luke vi. 19. If the glory of virtue do not first enter into thee, thou shalt never enter into the virtue and triumph of glory.

Thus hath God already called us to glory and virtue, in respect of an inchoative fruition; hereafter we shall come to a perfect and plenary possession. The virtue there, is a pure white garment without spot; and the glory, a golden crown of eternity. God's children have three suits of apparel, black, red, and white. Here we are either in black, mourning, or in red, persecuted; there we shall be only in white, glorified. "A great multitude stood before the Lamb, in white robes, and palms in their hands," Rev. vii. 9. White is the symbol of innocency, of joyfulness, of

blessedness : of innocence, because it is neither spotted nor dired ; of joyfulness, because opposed to black, which is the garb of sorrow ; of blessedness, because the state there is not subject to any change. It matters not what rags we wear below, so we may be clothed with that white above : we now mourn in black ; but those tears shall work a miracle through Christ, and change all our garments into white. Have virtue, if thou wouldst have glory : be we here conformed to Christ's image, and then he shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like his glorious body, by that mighty working whereby he subdues all things to himself, Phil. iii. 21. For the glory, it is unspeakable : " Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him," 1 Cor. ii. 9. The eye hath not seen it, because it is not colour ; nor the ear heard it, because it is not sound ; nor hath it entered into the heart of man, because the heart of man must enter into it. (August.) " Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord ;" for it is too great to enter into thee. If we durst pray with Moses, Lord, show us thy glory ; he would answer, There is no man shall see me, and live, Exod. xxxiii. 18, 20. Therefore, Lord, one day give it us. Yes, he will, for he hath called us to it. There we shall rest and see, see and love, love and bless, that glory which is and shall be for ever. What else should we propose for our end, than that glory which shall have no end ?

Thus I have brought your meditations up into heaven ; and now you say, It is good being here, it is good leaving you there. Enough and enough again ; it is high time to bless you with a dismissal, or dismiss you with a blessing. We have opened the fountain, but you know the cock is behind, that must derive the water of life to your hearts : Through the knowledge of Jesus Christ. I know this point is too ample for the small remnant of the fugitive time, and therefore awhile I suspend it. And now you may say, the sermon is done : and yet would to God you could say so truly, that it was done. But as a learned divine observed out of The Christian Tell-truth ; when a great lady asked her servants, whether the sermon were done or not : they answered, It was done : she pleasantly replied, It was spoken, it was not done. Christ hath called you to glory and virtue, to godliness here and salvation hereafter : if now your hearts come home to him in obedience, then the sermon is done indeed ; but if you cleave to the world, and care more to bring wealth to your purses than Christ to your consciences, the sermon is spoken, it is not done. It is spoken and done by the preacher. God grant I may say, it is answered and done by the hearers. Oh how beautiful were it to behold your growth and stature in grace confessing, and recompensing, the spiritual food which you have received !

VERSE 4.

Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises : that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

I SHOULD come immediately to these words, but that in the former building there was a piece of timber left out now to be inserted. It was, the knowledge of our Caller. Now this point of knowledge (to avoid multiplicity of discourse upon the same argument) may fitly be considered in the word of connexion

that knits the verses together : " whereby." But first I will let the words fall into parts by distribution. In the whole verse we may observe :

1. A conveyance ; and herein,
1. The instruments, Whereby.
2. The materials, Promises.
3. The latitude of them, for, (1.) Quantity, Great.
- (2.) Quality, Precious.

II. An inheritance, Partakers of the divine nature. This is qualitative, and may be exemplified in a seven-fold relation ; as,

1. Servants of a master.
2. Subjects of a king.
3. Sons of a father.
4. Fellows of a society.
5. Members of a head.
6. Branches of a tree.
7. Spouses of a husband.
- III. A deliverance ; wherein consider,
1. The discovery of danger, The corruption that is in the world through lust.
2. The recovery from that danger, Ye have escaped it.

" Whereby." We begin first with the instrument, and so are fitly met with the point which before escaped us. For this " whereby " stands like a Janus, looking both to the matter past, and to come. The matter past was the knowledge of Christ, which was to this place reserved, that we might have good occasion to perpend the virtue of it. " Whereby." The sum of the point is this. The true knowledge of Christ is the means, whereby are conveyed to us all the promises of mercy. One was of opinion, that a philosopher exceeds an ordinary man as much as an ordinary man exceeds a beast ; but every true Christian exceeds a philosopher as much as a philosopher does a dunce. They scarce knew God in his creatures, we know God in his Christ. *Ignoti nulla cupido* : as we say, Un-couth, unkissed ; we must look before we like, discern before we can desire. " Mine eyes have seen thy salvation," says old Simeon ; therefore, " now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace." My corporal eyes have seen thy manhood, my spiritual eyes have seen thy Godhead : which is thy salvation, as giving it, and my salvation, as receiving it. Neither is this *salutare singulare* ; but whosoever hath seen and known this salvation, by his eye of faith, will earnestly desire it : as Stephen saw the Lord Jesus at the right hand of God, therefore longed to come to him, *video, venio*.

There is no pleasure so sweet as knowledge, no knowledge so sweet as that of religion, no knowledge of religion so sweet as that of Christ ; for this is eternal life, to know God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, John xvii. 3. There is no entering into heaven without doing the will of God, Matt. vii. 21 ; there is no doing it without knowing it. " If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them," John xiii. 17. Ignorance is not then the mother of devotion, but the grandmother of irreligion. Let us never think that God will accept our verdict at the bar, when we give it up with an *ignoramus*. Let us therefore use the means to get knowledge. 1. Read the Scripture ; that is God's will, there is knowledge, John v. 39. 2. Frequent the temple ; that is his house, there is knowledge. I thought to know this, but it was too hard for me ; until I went into the sanctuary of God, then I understood it, Psal. lxxiii. 16, 17. 3. Resort to the communion ; that is God's maundy, there is knowledge : this shows the Lord's death till he come, 1 Cor. xi. 26. 4. Consult his ministers, for the priest's lips preserve knowledge ; there hear God's oracle : yet after all this, glory not in thy knowledge.

*Quomvis Scera satis per te tibi consulis, et scis,
Disce docendus adhuc.* (Horat.)

He that is proud of his knowledge, is a prodigy; for he hath the gout in the wrong end: others have it in their feet, he hath it in his pate. They that saw most of God, saw but his hinder parts: and in glory, when we shall see him face to face, it shall not be a comprehensive, but apprehensive, knowledge. It is not possible for men or angels to know so much of God as he knows of himself. Only the blessed Trinity fully knows itself in the unity of Deity. We have now a fit knowledge; then, a knowledge proportionate to our perfection.

But every man pleads his knowledge; let him then show it in the effects. Knowledge directs conscience, conscience perfects knowledge. Abused knowledge will enhance judgment and punishment: for this were the sins of the Jews, *cæteris poribus*, greater than the sins of the Gentiles; because in Jewry God was known, and his name great in Israel: it was not so with other nations, neither had the heathen the knowledge of his laws. The sins of us Christians, other circumstances being matches, are greater than the sins of the Jews, because our knowledge is more. They had but an aspersion; line to line, here a little and there a little: we have an effusion: "I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh," Acts ii. 17. Now after you have known God, how turn you again to those beggarly elements? Gal. iv. 6. Will you swear, that know you should not swear? Will you defraud, that know you should deal justly? "Ye have not so learned Christ," Eph. iv. 20. If Barbary wring her hands for knowing so little, beware lest Christendom rend her heart for knowing so much to so little purpose. Knowledge doth elevate or lift up the soul; but if it be abused, it shall give her the greater fall. Because the precipice is from on high, like stars that the red dragon's tail swooped from heaven, it shall fall like an angel of light into utter darkness. Deeds prove more than words: never tell me your science, show to me the fruits of your good conscience. Albeit your words be never so loud, if your works be low: though you were sons of thunder, yet a crack in the instrument will spoil the sound; as Jupiter's adultery did even among children discredit his thunder. Our knowledge without holiness, is like Uriah's letters that contained his own death, 2 Sam. xi. To such they are letters of blood, commendations to Satan. As that servant in the comedy, Hæv I brought letters to bind myself? so these two, disjointed, commend a man to hell; Go, bind him hand and foot, and throw him into utter darkness. Sin even in ignorance is a talent of lead; but sin in knowledge is a mill-stone to sink a man to the lowest. To know good, and do ill, make a man's own mittimus to hell. Among arts the mathematics are most commended, because they stand upon infallible demonstration. You think yourselves good artists in Christianity, and profess good knowledge in religion: let me see your mathematics, some demonstration. Show me thy faith by thy works; there is a demonstration. Let your light so shine on earth, to the glory of your Father in heaven; there is a demonstration. Feed the hungry, relieve the poor: there is another demonstration. Give me this mathematical part of divinity, that consists in demonstration. *Non in fictis, sed in factis: non in lectione, sed in dilectione.* (August.) This practical part is the object of man's eye: we cannot see the knowledge in your brains, but by the works of your hands. You must do, if you would be sure you know; and you must know, if you would be sure of comfort.

"Great and precious promises." From the instrument we pass to the materials conveyed, promises. This is the conveyance of the gospel, therefore it is called a covenant, the covenant of promise. The law gave menaces, the gospel gives promises. It was the condition of the law, Do this and live: it is the promise of the gospel, Believe and thou shalt be saved. Indeed they had promises under the law, but not by the law; for whatsoever was promised in the Old Testament, belongs properly to the New. *Lex imperat, fides impetrat.* The law came by Moses, and by the law death: grace comes by Jesus, and by grace life. Cajetan says truly of the law, that it shuts up all those who are under it, under sin; by commanding, but not by helping. But the gospel brings mercy, to our houses, to our hearts. Irenæus, to some of his time that asked, What new thing Christ brought with him into the world? answered, That he had made all things new. "Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new," 2 Cor. v. 17. He fulfilled the old prophecies by his new works; ceased the old sacrifices by his new sacrifice: abolished the old sacraments, those bloody ones of circumcision and occasion, by his new sacraments; gave us a new commandment, a new testament; put in the room of old menaces, new promises. And these new things are for virtue greater, for profit better, for use easier, for number fewer. Our faith is more light-some to believe, in *Christum missum*; theirs, more obscure, in *Christum promissum*. (Kilius.) But "is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given," &c. Gal. iii. 21. Whereto then serveth the law? Yes, it hath a civil and a religious use. Civil, to restrain us from, and chastise us for, sins: and for this cause it is honoured even of the politicians of the world, who though they will not themselves believe the gospel, yet would have other men observe the law, for their own peace and tranquillity's sake. Religious, for it is our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, Gal. iii. 24. Now the office of a schoolmaster is double, to direct, and to correct; so the law doth direct to good works, and corrects for evil works. (Aret.) It reveals sin, that, as in a glass, we see our misery, and the penalty due to transgression. It is a corrosive laid to an old sore, not to heal the sore, that is not the act of a corrosive; but to eat out the dead flesh, to make it alive and sensible, that so our wounds may be healed by the gospel. Therefore is not the law contrary to the promise. Things that are subordinate one to another, have a mutual office of serving, not of contravening one the other. Therefore is the law given, that we, finding our own disability to keep it, might have recourse to the lawgiver; (Leo.) to the sufficiency of Christ. For the law so humbles a man with the grief of sin, and terror of judgment, that it sends him packing to Christ. "If any man sin," and the law tells us we have all sinned, "we have an Advocate with the Father;" and this the gospel shows us, even Christ "the propitiation for our sins," 1 John ii. 1, 2. It makes a man sing with David, "Sweet, O Lord, is thy mercy." The law may express sin, but it cannot suppress sin: for that were to invade the office of the promise: the office of the law is to kill, the office of the promise to give life. Thus we have in the gospel the promise of life: the Lord give us faith to apprehend the life of the promise, through Jesus Christ.

"Great and precious." Here is the latitude of these materials, in their quantity and quality. They are for quantity great, exceeding great: for quality good, exceeding good, precious. Great, for they promise a thing no less than greatness itself: the love of God, an immense kingdom, the world invi-

ble; in comparison of whose greatness this world itself is a mole-hill. Precious; for if this temporal life be held so precious, which we know time must determine, how precious is that life which is equal with eternity! If that life be so estimable, which is obnoxious to sin, and waited on with misery, inasmuch that all riches and jewels are rubbish in comparison of it; "Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life," Job ii. 4; a truth from the father of lies; how precious is that life, where a man shall see nothing but what he loves, and love nothing but what he sees! The best way to exemplify the great price of these promises, is to instance in some particulars. Hereof the word of grace is abundant; but a man that would commend a spring-water, needs not drink up the whole fountain, one or two draughts is sufficient. Take a taste from Matt. xi. 28, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest;" a great and precious promise, if we consider the Mover, the moved, and the motive. The Mover is Christ, "Come unto me;" not to the mother, but to the Son; not to our lady, but to our Lord. Send not others, but come yourselves: come to no other but to me. The moved, "all that labour and are heavy laden;" that labour in your actions, are heavy laden in your passions; (Ferus.) that do not carry sins like cork and feathers, lightly on your shoulders, but groan under the unsupportable weight, and send forth prayers mixed with tears for ease. Come, not on your feet, but your faith; not on your legs, but your lives. The motive, I will ease you, or give you rest. What! labour and grievous labour, a burden and a heavy burden, and yet I will ease you? a great and precious promise! The physician cannot say to his patient, I will cure thee; but thus far, I will spare no invention of wit, no intention of will, no contention of power, to help thee. Only the great Physician of heaven can promise absolutely, I will ease thee. "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he will sustain thee," Psal. lv. 22. Take another: "All things work together for good to them that love God," Rom. viii. 28. All things, not only God's good things, but even our evil things. Afflictions that are most bitter, shall make us better; the sharpest rue shall be an herb of grace. Yea, even our sins; for such is the goodness of God, that what at first he inflicted for a penalty, he turns to a mercy. Sin first wrought sorrow, now godly sorrow shall kill sin: (August.) the daughter shall destroy the mother. They shall "work," not like idle indifferents, that do neither good nor harm; but the first Mover's and Maker's hand sets them a working. "Together;" not singly and apart, lest their divided forces should drop and faint in their operation; but they shall co-operate, work together, for the surer expedition of their intended business. Not to their hurt, as all things concur to the wicked: for as the sea receives many fresh rivers and sweet springs into itself, yet remains salt and bitter still; so the ungodly are not made the better by God's good blessings. Nor without good or harm to them; but to the glory of God, and the dear salvation of their souls. Here is a great and precious promise!

Now seeing these promises are such, let us affy them, and apply them: they deserve our faith and application.

For affiance: if God so promise, let us trust him. "He is faithful that promised," Heb. x. 23. Woe to him that shall call God's faithfulness into question! Yet there is a generation of men that object: What! nothing but promises? *Promissis dices, quilibet esse potest*, Every one can be rich in promising, though he be poor and beggarly in performing. Who can live by

promises? These must, with Thomas, feel, or they will not believe: they are led by sight and sense, not by faith: unless they have an ocular view, they care for no oracular testimony, no miraculous power. Here is nothing in hand, but a bare and naked promise. Thus stands the case with them. Man hath a precious jewel to sell, it is his soul. God and the world come both to buy it. The world first steps in, and thrusts his bags into his hand; here is present possession. God comes and out-bids the world, for he offers grace, and peace, and glory; but withal he craves time for the greater part of it, and gives nothing in hand but his promise, his word, and some small earnest of the bargain. The worldling cries, A bird in hand is best; hugs his money that he hath. God he thinks not so good a customer; he dares not trust him, perhaps he fears he will break. Yet this same man will rather accept a reversion of some great office or estate, though expectant on the tedious transition of seven years, or on the expiration of another's life, than in present a sum of far less value. What folly is this, rather to take the idle vanities of this world in hand, than faithfully to wait upon God's promise for the glory of heaven! O but we can satiate ourselves with the profits and pleasures of this life, and yet take God's word for the kingdom of heaven too. But I say, if a man, if a minister, if a prophet, if an angel should tell you so, believe him not; for the Judge of heaven and earth hath said otherwise. "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." It will be very hard for a man to keep both; it is impossible to serve both. The two poles shall sooner meet, than the love of God and the love of money. The very possession of the world is not half so sure as God's promise.

For applying: seeing these promises are so precious, store thy heart with them; that which way soever the blow comes, it may assault thee without fear, not without foresight. Art thou molested with troubles? Remember the promise, "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world," John xvi. 33. And, "Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me," Psal. l. 15. All days are troublesome, "Man is of few days, and full of trouble," Job xiv. 1; but some are worse than other. That aged patriarch told the king of Egypt, "Few and evil have the days of thy servant been." He had many evil days, but some worse; when he lost Rachel his wife, Joseph his son. The Thames hath always in it water enough to drown a man, but sometimes it is more tempestuous and raging than at others. As all times have their incident trouble, so there is one main day of trouble. Jerusalem is threatened her day of visitation. What shall we do when this day of trouble comes? Remember the promise; Call upon me, saith God; I will hear and deliver thee. Do thy friends leave thee? mayst thou complain with David, My neighbours hid themselves, and my acquaintance stood afar off? Consider the Lord's promise, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee," Heb. xiii. 5. In what was spoken to Joshua in particular, Josh. i. 5, the apostle interests every Christian in general; the infallible promise of God's inseparable presence. Art thou tempted? Remember the promise, God will not suffer thee to be tempted above thy strength. If God remove not Paul's temptation, he will give him an equivalent help; "My grace is sufficient for thee." Doth the law threaten thee with death for thy sins? Remember the promise, "There is no damnation to them that are in Christ Jesus," Rom. viii. 1. Answer with Luther, Lady Law, thou comest not in season, I have nothing to do with thee. Thou art a bitter lady, but

I have a sweet Lord. There is death in thy looks, but there is salvation in the face of Jesus Christ, who is fairer than all the sons of men. The law is all red, nothing but blood, death, and fire in her looks: Christ is white and red, of the purest complexion; "My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand," Cant. v. 10; white in his own innocence, ruddy with the sufferings for our sins. Such is thy mercy, O blessed Saviour! Let the law do her worst, be thou a true St. Christopher, and bear Christ in thy heart. In the law is the menace of death, in Christ is the promise of life. We may say concerning any sinner, what Martha said of her brother, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died;" John xi. 21. Dost thou suffer affliction? Remember the promise. If we suffer with Christ, we shall also be glorified with him, Rom. viii. 17. The saints are called from bleeding under the hand of persecution, to the marriage supper of the Lamb. Well may we endure a bitter breakfast, even to blood and death, considering that this supper of glory shall close up our stomachs. God makes his church three meals, a breakfast, a dinner, and a supper. The breakfast was in the morning of the world, that is the law; somewhat sharp, though they had assurance of Christ to come. The dinner is in the world's high noon, that is the gospel; here is good cheer, the fat calf killed, the Messiah slain; yet, like the passover, not eaten without sour herbs; we are fain to mingle our drink with tears. The supper at night shall be sweet, it is eternal glory; fitly called a supper, because then begins rest for ever. After breakfast a man goes to his labour, so after dinner, but after supper to bed. The servants of God under the law, the sons of God under the gospel, must both labour, and work out their salvation with fear and trembling; but at the supper of glory works cease. Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, for they rest from their labours, Rev. xiv. 13. Lastly, doth the inevitable hand of death strike thee, must thou die? Remember the promise, I am the resurrection and the life; whosoever believeth in me shall not die for ever, John xi. 25, 26. Let me ask thy conscience, as Christ there did, "Believest thou this?" If thy heart can answer, "Yea, Lord, I believe," &c. send forth thy soul with joy, thou hast a promise that Jesus Christ will receive it. Commit your soul into the hands of a faithful Creator in well-doing, 1 Pet. iv. 19. Here be great and precious promises; though thy memory cannot retain all that the gospel proposeth, yet be sure to hold fast some; be not without some oil in thy lamp when the Bridegroom comes. Rich men that love themselves well, will have antidotes for sickness; their cabinets stored with hot and precious waters against swoonings and sudden qualms. And likely the poorest cottager, though he cannot go to the price of the better extractions, yet will at least have some *aqua-vitæ* in the house. Now if thy heart hold not such store of these most precious promises as the richer saints, yet be sure to have at all times St. Paul's *aqua-vitæ* ready, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners;" 1 Tim. i. 15. But do thy best to fill the cabinet of thy heart; thou shalt have need enough of all. Remember who hath promised. All God's promises are yea and amen in Jesus Christ, 2 Cor. i. 20; may they be yea and amen in our believing hearts.

"Are given unto us." Here is the fourth circumstance of the conveyance: the form of it, which is a deed of gift, are given us. All worldly things are but lent us; our houses of stone wherein our bodies dwell, our houses of clay wherein our souls dwell, are but lent. Honours, treasures, pleasures, money, mainte-

nance, but lent. We may say of them all, as he said of his axe-head when it fell into the water, Alas! they are but borrowed, 2 Kings vi. 5. Only spiritual graces are given: of those things there is only a true donation, whereof there is a true possession. Worldly things are but a tabernacle, a movable; heaven is a mansion; whatsoever becomes of the former, if thou canst keep the other, say, I have lost that I could not keep, I have kept that I cannot lose. Happy Christians! though they have the least share of things lent, they have the greatest portion of things given. We have little on earth; they have less in heaven. God shall say to the wicked, I have lent thee an office, give account of it, for thou must be no longer steward. But to the faithful, "My peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth," John xiv. 27. How gives the world? It gives a little, that it may take away all; but the joy that I give you, no man shall take from you, John xvi. 22. Whatsoever is freer than gift, it makes a new proprietary of the same things; such gifts are God's, without repentance. He may repent that he made man, Gen. vi. 6; that he made Saul king; but he never repents that he made a man repentant, or that he hath given him grace in Jesus Christ; but saith of him, as Isaac said of Jacob, I have blessed him, and he shall be blessed, Gen. xxvii. 33. Here the Lord's bounty requires of us some duty; this three-fold.

1. Call upon the Giver, as the beggar frequents the gates of bounty; and that in faith. Ask in faith, without wavering, James i. 6; for let him spare to speak that distrusts to speed. Faith is to God as Bathsheba was to Solomon; so in favour, that the king will deny her nothing, 1 Kings ii. 17. And when thou movest this bounteous Giver, beg the best things, such as are well worth giving. When we put to sea, we pray for a good gale; when we have sown, for a good spring; when we reap, for fair weather: we may have all these, and yet be cursed; let us entreat for grace, this will bless all. God does us no wrong in taking away our temporal things, for they are but lent us: he takes back his own, he does not take away ours. It is an argument of love in the father, when he takes away the child's knife, and gives to him a book. We cry for riches; it is a knife to cut our fingers; God gives us a Bible, the riches of verity, not of vanity. Great works become a great nature; let us not be afraid to ask him a kingdom; for how unworthy soever we are of things so far beyond us, yet he gives things worthy himself. When Alexander gave a whole city to one of his favourites, he modestly replied, It was too great a fortune for a man of so mean condition. But the monarch answered, I examine not what is fit for thee to receive, but what is fit for me to give.

2. Be thankful to this Giver; not only for spiritual, but even for temporal things. It is not enough to take the whole loaves, but let us even gather up the fragments. Lay up in the ark of thy memory, not only the pot of manna, the bread of life; but even Aaron's rod, the very scourge of correction, wherewith thou hast been bettered. Blessed be the Lord, not only giving, but also taking away, saith Job. God, that sees there is no walking upon roses to heaven, puts his children into the way of discipline; and by the fire of correction eats out the rust of corruption. God sends trouble, then bids us call upon him; promiseth our deliverance; and lastly, the all he requires of us is to glorify him, Psal. i. 15. God "giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not," James i. 5. Never upbraids? How then doth he condemn Israel by the ox and the ass? Isa. i. 3. How tell David of his favours to him, in de-

liverance from Saul, and advancement to a kingdom? 2 Sam. xii. 8. I answer, God never upbraids but when our ingratitude enforceth him. The widow of Zarephath said to Elijah, "Art thou come to call my sin to remembrance?" 1 Kings xvii. 18. But it is our unthankfulness that calls our sins to remembrance. "How is the faithful city become an harlot!" God inquires not the means, but wonders at the matter. Unthankfulness is such a fault, that men think it a vice, angels a sacrilege, devils a monster, God himself a wonder. Gratitude pleaseth him: of the Samaritan that gave him thanks, Christ took notice. Of the ten cleansed none were found to give glory to God, but the stranger, Luke xvii. 18. The leper praiseth God, Christ praiseth the leper. Mary Magdalene gave Christ an unction of thankfulness, he gave her an unction of a good name, a thing better than ointment; for "A good name is better than precious ointment," Eccles. vii. 1; that whosoever this gospel should be preached, her work should not be forgotten, Matt. xxvi. 13; the whole world should ring of her. God gives all gratis, I mean in the adverb, not in the noun; for they are not all thankful persons that receive it. Some are not made better by God's gifts; yea, many are made worse. Give Saul a kingdom, and he will tyrannize; give Nabal good cheer, and he will be drunk; give Judas an apostleship, and he will sell his Master for money.

But if God gives all to us, let us give something to him. What shall I give him? Not only my goods, but myself. Say as that widow might, I am poor, and have nothing to give but my two mites, my body and soul; take them, and take all. When thou comest, to offer thy sacrifice of thanks, do as Abraham was bidden, slay (not thy dearest son, but) thy dearest sin. If we give our soul to God, as Abraham did Isaac, he will restore our soul to us with joy, as he did Isaac to Abraham; and that, as he did there to him, so here to us, not without the promises of life. There are that think every thing too much that God receives; as Leonides a steward told Alexander, that he bestowed too much frankincense on his gods. When Mary gave Jesus that ointment, Judas cries, Why is this waste? he thought it lost. But he that hath given himself to God, will not stick at the rest. It is the apostle's argument of God's liberality to us, He that spared not his only Son, but gave him for us, will not deny other things with him, Rom. viii. 32. So if thou have given him thyself, thou wilt never grudge him thy purse, or thy praise. It is a good desire of the soul, with that father, Whatsoever the Lord would give me, let him deny all and give me himself. So God requires of us, not thousands of rams, nor ten thousand rivers of oil; not the son of the body for the sin of the soul, Micah vi. 7; but, Man, give me thyself: this is instead of all, above all. As Seneca writes of Æschines, a poor scholar, to his master, Socrates; I offer thee that one only thing I have, myself. Others have given much to thee, but they have kept more to themselves; but no man gives more than he that keeps nothing back. Socrates kindly accepted, and answered, I will take care that I may restore thee to thyself better than I received thee. So God deals with us; his return is better than our gift; we give to him ourselves sinful and wretched, he restores us to ourselves gracious and blessed.

3. Be not proud, arrogate not that to thyself which is God's gift. The apostles restored a cripple that was lame from his mother's womb; but lest any of God's glory should cleave to their earthen fingers, they disclaim their own power and holiness, and give it to him that owes it, and will not give it to another: The name of Jesus Christ hath made this man strong, Acts iii. 16. The blessed Virgin, that

was so full of grace, *in se*, not *a se*, humbly acknowledged the fountain; even God her Saviour, Luke i. 47. The papists trust in our lady, but our lady did trust in our Lord. And albeit she was sanctified to be the mother of her Maker, though so good a woman, that, *Non primam similem visa est, nec habere sequentem*; though all generations called her blessed; yet saith she, The Lord regarded the lowliness of his handmaid. They may tell us, that she doth not command by the right of a mother, but indeed she did obtain by the faith of a daughter. "O give thanks unto the Lord: make known his deeds among the people," Psal. cv. 1: make known his works, but to his glory; for some make known his deeds, but to their own glory. Vain-glory easily creeps in even through the crack of our acknowledgment of God's goodness towards us. One says, Such a nobleman drank to me, shook me by the hand, discoursed with me: but hereby he insinuates to the hearers some worthiness in himself, for which he was so graced. So some in declaring God's works and favours to them, have a conceit of merit in themselves, deserving such respect. To meet with which pride, may seem Christ's charge to the leper, "See thou say nothing to any man," Mark i. 44; which enjoined silence was not to smother God's glory, but to keep him from vain-glory.

Thus we have considered the conveyance, in

The intent, Whereby.

The content, Promises.

The extent, Great and precious.

The patent, Are given us.

Now if all this be not a sufficient assurance, then give me leave to speak according to your capacity in the city; and to add, that it is signed, sealed, delivered, and bound with an oath, for your further confirmation. You are well acquainted with these words, with such deeds: I wish, therefore, that as you know them in earthly things to your profit, so you may know them in heavenly things to your comfort.

1. They are signed, God hath put his hand to them in the gospel. If a nobleman should send thee gracious letters of preferment, and put his hand to them, thou wouldst credit it. If thy father, taking a long journey, should first pen his own will, wherein he did make thee his heir, and bequeath to thee all his substance, and set his hand to it, thou wouldst joyfully and confidently embrace it. This patent is the testament and will of Jesus Christ: "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am," John xvii. 24. This he hath signed with his own hand; for the evangelists were but the pens, it was the hand of Christ himself.

2. But it is not enough to have a writing signed. Doth the law require sealing? These promises are sealed to us: there are two broad seals, the two sacraments. Baptism: Whosoever believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; there is one broad seal. The Lord's supper: Whosoever eateth the flesh of Christ, and drinketh his blood, shall not perish; there is another broad seal. For the sacraments are not only not bare signs, but seals: so Paul called circumcision "a seal of the righteousness of the faith," Rom. iv. 11. There is also a privy seal, miracles: wrought in the first rising of the Sun, but now, in the glorious day of grace and knowledge, ceasing. Now we ask not for the privy seal of miracles, but the broad seals of the sacraments: herewith we are content, for by these instruments we receive Christ. We hear the word, we feel the virtue: we know not the manner, but we believe the presence of Jesus Christ. (Durand.) The Romists abuse both these seals; God's broad seal in corrupting the sacraments, God's privy seal in their false and lying miracles.

3. Is not this yet enough, to be signed with his holy hand, and sealed with his royal arms, except till it be delivered? These are delivered to us: "Ye have received the Spirit of adoption," Rom. viii. 15. That you may be sure of this conveyance, it is put into your hands, into your hearts.

4. If yet the subscription of God's hand, and affixion of his seal, and delivery into your possession, be not sufficient; "God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation," Heb. vi. 17, 18. In which two verses, that stand like two turrets, there are eight fortifications, which all the powers of hell shall never be able to overthrow. He doth not say, but show; there is demonstration: not sparingly, but abundantly; extension: to, not servants, but sons and heirs; if so, never to be disinherited; there is adoption: of promise; not of man's birth or merit, but of God's promise, who never yet brake his word; there is ratification: the immutability of his counsel; friends are inconstant, riches are inconstant, the world is inconstant, but I the Lord change not, Mal. iii. 6; there is determination: he interposed himself by an oath: wonderful mercy, that the Creator should swear to his creature! there is confirmation: these be two immutable things; therefore without alteration, in which it was impossible for God to lie; well may he deny sinners, but he cannot deny himself; there is impossibility of retraction. Now for the corollary, or use of all these invincible arguments, it is our strong consolation; so strong a fortress, that if we do not betray it ourselves, all the engines of hell shall never endanger it. How much are we beholden to God, that he will swear! but how little beholden is God to us, if we will not believe him when he swears!

We see the stability of these gracious promises; which (to shut up the discourse with application) should not pass us without some profitable use. From the stability of God's promises to us, let us learn to be constant in the performance of our promises to God, and to man.

1. To God. We have all made a promise to him in our baptism: let not us forget that, lest God forget us. Did we then promise, and do we now stagger? The true Christian is fixed on the poles of constancy, not carried on the wheels of change. Let us "continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel," Col. i. 23: so grounded, that if an angel from heaven should preach another gospel, let him be accursed, Gal. i. 8. The inconstant professor is scarce a Christian, but, like Agrippa, almost a Christian. His religion lies in wait for the parliament; neither ebbs nor flows, but is just standing water, betwixt both. As a noun, he is only adjective: as a verb, he knows no tense but the present. One part thinks him theirs, the adverse theirs; he is with both, with neither: not an hour with himself. He might get to heaven, but for his halting; but he knows not what he should hold, he knows not what he doth hold. He is sure to die, but not what religion to die in. He cannot tell whether is best to say his *Pater-noster* in Latin or in English, and so leaves it unsaid. He that hath promised, and not performed, is in worse case than he that never promised. The trifling Christian spends worse than the barbarous infidel.

2. To man. Promises are due debts. There might haply have been no sin in not promising; there is a sin after promise in not performing. There is more alliance than alliance in the world: *Proter quasi, ferre alter*, Keep thy word with him as with thy-

self. But how should he keep touch with man, that breaks with God, with his own soul? If this point seem obscure, there are too many in this city whose lives may comment upon it. They take care to owe, they think they ought not to pay. These are worse than the prodigal; he lived on his own portion, Luke xv. 12; these, like the unjust steward, live on another man's portion. They bear the name and wear the livery, but have not the souls of Christians. A debtor that can pay and will not, makes himself incapable of pardon. Such men think to set all on Christ's score; and to say, "Forgive us our debts," is sufficient, though they leave out the other part of the petition, "as we forgive others." But God does not forgive spiritual debts where men have no care to pay temporal debts. Why, but there is more virtue in the Seed of the woman, than can be venom in the head of the serpent; and repentance makes all reckonings even. But "be not deceived: God is not mocked," Gal. vi. 7. If they mock him, he will mock them: "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision," Psal. ii. 4. Neither can there be repentance without restitution. A thief takes away thy purse, asks thy pardon, says he is sorry for it, but keeps it still: thou sayest he does but mock thee. If God could be cozened with tricks, how many politic worldlings would go to heaven, whose portion is in the infernal depth!

Well, let us learn to put away lying, and to speak every man truth to his neighbour; for we are members one of another. Eph. iv. 25. There is a thing forbidden, Lie not; a thing commanded, Speak truth: a reason for both, because we are members one of another. Let us be plain in promising, honest in performing. There are some that have double tongues, and speak their promises in a doubtful sense; ambiguous, equivocating terms; epicene and bastard phrases, as the devil gave his oracles; which must be true every way, certain no way. They beguile men's plainness, but in plain truth they beguile their own souls; for they that will overreach others with the sin of deceitfulness, shall be overreached themselves with the deceitfulness of sin. They sing the song of Curio, Let gain prevail: they had rather be sinners than beggars. Thus according to Daniel's prophecy, truth shall be cast down: covetousness hath got the advantage of ground, and "truth is fallen in the street," Isa. lix. 14. Thus these two wrestle on earth, and truth falls; but one day, when they shall wrestle in heaven, truth shall prevail. Wine is strong, princes are strong, women are strong, but truth is stronger than all, 1 Esd. iv. 35.

But now where is this truth? I will tell you an apologue. Four friends parting inquired where they should find one another again; the water, the fire, the wind, and truth. Fire said, You shall be sure to find me in a flint stone. Water said, You shall be sure to find me in the root of a bulrush. Wind said, You shall be sure to find me amongst the leaves. But poor truth could appoint no certain place of meeting: for *terras ostraea reliquit*, no place for truth. What say you to Westminster Hall? Indeed there is room enough, but small room for truth. What say you to the Exchange? There be fair walks, but they may exchange away truth. Where is she then, in your shops? That were strange to find truth in shops. Is she then in the courts? We behold there always the seat of truth, but not always truth in him that supplies that place. Perhaps she lurks in the colleges of the Jesuits. O no, when the truth offered to come thither, equivocation repelled her. She could never abide their main principles, Swear and forswear, rather than tell truth. What, is

she in the pope's breast, that we should run to Rome for her? No, antichrist cannot be a friend to truth. Is she not ferried over to Amsterdam? No, truth will never follow those that run away from the church. You would wonder to find her in a courtier, in a politician, whose element and position is, He that knows not how to dissemble, knows not how to live. Or in a countryman's budget, shut up with snaphance? No, you shall have as much deceit under russet as under velvet, though a little more bunglingly. No thanks to them, they would cozen as frequently, if they could do it as cleanly. You would smile to find her in children and fools; yet they say, Children and fools tell truth. But if it be childhood or folly to tell truth, I am sure we have but a few children, a few fools. Or in a drunkard; yet they say, *In vino veritas*, Drink utters the truth. But take the ale-bench without a malicious lie, or at least an officious lie; a very lie, or a merry lie; and make a pew of it. Where then shall we find truth? I hope in the church, in the pulpits: oh God forbid else! yet often truth keeps only in the pulpit, and does not go down-stairs with the man, but stays there till his coming up again. I hope in this scrutiny of truth you will not say that I have favoured ourselves: no, beloved, God give us hearts to know that we are all untrue, deceitful upon the weights; and mind us to seek truth as precious treasure. God is true, every man a liar. There is no certain place to find truth, but in the word of God; there let us seek her, there we shall find her. Now the God of truth give us the truth of God, in the knowledge of Jesus Christ.

"That by these ye might be partakers of the Divine nature." We are come to the second general part of the verse; which we called the inheritance, consisting in the participation of the Divine nature. And we may well call it so: for none can deceive us of it before we have it, nor deprive us of it after we have it. It cannot be prevented: Fear not, little flock, it is my Father's will to give you a kingdom. Luke xii. 32. Determined from the beginning, concealed a while, possessed in due time: whatsoever our lawyers distinguish between a freehold in law, and a freehold in deed; this is both. It is a freehold in law, whereto even they have right that have not yet possession. It is a freehold in deed: on earth we have a purchase of the inheritance, in heaven an inheritance of the purchase.

"That ye might be partakers," &c. Before I show you the vine, let me cut up two brambles; one whereof the Manichees, the other the Familists, planted (by force) on this ground. There went but a pair of shears between them. That of the Manichees was a dream, that we came by traduction from the nature of God himself; and when this temporary life had run the course, we should return to the same ancient estate, and become a Divine nature. They presupposed a commixion of God's nature with ours: as if they were melted together like wine and water. This is a blasphemous heresy, to think there is a transfusion of the Divine Being into man, as if Infiniteness could be in a circumscribable essence. A creature cannot be made of the essence of God, for it hath no parts, it is not divisible. The other is of some fanatical spirits, who think we do so pass into God's nature, that our nature is quite swallowed up of his. So they take that place, 1 Cor. xv. 28, that at the last God shall be all in all. But certainly this delirament never came into the holy apostles' minds, that our natural being should be lost in the essence of God: they meant not that we should lose our nature, but the corruption of our nature; and that by a sanctified renovation we should be made par-

takers of the Divine immortality and blessedness. Thus we are made one with God, according to the capableness of our nature. The Familists say, we are deified; so as God became man, man becomes God. Their own words are, Men are deified, and God hominified. These are new words, such as the ancient fathers never taught nor thought. But those men thought it no treason to coin new words; and indeed it was necessary that they who would coin a new religion, should also coin new terms new, paradoxes. There were some held, that man's soul was part of God's own essence. *Divina particula auræ*. (Virgil.) Indeed, it is a breath of God, a work of God, not a part of God.

Things may divers ways participate other's nature. *Omnæs species sub eodem genere participant essentiali generis*: as angel, devil, man, and beast partake the nature of a living creature. *Omnio individuum sub eodem specie participant essentiali speciei*: as Peter and Paul of a reasonable nature; wolf and lamb of a brute; cedars and briars of a vegetative. But to come nearer home, and to detain you no longer in the suburbs or entrance:

God's nature may be participated two ways, of quality, and of equality. For equality: this is only proper to the three Persons of the blessed Trinity, and not communicable to any other. Our Saviour Christ partakes both the Divine nature and the human: the Divine, by the identity of his essence; the human, by taking man's nature into God. He did not cease to be what he was, but he began to be what he was not. And this assumption of man's nature to the Divine, did not make it God; it did rarely beautify it, not properly deify it. For as he was man he had not the essence of the Deity in him, but he was in it. Yet did he so glorify it, that all the angels of God worship it. "When he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him." Heb. i. 6. Our neighbours of Rome tell us, that Christ was often worshipped as man: they urge these places, Matt. ii. 11; viii. 2; ix. 18; xx. 20. But here we doubt two things: first, whether this was religious worship or civil. Next, if it were religious, whether their eye of faith saw not him God, as well as their eye of flesh saw him man. Indeed the flesh of Christ is to be adored for the union of the Deity, because they be inseparable; but the Arians worshipped Christ as a creature only, not as God and man. We adore him in his flesh, not according to his flesh; as the honour redounds to the King himself, that is done to the crown on his head. But I durst here conclude against the papists, that if it be unlawful to worship Christ as he is only man, then much more unlawful to worship his image.

Thus we see how Christ who is God, partakes of our nature: now consider how we by Christ who is man, partake of the Divine nature. Here the wicked begin to clap their wings, and boldly to infer, that they partake God's nature, because God partakes their nature. But if this were enough to save men, because Christ took our flesh, call Cain and Judas out of hell, yea, let hell itself be as imaginary as is purgatory. A father hath ten sons; nine of them are sick: do they all certainly recover because the tenth is sound? yet they come all from the loins of one father. All the house of Cis are not kings, because Saul is one. It is not enough that Christ comes near thee in the flesh, unless thou come near him in the spirit. Though there be sap in the vine, congruent and potential to bring forth fruit in the branches; yet doth not this vine communicate his sap to oaks and briars, albeit these partake of the general nature of wood. Yea, after that the very

branches of the vine are broken off and dead, the vine ministers to them no more sap, though they retain the vine's species and nature. So that it is not our participation of Christ's human nature that makes us happy, but of his Divine: that partaking is by flesh, but this is by faith. It is probable that some were lost, who were even kin to Christ in the flesh; yet it must needs be granted, that to partake of the same blood, is a degree nearer, than to partake of the same nature. Matthew and Luke set down Christ's genealogy: the one, his line royal; the other, his line natural. But Christ himself sets down another genealogy, a new one, a spiritual one: "My mother and my brethren are these which hear the word of God, and do it." Luke viii. 21. He affirms these to be as near to him in the faith, as his own mother in the flesh. And she was more blessed in being the daughter, than in being the mother of Christ. The Jews thought it a great privilege to be Abraham's sons; yet one that called himself son of Abraham cries in hell. The damned churl could say, "Father Abraham, have mercy on me," Luke xvi. 24. The flesh was not made after the image of God, but the spirit; therefore God is not called, the Father of bodies, but, the Father of the spirits of all flesh, Heb. xii. 9. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit," John iii. 6. Esau was not blessed because he was of Isaac's flesh, but Jacob was blessed because he was of Isaac's spirit. Paul is said to travail of the Galatians, till Christ was formed in them, Gal. iv. 19. Thus men may partake of one nature in Christ, and yet be cursed; but if of his Divine nature, they are blessed.

This participation then must be only qualitative: by nature we understand not substance, but quality; by grace in this world, and by glory in the world to come. This communication of the Divine nature to us, is by reparation of the Divine image in us. This is cleared by the analogy of other respondent places. "That we might be partakers of his holiness," Heb. xii. 10: so that to partake of the Divine nature, is to be holy as God is holy. "Put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness," Eph. iv. 24: to be created after God, is to partake of God's nature; and this consists in justice and holiness. God did predestinate us "to be conformed to the image of his Son," Rom. viii. 29: the conformity to God's image, is the participating God's nature. This was not wholly unseen to Plato, who said it was man's chiefest good to be made like to God. The sweetness of this benefit, and the multiplicity of comforts arising from it, I defer a little further; and here proceed to exemplify the relations, which may in some measure shadow out to us this partaking of the Divine nature. For it is in no wise to be understood really, but by renovation. I propounded in the distribution seven respects, to exemplify the benefit of this participation.

I. As servants of a Master; not merely as creatures; so all men partake: "We are also his offspring," Acts xvii. 28. With outward things he maintains all; the whole world almost these six thousand years at his own proper cost and charges. He feeds the ravens, and the young lions seek their meat at him. How few of the birds of the air lie dead at thy feet for want of provision! But, alas, as the Canaanite told Christ, these, like the dogs, eat only the crumbs; the faithful have the fat morsels. All our Father's servants have bread enough, Luke xv. 17: they are but servants, yet they have bread enough. Thus we partake with God in being his servants, wherein indeed consists true liberty. "For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's free-man," 1 Cor. vii.

22. "Thou, Israel, art my servant, the seed of Abraham my friend. Thou art my servant, I have chosen thee," Isa. xli. 8, 9. And this is a sure participation where can be no rejection. But how do God's servants partake of these Divine things? In five respects; in livery, liberty, dignity, cognizance, recompence. For their livery: it is the profession of the gospel; that same "new man," restored to the Creator's image, Col. iii. 10. For their liberty: "Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free," Gal. v. 1. For their dignity: "If any man serve me, him will my Father honour," John xii. 26. It is more credit to be a porter of God's gate, than to command in the presence-chamber of a king: "I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God," &c. Psal. lxxxiv. 10. For their cognizance: it is both visible and invisible. Visible in their charity, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples," John xiii. 35. Invisible, as being sealed in their foreheads with the mark of the living God, Rev. vii. 3. For their recompence: the world says, "It is in vain to serve God;" but, "They shall be mine, saith the Lord, in that day when I make up my jewels," Mal. iii. 14, 17: of so high a value as his special treasure. God does not, as great men commonly do with their servants, give them countenance, and let them shift for themselves. He gives not only protection, but provision; not only countenance, but maintenance: "Well done, good and faithful servant: enter into the joy of thy Lord."

This is the sweet, but not common to all; for all shall not have *servorum omnia*, the rewards of servants, that have *servorum nomina*, the name of servants. God hath many servants, but little service in the world. We do so trust and thrust his work one upon another, that still it is not done. They say, Many hands make light work; but it is usually seen, that many hands make slight work. God's holy name is blasphemed: the hearer says, Let the magistrate look to it; the magistrate says, Let the minister reprove it; the minister says, Let the hearer reform it; the company says, Let the offender himself answer it; the offender says, Let no man mind it. The sea breaks in: all the borderers contend whose right it is to mend the dam; but whilst they all strive much, and do nothing, the sea breaks further in upon them, and drowns the whole country. A gentleman having but one servant, thought him overburdened with work, and therefore took another to help him: now he had two, and one of them so trusted to the other's observance, that they were often both missing, and the work was not done. Then he chose another, he had three; and was then worse served than before. Therefore he told his friend, When I had one servant, I had a servant; when I had two, I had but half a one; now I have three, I have never a one. God hath so many titular servants, that when his business comes to be done, not one of them can be found.

2. As subjects of a Prince; and thus we partake with the King of heaven in many benefits. We have the tuition of his law, through a blessed Advocate. "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous," 1 John ii. 1. We are fain to sue in *forma pauperis*; therefore the great Judge of heaven hath appointed us a Counsellor to plead our cause, Jesus Christ. We have the safeguard of the empire; not only the protection of the King, from which the wicked as outlaws are secluded; but also the keeping of angels, to whom he hath given a charge over us, to keep us in all his ways, Psal. xci. 11. So nearly we participate of his Divine things, that we have his own guard royal to attend us. I know, that Christ is King over all the world; "The

Lord reigneth; let the people tremble," Psal. xcix. 1. This kingdom is material and formal. The material are his subjects; and these are both elect and reprobate; for all are under his kingdom, with a different desire, with a different event. The will of the King is done *by* the obedient, *upon* the rebellious. The form of his government is, to the wicked, the rule of a lord over his slaves; to the faithful, the rule of a father over his sons. Accordingly he hath a double sceptre; there is the rod of consolation, "Thy rod doth comfort me," Psal. xxiii. 4; and the rod of confusion, "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron," Psal. ii. 9. Christ's kingdom is eternal; "He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end," Luke i. 33. And this not only in respect of the King, but also in respect of the subjects; for they shall stand continually before him, as the queen of the south blessed Solomon, 1 Kings x. 8. In the Persian army were ten thousand soldiers called *athanatoi*, immortal; not indeed because they did not, but because that number was supplied, and continually made up. As a divine, handling a point of usury concerning a hundred sheep lent to a neighbour, with a certain rate or rent to be paid yearly for them, and the stock still at the year's end to be made good, wittily called these immortal sheep, for they never died to the owner, though to the borrower they all misearied. But Christ says not as Laban did to Jacob, If any sheep die, thou shalt make them up of thine own; thou shalt bear the loss of it, of thy hand I will require it, Gen. xxxi. 39; but rather, like David, saves his sheep from the bear and lion, the world and the devil. As himself, when he died, suffered not a bone of his own to be broken, and another put in place; so his subjects shall have no change: "Those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost," John xvii. 12. Here shall be no *interregnum*, not *multi principes*; nor is it enough to say, *I live Rex*; but, O King, live for ever. Thine is the kingdom, power, and glory, for ever and ever. A King he is; yet he were but a poor king if he had no subjects; but "they shall reign with him a thousand years," Rev. xx. 6, that is, for ever. For if every day in heaven be as a thousand years, what is a thousand years of such days but eternity?

He is our King, to make us blessed by his kingdom. Augustus, that day he had done no good to his subjects, in relieving their wants, said to his friends at night, I have not been a king to-day. It was proverbial of Aurelianus, that he was a good physician, but he gave too bitter medicines. Julian used to stamp a bull on his coin, whereupon the Antiochians inferred, that he purposed to gore the world to death. The breasts of some kings have been stuffed with a thunder-cloud, their vapours always venting to the world's terror. But we may say of our supreme King Christ, as (in due measure) of his servant our royal sovereign, if at least we may compare the peace of a prince with the Prince of peace, as he is the fairest blossom that ever budded out of the white and red rosary, so he hath brought together red and white: Christ hath reconciled justice and mercy; anger red as blood, and compassion white as snow. He hath turned our scarlet sins into white wool; and this by making himself ruddy in passion that was ever so white in innocency. "My Beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand," Cant. v. 10. Thus we partake the blessings of his Divine nature in being his subjects. Let the heathen serve their tyrants, the Turks their Mahomet, the Romists their pope, worldlings their lusts; thou, O Jesus Christ, be our King for ever.

3. As sons of a Father: thus we partake many things of the Divine nature. 1. Children have from

their fathers on earth generation, we from our Father in heaven regeneration; "We receive the adoption of sons," Gal. iv. 5. We are not natural sons; so is Christ only; but naturalized, as I may say, made his own by adoption and grace. "I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters," 2 Cor. vi. 18. 2. We have nutrition, and that both natural and supernatural. "I have nourished and brought up children," Isa. i. 2. He gives bread to nourish, not stones to choke; *beneficia, non veneficia*; fishes, not serpents, Matt. vii. 10. Thirdly, we have education. Earthly parents bring up their children to their own customs: Rachel, though she would go with her husband Jacob, yet would not leave her father's gods behind her. "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain," John iv. 20; therefore so may we. That which comes by tradition, is held inheritance. That which is patronized by usualness, slips into the opinion of lawfulness. Thus many children are made papists by the mother's side; and she is so herself, for no other reason but because her grandam was so. Thus whiles they follow the counsel of their mother on earth, they lose the blessing of their Father in heaven. But God brings up all his children after his own law: they are in a strange land, yet live after the laws of their own country, their conversation is in heaven.

God deals with us as Bernard observes Isaac did with his son Jacob, Gen. xxvii. First, "Come near, that I may feel thee, my son," ver. 21. Then, "Come near, and kiss me, my son," ver. 26. "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth," Cant. i. 2; that is, with his Spirit; for the Holy Ghost is *osculum Patris*, the kiss of God the Father. Then, *Benedicite*, he blesseth him, ver. 27; gives him a progress of grace, and that irrevocable, "he shall be blessed." Lastly, he gives consolation, and full confidence, that we boldly cry, "Abba, Father," Gal. iv. 6. This duplication, Father, Father, is pathetic and mystical. Pathetical: and so it insinuates our certainty, we are sure that God is our Father; and our fervency, that we be importunate, not taking a denial at our Father's hands: so Martyr. Mystical, as Augustine Paul, in using a Hebrew word and a Greek, signifies that there is no difference between Jew and Grecian; "For the same Lord over all, is rich unto all that call upon him," Rom. x. 12. Every Christian in the world may go "boldly unto the throne of grace," Heb. iv. 16. It is for a Saul to say, Pray for me; but he that is God's son, dares go himself without sending others. Let no terrors keep us from our Father. "I will arise and go to my father," Luke xv. 18. To such a corner Christ will communicate good things. "Daughter, be of good comfort," Matt. ix. 22. "Daughter," a word of great familiarity; "be of good comfort," a word of great security. "I ascend unto my Father, and your Father," John xx. 17. To his Father! what is this to us? Yea, also to your Father. He doth not say, I ascend to *our* Father; but to *my* Father, and *your* Father. He is in one respect my Father, in another yours: mine by nature, yours by grace. (August.)

Infinite good things we partake, if we be sons; but all lies in the assurance of this filialty. When God gives a man sanctity, he seems to say, "Thou art my son; this day have I begotten thee," Psal. ii. 7; when man apostatizes, Thou art not my son, this day have I lost thee. What say you to the covetous worldling? Is he the son of God, that is not charitable to the sons of God? King Richard the holy warrior, having taken a bishop in the field in coat-armour, was requested by the pope to release him, Send me my son. The king sends not the bishop, but his coat-armour to the pope, with this question, Is this thy son's coat? alluding to that of

Jacob's sons, when they had sold their brother Joseph, and dipped his garment in goats' blood; "This have we found; know now whether it be thy son's coat," Gen. xxxvii. 32. The pope being ashamed, returned his answer, that this was not the coat of any son of his. God's sons are known by their coat, that is, charity. Satan lays hold on the covetous oppressor, and makes him his captive: if God should now say, Deliver me my son; he would straight-away God the oppressor's coat, his injustice and extortion. Is this thy son's coat? No, God's children wear no such kind of garments: let him either strip off such robes, or perish with them. Let others be ambitious of great and glorious parentages; only, Lord, make us thy sons and daughters in Jesus Christ.

4. As fellows, in due measure, with God himself; "Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ," 1 John i. 3. We may have a society with man, this is requisite, for we are all of one mould; but to God, what all fellows? Yes, we have a fellowship with God; such is his mercy, not our merits. The proud gallant scorns the poor mechanic; What, are you my fellow? Yet, *Mors sceptris ligonibus aequal*, Death takes away difference between king and beggar, tumbles both the knight and the pawn into one bag. Well, let the world despise us, it is enough the Lord doth not disdain our fellowship. "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all," 2 Cor. xiii. 14.

There are divers sorts of fellowships.

Such as partake a mutual lot, as fellow-merchants in their adventures. We have thus a fellowship with God. If we rejoice, he joys in us, with us, makes us indeed rejoice in him; for Christ rejoiceth in the Christian, whensoever the Christian rejoiceth in Christ. That repenting son was not more glad that he had found his father, than the father was glad he had found his son, Luke xv. If we suffer, he suffers with us. Saul, thou persecutest me, saith Christ. He that did once suffer for us, doth still suffer in us. The usurer oppressing thee, takes away the goods of Christ, and shall be called to a strict account. There is *consortium*, the word by most translations here used.

Chamber fellows, such as lodge together; "Come, my Beloved, let us lodge in the villages," Cant. vii. 11. Where the chamber is a sanctified heart, the bed a pure faith, the pillow is the peace of conscience, the curtains like Solomon's, azure, purple, and scarlet. Azure, or sky-colour, noting our heavenly conversation; purple, our zeal to God's glory; scarlet, our charity: so love is praised to have a thread of scarlet in her lips. Thus now God is thy chamber fellow, and inhabits thy holy conscience; and hereafter thou shalt dwell together with him in everlasting rest.

Fellows in a journey: and thus we have Christ's company. Whilst they walked and talked, "Jesus himself drew near, and went with them," Luke xxiv. 15. They that will walk to Christ, shall have Christ walk with them. He is the truth, the way, and the life: they that faithfully seek the way of life, shall find the life of the way. The papists have great pilgrimages to shrines; Christ doth not travel with them; he hath no fellowship with them that give his honour to blocks and stones. Let my soul, on the holy feet of faith and obedience, travel toward Jerusalem: then Christ will say, Thou shalt have my company. The good Christian cannot in any country travel alone, he is sure of the fellowship of his Saviour.

Such as confer together: so we partake with God in a sweet and familiar discourse; "Come now, and

let us reason together, saith the Lord," Isa. i. 18. Tell me your griefs, saith Christ. Are you pained at the heart with true compunction for your sins? I will heal the broken-hearted. Are you smitten with vexations? I will bind up your wounds. Thus it is our part to acknowledge, his mercy to forgive. We speak to him by our prayers, he speaks to us by his comforts. We pour our grievances into his bosom, he pours his graces into our bosom. Many cannot hear Christ speaking comfort to them; no marvel, for they speak not for comfort to him. Strangeness doth lose acquaintance. We never came humble petitioners for grace to the mercy-seat, but we sped; if the Lord hath at some one time been extraordinarily bountiful to us, shall we diswont ourselves from his presence, be proud of our own stock, as if we needed him not? This is the way to lose him, and all comfort with him. God loves to have us talk with him: if we forget to pray for good, why should not he forget to do us good?

Such as feast together; thus we partake with God: If any man open unto me, I will come in and sup with him, and he shall sup with me, Rev. iii. 20. Here is a mutual supper; the confession of sins, that is our cheer; the remission of sins, that is Christ's cheer. We give him meat and drink, he gives us meat and drink. Our dishes are all salads, lilies, and fruits. "My Beloved is gone down into his garden, to the beds of spices, to feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies," Cant. vi. 2, the fruits of our righteousness. Our drink is penitent tears; though they be sharp to us, they are sweet to him. The tears of penitent sinners is the wine of angels, says a father; yea, wine for the Lord himself; not a tear falls, but he catcheth it in his own bottle. If we feast Christ, give him this drink. Let thy heart be a vine-grape, sorrow the wine-press; crush out this liquor, the Lord loves it. His meat to us is his own flesh; his drink, his blood; the bread of heaven, and the wine of blessedness. "Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life," John vi. 54. The temple is his banqueting-house, or wine-cellar; "He brought me to the banqueting-house," Cant. ii.

4. There he broacheth to us the sweet wines of his gospel and sacraments. Here is another fellowship, and so are we fellow-commoners with Jesus Christ. Indeed all the good cheer is his: alas, what have we of our own to make such a guest welcome? He may safely discommend our provision: let us not say, as some do to their guests, Welcome, but here is no good cheer for you, when secretly in their hearts they think there can be no better. Christ loves not so proud a mind, when the tongue says it is nothing, and the heart thinks it is too much. But plainly acknowledge thy poverty: if thou have any grace to feast him with, thank him for bringing it, and say in this truly, that he is come to his own cost. Yet thus he is pleased to feed on his own provision, and to call it thine. He feeds on ours; I have eaten honey, and drunk milk; we feed on his; "Eat, O friends; drink abundantly, O beloved," Cant. v. 1: drink liberally of it, for it is a cup of saving health to all nations.

Sworn brothers. Men not brothers by nature of blood, are made so by vow of love. Here is another fellowship; Christ hath vowed himself thy brother. "Both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren," Heb. ii. 11. Thou hast vowed thyself to Christ in baptism; keep thy vow, make good thy fellowship, lest thou be a vow-breaker. Thy sin is no less than perjury, if thou become his enemy to whom thou art a sworn brother.

Thus we partake of the Divine nature (with all reverence be it spoken) as fellows. But not to deny the King his supremacy, we are fellows with Christ in his joy, reserving the throne to himself. Yet he is pleased to promise us a consession with him in his throne; "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne," Rev. iii. 21. We have a partnership with him in the place of his kingdom, not inequality of reigning. The king sets a subject at his own table; yet must this subject still acknowledge his sovereign. Though we be co-heirs, let Christ be the elder Brother. Though we be made like to the angels, yet not like to the Lord of angels.

The wicked know not, care not for this fellowship; they do not like so Divine company; they cannot be merry if God be by. Alas! none know the sweetness of this partnership, but the partners. It is a new name, which no man knoweth but he that hath it, Rev. ii. 17. But he that hath it is truly merry, and keeps Hilary term all his life. "In thy presence is fulness of joy; and at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore," Psal. xvi. 11. God's company doth not only make us glad, but makes us good. Seneca said, that one special means to stay us from vice, was to think some grave men were in our company; *Semper eos tecum, quos verearis, habe*. But we have not only men and angels, but even God looking on us, and associating with us. Peter swore like a ruffian, and forswore like a renegade, till Christ looked on him, and then he wept.

There be divers fellowships in the world.

There is a generation of men that lavish their estates, as we say, fling the house out at the windows, that call themselves good fellows. But good fellows and evil men are incompatible. They are like Simeon and Levi, sworn brothers, but brethren in evil. Perhaps they have more society than honest men, but not so good society. Briers and thorns twine more together than good plants. God is not in this fellowship; you shall meet him at the church, not at the ale-house. But Satan puts in for a part; sometimes one drunkard plays the devil with another, in stabbing, or over-loading with drink; but if there be not always a personate devil, there is always a personal devil; Satan himself stands by. In this fellowship, riot is the host, drunkenness the guest, swearing keeps the reckoning, lust holds the door, and beggary pays the shot.

There is another fellowship, a mystical one, a mischievous one, the society of Jesuits; yet they write themselves, Of the fellowship of Jesus. What! no meaner? Would not Peter, nor Paul, nor Francis serve? No, none worthy of these men's company but Jesus. I persuade myself, he will give them little thanks for their familiarity. But do they not rather derive their names a *contrario*? Jesuits, not because fellows, but enemies, to Jesus; as the Romans took names from their conquests; Scipio Africanus, because he conquered Africa. Call him not Israel, but Jezreel: call them not Jesuits, but Jebusites. But Peter is the deputy of Jesus, and they are factors of Peter: indeed they uphold the chair of their imaginary Peter, and blow up other states with saltpetre. But sure Jesus was never a fellow-digger in their vaults, nor an engineer in their fire-works.

Well, thus Christ to the faithful vouchsafes his fellowship: he is "the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys," Cant. ii. 1; not a garden-flower enclosed, but he grows in the field; his company is easily had, if our faith invites him. If thou wilt be of one heart, thou shalt be of one fellowship, with him. Let thy will and obedience agree with his commandments, and then his sweet presence shall accompany thy conscience for ever. Complain not though other

men blanch thee, so long as thou hast the fellowship of Jesus Christ.

5. As members of a Head; and thus we nearly partake of the Divine nature. "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular," 1 Cor. xii. 27. Christ is the Head, the church is the body, the faithful are the members. What doth the Head impart to the body? 1. Sense. He gives us eyes: we see not the mysteries of salvation without him. Lord, enlighten mine eyes. Ears: we may hear the gospel of life, but not the life of the gospel, without him. Lord, open mine ears. Taste: for we may have the cup of blessing held to our mouth, and yet cannot taste the sweets of grace without him. Lord, make me to relish thy heavenly gift. Feeling: man's brain is said to have no feeling in itself, yet to give feeling to all parts; but Christ hath a feeling of our infirmities, and gives us a feeling of our own. We are naturally dead, and cannot feel our misery: it is Christ our Head that gives the life of sense, and the sense of life. 2. Understanding. The head is the seat of understanding; we can have no comfortable knowledge of God but by Christ. "Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us," John xiv. 8: do thou show us, we can see nothing but by thy light. This is "the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," John i. 9. Hence it is, that no member can be ignorant, because he is joined to the Head. Though they cannot know so much as the Head, yet they shall know so much as shall make them blessed. 3. Motion: Christ our Head gives us motion. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me," John xii. 32. If the Head be gone before, the members must needs follow after. We have moved from God by nature, Acts xvii. 28; but to move to that which is good, from God by Christ. 4. Lastly, life itself; "for we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones," Eph. v. 30. There is a quarrel between philosophers and physicians about the principal seat of life, whether it be in the heart or in the head. But in divinity the case is clear, for all our life is from our Head. "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God," Gal. ii. 20. Our breath is in our bodies; the life of our souls is in heaven. "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God," Col. iii. 3. Our bodies move on earth, our hearts dwell in heaven. (Anselm.)

Let us be sure we are members of Christ, then sure that we are partakers of the Divine nature. Who is sure of that? Not the adulterer; for he takes the members of Christ, and makes them the members of an harlot, 1 Cor. vi. 15: he hath lost the ligaments of purity. Not the oppressor; he hath lost the ligaments of charity: for he that is not a good member of the commonwealth is not a true member of Christ; and if the usurer can prove himself a good member of his country, I will yield he may be a member of the church. Not the drunkard; he hath lost the ligaments of sobriety: our heavenly Head hath no staggering members. It will be very hard for a man to reel into heaven. Not the contentions; for he hath lost the ligaments of concord, and broken the unity of the Spirit, which is in the bond of peace, Eph. iv. 3. That religion that is derived from Christ, preserves unity with Christians. He that will not keep the peace of God, shall not be kept by the God of peace. Not the furious striker, who if he receives words, returns wounds: he is no member of Christ, for one member doth not strike another. Not the repiner; for the eye says not to the hand, I have no need of thee, 1 Cor. xii. 21. The foot will not invade the office of the ear, nor the arms of the lips. The magistrate will not administer the sacraments,

nor the minister bench it. Not the swearer; for he is no member that strikes the Head. If we be members, the passion of others will work compassion in us.

6. As branches of a Vine; and so we partake of the Divine nature. "I am the true vine," saith Christ, John xv.: a true vine indeed; for, 1. He was set on a blessed ground, the womb of the virgin, whom all generations shall call blessed, Luke i. 48. In this fruit all nations are blessed. 2. He was cut and pruned, wounded for our transgressions, till there ran out the life with blood, that was to us the blood of life. 3. He was dunged, soiled with the filthy excrements of the Jews: his mouth prays for them, their mouths spit on him. 4. He was digged, his side opened with a spear, his hands and feet with nails; "They *digged* my hands and my feet," Psal. xxii. 16. 5. As the vine is fastened to some wood or wall, so was Christ fixed to his cross, till death and hell had done their worst. Yet there is still life in him, and he spreads this life to his branches, far and wide; sending out his boughs unto the sea, and his branches unto the river, Psal. lxxx. 11. We are all naturally dry sticks, fit for nothing but the fire; but being ingrafted into him, there is the living sap of grace derived to us. "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide me," John xv. 4. This, saith St. Augustine, comforts the poor publican, confounds the proud Pharisee. *Qui rivet in foliis, venit a radicibus humor.*

This also we are partakers. There is a three-fold Divine union. 1. Essential; so God the Father is one with the Son and the Holy Ghost. 2. Personal; so God's Son is united to human nature. 3. Mystical; so the faithful are united to Christ. "He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit," 1 Cor. vi. 17. This is infinite comfort; we cannot want grace and felicity, unless Jesus Christ should want it. Whatsoever the Divine nature hath communicable to man, we participate by being branches of this Vine. Perhaps he doth cut us till we weep and bleed; he purgeth us, but to good purpose, that we might bring forth more grapes, John xv. 2; for we are most fruitful under the cross. Such is the pity of our heavenly Father to us, that even his anger proceeds from mercy; he scourgeth the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of Jesus Christ, 1 Cor. v. 5. Yea, Lord, cut us even till we weep and bleed, so we may partake thy joy and glory in heaven.

7. As spouses of one Husband, Christ: this is a near partaking. "A man shall be joined to his wife, and they two shall be one flesh," Eph. v. 31. The husband and the wife are one flesh, the believer and Christ are one spirit. This is an ineffable mystery; my heart feels it, no tongue can express it. Here all language is lost, and admiration seals up every lip; we may drowsily hear it, and coldly be affected with it; but let me say, principalities and powers, nature and reason, men and angels, stand amazed at it. But what do we thus partake of the Divine nature, by this marriage to Christ? 1. We have his kisses; and this is the earnest of love and faithfulness; *philia*, a kiss, of *phileo*, to love; whom God kisseth, he loveth; as the father welcomed his returning son, he "fell on his neck, and kissed him," Luke x. 20. No token of affection more lively, more lovely than a kiss. 2. His embracings. His left hand is under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me, Cant. viii. 3. God is said to have a right hand and a left, Prov. iii. 16; with riches and honours, which are the gifts of his left hand, he lifts up my dejected head; with eternal life, which is the gift of his right hand, he embraceth my sides for ever. Whoso puts his trust in the Lord, mercy em-

braceth him on every side, Psal. xxxii. 10. 3. We sleep with him; "Our bed is green," Cant. i. 16. Make ready his bed, if thou wouldst have his company; sweep the chamber of thy heart from all the dust of evil thoughts, and annoyance of lusts; give him fine linen, innocency of spirit: a pillow of charity; a covering of obedience to keep him warm; and let the down-bed of thy faith be prepared; then he will lodge with thee. 4. He gives his spouse a jointure or portion. As in the solemnizing of a marriage on earth, the husband says to his wife, With all my worldly goods I thee endow; so Christ endows us with his riches of glory. "My Beloved is mine, and I am his," Cant. ii. 16. Blessed exchange! he is ours, we are his; yea, all ours are made his, all his is made ours. We brought him a portion of wickedness, of wretchedness; the fee-simple of sin, death, and hell; he bore all those torments, and so took them that he took them away. He brings us another manner of jointure or endowment; justification, sanctification, freedom, grace, and peace on earth, glory and joy in heaven. Here is a blessed wedding. In our marriages we have these requirable things; the bridegroom, the bride, the father to give the bride, the priest to tie the knot, the witnesses, and the wedding ring. Here the bridegroom is Christ, the bride the church, the giver God the Father. (Who gives this poor beggar woman, man's soul, to be married to this rich Man, this Prince? God himself.) The priest that makes the knot is the Holy Ghost, he is the sealer of this union; the witnesses are angels; the wedding ring is our faith. Dost thou plead, thy soul is married to Christ? show me thy wedding ring, look well to thy faith.

The best way to reconcile two disagreeing families or enemy kingdoms, is to make a marriage between them; for the uniting of bloods ends all quarrels. We were all adversaries to God, and he was ready to fight against us with eternal death; how should peace be made but by a marriage? So Hamor persuaded the Shechemites; "Let us take their daughters to us for wives, and give them our daughters;" so shall we have peace, Gen. xxxiv. 21. Lo, the King of heaven gives his only Son to mortal man's daughter, that is, his soul; and though she were a miserable beggar, jointures her in his own kingdom. Be not then married to the world, it is a misshapen stigmatic; not to lust, it is a black and leprous witch; not to the devil, he is a foul and ugly monster; run not greedily after riches, pleasures, and wantonnesses; remember thy chaste love to thy one and own Husband: "I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ," 2 Cor. xi. 2. Abhor bigamy, lest he divorce thee; have one Husband; the bed brooks no rivals. Raise thy affections above a common pitch, and let thy soul bear herself as the spouse of the great King. It is a wonderful joy that a man hath with the wife of his youth; but it is a greater joy in being spouses to Christ: the faithful soul knows only the sweetness of his embraces. But the greatest of all is to be married to him in heaven: "Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb," Rev. xix. 9. Only that marriage is the merry age, where shall be joy, great joy, eternal joy; our music shall be the choir of heaven, and our banquet everlasting glory.

I have been over prolix in this point of partaking the Divine nature; but it is tedious only to those that have no right in this participation. Let me excuse myself; my tongue followed my heart, and I could not but speak what was my comfort to feel. It hath given sweet content to my own spirit; God grant it may give no less consolation to others. This participation is not a transfusion of the Divine essence or

nature into us; but a communication of the manifold blessings wrought out by Christ. Of nothing, we have being; of being worse than nothing, we are restored to God's image; formed with reason above the creature, and reformed with grace above reason: now immortal in our souls, hereafter to be immortal in our bodies. What honour, what glory is this, that a man of dust, a worm creeping out of the mud, *audet erectos ad sidera tollere cultus*, should look up unto heaven, and call the omnipotent God his Father! How gracious is this promise! how glorious this participation! Let not the blind judgments of the world trouble us; we believe and know, know and feel, feel and joy that we are partakers of the Divine nature. We might here infer with Athanasius, that Christ is the same substance and nature with the Father; because they that are partakers of the Son, are also partakers of the Divine nature. (Contr. Arrian, Orat. 2.) He says further, that the beginning of this partaking, is by the consignment of the Holy Spirit in our baptism. (Epist. ad Scrap.) Ambrose refels the Arians from this scripture, who condemn the voice of substance and nature in Divine things; as if Christ could be the Son of God, and not the substance of God. But if the name of substance or nature trouble them, let this text satisfy them. (De Fide ad Grat. lib. 1. cap. 9.) He adds, who can deny the Holy Ghost to be equal with the Father or the Son, whenas it is his work whereby we get a participation of the Divine nature? (De Spir. Sanc. lib. 1. cap. 2.) Cyril says, that the faithful communicant, in receiving the sacrament, is made partaker of the Divine nature. (Cyril. Ieros. Catech. 4. Mystag.) Leo from hence takes occasion to exhort us to piety and holy life: Remember whose thou art, the member of Christ, and temple of the blessed Spirit: do not drive away so sweet an inhabitant by thy sins, and again subject thyself to the devil's servitude. (Ser. 1. de Nat. Dom.) To the same purpose speaks Cyrillus, (Alex. lib. 4. in Levit.) and Origen, (in Levit. Homil. 4.) All of them striving to show us, that we by faith partake of Christ's flesh, by his flesh of his soul, by both of his Spirit, by all of his Deity.

Thus you have seen the conveyance and the inheritance. In the one was a word of promise; in the other a word of preferment. Now all these privileges we partake as we are true Christians. Plato said he was beholden to nature for three things: first, that she had made him a man, not a beast. Next, that she had made him a man, not a woman: for *mulier quasi mollior, or mollis aer*; but *vires in viris, vera sedes virum, sexus solet esse virorum*. Lastly, that she had made him a Greek, not a barbarian. Well, in all these preferments he acknowledged himself but beholden to nature; and for all these we, as well as he, are beholden to the God of nature. But there is a fourth thing, for which, as he to Greece, so we must be thankful to grace; that we are not only men, and not beasts; Greeks, that is, knowing, and not ignorants; or philosophers, and not fools; but yet infinitely more, that we are Christians, and not infidels. By this only we partake of the Divine nature; only glory in this. "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, saith the Lord." Jer. ix. 23. 24. Nothing is more worthy thy pride, than that which will make thee most humble if thou hast it: that thou art a Christian. When an ambassador told Henry the fourth, that magnificent king of France, concerning the king of Spain's ample dominions: first, saith he, he is king of Spain. Is he so, saith Henry?

and I am king of France. But, saith the other, he is king of Portugal: And I am king of France, saith Henry. He is king of Naples: And I am king of France. He is king of Sicily: And I am king of France. He is king of Nova Hispania: And I am king of France. He is king of the West Indies: And still, I am king of France. He thought the kingdom of France equivalent to all these. To what purpose is all this? Yes, if thou apply it rightly. Another hath great learning and wit: Well, I am a Christian. Such a one hath great honours: I am a Christian. Another hath abundance of riches: I am a Christian. That man hath large dominions: Well, I have more in heaven, I am a Christian. He is of the blood royal, partakes the nature of kings: Yet I partake of the nature Divine, am of the blood royal of Jesus Christ, I am a Christian. Let them glory in their great and honourable relations, it shall content our souls that we partake of thy Divine nature, O Jesus Christ!

"Having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." This is the third main point, our deliverance. It hath the last place in the words, not so in effect with us; we must first escape this corruption, before we can come to that Divine participation. As you have seen what you are, partakers of the nature of God; so now see what you were, soiled with the corruption of lusts: "Such were you; but ye are washed," &c. 1 Cor. vi. 11. In this deliverance we considered two general parts, a discovery, and a recovery; a discovery of great danger, a recovery from that danger. The danger discovered was the corruption of lust; the deliverance is specified, an escaping. In the danger or wretched estate wherein they naturally stood, consider, 1. The infection, corruption of lust. 2. The dispersion, through the world. For the infection, conceive in it two things: 1. *Tumorem*, the corruption. 2. *Humorem*, the lust. The one that is bred, the other whereby it is fed. In all we shall find, that the greatness of the danger commands the greatness of our deliverance.

"Corruption;" this is the tumour, a universal disease. All flesh have corrupted their ways. This monster is not coagulated all at once; but

Gradatim spargere vires:

Prorsus et ex multis unum coalescere morbum.

Stone after stone, Babel is builded: stick after stick, the burning pile is made up: from the confluence of many diseases, ariseth death.

First, it gets into the thoughts, that the imaginations of the heart are evil, Gen. vi. 5. This we think little danger; but when it hath got the citadel, it commands all the sconces, and forts, and guards. The heart is a castle, the outward senses are the gates. When it hath got into the castle, the watchmen were to blame, that let the enemy in. *Turpius ejicitur, quam non admittitur hospes*. These be *partus mentis, primogeniti Egypti*: if thou canst not hinder the conception of sin, but it must be borne; yet, like the midwives of Egypt, despatch it betimes, lest it despatch thee. For "lust, when it hath conceived, bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death," Jam. i. 15. Spare not the little Babylonians, lest they one day grow great enough to vanquish Israel. Kill the young wolves, and secure thy flock: destroy the brood of the viper: let it never come to this, I would I had prevented it. Sin is easily committed in act, if admitted in thought. Labour first to purge thy heart from this corruption: let not thy "vain thoughts lodge within thee," Jer. iv. 14. Job, though he were well persuaded of his children in respect of their outward demeanour, yet he doubted their hearts, "It may be that my sons

have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts," Job i. 5. "Keep thy heart with all diligence," Prov. iv. 23: the hands and feet must be well guarded and regarded, but especially look to thy heart. Let thy thoughts examine thy thoughts: thy conscience must not only extend to deeds and words, but even to secret thoughts. They that are accustomed to evil thoughts, can seldom bring forth good words, never good deeds. As the corn is, so will the flour be: if the meal be bad, the fault is not in the millstones that grind it, but in the miller that put in such base corn. All thy senses and members are but the millstones: the heart is the miller: if thy words and works be ill meal, thank the miller, thy heart, for such corrupt thoughts. As the wood is, so will the fire be: if it be wet and stinking wood, look for an unsavoury and unwholesome fire: if the wood be sweet and dry, it will perfume the room with a sweet and pleasant air. Such fuel as you lay on your thoughts, such fire shall you have in your actions. There is a knowledge projected, which only looks upon outward things: and even beasts do in some measure participate this with men. There is a knowledge reflected, that inwardly beholds a man's self. Many men know many things, but they know not themselves. Man's knowledge should not be a gadding harlot, whose feet cannot keep within doors; but a good housewife to stay at home. When Dinah would be rambling abroad, to see fashions, and to observe the ladies of the land, she was defouled by Shechem, Gen. xxxiv.: if our affections be noctivagant, night-walkers, they will easily come home quick with child.

Next, this corruption gets into the senses. It passeth through the eye. "Death is come up into our windows, and is entered into our palaces, to cut off the children from without, and the young men in the streets," Jer. ix. 21. It hath terrible effects; it invades the palaces, the secret chambers of the heart; *abscondit pueros*, it cuts off the little masculine virtues of the soul; yea, even the young men, the graces that begin to get strength in us. All this death comes in at the window, that is, the eye. *Cur obliqui vidi, cur noxia lumina feci?* Mine eye hath betrayed my soul. Epiphanius gives an apt moral reason, why, in the old law, when a dead corpse passed by any house, they were commanded to shut their doors and windows. When a work of death, abhorred sin, is proposed, shut both the doors, your mouths, and the windows, your eyes. It is said that Judith's pantofles ravished Holofernes' eyes; her sandals took him, Jud. xvi. 9. What good men tread under their feet, that wicked men are seduced by. Therefore says Solomon, Look not on the colour of the wine, when it moveth itself aright, Prov. xxiii. 31: be not tempted with the colour or dancing of it in the cup. *Nimium ne credas colori*. That sense is necessary to the sin, that opens the door, and lets the thief come in. Iniquity is the thief, the eye is the gate; therefore says Job, "I have made a covenant with mine eyes." Adultery is such an ugly monster, that it could never enter the city of the heart, unless it did first corrupt the watch. Lord, "turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity," Psal. cxix. 37. The ear is another passage: through that door Satan often sends in his errand. Woe is me, because I have heard that which made me either angry or guilty! Keep him out, and be safe: stop thine ears to his charms, so shall he not touch thy heart. But he cries to the porter, Let me but come in, I will desire no more: do but give him the hearing, it is sufficient to take thy soul.

It stays not wholly in the senses, but gets also into the tongue; and this must needs babble the corrup-

tion. Democritus called speech the image of life: and another used to say, Speak, that I may know what thou art. "A fool uttereth all his mind," Prov. xxix. 11. As wise men carry their mouths in their hearts, so fools carry their hearts in their mouths. Fools first speak, and then deliberate: they bluster out their follies. A wicked man bears his words in his mouth, as a dog doth an arrow in his ribs, never rests till it be drawn out. He is pregnant of slander or blasphemy, and either he must be delivered, or he will burst. O evil servant, out of thy own mouth I will judge thee, saith God. God doth judge, and man may guess. Diogenes said, You will choose men to service before you hear them speak, yet will not buy an earthen pot before you try it by the sound. A bell may have a crack, and you cannot see it, but take the clapper, and strike it, you shall soon perceive it is flawed. The damsel told Peter, Sure thou art of Galilee, for thy speech bewrayeth thee. Many lap the water, bending on their knees; none but a right Gileadite can without hisping pronounce Shibboleth.

Lastly, you shall find it in the hands too, and there it exceeds itself: in the heart it is but corruption, in the hands it is eruption. *Eo ungue loquentur*, you may know a covetous wolf by his paws. A troubled fountain sends forth impure streams: an evil heart hath a most evil hand. If the hand grope for a bribe, as Felix did of Paul, Acts xxiv. there is a most unjust heart. If the hand scramble for wealth, there is a covetous heart. If the hand be still striking and stabbing, there is a bloody heart. The actions of the hands are so many characters, whereby we may spell the meaning of the heart. The hands speak a man. What a man does, I am sure he thinks, not evermore what he says. Saul's tongue could say, "Blessed be thou of the Lord: I have performed the commandment of the Lord," 1 Sam. xv. 13. But Samuel heard the language of his hands; "What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?" ver. 14. The corruption that is secreted in the heart, is declared by the hand. The deaf man would think the air quiet: but he that hears it thunder, knows it is troubled. Many look fair and sky-coloured in their profession, but they thunder in their works. They imagine mischief, and practise it, "because it is in the power of their hand," Micah ii. 1. They have breath as sweet as sirens', but their deeds leave a stink behind them.

Now swell all these corruptions into one imposthumated head, and here is not only the corruption of the world, but a world of corruption: as the prophet calls Jerusalem and Samaria, not only sinners but sins, Micah i. 10; or as Lucan speaks of a wounded body; *Totum est pro culcere corpus*. The whole body was as one wound. A land overflowed with sin is said to be all sea: so a heart overrun with sin is all sin. That is land still, and this is a heart still: but by reason of this deluge we say, that is all sea, this is all sin. And this corruption is so pleasing to the wicked, that they think it health itself. Men take such delight in this bestiality, that, as Pliny reports, Grilbus being transformed to a hog, would not endure to be turned to a man again. When God offers the drunkard to make him sober, no, he thanks him, he is better as he is. Doth he undertake to let out the usurer's corruption by charity? no, he had rather be a usurer still.

Divers uses are to be made of this proposition: which are generally two-fold; concerning others, concerning ourselves. Concerning others, that we flee the persons in whom this corruption rages; as being willing to avoid the plague, we do balk the

house wherein the infection dwells. Miserable folly ! we hate the plague which may kill our bodies, we love the plague which may spill our souls. The condition of sin is better than the condition of sickness. (Nazian.) For if a man lie sick in the streets, others are dainty and shun him, walking aloof. But let a rich man be an adulterer, a swearer, a usurer, we close with him; yet only of these we have a charge, not to accompany them. Which of these corruptions, in your own souls, do you think the worst ? To see this corruption, the Lord give us eyes ; to let out this corruption, prick our hearts ; and from this corruption, save our souls.

Concerning ourselves : better not know our disease, than no means to cure it. For this purpose, something must be done upon us, something by us. The thing to be done to us, which may properly get out this natural corruption, is salting. For salt doth not only preserve from corruption, but also eat out corruption. It hath divers effects, fit to shadow out the work of the Spirit on us for this purpose. First, it preserves from corruption and rottenness : the Egyptians used to wrap their dead bodies in salt. All are corrupted, subject to rottenness, and need salting. The ministers of the gospel are the " salt of the earth," Matt. v. 13. It is not enough to have quirks of wit, but soundness of doctrine. They that preach, not only after a new method, but new things, swell your brains, but leave your hearts empty ; they do not salt you. That is good salt, which keeps your souls from stinking before God. Secondly, it is searching, and goes to the quick : there must be acrimony in salt, else it is not good. Do we cut, and fret, and trouble you : remember we are salt, the sharper the better. Indeed a man may over-powder, and there is discretion in salting. There are some that have had too much salt, till they are ready to throw the church out at the windows : the name of a bishop frights them, a surplice makes them run ; they fear a cross worse than the devil does. These are over-powdered, but with ill salt ; they are corrupt, and must be new salted. There is no medicine profitable, but it is sharp : our acrimony is good, though thereby we endanger the loss of your loves. This should not make you fret at us, but at your own sins. " I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance," 2 Cor. vii. 9. If you hear these things sorrowing, give me thanks for it, saith Chrysostom. Show yourselves *gratos non gratos*. The preacher's reproof is like salt, it may bite ; but better sharp corrosives, than festering wounds. I am most loved where I am most salted. (Bernard.) At last you will say with David, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, that God of all grace, that hath sent thee to meet me this day, with thy admonition. Blessed be thy advice, the doctrine thou hast preached ; and blessed be thou, which hast kept me this day from shedding blood, 1 Sam. xxv. 32, 33 : even a benediction upon thy person, that hast been the instrument of preventing my sin, by thy salting. There is nothing more against the grain of our affections at first ; but when by this means we shall find ourselves preserved to heaven, where no corruption shall enter, for this salting we shall thank the Lord. Lastly, salt gives a taste or relish to another thing. " Can that which is unsavoury be eaten without salt ?" Job vi. 6. Corruption shall not inherit in corruption, 1 Cor. xv. 50. Without this salt there is no taste in us. Unsavoury meat is called foolish meat : *Ut sapientia futuræ fabrorum prandia betæ*. (Martial. lib. 13. ep. 13.) One manner of God's entering into covenant was called, the " covenant of salt," for the perpetuity of it, Numb. xviii. 19. So were the sacrifices seasoned in the old law, Lev. ii. 13 ; so

must every soul be relished in the gospel ; " Every one shall be salted with fire," Mark ix. 49. In that was the covenant of salt, in this, the salt of the covenant. Love them best that salt you most. Had you rather stink than be salted, and so presented a service to God. The sermon may delight us, but not better us, that hath no salt in it. *Nulla est in tanto corpore mica salis*. (Catull.) If thou yet find no good by thy pastor, yet love him, in hope of the good he may do thee.

Thus, to get out this corruption, we see what is to be done on us : now what is to be done by us ? Two things ; a vision of it, and a provision against it.

First, we must endeavour to see it. Physicians say, if the disease be once known, the cure is half done. If we could see corruption in the true form, we would loathe it : but as the conjured devil appears not to the necromancer in hideous and frightful shapes, but in some familiar representation ; so vice shows itself in forms most delectable to flesh and blood. If half so much were known to man as God knows, we would hang down our heads for shame. Man's heart is beyond all geometry ; " deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked : who can know it ?" No man can measure it, but he only that spans the heavens : " I the Lord search the heart," Jer. xvii. 9, 10. It is a little piece of flesh, it will scarce give a kite her breakfast, yet fills the whole world with corruption. Therefore learn to see this corruption. Sin in itself is not to be seen ; therefore behold it *in concretis* : the tyrant like a lion, the fraudulent like a fox, the lustful a goat, the drunkard a hog, the oppressor a wolf, the traitor a devil.

If we would see any thing, it is requisite that the object be rightly placed ; not behind us, not beside us. Not behind us, there we cannot see it. We hang other men's faults at the pommel of the saddle, put our own in the cloak-bag behind us. Like barbers, that trim all men but themselves. Not beside us. If thou wouldst plainly behold an object on this side of the room, thou must go on the other side. Wouldst thou see the corruption of pride ? thou canst never do it so long as thou art proud ; thou standest on the same side. Go on the contrary side, that is, to humility, then thou shalt behold pride in her gaudy and ridiculous colours. Wouldst thou see the corruption of adultery ? thou canst not so long as thou art an adulterer ; the harlot is on the same side with thee. Go over the way to chastity, and there see the harlot in her proper and foul deformity. Desirest thou to contemplate the sordid corruption of drunkenness ? thou canst never do it so long as thou art drunken ; thou and thy cups are both of one side. Go and stand *in opposito*, to sobriety : then thou shalt see a blear eye, a reeling foot, a stammering tongue ; thou wilt abhor it. Wouldst thou grow into dislike of usury ? never so long as thou art a usurer. Go on the other side, to charity ; then see a covetous heart, an oppressing hand, an unquiet conscience. It is impossible to discern the tetrical and horrid countenance of sin, so long as thou sidest with it : set thyself against it by repentance, and thy dislike will be greater than ever was thy love.

Next, when thou hast discovered it, strive to expel it : this is not done by nature ; for nature, according to the temperature of bodies, increaseth this corruption. The Italians have a proverb, If little men were patient, if great men were valiant, and red men were loyal, all the world would be equal. The same causes in nature that concur to such a constitution, concur to such a corruption. Therefore they say, From a white Spaniard, a black German, and a red

Italian, *libera nos Domine*, good Lord, deliver us. And we in England confess much trust or danger in men according to their complexions. To a red man read thy read; with a brown man break thy bread; from a pale man still remove; from a black man keep thy love. But this is only according to nature; for grace can alter nature, and purge out this original corruption. When an astrologer told a cardinal to what misfortunes he was born; he answered, But I am new-born, and the good of my second birth hath crossed the bad of my first. Humours cannot be durable, because their prime matter is capable of so many forms and changes; but graces, having their root in the Deity, must needs be eternal, as is their Author. Strive then to cast out nature by grace, corruption by Christ. Do not keep it in, but cast it out. A wicked man may restrain evil, as do the godly; but here is the difference, that man keeps in corruption, this kills corruption; only to refrain evil is to be evil still. Haman was angry for want of Mordecai's reverence, yet he smothered the fire of his wrath, which nothing but the last drop of every Jew's blood could extinguish, *Esth. iii. 6*. The good man doth not only check it, but choke it. If he cannot nullify sin, he will mortify it; that this corruption shall never hurt him, shall never please him. And when he hath gotten this upper hand of it, he never loseth it; for if it be forborn, it will return. Corruption is like a candle new put out, it is soon lighted again; if Satan but blow upon it, its own heat inflames it. Let us therefore always be tilling the paradise of our souls with good works, that God may delight to walk there. Will Christ himself become the door-keeper of the heart? he will be as ready to be the door-keeper of our house, to keep out our enemies, as David was willing to be the door-keeper of God's house, to let in his friends. It is only the Lord, who, with the sweet breath and perfume of his Holy Spirit, doth cleanse the air of our hearts from this corruption. We see our duty, to cast it out; now let me add two circumstances; when, and whence.

First, when we must cast it forth; and that, I. Whilst corruption is young. Kill the enemy whilst he is young, that he may leave no posterity to hurt thee. (Hieron.) Sin long customed, is hardly conquered. Frequent actions constitute a habit, whether in good or ill. He that hath done well once, shall more easily do it the next time. He that hath done evil once, shall more hardly resist it at the next assault. There are evils that naturally grow in us, and evils that we sow in ourselves. Whatsoever grows of its own accord, let us strive to kill; but sow none. Suppress the beginnings of evil. Sin is like a nettle, the older it is, the harder it is killed. Well hath our church ordered that preparative every morning prayer: "To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." 2. Whilst we are young; for corruption grows the older the stronger, and the older the weaker. Whom thou being young entertainest for thy play-fellow, when thou art old thou shalt find thy master. Our Saviour began the work of our salvation whilst he was very young. The very first day that great Prince was courted in a stable; he shed some blood in his circumcision when he was but eight days old. And is it too early for us, being young, to work out our own salvation? Shall Satan have the rose-buds, and God only the stalk? Satan the veins full of blood, bones full of marrow, God a carcase? We vowed in our baptism, all the days of our life to his service; for shame let us not, Ananias-like, keep back part of the price. "If ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil?" *Mal. i. 8*. The go-

vemor of your bodies will none of it; will the Governor of your souls accept it? Serve God in old age? a sweet piece of service! If God come in youth, and find no fruit, beware the fig-tree's curse, "Never fruit grow on thee hereafter." The sealing of a bond without a time set, makes the debt presently due. God doth not bid the drunkard abstain when he can drink no more; nor the usurer leave oppressing when his bags be full. To leave sin when sin leaves us, will never pass for true repentance.

Next, whence we must cast it forth; out of the heart. For as in generation, so in regeneration, life begins at the heart. Now to cast it quite out from thence, that no dregs remain, this is not possible on earth; but the strength and principality of it. As when many birds are caught in a net, if a pelican or some great fowl can break the net, and get out, all the little birds follow; so cast out the grand corruption, that is most predominant; as lust in the adulterer, covetousness in the worldling, pride in the haughty; then all the inferior will follow; as if the master be dead, all the servants will attend the funeral. If it cannot wholly be now buried, it shall be one day. God suffers sin in his chosen till the last, that then they may have a full triumph. When the five kings were hid in a cave at Makkedah, Joshua charged the soldiers to pursue their enemies, and consume them; for the kings, he brought them out at evening, and then made his men of war set their feet on the necks of them, *Josh. x*. So at evening you shall set your triumphant feet on the necks of these tyrants, having first captivated them, and slain your enemies with the sword of mortification. Yea, God shall shortly tread Satan himself under your feet, *Rom. xvi. 20*, and give you a full victory in Christ.

"Lust." We perceive the tumour that is bred, now look upon the humour whereby it is fed. Lust, concupiscence in itself, as it is a faculty of the soul, and gift of God, is not sin; but may be the hand of virtue, or the instrument whereby she works. Keep her at home, and set her on work, to light the candle, and sweep the house; let her be under the correction of grace, and she may prove a chaste virgin, fit to meet the Bridegroom at his coming. Lust is in itself as they write of the planet Mercury in the horoscope of man's nativity; if it be joined with a good planet it makes it better; if with a bad one, it makes it worse. There is a lusting of the Spirit; for "the Spirit lusteth against the flesh," *Gal. v. 17*. But it is most commonly taken in the worse sense, and so two ways; strictly, and largely, or in the full scope.

Strictly, it is taken for the sin of uncleanness; which albeit God hath in so many places threatened to confound, yet that filthiness which God hath condemned is not without its patrons. Such are, first, libertines, and they will have Scripture for it. Hosea was commanded by God to take a wife of whoredoms, *Hos. i. 2*. Some answer, this was a figure, not a fact; not a history, but a mystery; that God would cast off his old wife, the church of the Jews, for their whoredoms, and choose a new one, even a wife of fornications, the church of the Gentiles; that he might sanctify it, and present it to himself a glorious church, *Eph. v. 27*. So the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband, *1 Cor. vii. 14*. But grant it a history, yet was not the prophet to be blamed, that of an impious strumpet he made a chaste wife; but rather they that of chaste wives make impudent strumpets; which is the condition of these times. Howsoever, to the prophet this act was commanded; to all us, the like is forbidden.

The other defenders of incontinency are the papists; and that not only with arguments, but with authority. Their common plea is, that in hot coun-

tries they are necessary evils: but by their leave Israel was a hotter climate than Italy; yet, "There shall be no whore of the daughters of Israel," Deut. xxiii. 17. But they cite Augustine, Take away whores, and wear your wives; that were the way to make stew of your own houses. This might Augustine say, but St. Augustine never said it. Such a gallant he might be in his unruly youth; but after that same *tolle et lege*, when he lighted upon that text, Rom. xiii. 13, no more chambering and wantonness now, but he put on the Lord Jesus, and disclaimed the lusts of the flesh. He confesses, Indeed I did once beg of God the gift of continency; but to tell truth, I desired that he should not hear me: I had rather it might then be satisfied, than mortified. (Confes. l. 8. c. 7.) But we justly abandon that remedy, that is worse than the disease. As an emperor said of the means prescribed him to cure his leprosy, which was the blood of infants, I had rather be sick still, than be recovered by such a medicine. Thus they that put away honest wives and go to harlots, deal as wisely as he that cuts off his own legs to go upon crutches. *Causa patrocínio non bona peior erit.*

This lust is a sin hardly subdued. Old Lot, whom all the fire that consumed Sodom could not touch, yet was inflamed with his own heat. Ambrose saith of Samson, He could choke a lion, not his lust. Another of Hercules,

*Lenam non potuit, potuit superare lenam;
Quem fera non valuit vincere, vicit Hera,*

He found the lioness weaker than his lust, and no beast so savage as his harlot. Lust is a hellish fire, whose fuel is fulness of bread and idleness, evil words the sparks, infamy the smoke, pollution the ashes, the end hell. For this sin God rained fire and brimstone upon Sodom; he sent down hell out of heaven. (Salvian.) The delight is short, a minute determines it; the torment is everlasting, no worlds of ages shall end it. Plutarch writes of Lysimachus, who being besieged, himself and all his people ready to perish by thirst, gave up the keys of his city to the enemy for one cup of cold water: when he had tasted this cold comfort, he cried out, Oh that for so short a pleasure of a king, I should be made a slave! So the pleasure of adultery is short, the punishment of the adulterer is everlasting. (Hieron.) Consider this lust in the body, as a pot boiling on the fire: it may be two ways cooled.

First, by taking away the fuel. Uncleanliness is the daughter of surfeit. That harlot breeds bastards, and lays them at the rioter's door; the soul stands charged to answer what the body does. When the mouth is made a tunnel, the throat a wine pipe, and the stomach a vat, wantonness *bien venu*. After gluttony and drunkenness follows chambering and wantonness, Rom. xiii. 13. Gregory observes, that the chief of the cooks, which was Nebuzaradan, first overthrew the walls of Jerusalem, and first put fire to the temple. By the chief of the cooks, he understands gluttony; by the walls, our senses; by the temple, our heart: riot gives the first overthrow to all these.

Secondly, the pot is cooled by pouring cold water into it: only abundance of sorrowful tears can put out this unruly fire. The Amalekites had spoiled Ziklag, and taken their wives and their children prisoners; which when David and his people found, they wept till they could weep no more. David asked counsel of the Lord, and upon his direction followed them, and smote them from the twilight till the evening of the next morrow. So there escaped none, save four hundred young men that fled upon

camels, 1 Sam. xxx. Conceive lusts to be these Amalekites; they spoil our Ziklag, sack our city, captivate our wives and children, our senses and affections: now let us cast cold water into this pot, weep till we can weep no more, lament we day and night. Then let us pursue these brutish Amalekites; so shall we overcome our untamed lusts, and smite them from the twilight of our youth to the evening of our old age. Some young men may escape, some vain words and unclean thoughts may remain in us; but for the old Amalekites, gross and foul faults, we shall conquer them. So recover we our wives and daughters, our affections so dear to us; and they that were the prisoners and drudges to lust, shall now do good service to God. "The land is full of adulterers; for because of swearing the land mourneth," Jer. xxiii. 10. Shall the land mourn for the inhabitants, and not the inhabitants mourn for their sins? We have preventions, lawful marriages. The Garamantes of Libya have all their women common. Wicked infidels! no marriage, no chastity. We have marriage, but not chastity. The more unsufferable their impiety, that have such a remedy. Though we cannot quench this fire, we will weep upon it; we will mourn for these lusts. Let the offenders use this remedy, and by God's assistance they shall get the victory. "Thou brakest the heads of the dragons in the waters," Psal. lxxiv. 13. The heads of the dragon are broken in the waters; great lusts are drowned in a flood of tears. Moses in zealous indignation did drown Israel's sin; he drowns the idol, lest the idol should drown the people, Exod. xxxii.: as the philosopher did with his wealth. So beat your lustful affections to dust, drown them in your tears, and let your souls drink those tears; as the prophet says, My tears have been my drink day and night. These shall so blot Satan's accusation and bill of complaint against us, that the court of heaven will not read it. There was a hand-writing against us, but it was engraven in brass; no aqua fortis of our tears could eat out that; only Christ's blood did expunge it, Col. ii. 14. The devil still puts up new declarations and quarrels against us, but they are written (as it were) in paper; if we weep on them, we shall easily blot them out. Antipater wrote to Alexander a long epistle, containing accusations of his mother Olympias; to whom Alexander shortly replied, Alas, doth not Antipater know, that one tear of a mother will wash out many letters of an accuser? So one tear of the child of God shall obliterate all the indictments of the devil. Thus penitently *peccata dolere, est peccata delere*; for God esteems sin in deed repented, as if it had never been in deed committed. Weep therefore here, that thou mayst not weep hereafter. One remorseful tear shed on earth, is better than whole buckets in hell. Weep here, and weep never; weep there, and weep for ever. "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy," Psal. cxxvi. 5.

All this while we have considered lust in the narrowest bounds, as a particular effect of that grand beldam concupiscence. But lust is of a greater latitude, and is not only to be taken for the desire of fleshly company, but for the whole general corruption of our nature, prone to all sin. There is in the world, "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life;" therefore it is called the lust of the world, 1 John ii. 16. St. John divides the world into three parts, and gives lust two of them there; all in the next verse, "The world passeth away, and the lust thereof." Whatsoever is in the unregenerate will of man, that is lust. "The works of the flesh are manifest," Gal. v. 19; that is, of lust, it is all one. When they are conjoined, as lusts of the flesh, then flesh

is as the mother, and lusts the daughters; when they are found in several places, know they are but diverse names of one and the same thing. Paul, in reckoning them up, mentions many, and concludes more, with "and such like." He says first they are so manifest that he need not, and last so manifold that he cannot, reckon them all up. Now if St. Paul, numbering the sins of his times, was fain to break off his catalogue with an *et cætera*, how shall we in these days deliver up a true inventory of them? Alas, we have now those sins, to which they then wanted names. Theirs were serpents, ours are dragons; the first were evil, but the last are worst of all. The consummation of times and sins are met together upon us. The world, like that image, had a head of gold, there was some purity; his shoulders of silver, there the metal declines; his arms of brass, baser still; his legs of iron, yet more rusty; but now come to his feet, they are all of clay, nothing but earth, earth. And as commonly in a diseased body, all the humours fall down into the legs or feet, and make an issue there; so the corruption of all ages hath slid down into the present, as into the feet, and their lust hath made an issue, to the annoyance of all the world.

This lust is a friendly Judas within us, a familiar devil: she is indeed the mother of all wickedness; yield the fatherhood to the devil, lust will challenge the motherhood to herself. "When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death," Jam. i. 15. St. James seems to speak of a womb, lust conceives; of a birth, it bringeth forth; of a growth, it is finished; of a death, it lastly kills, brings forth death. The psalmist describes the bringing her to bed, Psal. vii. 14. First, she conceives mischief, and grows quick with child. Then, she travails with iniquity, there is her labour. Lastly, she brings it forth, there is her delivery. The prophet gives her a quicker despatch; She conceiveth mischief, and bringeth forth iniquity, Isa. lix. 4: she doth but conceive, and presently bringeth forth. Let me take leave to follow this significant allegory. We have found out the mother of sin, lust; but can she be with child without a husband, or one instead of a husband? Sin must have a father as well as a mother; though it be an illegitimate bastard, it must have a father. You all know the father of sin, that is, the devil. We have now a father and a mother: the father begets, and the mother conceives: she is big with child; but how shall she do for a midwife? she cannot be delivered of her burden without a midwife. There is one ready at her call, that is, consent. We have now a father, a mother, a midwife: suppose the child is begotten, conceived, and born; how shall we do now for a nurse? it will otherwise die for want of keeping. Lust is some great lady, and seems to nurse her own children. There is a nurse provided too, and that is, custom. Here are all things too fit and ready for the production of this monster. The devil is the father, lust the mother, consent the midwife, and custom the nurse; if consent bring it forth, custom will bring it up. When sin was first brought forth into the world in that first human person that ever sinned, Eve, this was the proceeding. Concupiscence the mother kept company with the devil the father, and he suggested to her his seed, that was, temptation; presenting a fair fruit to her eye, and dissuading from confidence in the truth of God's charge: upon this seed she begins to conceive: she saw it pleasant to the sight, and desirable to make one wise, Gen. iii. 6. After this conception in the thoughts, she knew not how to be delivered but by consent; she did take and eat. Now the child is born, lest it should perish

for want of keeping, lust puts it forth to nurse. Dame custom takes it to keeping, and promiseth to bring it up. And she hath been as good as her word; so nursed it, and nourished it, that it is now past a tender stripling: Paul calls it an old man, "Put off the old man," Eph. iv. 22; above 5000 years old, and yet it is not only alive, but lively and lusty to this day.

First, for the father of sin, whom all confess to be the devil; "When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it," John viii. 44. Christ calls him the father of lies, not of liars, for all men are liars. Now as every lie is a sin, so some have observed that every sin is a lie, because it is done against the truth. If so, then he that is the father of all lies is the father of all sins; and by a lie he engendered all sins. God had said, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," Gen. ii. 17. Eve, first receiving Satan's seed, reporting this, corrupts it; and says only, "Ye shall not touch it, lest ye die," Gen. iii. 3. Satan says peremptorily, "Ye shall not die." So God's plain affirmation, Ye shall die, was first turned to a dubitation, Lest ye die; at last, to an impudent negation, Ye shall not die. God affirms it, the woman doubts it, the devil denies it. (Bern.) Thus he is the father of sin. In the devil there be some good things:—substance; for he is good as a creature, not as a devil. God made him an angel, he made himself a devil. *Deus non odit peccatum causa diaboli, sed diabolum causa peccati*, God does not hate sin for the devil's sake, but he hates the devil for sin's sake. Immortality; for he is a spirit, and cannot die. Faith; "the devils believe, and tremble," Jam. ii. 19. Truth; for they confessed Jesus to be the Son of the living God. But these two last are enforced, not voluntary. His whole purpose is to beget sin, and by sin to beget death. "God made not death," Wisd. i. 13. How then came it into the world? It entered by sin. How entered sin? By the malice of the devil. This Satan works in a double spite.

In a spite to man; because he is God's image: he cannot hurt God, therefore have at his image. Besides, man is to be advanced to that heaven from which he is hurled down for ever. If therefore he possibly can, he will pluck him to hell where himself must be for ever. Thus Satan gave life to sin, that gave death to all the world. In a spite to Christ; for Christ and Satan were never friends. The Lion of Judah and the lion of this world were never at peace. The devil doth what he can to bruise Christ's heel, in hurting his members; and Christ hath thoroughly burst his head. In Christ's birth Satan set hard to kill him by Herod; in the wilderness he tempted him; he never rested till he had brought him to the cross; he had him then where he would. But as the devil came to destroy Christ, so Christ came to destroy the devil; "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil," 1 John iii. 8. But as Christ resisted him when his living body was on the pinnacle of the temple, so he overcame him when his dead temple hung on the pinnacle of the cross. Scaliger writes, That the camelion, when he spies a serpent shading under a tree, gets up and lets down a little thread, not unlike a spider's, breathed out of his mouth; at the end whereof there hangs a little drop as clear as crystal, which falling on the serpent's head, kills him. So Christ, mounted on the tree of his cross, sends down from his side a thread of blood, that fell on the old serpent's head, and for ever slew him. Now if thou wouldst prevent this generation, infatuate the father of sin, disable the devil. Allow

him no bed of fornication in any member of thy body, or corner of thy soul. Would he beget adultery in thee? afford him not the bed of an unclean thought. Would he beget revenge? afford him not the bed of anger. Would he beget usury? allow him not the bed of covetousness. Debar this copulation, prevent this conception, and thou shalt never have that bastard laid at thy doors.

We have had much ado with the father of sin; we shall yet be more troubled with the mother. I could not be blamed for accusing him, that accuseth all the world; neither must I be partial to the bel-dam, lust, an old decrepit woman, growing on apace to six thousand years, and yet she is not past children. This lustful mother is ready to conceive, as that devilish father is forward to beget.

*Pugnabit primo fortassis, et (improbe) dicet:
Pugnando vinci se tamen illa volet.* (Ovid.)

She wrestles with a desire to be overcome. I will consider how this is done in some particulars.

An offence is done you; the devil comes, and joining with concupiscence, suggests the adulterous seed of anger: lust, the mother, conceives malice, she travails with the pleasure of revenge, she grows big with conspiracy, and at the last, she brings forth murder.

There is beauty in a woman. God's admirable workmanship, rich colours upon a piece of clay. By some wanton look, lascivious speech, or light behaviour, the devil suggests the seeds of unchastity. Lust conceives desire, she travails with expectance of opportunity, grows big with immodesty, at last, brings forth adultery.

In another, the devil suggests the seed of pride; lust conceives it by thinking on honour; she travails in the imagination of high places, how great things she might do, how bravely quit her enemies, if preferred to some dignity: she grows big with an office, and at last brings forth scorn and tyranny: now still she runs upon Pompey's motto, *Semper ego cupio præcellere, et esse supremus*.

Satan suggests the seed of discontent; lust conceives a child; like ice, it begets the mother again. Wine begets lust, and lust begets a desire of wine. Bacchus and Venus are near neighbours; only voluptuousness hath a house between them.

This is the mother, and thus prone to the forbidden bed. What shall we do? Because we know the dishonesty of the father, let us be sure to keep in the mother; restrain lust, and so sue a divorce betwixt the devil and concupiscence. The only way is to put enmity between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman; that though the devil be never so busy in suggesting, yet concupiscence may be kept from conceiving. There are two good herbs to make this woman barren, *agnus castus* and lettuce, prayer and fasting. If this kind of devil have adulterated with lust, he goes not out but by prayer and fasting. It is fasting spittle that must kill this serpent. If this take not effect, present to thy mind a spiritual crucifix, the remembrance of him that died on the cross for thee. Think thou dost see Jesus coming toward thee; his head crowned with thorns, his hands, his feet, his side, his heart bloody; his eyes full of tears. Behold him: adultery sits not in those eyes; those feet were not made to please Herod with a measure; those arms were wonted to no wanton embraces, but to embrace the cross with patience, our souls with comfort. For thee, lust, for thee have I died; thou only didst murder me: do not make these wounds bleed afresh; open not my side again to let forth new streams of blood; pull me not from my throne in heaven to the grave again.

Wouldst thou keep lust from the adulterous company of Satan? set in the view of thy conscience, Jesus Christ crucified.

The next is the midwife, consent. Well might the child be conceived by suggestion, but without consent it could never be born. The devil suggests into Absalom's heart pride, his lust conceives a crown, consent of will is his midwife, and delivers him of treason. The devil suggests into Demas gain; his lust conceives heaps of money, ease, the pleasure of the world; consent of will is his midwife, and delivers him of apostasy. Satan comes to a young beginner, one newly set up for himself, and suggests the sweetness of being rich; lust conceives all ways of gain, and propounds being one day an alderman; consent of will plays the midwife, and brings forth fraud and lying. If thou wouldst prevent the birth of sin, deny lust her midwife, consent. "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not," Prov. i. 10. Could artisans and women master great difficulties, and wouldst not thou? saith Augustine to himself. It is no easy achievement. It was as great a miracle that Joseph in the arms of his mistress should not burn with lust, as it was for those three saints to walk in the fiery furnace without scorching. (Luther.) If lust will yield, and sin must be bred, yet be sure to lock up the midwife; that it may be an abortive brood, stifled in the womb, still-born. He was a great prince, that on the difficulty of his queen's delivery, when the midwife put him to the choice, whether the mother or the son should be saved, seeing one of them must on necessity be lost: the king answered, Save the fruit, though the tree fall; preserve the son, albeit you lose the mother. But in this case do the contrary; save the mother, and let the child perish; kill sin, and preserve nature alive. Thou art tempted, consent not; allow no midwife, and the child shall never be born. We have all lust about us, a very body of death, Rom. vii. 24: the father is ready, the mother is willing; keep away the midwife, that though sin be done upon us, we may have this comfort, we consented not.

The last is the nurse, custom: this feeds, sustains, and brings up the bastard. Though it be born, it could not batten, thrive, and grow to stature, but by sucking on the breasts of custom. The curse that the Cretians used against their enemies, was not fire on their houses, nor a sword at their hearts; but that which in time would bring on greater woes; that they might be delighted with an ill custom. "If I have done this, if there be iniquity in my hands," &c.; then "let the enemy persecute my soul, and take it; yea, let him tread down my life upon the earth, and lay mine honour in the dust," Psal. vii. 3—5. Hugo Cardin. on those words of the psalm comments thus: Let him persecute my soul by suggestion; take it by consent; tread down my life by action; and lay mine honour in the dust by custom. This is not only a grave to bury the soul in, but a stone rolled to the mouth of it, to keep it down. Sin, but now born, *iniquitas est; matura, natura fit*, when it is ripe, it becomes a nature. The disease is incurable when vices are made manners. Custom is not only another nurture, but another nature. Lawyers say, That which is done by many, is at length thought lawful in any. Take an apologue: Four things meeting, boasted their comparative strength; the oak, a stone, wine, and custom. The oak stood stoutly to it, but a blast of wind came and made it bow; the axe felled it quite down. Great is the strength of stones, yet continual drops wear them; a hammer breaks them to pieces. Wine overthrowes giants and strong men, senators and wise men; *et quid non pocula possunt?* yet sleep overcomes wine.

But custom remains unconquered. Many would not endure Jesus Christ, because he came to break their customs. The masters of the pythonesse objected this against Paul and Silas; that they did teach customs not lawful for them to receive, Acts xvi. 21. For this cause was the uproar in Ephesus; the copyhold of Diana was touched; and the town clerk had no means to appease the tumult, and deliver the apostles, but by saying, These men are no blasphemers of your goddess; they come not to break your customs, Acts xix. 37. Tell a papist that his two meals' fast makes the third a glutton, he defies you for a breaker of his customs. Tell a countryman that it is unlawful to keep his town-wake on the Sunday, he hates you as a puritan, that comes to break his custom. It is custom that hath undone our church: when the pastor comes to demand his tithes, he is answered, as the man of Romney Marsh did his minister from Scripture, "Custom to whom custom." But the minister well replied, "The churches of God have no such custom." This is the nurse, custom; and so you have all four; the father, the mother, the midwife, the nurse. And here is the generation of that monster, sin; born from the womb of that concupiscence, which my text calls lust.

Now God hath given us means to conquer all these. The father is Satan, "Whom resist stedfast in the faith," 1 Pet. v. 9. Faith in the Lamb shall put this roaring lion to flight; "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb," Rev. xii. 11. For the mother, overcome her by mortification, "Mortify your members which are upon the earth," Col. iii. 5: not only lay her asleep, but lay her dead. The midwife is consent; disable her, by resolution not to obey her in the lust of the flesh. "Let not sin reign in your mortal body," Rom. vi. 12. He says not, let not sin tyrannize; but, let it not reign. Be not sin's voluntaries; if you be only pressed against your wills, it is not you that offend, but sin that dwelleth in you. The devil will suggest, and concupiscence will admit, but take away the midwife, consent not. There will be *sensus*, let there not be *consensus*. When the fair Lucrece was ravished by Tarquin, Augustine observes, There were two persons, and but one adulterer; a conjunction of bodies, but a distraction of minds. A regenerate man's case is like that of Lucrece; sin is rather done on him, than of him. But lastly, let us all confess, that the father hath begot, and the mother conceived, and the midwife brought forth sin in us; we have gone too far in this birth; yet, in the fear of the Lord let us not put it to nurse, nor accustom ourselves to it; but break off sin by repentance; otherwise, lust, when it is finished, brings forth death.

"That is in the world." We have seen the infection, let us now look upon the dispersion; through the world. The world is taken two ways; for the frame and constitution of the world, and for the men and inhabitants of the world. Now this corruption extends itself to both; the content hath corrupted the continent; men's sins have infected the world, as the plague in persons infect the very walls of the house. The latter acceptance is here strictly meant; yet let us see this corruption in both.

First, for the men of the world; for this is rather a depravation of manners, than of elements. The prince of this world shall be cast out, John xii. 31. Not the Prince of the great world, for that is God; but of the little world, evil man: the wicked are his vassals, because they are sin's vessels. The devil is called the "prince of the power of the air, the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience," Eph. ii. 2. Christ "was in the world, and the world knew him not," John i. 10. What world knew not Christ?

The heavens knew him, for the sun was eclipsed at his death, and that at full moon; the earth knew him, for it shook and quaked with fear: the stones knew him, for they rent and clave in sunder. The world that knew him not, was man; not the substance, but the inhabitant of the world. Everything is that which it loves; so the wicked are the world, because they affect the world. But if the world be ever taken in the worst sense, how then is it said, So God loved the world? When Donatus opposed that, "The whole world lieth in wickedness," 1 John v. 19; Augustine answers him with, "Christ is the propitiation, not for our sins only, but for the sins of the whole world," 1 John ii. 2. And, "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself," 2 Cor. v. 19. Here a distinction shall make all clear. Where world is taken in an evil sense, it is meant of evil men; where in a good sense, of good men; where in a general sense, of all men. The godly are called the world, but the marrow of the world: when this marrow decays, the world will perish. "Help, Lord; for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men," Psal. xii. 1. If the godly be diminished, now, help, Lord. Chrysostom says, Many things are spoken of the land that shall not be fulfilled but in the cross. But the wicked are properly called the world; for though they be reasonable men, and have souls from heaven, yet they are corrupted by and corrupting the earth. There is a river in Spain full of fishes; but those fishes are corrupt and unwholesome, by reason the river runs three or four leagues under the ground: so the wicked, though they had some sparks of natural goodness, yet by running through the earth, they become loathsome. "Many walk, that are enemies of the cross of Christ," Phil. iii. 18: if many in Paul's time, more now. For Satan, who was then bound, is now loosed again out of prison; and hath "great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time," Rev. xii. 12. So tetrical and horrible is this, that a man would think the whole world were turned devil. Therefore pray we with David, From men of the world, good Lord, deliver us, Psal. xvii. 14.

Secondly, the world in the very frame and substance of it is thus corrupted; all is vanity. A man that would taste the saltness of marine waters, needs not drink up all the sea: it is enough for me to give you a taste of this world. In the creation of every day's work, God saw that it was good; but in the sixth day, having done all, and viewing all in the harmony, they were very good. The things of the world were made good for man, but he made them evil to himself; so that now the whole creature groaneth under this corruption, Rom. viii. 22. So it labours, as if it desired release, and rest: so it is corrupted, that it must perish. "The heavens shall pass away with a great noise," &c. 2 Pet. iii. 10: the differing doth not discredit the certainty. If the world itself be so perishable, what think you of all the pomp and vanities of it? They are corrupt themselves, and corrupting others. "Love not the world," 1 John. ii. 15. What is the world? The apostle expounds it to be "lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and pride of life." Blessed is the man that is delivered out of them; wretched is he that is wrapped in them.

There's only one way left, not to admit
The world's corruption; to be none of it.

Now, shall I wrap up both these worlds into one bundle, and teach you how to loathe it? This you will do by considering the villany, misery, inconsistency, insufficiency of it.

The villany. The world shall hate you, saith Christ. Then Christ hath not told us truly, or the

world will use us hardly. As Tertullian observes on Nerva's epistle to Pliny: he would not have Christians sought for, as if he confessed them innocent; yet being found, he would have them punished, as if he professed them guilty. Good men commonly find as much favour of the world, as Vitellius showed Julius the senator; when the emperor Commodus commanded he should be slain with the sword. Vitellius in favour did beat him to death with cudgels. Plead what they can for their own innocence, the wolf will answer the lamb, Indeed thy cause is better than mine, but my teeth are better than thine, I will devour thee. There are not wanting, that, like Fimbria of Rome, who meeting a citizen that he hated in the street, gave him a deadly thrust into the body with his sword; and the next day entered an action against him, that he had received but part of his blade into his body, and not all, as he meant it. *Sic nocet innocuo nocuus*: what can the lamb expect else of the butcher? Indeed sometimes the world useth a man, as Jerome notes the prætor handled a soldier, to make him renounce Christ. First he imprisons him in his own house, allows him a chamber well furnished, soft lodging, dainty cheer, wine, music, all delights. When this course would not take, (yet, Lord, how many are thus tempted to leave their Saviour!) then he casts him into a dark dungeon, loads him with irons, starves him with the hungry allowance of husks and puddle-water. When nothing would do, he burns him. If the devil cannot win men to hell as he seems an angel of light, he will strive to accomplish it as he is a spirit of terror; if not transformed to another shape, then deformed in his own shape.

The misery. So soon as Christ was baptized, and the Spirit descended on him, presently Satan had about with him. No sooner do we give our names to Christ, and receive the Holy Spirit, but instantly the devil rages and roars against our poor souls with might and malice. If we begin to please God, we displease the world; if God be our friend, that will be our enemy. "When we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears," 2 Cor. vii. 5. When we once put our endeavours to godliness, expect no quiet.

Nunquam bella bonis, nunquam dissidia cessant:

Et quocum certet, mens pia semper habet. (Prosp.)

Say we then with David, "O God, my heart is ready;" ready for good things, ready for evil things, ready for high things, ready for low things, ready for all things. (Bernard.) The kine of Bethshemesh might low after their calves at home, yet they kept one path, and turned neither to the right hand nor to the left, 1 Sam. vi. So although we mourn for parting from our temporary delights, yet let us keep the way of truth, that will bring us to the end of our faiths, the salvation of our souls. Scrape not then on the dunghill of this earth for pearls, where nothing will thrive but toad-stools. In me you have peace: in the world you shall have tribulation, John xvi. 33: leave me to affect your own misery.

The inconstancy. At most we can get but the figure or fashion of this world, and the fashion of it perisheth. The partridge may sit on eggs, and hatch them, Jer. xvii. 11: but then (because they are none of her own) the true mother calls them, and they fly away. The worldling is this brood-goose, hatcheth chickens, gathers riches; but when God calls them, they run away from him, and leave him a fool. Thou fool, this night shall they fetch away thy soul from thee; then whose shall these things be? Luke xii. 20. Swallows will not build in houses ready to

fall; yet we, more unwise, build our nests in this perishing world. Sea passengers have written, that about the Teneriffe there be certain islands, called the flitting islands; they are often seen, but when men come near them, they flit away. The world itself is such, a flitting island: to-day thou thinkest it thine; to-morrow it shall not find thee his: thou art quickly gone from that, or that from thee. *Solvet amicitias mors ingratisissima vestras.* O blessed place, where peace hath no change!

The insufficiency. It can never content us. They that have most, crave most: the richest usurers are the poorest beggars. "He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver," Eccl. v. 10. As the poor man cries, What shall I do because I have nothing? so the covetous cries as fast, What shall I do because I have so much? "What shall I do, because I have no room to bestow my fruits?" Luke xii. 17. But what is this? have we any hope to east out worldliness? No: indeed your judgments here can make no resistance, but your affections cannot be brought to it. Most men desire Esau's blessing, the fatness of the earth: they care not for Jacob's; yet he went away with the covenant. Cain's outlawed stock were yet excellent in worldly things; Jubal in cattle, Jubal in music, Tubal in brass and iron; they were the fathers of those professions. What worldly thing is there, but some reprobrates have had it? For beauty, Absalom was very fair; and the daughters of men by beauty insured the sons of God, Gen. vi. 2. For strength, Goliath was very potent; for swiftness, Hazeel was a swift runner; for wealth, Nabal was very rich; for honour, Saul was a king: in man one dram of grace, from God one drop of mercy, had been better than all these. "There appeared a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars," Rev. xii. 1. The sun is Christ, the twelve stars the twelve apostles, the moon is the world, and that is under the church's feet. We that have the earnest of the Spirit, and the first-fruits of salvation, while we are awake know and acknowledge this to be the best of all. Yet if a little rest of quiet, or ease of health, or luggage of wealth, be missing, we mutter as if God had done nothing for us, and are often ready to leave the music of Zion, and to run back to the world. Strabo hath a tale of a musician, that had got together many delighted hearers, whom with sweet charms he held by the ears; they praised his music, he was well-pleased with their company. On a sudden the market-bell rung, away they ran all, and stayed not so much as to give him thanks; only one somewhat deaf stayed behind. The musician heartily thanked him that he would tarry with him, when all the rest went away at the ringing of the market-bell. Why, but hath the market-bell rung indeed? says he. Yes, quoth the musician. Away trudges he too. You can apply it. Preach we never so well against worldliness, when the charms and chimes of the world ring, it is hard to keep your minds from running. Oh how difficult is it to conquer this world! yet faith can do it; "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith," 1 John v. 4. Every true Christian is greater than William the Conqueror, greater than Alexander the Great, greater than Pompey the Great, greater than the Great Turk: for they conquered in many years but a few parts of the world; but the believer in one hour, with one act only, subdueth the whole world, with all things in the world.

Terra fremat; regna alta crepent, ruat ortus et arcus;

Si modo firma fides, nulla ruina nocet;

Art thou a Christian? hast thou vanquished the

world, that vanquisheth all the wicked? Bless God for this conquest: the king of Spain's overrunning the Indies was nothing to it. Merchants would give much to know a short cut to those remote places of traffic, without passing straits, or fetching bouts: the shortest cut to the riches of the whole world is by their contempt. Here is a short description of the world's vanity, by reason of this corruption: but what can he expect that speaks against the world? When Christ himself came to dissuade men from the world, he had ill luck in that point. He might preach, "Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness," Luke xvi. 9; and, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon," ver. 13. But when the Pharisees, that were covetous, heard all these things, they derided him, ver. 14; he had but a flout for his labour. But let those that have hope of heaven, cease to love this world; and know that if Christ make us to deny this world, he will give us a better: we shall be no losers by him, he vouchsafes us the kingdom of heaven; for if in this life only we had hope in Christ, we of all men were most miserable, 1 Cor. xv. 19. Take this corrupted world that like it; let that glorious world be ours.

"Having escaped the corruption." We have considered the infection, and the dispersion, and therein the discovery; now one word of the recovery, we have *escaped* it. I call this a deliverance, for we have escaped, not by our own power, but by his grace that hath delivered us. "Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers: the snare is broken, and we are escaped," Psal. cxiv. 7. The snare of the fowlers were the lime-twigs of this world; our soul was caught in them by the feathers, our affections: now indeed we are escaped, but the Lord delivered us. We that were once taken captives of Satan at his will, are now freed. There is a four-fold manner of freeing captives. 1. By manumission, a voluntary making free of a bond-servant: so we are escaped from the service of Satan into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed," John viii. 36. 2. By commutation. We were prisoners by sin to death. God therefore made a change with death: Take thou my Son prisoner, give me my servants free. Death and hell were forced to exchange; so they killed Christ, and we escaped. 3. By price, when a ransom is paid. Now Christ "gave himself a ransom for all," 1 Tim. ii. 6. No silver or gold could serve: but the precious blood of that immaculate Lamb, 1 Pet. i. 19. We are bought with blood, and this is the blood of God. So Tertullian, No blood could have saved us, but the blood of him that was God. Here was mercy, great mercy. Christ to have mercy upon us, had no mercy upon himself: the price is paid, and we are escaped. 4. By violence. Thou hast plucked my feet out of the snare, when they were too hard for me: with a strong hand and out-stretched arm God hath delivered us out of this Egypt. As David delivered his sheep from the lion, so the Lord hath delivered us, 2 Tim. iv. 17. Christ did cast out devils: like Alexander, he stood not to untie the knot, but he cut it. By all these ways we are escaped; may our thankful hearts give praise to our Deliverer Jesus Christ.

But did God all this for us, and shall we do nothing for him, for ourselves? Alas, we shall then soon again be entangled with the corruption of this world. Here we learn the due and true use of faith and repentance: faith, to lay hold on the blood of Christ, to cleanse our souls from this corruption of lust; and repentance, by true remorseful tears to purge ourselves continually. No day is without

sins, let no day pass without sorrows. These showers shall kill the weeds of lust, and spring up the herbs of graces. When he over-waters earth, there follows temporal plenty: when earth waters heaven, there follows spiritual plenty. Let me now give you the picture of repentance; which I desire not to be set up in your houses, but to be laid up in your hearts.

She is a virgin fair and lovely, but sorrow seems to do violence to her beauty; yet indeed increaseth it. You shall ever see her sitting in the dust, her knees bowing, her hands wringing, her eyes weeping, her lips praying, her heart beating, her lungs panting. She comes not before God with a full belly, and meat between her teeth, but her soul is humbled with fasting, Psal. xxxv. 13. She is not gorgeously attired; sack-cloth is her garment. Not that she thinks these outward forms will content God, but only are the remonstrances of pure sorrow within. And indeed at that time no worldly joy will down; only pardon and mercy in Jesus Christ. She hangs the word of God as a jewel at her ear, and ties the yoke of Christ as a chain about her neck. Her breast is sore with the strokes of her own penitent hands, which are always lifted up toward heaven, or beating her own bosom. Sorrow turns her *lucina* into *flumina*, *frontem* into *fontem*; her eyes into fountains of tears. The ground is her bed; she eats the bread of affliction, and drinks the water of anguish. Her knees are hardened with continual praying, her voice hoarse with calling to Heaven; and when she cannot speak, she delivers her mind in groans. There is not a tear falls from her, but an angel holds a bottle to catch it. The windows of all her senses are shut against vanity: she bids charity stand the porter at her gates, and she gives the poor bread, even while herself is fasting. She would wash Christ's feet with more tears than Mary Magdalene, and, if her estate could reach it, give him a costlier unction. She thinks every man's sins less than her own, every man's good deeds more. Her compunctions are unspeakable, known only to God and herself, and to no creature else. She wisheth not only men, but beasts, trees, and stones, to mourn with her. She thinks that no sun should shine, because she takes no pleasure in it; that the lilies should be clothed in black, because she is so appalled; that the infant should draw no breast, nor the beast take food, like the Ninevites, because she hath no appetite. She hath vowed to give God no rest, till he have compassion upon her, and seal to her feeling the forgiveness of all her sins. Now mercy comes down like a white and glorious angel, and lights on her bosom. The message which mercy brings from the King of heaven is this: I have heard thy prayers and seen thy tears. The Holy Ghost comes with a handkerchief of comfort to dry her eyes. Lastly, she is lifted up to heaven, where angels and cherubim sing her tunes of eternal joy, and God bids immortality set her in a throne of glory.

VERSE 5.

And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge.

The former part of the chapter is spent in comforting; now he comes to exhorting. A father does not only promise his son, I will make thee mine heir; but withal imposeth on him some duties, by perform-

ance whereof he may assure himself of inheritance. If we should speak nothing to men instructively, or reprehensively, but all comfortably, it were the next way to send them comfortably to ruin. *Sat Deus; at nobis quedam facienda reliquit*: It is not fit that heaven should take all the pains to bring earth to it; earth must do somewhat to bring itself to heaven. God's bountifulness is beyond our thankfulness; yet thankfulness is not enough, there is matter of labour and diligence in it. He that lies in a dark pit, will yet offer his hand to him that will help him up. Jeremiah did put the cords under his own arms, that Ebed-melech let down to draw him out of the dungeon, Jer. xxxviii. 12. If the lord of a manor have given thee a tree, thou wilt be at the charges to cut it down and carry it home. He that works first in thy conversion, hath in wisdom made thee a second. Thou seest God's bounty; now look to thine own duty. This is taught us by,

I. The quality, Diligence.

II. The quantity, All diligence.

"Give diligence." Here first for the quality.

There is no matter wherein we hope for good in the event, accomplished without diligence in the act. He that expects a royalty in heaven, must admit a service on earth. The good man is weary of doing nothing, for nothing is so laborious as idleness. Bernard calls it a dumb numbness of the soul, which neglects to begin, or is weary to prosecute any good work. Deny sloth not only continuance, but countenance. Satan's employment is prevented, when he finds thee well employed before he comes. Thomas a Becket, no good man, in no good cause, when he was admonished to be less stirring in state matters, answered, that he sat at the stern, and therefore ought not to sleep. This is a Christian's case: Is the world tempting, the devil attempting, my flesh betraying, and shall I sleep? Do I steer the helm of my own vessel, wherein my soul is the passenger, and my hope of blessedness the freight, and would you have me to sleep? Jacob complains, that the sleep departed from his eyes, Gen. xxxi. 40; so careful was he to make his reckoning even with his master. I am sure we have a greater charge, greater Master, greater account, and yet we sleep. Lepidus lies in harvest under the cool shade, I would this were to take pains; so some stretch themselves upon their ivory beds, Amos vi. 4, and invite their curious morsels with rich wines; and, Oh that this were the way to heaven! Augustus, hearing that a Roman, far in debt, slept quietly during his life, sent after his death to buy his pillow. It is a strange pillow whereon some slumber, that owe so much to God and man. When the oyster gapes, the crab throws into her a little stone, which hinders her from shutting again, and so he devours her. Satan watcheth our idle gaping, throws in his bait, lust or drunkenness, and so preys upon us. It is observable, that albeit the Romans were so idle as to make idleness a god, yet they allowed not that idle idol a temple within the city, but without the walls. It grieves me to think that our suburbs abound with so many worshippers of this lazy devil; yet I still pray that none may be within the walls. Let us deal with idleness and wantonness as Philip of Macedon did with two such persons, cause the one to drive the other out of our coasts. The old world snored when the great shower came: Sodom slept, but her damnation slept not. It was Gog's presumption, "I will go up to the land of unwall'd villages; I will go to them that are at rest," Ezek. xxxviii. 11. So Satan presumes to set on the sluggish, as an undefenced city: the devil shoots in a slug, and hits none so

soon as the sluggish. The unjust steward out of office forecasts, "I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed," Luke xvi. 3. We have those can dig, yet are not ashamed to beg. Many a one says, not, I cannot, but, I will not, dig. It is mercy to give them three things, correction, work, and meat. A generous spirit is of Maximinus' disposition; *Quo major sum, eo magis laboro; et quo magis laboro, eo major sum*. Our gallants would not endure that father, that should charge his eldest son to work in the vineyard, Matt. xxi. 28. Jacob got the blessing, but it was under the name of Esau, which signifies working. (Ambrose.) We must have the hands of Esau, if we look for the blessing of Jacob. There are three marks and helps of diligence; vigilance, carefulness, love.

Vigilance. A serious project, which we can hardly drive to our desired issue, takes sleep from our eyes. The best plot is to be saved, to appease God's anger, to get remission of our sins; yet we are fast asleep, though this be undone. Christ said unto Peter, "Simon, sleepest thou?" Mark xiv. 37. Is Judas waking, the Pharisees walking, the soldiers banding, the devils urging, the Son of man betraying, the great work of redemption accomplishing, and sleepest thou? So is Satan provoking, thy flesh ready to yield the fort, sin at the door, and judgment not far off, and sleepest thou, O Christian? When Abraham received the woofullest charge that was ever given to father, concerning his only son, he rose early to do it, Gen. xxii. 3. On the week days every man riseth early to his trade; on the Lord's day, when the business of their souls is specially in hand, men usually sleep their fill.

Carefulness. "Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God," Eccl. v. 1. Thou hast a foot, walkest with that foot, even to the temple; but look to it. *Res est solliciti plena timoris amor*, If thou lovest God, thou wilt be fearful to offend him, careful to please him. Gideon smote the host of Zebah and Zalmunna, and returned from the battle before the sun was up, Judg. viii. 13. Satan finds us careless, smites us in the night of ignorance, and carries us away captives before we perceive it. The world says to a man, as the priests and elders did to the soldiers, Here is store of money, we will secure you, Matt. xxviii. 14. Money is able to make thousands secure; but, *magna securitas, maxima tempestas*. The spies of Dan returning, told them that the people of Laish dwelt secure, quiet, and careless; so they took them, so they smote them, and burned the city with fire, Judg. xviii. 7, 27. No man perfectly knows his own heart: you think all well; this may be not assurance, but security. *Invadunt urbem somno vinoque sepultam*. When they shall say, "Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh on them," I Thess. v. 3. Every man thinks ill of his sins, but perhaps he thinks too well of his good works: the servants of God mistrust their own righteousness.

Love. This diligence must fetch the life from affection, and be moved with the love of virtue. They are most, whom fear correcteth from evil; they are best, whom love directeth to good. (August.) We refuse the dainty morsels of a churl's table, because we have them not with love. God regardeth not the mammoes of our sacrifices, the scraps of our perfunctory obedience, when the awe and law of man bring us thither, not the love of God. Constraint makes a thing easy in its own nature, to become toilsome; love makes a difficult thing easy. He that is banished his native country, thinks every step tedious; let his own will call him forth, his travel is pleasant; else men would not cross the seas to see fashions. There was a man so well affected to his

own city, that in fifty years he never went a league out of it; as if, like a fish, he must needs die if taken out of his own element. Not long after his luck was to commit an offence; whereof being convicted, and liable to severe punishment, the favouring judge, intending to mitigate it, because this was his first error, confined him on the pain of death to the limits of that city. Now what was to his opinion formerly a delight, becomes a bondage and vexation; nothing in the city pleaseth him, all his desire is to gad abroad. How many miles can we ride and run in a day to see one beast pursue another! The unevenness of the way, the uncertainty of the weather, troubles us not, because we have a love to the sport. If the charge of a superior commands us to measure over so many miles, we soon complain of weariness. The sabbath finds many in the fields, walking to the neighbour villages, for wanton delights. If they were commanded to travel so far to church, and to serve God, they would say, with Jeroboam, it was too long a journey. All negligence in good things is from the want of love.

Well, God requires our diligence; *Vult et non vult piger*. (Bed.) He would have honour, but no labour. The promises delight them, the combats affright them. O foolish man! thousand thousands stand about thee, and dost thou presume to sleep? (Bern.) I had rather be sick than slothful; (Sen.) by that the mind is stirred up; by this, effeminated. I use, saith that philosopher, short sleep; it is enough for me to have forborne watching. Sometimes I know I sleep, sometimes I suspect it.

But enough of diligence, unless we were taught also rightly to dispose it. For there be many that weary themselves for very vanity. Even Israel would go back to Egypt for the garlic and onions; things, saith Gregory, that provoke tears in them that eat them. Manna makes the heart merry, but they must have garlic; as if they were weary of joy, and desired again tears and sorrow. "The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart," Psal. xix. 8. But men confess this world troublesome, yet love their own vexation above the peace of God, which passeth all understanding. Our minds are so scattered among these visible things, that we forget how the state stands within us; like him that looks to the outside of his house, loams, washes, paints it, while the rotten timber drops down within. While men hunt after the world's venison with Esau, they are in danger to lose their Father's blessing.

I have given three helps of diligence; let me yet add a fourth, study; so some here translate *σπουδήν*. What good work can be done without study? Indeed the main is confessed: "Study to show thyself approved unto God," 2 Tim. ii. 15. But we think inferior offices need no such studious diligence. What easier thing is there than to keep the peace? yet the apostle says, "Study to be quiet." Man's nature is so apt to revenge, that it is no easy matter to be peaceable. Says the philosopher, Study thyself. What is easier known than a man's self? No, says Job, I know not mine own soul. Man's self is a good book to study: "I am fearfully and wonderfully made," Psal. cxxxix. 14. Read this book in folio, in thy prosperity; read it in quarto, abridged by calamity; read it in octavo, made less by penury; read it in decimo-sexto, made contemptible by ignominy; read it *in nihilo*, made nothing of this world by death. The lawyer will not answer a declaration without study; or he builds more on his fortune and favour, than on his wit and fidelity. The poet can tell the gallant that buys love sonnets, I study for your pleasure. The advocate studies his pleading, or talks idle. When a vain-glorious orator asked his

friend, How liked you my speech? and preventing the answer, which he expected applause; Believe me, says he, I did it on the sudden, without study. So I believe, says the other, for it did not savour of the study. For us, what dare we do without study? Perhaps you think not so; but that we come with the same preparation to speak, that you come to hear. So we might all be accused, be accursed, for doing God's business negligently. You think, because it is easy for you to come to church when the bell hath tolled an hour, it is as easy for us on a night's warning to preach. If there be any thing in the world that bewrays this city's ignorance, this is it. I will tell you a paradox; I call it so because few will believe it, but it is true. It is more difficult to hear well, than to speak well. To hear? say you: I can hear the gravest bishop in the land, and never study for the matter. But I say, if thou wilt be as good a hearer as he is a preacher, thou must study for it more than he. Good reason: he goes along with the meditations conceived in his own breast; thou must go along with his speech; he follows himself; thou must follow him. It is easier for a hare to run her own course, than for a hound step by step to hunt her out. Our Saviour says, "Take heed how ye hear." There is a certain art or cunning in well hearing. In a certain country, every man was to plead his own cause; he was allowed an advocate to put his mind in good terms, but himself delivers it. One had his turn thus fitted, paid the lawyer, took the copy, liked it admirably, studied it by heart; but after often reviewing it, he fell into dislike of it, and returned it back with his *non placet*. The lawyer asked him the reason why he now disliked that, which at first he so applauded. Why, says he, now I have read it often over, and find the weaknesses; at once reading it seemed very good. And, quoth he, shall the judges hear it above once? Let this touch upon the infirmity of common hearers.

Beloved, you cannot hear well without studying how to hear; do not think we can preach well without it. Indeed there be enthusiastical preachers, that run away with a sermon, as horses with an empty cart: you are not worth your ears, if they cannot distinguish. But to conclude, if no great work can be done without study, then surely not the salvation of body and soul without it. It is well, if with any study we may have it. When an astrologer told Agrippina, that Nero her son should be emperor; but first he must untie a knot by art, that was tied by nature: he meant, that he must artificially dissemble himself honest, though he were naturally a villain. She answered, He shall untie any knot to have an empire. It is enough for us that we may have the kingdom of heaven, though we untie a knot by the art of grace, that was bound by the corruption of nature. We are born unclean, have made ourselves guilty; given to lust, avarice, pride: there is nature's knot. Let us untie this by grace; "Such were you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified," 1 Cor. vi. 11; and the kingdom of heaven shall be ours. To this let us give all study. Some astronomers have beaten their brains with much study to find out the space betwixt earth and heaven; and have given it up for above three hundred thousand miles. How great was their study! how uncertain their account! how vain the fruit! Know it is a great way, not a journey over to France, or to India; study how to get thither. For this we study to preach, for this study you to hear, let us all study to practise; and when we have given all diligence, still, Lord, be merciful to us.

Give diligence; not a pragmatical business in others' affairs; but rectify thy diligence, confining it principally to thyself. Dress thine own garden, lest

it be overrun with weeds. (Sen.) I know not with whom I had rather have thee be, than with thyself. I lend myself to other men's occasions; I give myself to mine own. We may say to worldliness, as Christ to Martha, You are troubled about many things; but one thing is needful, mind that. They think when they have gotten store of riches, they shall then sleep in quiet: no, then is least quiet of all. The rich man resolves when he hath filled his barns, then, Soul, rest: no, then, Soul, come to judgment, to everlasting unrest, Luke xii. It is in vain men rise up early, and go to bed late, and eat the bread of sorrows; for upon better conditions God "giveth his beloved sleep," Psal. exxvii. 2. Pyrrhus boasted to his friend Cineas, that he would invade Italy, and hoped to achieve it. Cineas asked him, Sir, what will you do then? Then we will attempt Sicily; and so at last get Carthage, and all Africa. And what then, sir? Then, saith Pyrrhus, we will rest and be merry. Alas, saith Cineas, may we not do so now, and save all this trouble? Then, I will take mine ease; no, then least ease of all; for besides hazard of blood in getting, there will be continual trouble in keeping. *Non minor ille labor, quam quærere parta tueri.* Eutropius, in the poet, to one that asked how he might be revenged on his enemy, gave this counsel, Make him rich; so lay on him a burden of cares. The rich landlord envied his poor tenant, because he heard him sing every day at his labour, that had scarce bread for his family; while himself, wanting nothing, was full of discontent. One advised him to convey cunningly into his cottage a bag of money: he did so. The tenant finding this mass, so great in his imagination, left off his singing, and fell to carking and vexing how to increase it. *Crescentem sequitur cura pecuniam;* the landlord fetcheth back his money, the tenant is as merry as ever he was. God is our Landlord: while we his poor tenants have but little, we are content with a little; but if riches increase, cares increase with them; and till our Landlord take back his burden, we have no ease. We may say of worldly wealth, what Solomon of worldly knowledge; he that adds it, adds sorrow with it, Eccl. i. 18. Diogenes laid himself to sleep in his cell, and his purse by him. A thief spies it, and watches till he was asleep. About midnight, when he thought him safe, he ventures to steal it. To whom the subtle cynic, Take it, wretch, so we shall both sleep. Thou couldst not sleep till thou hadst it, nor I till I lost it. The very camel is glad to be eased of his burden. When Æsop, with the rest of his fellow-slaves, were put to carry burdens to a city, one chose to bear this merchandise, another that, every one had his choice, and Æsop chose to carry the victuals. Every one laughed at this, that he, being the weakest, had elected the heaviest burden. Away they went together; and after some miles they went to breakfast, his burden was the lighter by that: then to dinner, it was lighter still: then to supper, now it was easy: the next day they had eaten up all his burden, and he went empty to the city, whither they being laden could not reach. Let the covetous choose gold for his burden, the proud rich garments, the ambitious mountains of honour, every worldling his several luggage; let my choice be that of St. Paul, if I have food and raiment, therewith to be content; I shall go the lighter to heaven.

"All diligence." Here is the quantity, all; and that for two reasons:

1. The working up of salvation is no easy labour; thereto is requirable *all* diligence. Such a diligence respects so great an object, and such an object re-

quires so great a diligence. Refuse no labour for such a reward. (Hieron.) The best things are the hardest come by. *Qui capit optatam,* &c. He must be frozen with cold, and sweltered with heat, that accomplishes so great a work. This equity must needs be granted, that if we cannot attain to worldly trash without labour, then much less to heaven without all diligence. "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence," Matt. xi. 12: but rest alone, try if you can extort this by force. Spare no invention of wit, no intention of will, no contention of strength, about it. If you will needs use violence, oppression, extortion, here violate, here oppress, here extort: wrestle for this, though with Jacob you lame your limbs; get it, though you lose your lives. When Dionysius saw what heaps of wealth his son had hoarded up in his closet; he asked him what he meant, to let it lie there, and not to make friends with it to get him the kingdom after his decease? Son, thou hast not a spirit capable of a kingdom. So knowing a rich man's piles of bags and whole countries of revenues, and finding no works of piety, none of charity, we may justly tell him, he hath not a soul capable of the kingdom of heaven. In heaven there is gold tried in the fire, Rev. iii. 18. Will we adventure our estates, our lives, to find out new lands where may be gold; and spend no diligence for that where we are sure there is gold, and such as cannot perish? In all other things the difficulty of obtaining whets thy mind, and spurs the actions forward: only for heaven, which we confess best of all, we use labour least of all. It is a hard task, therefore give all diligence.

2. God requires "the whole duty of man," Eccl. xii. 13; that is God's due. What, nothing left for this world? Yes, moderate providence; the saving of souls hinders not provision for bodies, but furthers and blesses it. First seek the kingdom of heaven, then these things "shall be added to you," Matt. vi. 33; other things shall come into the bargain. Paul calls them *adjunctanea*, Christ *adjectiva*; there is no substance in them. Follow thou Christ, the rest shall follow thee. The world says, Dost thou follow me? I will flee thee: dost thou flee me? I will follow thee. Besides, there is a mass of corruption in us; *all* diligence is little enough to expel that. A tyrant boasted that he had turned a great stream in two days: yet quoth the philosopher, But you have been turning another stream this twoscore years, and yet have not done it; your own evil disposition.

A Christian is like a commonwealth: grace is the queen, religious thoughts the subjects, lusts the rebels: these war against the queen, fight against the soul, 1 Pet. ii. 11. If they grow to a head, they will make a mutiny in our hearts: our best policy is to keep them bare and low. Though we cannot take away their will, yet let us prevent them of power to hurt us. To this let us give all diligence, and the Lord give a blessing to that diligence.

"Beside this, add," &c. Thus much for the addition, now to the addition; wherein we find a concession, an accession, that he requires; add. You have done something, yet there is a *besides*. I yield a beginning, I ask a proceeding. Set not down with your *satis*: knowledge you have, and faith you have; yet there is a *besides* these. "Leaving the principles, let us go on unto perfection," Heb. vi. 1. We cannot say that work is finished, whereof any part remains to be done. None were fit to fight the battles of God, but they that lapped water out of their hands, Judg. vii. 5, (like the dogs of Nilus for fear of the crocodiles,) still going forward. As God himself is said to "drink of the brook in the way," Psal. ex. 7; this man lifts up his head, and goes on.

Christ hath sprinkled all the way between heaven and earth with his blood, and hath made it a "living way," Heb. x. 20: like good hounds, let us trace him by the foot, and run after him in the smell of his garments, Cant. iv. 11; not resting till we rest with our Master. Thou hast done many good works, assurest thyself of some growth; yet forget that is behind, and reach forth unto the things before, Phil. iii. 13: there is still a besides. They go from strength to strength, till every one appear before God in Zion, Psal. lxxxiv. 7. When thy soul hath tasted some crumbs that fall from thy Master's table, some drops of blood that ran from thy Lord's side; yet still think of a somewhat besides. Beda observes on Numb. xxxiii. 29, "They went from Mitheah, and pitched in Hashmonah;" that Mitheah signifies sweetness, and Hashmonah swiftness. Mitheah and Hashmonah, sweetness and swiftness, must be joined together. They that in Mitheah have tasted of the Lord sweetness, will remove to Hashmonah, come toward him with swiftness.

When the young man asked Christ what he should do to be saved, he pointed him to the law, "Keep the commandments," Matt. xix. 17. But he replied, "All these have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?" ver. 20. Yes, there is a besides, he never dreamed of; "If thou wilt be perfect, sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor," ver. 21. This last besides almost put him beside himself. In natural things we still covet a *besides*. If we have wit, we covet more wit: we will seek to be more wise than we can be, though we be found less wise than we should be. But in worldly things our desires have an everlasting *besides*. Hath Ahab a kingdom? yet Naboth's vineyard is another *besides*. Hath he bought the manor? he must have the poor man's cottage besides. The rich man hath exceeding many flocks and herds, the poor nothing but one only lamb, 2 Sam. xii. 2; well, this one lamb is his besides, he must have it. Hath another put out the hundred to usury? yet there is a besides; when the ten pounds come in for interest, out with that too. The widow had filled all her vessels with oil, yet she calls for another vessel, 2 Kings iv. 6; there is a besides still. The rich man, Luke xii. had his barns full before; but now he must enlarge them according to his desires: there is another besides, he must have more. Oh the insatiate desire of this world! but for heavenly things, a small scantling serves us. I believe that Christ died for me, I am sorry for my sins, I hope to be saved; here is enough, no besides is thought on. Nothing satisfies us for this world; we are quickly glutted with Jesus Christ.

"Beside this?" God, that hath done enough for us, leaves us somewhat to do for ourselves. He hath given us "all things that pertain unto life and godliness," ver. 3; enriched us with "great and precious promises," made us "partakers of the Divine nature," ver. 4: there is God's work. But "besides this, add to your faith virtue;" there is thy work, "The blood of Christ cleanse us from all sin," 1 John i. 7; yet he that hath this hope, purgeth himself, chap. iii. 3: there is thy besides. "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man open the door, I will come in," &c. Rev. iii. 20. God knocks; thou must open, that he may enter: do thou open, that is thy part; God will enter, that is his part. David calls God his helper: now, as St. Augustine observes, he is not said to be helped, that never condescended with his endeavour. We are not blocks and stones: (Beza in loc.) and withal he infers upon 1 Cor. iii. 9, "we are labourers together with God;" that we do *gratiae primae*, *ἀντιμετα*; and he that denies it, denies the efficacy of the first grace. This

we affirm without fear of falling into the popish doctrine of free-will too.

Three things concur in a sinner's conversion; the word of God persuading, the Spirit of God prevailing, and the will of man consenting. Thou art created without thyself, not sanctified without thyself. The father begot the child without the child's will: then it had none, for it was not; but he cannot bring this child to any art against his will. I will not dispute God's power; he can, but he will not, save us against our wills. Some Romists strongly build their paper-house of free-will on such places; but a man may smile to read how bitterly they oppose us in the frontispiece, and how consentingly they jump with us in the conclusion. *Castifica teipsum*, says Evardentius; there is free-will: yet he concludes, *Castificas te non de te, sed de illo qui habitat in te*; there is no free-will. "Make straight steps to your feet," Heb. xii. 13, and turn you to me, saith the Lord; therefore, can they turn themselves? Here they cry out louder than oyster-women in the streets, Victory, victory; but they sing their own *triumphon*, put the crown on their own heads. But what is the conquest? They have gotten what we never denied. They prove here freedom of our will to add to our own endeavours: right, so say we too; but they forget that God had made us first partakers of the Divine nature: now, if the Son make us free, we shall be free indeed, John viii. 36. Did St. Peter write this to wicked men, or to saints? If they would prove that unregenerate men can will their own conversion by nature of themselves, it were worth their prize and praise; otherwise they have taken great pains for a thing not denied them: as I have heard of that wise man, who challenged his neighbour for impounding that very horse which himself at the same time was riding on.

Indeed God chargeth us with a *besides*; yet saith Christ, "Without me ye can do nothing," John xv. 5. Good must be derived from a perfect cause: and that is only God's grace. But we are not allowed to be idle. "The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David; Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne," Psal. cxxxii. 11: there is God's covenant. "If thy children will keep my testimony," ver. 12: there is our condition. The law is given that we might have recourse to the gospel; the gospel is given that we might be enabled to perform the law. God is the principal Agent, but thou hast thy besides. Implore his aid, put to thy own endeavours. Confidence of salvation doth not contradict wariness of conversation. He that is most sure of heaven, is yet afraid to do that which may deserve hell. Add the oil of thy diligence to the kindled lamp of God's grace; thy oil doth not enlighten the lamp, but feeds it. In vain we pray for that blessing, which our endeavours never seek. (August.) The philosopher wanting shoes, and the king giving him leather, yet he thought it not enough unless the king would also put them to making. God is so beholden to some, that he must do all for them if he will have them. But when he hath called thee to the truth, that might have suffered thee to die in ignorance and infidelity, thou hast thy besides. Be not so much thy own enemy, as to frustrate God's mercy by thy sluggishness. Lose not, through want of some labour to amend thy life, the hope of eternal blessedness.

"Add;" we are fallen upon a point of arithmetic, a special good point if it be confined to good things. Of the four main parts, addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division, the world embraceth three, and casts out a fourth, for worldly things; so God commands three of them, and casts out a fourth, for heavenly things. The world bars division, and God

forbids subtraction. Give me leave to follow this metaphor so far as it may give light to my present intention. Let us first see the world's arithmetic, then God's.

Addition, especially of sin to sin, is a frequent point. Herod had done many foul mischiefs, yet he had his addition; he "added yet this above all, that he had shut up John in prison," Luke iii. 20; yea, afterwards he slew him in the prison, Mark vi. 27. To incest he added tyranny; to tyranny murder. That other Herod had such an addition; "he killed James; and because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further, to take Peter also," Acts xii. 2, 3. Many such additions; to swearing they add lying, to lying killing, to killing stealing, to that adultery; until "blood toucheth blood," Hos. iv. 2. Their reward shall be proportioned; because their (added) sins for length reach up to heaven, therefore God shall double unto them double according to their works, Rev. xviii. 5, 6.

Multiplication goes beyond addition. "To-morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant," Isa. lvi. 12. "Be not over-much wicked," Eccl. vii. 17. In youth men sow those cursed seeds in the ground of their hearts; in age they reap a multiplied crop. Let usury be a demonstration of this point: the usurer says to his monies, as God said once to his creatures, "Increase and multiply;" a monstrous and unnatural brood. Other cattle and plants have their appointed seasons to engender and bring forth: money brings forth to-day, and begins a new travail to-morrow; yea, the young brood brought forth to-day, begins itself to bear to-morrow. Other creatures, the sooner they begin to bear the sooner they leave off: usurious monies begin betimes, and multiply without end. It is an unhappy point of arithmetic, multiplication by usury, and shall be punished as God threatened Eve; "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow," Gen. iii. 16. But "woe to him that increases that which is not his!" Hab. ii. 6. "For three transgressions of Israel, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof," Amos ii. 6. Upon him that will multiply his sins, God will multiply his plagues.

Subtraction is another point of the world's practice. They covet houses and fields, and take them away by violence, Micah ii. 2. Jezebel was cunning in this point against innocent Naboth, she took away his living and life too. How could so many flaunt it in their coaches, but that they live by subtraction? the tenth and right of the church maintains it. Oh the pity of God and man! that maintenance should be taken from the poor minister who wants bread, and be given to feed the vile appetite of pride and luxury. If a robber takes a purse, he dies for it: but let others subtract from the poor their commons, from labourers their wages, from the church her endowments; and this arithmetic passes. This made Socrates laugh, to see little thieves riding in carts to the gallows, and great thieves in coaches to condemn them. A poor sea captain being brought before Alexander for piracy, thus confessed his fault: Indeed I am a pirate, because I robbed some few fishermen in a cock-boat; but if I had scoured the seas as thou hast done, and spoiled all the world, with a navy, with an army, I had been no pirate, I had been an emperor. The malefactor could say, I die for a few tridles of petty thievery: but if I had robbed the poor by giving their bread to dogs; or the church by simony and detaining her tithes; or the commonwealth by engrossings, enhancing; I might have been a justice of peace, or an alderman. Thus, as in a throng a dwarf comes to be lifted up above the shoulders of the tallest, and made a laughing-stock, that kept least ado; so in the crowd of this world, the least sins are exposed to the

sharpest censures. Well, if any man will practise subtraction against the poor, God will use it against him, and take his name out of the book of life. If he be damned that gives not his own, what shall become of him that takes away another man's? (August.) If judgment without mercy shall be to him that shows no mercy, Jam. ii. 13, where shall subtraction and rapine appear? "Let the extortioner catch all that he hath; and let the strangers spoil his labour," Psal. cix. 11: there is one subtraction, his estate. "Let his posterity be cut off; and in the generation following let their name be blotted out," ver. 13: there is another subtraction, his memory. "Let there be none to extend mercy unto him; neither any to favour his fatherless children," ver. 12: there is another subtraction, a denial of all pity to him and his. "Let his prayer become sin," ver. 7: there is another subtraction, no audience from heaven. "Let another take his office;" there is a subtraction of his place: "let his days be few," ver. 8: there is a subtraction of his life. "Let him be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous," Psal. lxi. 28: there is the last, the subtraction of his soul. This is a fearful arithmetic; if the wicked add sins, God will add plagues. "Add iniquity unto their iniquity; and let them not come into thy righteousness," Psal. lxi. 27. God shall add unto them the plagues written in the book, Rev. xxii. 18. If they subtract from others their rights, God shall subtract from them his mercies.

Now let us come to God's arithmetic; and this principally consists in addition. "Whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain," Matt. v. 41. To give every man his own is but equity, but the addition of charity makes blessed. "I was hungry, and ye gave me meat," &c. "Come, ye blessed," &c. Matt. xxv. To remission add restitution; to restitution, charity; to charity, piety. How oft, says Peter, shall I forgive my brother? till seven times? Yea, saith Christ, and more; to seven times add seventy times. We must all give an account; blessed are they that can bring in this bill of reckonings, addition of good to good. "Let us not be weary in well-doing," Gal. vi. 9: there is our bill of reckoning. "Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man," Eccl. xii. 13: there is our total sum. Now as addition teacheth us to add grace to grace; so there is a multiplication required, to increase the effects of those graces in a multiplicity of good works. Knowledge not improved will be impaired. Hast thou faith but no stronger than many years ago? Is not thy zeal more fervent, thy charity more compassionate, thy humility brought lower? "Lord, thou deliverest unto me five talents: behold I have gained besides them five talents more," Matt. xxv. 20. To him that hath shall be given; but from him that hath not, shall be taken away that he seemed to have. If there be no usury, we shall lose the principal. God is a Father that loves to have his children thrive: he gives them a stock, and looks they should not be unthrifths; if they do well, they shall have the whole inheritance. As in generation, so in regeneration, we must be growing up to a full stature in Christ, Eph. iv. 13. As a traveller passeth from town to town till he come to his inn; so the Christian from virtue to virtue till he come to heaven. God hath sown some good seeds in our hearts; let us manure the ground with repentance, and mature the fruits by obedience, that they may grow up kindly, to his honour and glory.

Now because I am moved to move your charity at this time, let me be bold to teach you another point of God's arithmetic; it is division. "Give a portion

to seven, and also to eight," Eccl. xi. 2. Geometrical division is justice, to give every one his own. There is an arithmetical division, clarity, to give somewhat to all that want; not all to one, this is no division; but some to all, this is to divide well. He that will not divide while he lives, shall find an empty quotient when he is dead. (August.) The bread of the poor is like the way of the rich; he that hoards it from him is a man of blood. We find means of division, but they are not good. Upon the least quarrel we divide all among the lawyers: the Common Pleas and the Chancery drink up the poor's portion. Among ruffians, a word and a blow; among civil men, a word and a writ. I hear the proud neighbour speak of his equal, Go to, I have a hundred pounds to spend with him; I hear him not speak of the poor beggar, I have a hundred pence to give him. Even the lawyers themselves count you mad; I have heard that a lawyer dying bequeathed all his goods to bedlam; saying, Among mad-men I got it, and let mad-men spend it. There were two covetous brethren strove for the inheritance, Luke xii. 13; they strove not who should be most charitable. There are that divide a part to tailors for strange disguises, a part to panders for their female damnations, a part to corrupt officers that sell truth for bribes; and if they have any left, divide it among their children; but I find no portion left for the children of God.

What men charitably divide, they shall only find: of all, what I gave, that I have. This division is not loss but gain; it is sent before to be kept safe in the best coffer. The bread cast upon the waters, shall be found again after many days, Eccl. xi. 1. The truly rich man is not discerned by his plate, nor bags, nor wardrobe, but bounty; not by multiplication, but by division. Other men possess riches as sick men fevers, which indeed rather possess them. Good alms are like ambassadors, sent liegers abroad to secure the rest at home. We have many of St. James's almoners, James ii. 16. God bless you; but they bless you without a cross. Would I were able to help you: able! herein they wish well to themselves only. As the tenant said to his landlord, Would I could give you this farm. What then? said the landlord. You should never have it, quoth the tenant. They wish themselves money, not mercy. The poor may say to them as the beggar said to the bishop: if such wishes were worth a halfpenny they would not be so liberal. Well, divide it thyself, or it shall be done for thee. The father could not be more cunning at the rake, than the son will be at the pitchfork. The monies that were formerly chested like caged birds, will wing it merrily when he sets them a flying; "He begetteth a son, and there is nothing in his hand;" if at least they be not gone before he comes at them. "Thou fool, then whose shall those things be?" Luke xii. 20; yea, whose shalt thou thyself be? and that is the harder question. "When he dieth he shall carry nothing away;" but death comes, and there is a division indeed. Read James v. 2. The moth shall divide his cloth, the rust his gold: this is not all; the world shall divide his goods, infamy his name, the earth his body, terror his conscience, and hell his uncharitable soul. Wilt thou not divide, O worldling? thou shalt be divided. Your twenty in the hundred will not believe this, but a hundred to twenty he shall feel this. But let us divide our goods by charity, and Christ will gather up our souls in mercy.

It follows, "Add to your faith," &c. The motives are done: come we to the materials. Here be eight in number, all excellent in nature. Under this number of eight (though I put no divinity in numbers)

the Scripture hath often commended to us the graces of God. So the inducements we must put on are eight: first is the linings, bowels of mercies; next kindness, &c. Col. iii. 12. Paul does not there begin with faith, but he ends with charity, as our apostle here. So, Phil. iv. 8, he commends to us gracious qualities by the number of eight: "Whatsoever things are true," &c. To both these gradations he propounds the same eminent corollary: "The peace of God," and "the God of peace," be with you. There were eight tables whereon they slew their sacrifices, Ezek. xl. 41: upon these eight tables we must slay our sins, that we may make our souls acceptable sacrifices to God. The ascent to the temple had eight steps, Ezek. xl. 31: by these eight degrees we must climb up to heaven, or not come thither. There were but eight souls saved in Noah's ark: without these eight graces no soul shall be saved. Our Saviour Christ prescribed eight steps for our ascending to blessedness, Matt. v.; his apostle hath delivered the same number. Eight beatitudes. It were no impossible thing to find our Saviour's text in his apostle's gloss. 1. Christ begins with poorness in spirit, Peter with faith: this sees itself poor, and therefore apprehends Christ's riches. 2. Christ commends mourning, and Peter knowledge: now he that knows his sins will mourn for them. 3. Christ praiseth meekness, Peter temperance: it is no hard thing to find meekness in temperance; which is a virtue neither to distemper a man's self, nor to disturb others. 4. Christ blesseth the desire of righteousness, Peter of virtue; which is a rule to live righteously. 5. Christ magnifieth mercy, Peter charity; and who are charitable but the merciful? 6. Christ persuades to pureness in heart, Peter to godliness; and godliness makes the heart pure. As it is true charity to be merciful, so it is true piety to be pure in heart. 7. Christ exhorts to peace-making, Peter to brotherly kindness; and who can distinguish between peace-makers and those that are brotherly kind? as Abraham said to Lot, Let us not strive, for we are brethren. Lastly, Christ encourageth to suffer persecution for righteousness' sake, and Peter patience; now "tribulation worketh patience," Rom. v. 3.

Conceive all this a glorious house, the building up of a Christian. Let faith stand for the foundation; virtue for the walls; knowledge, the windows, that let in the light of God's truth to illuminate it. Let temperance be the mortar, that keeps off the violence of wind and weather; for temperance diverts corruption. Be patience the pins and stays that hold together the frame; for patience will not be moved. Let godliness be the perfect form or model of it, that the structure may mock the rage and resistance of hell. Set brotherly kindness for the lodging chambers, built to entertain friends. Charity is the roof, as St. Augustine says, of God's house in man's heart. Thus as God brought Moses to the mount, to the top of Pisgah, and showed him the land of Canaan, Deut. xxxiv. 1; so I have brought your meditations to the top of the mount, and showed you the fruitful valley standing thick with the graces of God. Now to the first material.

"Add to your faith virtue." Faith is the first, and I have drunk deeply to you in this cup before; yet I would have you sick of a holy ebriety, and still to thirst for this drink: "drink abundantly" of this cup, Cant. v. 1. To your faith, I cannot omit four things naturally arising out of the words. 1. The necessity; 2. The singularity; 3. The propriety; 4. The society, of faith.

1. The necessity of faith. Our apostle, to build his house of Christianity, lays this the foundation,

That would be a poor house that hath no foundation: the hope of too many is a castle in the air, that wants the foundation of faith. Philosophy lays her ground in reason, divinity in faith; the first voice of a Christian is, I believe. He hath most respect with God, not that is wisest in reason, but strongest in faith. Now the necessity of faith appears in three respects; in respect of God, of the devil, and of thyself.

In respect of God; for "without faith it is impossible to please God," Heb. xi. 6. Every man's desire should be to please God; without faith it is impossible to do it. "How shall they call on him in whom they have not believed?" Rom. x. 14. It was faith that made Abraham titled God's friend. He that thrusts into God's presence without faith shall be examined; *Quomodo intrasti?* "Friend, how camest thou in hither?" Believe and welcome; "As thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee," Matt. viii. 13.

In respect of the devil. He is a roaring lion, we have no means to resist him but by being "stedfast in the faith," 1 Pet. v. 9. He is too strong for thee if thou meetest him with thy virtue, or with thy good works; for he will object sins enough to outweigh them. Solon cannot meet him with his justice, nor Solomon with his wisdom; every poor sinner can overcome him with his faith. This quencheth "all the fiery darts of the wicked," Eph. vi. 16. Temperance is a good buckler, that he shall not wound thy body; honesty a good buckler, that he shall not wound thy name; patience, that he shall not disturb thy mind; but if thou want faith, he will for all these wound thy soul. This is an invincible shield against an implacable enemy.

In respect of thyself. Thou art ignorant, there is no understanding of God but by faith, Isa. i. The Vulgate reads, Unless ye believe, ye shall not understand. How the Trinity may be comprehended in understanding, thou askest well: how the Trinity may be believed in faith, thou askest not well. It is therefore to be believed, because it cannot be understood. (August.) Thou art originally corrupt, naturally hateful to God; nothing canst thou do to please him, till thyself be first made pleasing to him. The doer is not acceptable for the deed, but the deed is acceptable for the doer. Hadst thou all the succeeding graces, and not this foundation of faith, whereby thy person is made accepted in the Beloved, when thou art judged, thou couldst not be saved. Nature may do works to glorify ourselves; faith doth works to glorify God. We are not justified by the works of the law, but by grace, say we. But are not the works of the law the works of grace? Yes, every good work of the law is a work of grace; as every sin is a breach of the law. Grace and the law are not thus opposed, but grace and nature. In the root of a tree appears no beauty, no show of leaves or fruits; yet what beauty soever is visible in the tree proceeds from the root. So in the humility of faith we find small lustre, no pleasure discernible to the eye of man; yet whatsoever lustre or gracefulness shines in our works, is derived from that root. Thus faith is the queen that shall speed: let Ahasuerus be never so angry, to his Esther he will hold out his golden sceptre. To this faith God allows entrance; "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith," Heb. x. 22. As Adonijah to Bathsheba, I know the king will deny thee nothing, 1 Kings ii. 13; the eunuch to Philip, "See, here is water; what hinders me to be baptized?" Acts viii. 36. Believest thou? Yes. Then nothing hinders. Upon the knowledge of my faith, I ask, what hinders me to be loved? what hinders me to be blessed? what hinders me to be saved? Now as Philip to the

eunuch, so Christ answers us; Nothing, be it unto thee according to thy faith. Look we a little further into the necessity of faith: it is taken two ways in the Scriptures; either objectively, or actively. Objectively, or materially, for the truth of faith; actively, or formally, for the act of faith, which is the life of faith; for the object to be believed, and the act of believing.

The object or doctrine of faith is that which God by his prophets and apostles hath delivered; or what is naturally and by good consequence deduced from this, or reduced to this. For inference and connexion of Scripture is Scripture, as the root of a tree is the tree though it be hid in the ground. But to deliver rules of faith, no writing hath power but the Scripture; therefore none may speak authoritatively of the doctrines of faith since the apostles: men's assertions have no power to oblige the conscience. What the Scripture forbids, flee it; what it affirms, believe it; what it reproves, mend it; what it commands, do it. "And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God," Gal. vi. 16. There are some things *libere credenda*; some conceive them this way, others that way. Some things are *pie credenda*; as that Mary lived and died a virgin, albeit it be not there expressed; for who durst touch that vessel which God had sanctified to bear his own Son? Others are *necessario credenda*, all things revealed in holy writ, be they plain and easy, or dark and mystical. All, I say, in the readiness and intention of the mind, when we shall come to understand them; as the mystery of the Trinity, Christ's incarnation without sin, &c. Though we cannot conceive, we must believe. Now there is a difference of things objected to our saving faith. *Primaria credendi*, such are the articles of faith: *secunda credendi*, whatsoever thereof is necessarily inferred. The want of this faith excludes from heaven; yet the having of it without further degree doth not bring all thither. Athanasius doth not say, Whosoever doth believe this shall be saved; but, Whosoever doth not believe this shall be damned.

Therefore there is no binding men's faith to that the Scripture avers not. The papists do bind, 1. To things besides the foundation; as traditions, untempered mortar daubed on the walls of truth to hide it. 2. To things about the foundation, such as endanger it; as denial of Scripture to lay-men. This is a wretched sin, to obtrude for matter of faith that it is not lawful to read the Scriptures which are the rule of faith. 3. To things against the foundation; as the sacrifice of the mass, distinction of mortal and venial sins, justification by works, &c. What is against that which is necessarily to be believed to salvation, is against the foundation. But it is necessary to trust in Christ's blood and merits only, because there is no other name given under heaven whereby we may be saved, Acts iv. 12. Therefore to trust in others, to let angels or men share part of our faiths, is against the foundation. Indeed they boast that they only hold the foundation; but "I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing," Gal. v. 2. If you join your own merits with Christ's merits, he shall profit you nothing. Thus for the matter of faith.

As we see the necessity of faith, in respect of the doctrine to be believed; so see the necessity of it, in respect of the act of believing. The schoolmen, in defining this faith, are defective. First, they forget the name of Christ, who is the special object of faith; that light which makes the eyes of faith to see. Secondly, they leave out confidence, or affiance, an immediate effect or act of faith. For we have

"boldness to enter into the holiest," Heb. x. 19. Thirdly, they make it a speculation, not a practice; but faith is operative and busy, in applying Christ, in lifting up the soul to Christ, in abhorring that may offend Christ, in doing that may please Christ. Whither go we? to God. How go we? by Christ. On what foot? on our faith; for faith is still walking. There be three acts of faith concerning Christ, prehending, apprehending, comprehending of Christ. Prehending of him is by knowledge; we know him a Saviour: this is the first step, but not far enough, to heaven: the wicked know, the devils have this faith. Apprehending of him, by appropriation of his merits: we know him our Saviour; *my* Lord, and *my* God. Comprehending of him is a full possession in the heart. The other often doubts; such a faith had Peter, when he cried out sinking, "Lord, save me," Matt. xiv. 30. While he believed, he trod the sea safely: when he doubted, he began to sink. When we "comprehend with all saints," and "know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge," Eph. iii. 18, 19; this is the fulness of faith. "According to the faith of God's elect," Tit. i. 1: there is a faith of the elect, therefore the reprobates may have a faith by themselves. Their belief is in the elect, but the belief of the elect is not in them. They may have a true faith, but not a saving faith. This is of necessity to heaven; and as it depends upon Christ, so it is given by the Spirit of Christ. Our apostle says before, they obtained it by lot. Jacob prophesied the division of Canaan, yet was it done by lot. Faith is not gotten by wit or diligence, but by God's lot, that is, God's gift. If this lot be thine, thou hast drawn well, and shalt never look blank. The abridgement of all godliness, or sanctity in the root of sanctity, that is this faith. Now seeing (necessarily) we cannot be saved without it, in all our hearts, good Lord, plant it.

Secondly, we are to consider the singularity: the apostle says not, faiths, but faith. He writes to many, but he speaks of no plurality of faiths; "One Lord, one faith," Eph. iv. 5. One as to the object, which is Christ; not one as to the subject; for every believer hath his own faith. But his meaning is that all true believers have one and the same faith; your faith. There is but one faith in the church, as but one church in the faith; one faith in nature, not one in number. We may say of faiths, as of faces,

Facies non omnibus una;

Non diversa tamen.

One light, many rays; one fountain, many streams; one tree, many branches. The church is a pomegranate, that hath many kernels; an ear of wheat, that hath many grains. Every man hath his own faith, yet all have but one faith. Paul speaks of some that "have erred from the faith," 1 Tim. vi. 10; and of others "reprobate concerning the faith," 2 Tim. iii. 8: that have prevaricated from that faith which the church in unity professeth: "Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith," Tit. i. 13. Man's body, as physicians say, is subject to two thousand diseases; the eye, to two hundred: but faith, which is the soul's eye, is subject to more. There be so many errors concerning the faith, that they are not to be numbered. Almost as many sects as cities, as many creeds as heads. Christ says, when he shall come to judgment, that he shall scarce find faith on the earth; but if he come now, he shall find too many faiths. I pray God the plurality of faiths among many, hath not brought a nullity of faith in the most. So our Saviour's prophecy will still be true; among so many false faiths he shall scarce find any true faith. Not

so much need to pray now with the apostles, Lord, increase our faith; but, Lord, decrease our faiths. Lessen the number of our false faiths, increase the measure of our true faith. We know how some believe this year; we know not how they will believe next year. Where belief is uncertain, unbelief is certain. The vanity of some men, the curiosity of many men, the inconstancy of all men, make many faiths. As the Levite served his ravished concubine, he divided her into twelve pieces, and sent her into all the coasts of Israel, Judg. xix. 29; so poor faith hath been cut into twelve thousand pieces, and scattered all over the world.

The papists exclaim, so far as the world is christened, that the variety of faiths sprung from us. Out of one Luther came many faiths; as out of the belly of the Trojan horse, an army of soldiers. They call us new-gospellers, and protestants of a fifth gospel. All their malice is to black and grime the face of our church; which still, mangle all their spite, looks fair in the eye of her husband Jesus Christ. All their aspersions and calumnies are but rubbish to scour us, and make us God's brighter vessels. A fifth gospel, say ye? No, remember your own book, which the monks of Paris wrote, and called it, the Everlasting Gospel: there was a fifth gospel. But the want of our union with the pope, or unity with ourselves, doth not disprove the truth of our faith. As Jerusalem is at one, so Babylon is at one. (August.) The children of hell are at peace; Satan divides not his kingdom: one crow will not pick out another crow's eyes. As every union is not truth, so every dissension is not falsehood. Better are the troubles and differences of righteousness, than the peace of wickedness. There is no truth of unity, without unity of truth. Agreement in evil is not unity, but conspiracy. Indeed our neighbours of Rome are subtle, their quarrels are not in the streets, all their jars keep within doors. The Inquisition keeps papists in the unity of heresy. Yet some of them secretly know their own errors, their own distractions. Ludovicus Vives writes of a great one among them, persuaded to go to one of their conventicles; who answered, Come, let us go to the common errors, seeing you will have it so. Where was their union in the time of their antipopes, when there were three at once? Which was the head? Was it a body without a head? or a body with three heads? The one were defective, the other monstrous. What was the unity of their faith, when their heads were condemned heretics; some of them sacrificers to devils? Yea, even now they agree not in the faith. The Dominicans abridge man's free-will, the Jesuits contradict this; this quarrel fills the world with books. The truth is, there are more differences of faith in the Romish religion, than in all the world besides. A reverend divine of ours hath collected from Bellarmine's own pen many hundred differences among them; (Dr. Hall, The Peace of Rome;) yet these men boast their unity of faith. But as no unity is so strong as that of faith, so no dissension so violent as that of different faiths. Faith is a whet-stone that gives edge to the instruments of war.

The papists on the left hand; their divines conclude that none of us can be saved: one heaven cannot hold the pope and Calvin. Some of ours say so of them; If Rome be Babylon, then all that have the mark of the beast must burn in hell. So plainly, Rev. xix. 20. They instance in many particulars, wherein the Roman church doth raze the foundation. Therefore they say, Babylon will be served as she wished to Jerusalem, Psal. cxxxvii. She cried of that city, "Raze it, raze it, unto the founda-

tion;" her reward shall be proportionate; her little ones shall be dashed against the stones. But this may be too far on both sides, a fever of zeal.

Schismatics on the right hand; for faith suffers, as Christ suffered, in the midst of her enemies. These invent a new faith, a new church. As the heathen made a piece of wood a god, and then adored it; so these set up a new creed of their own forging, and then worship it. If it be appealed, they cry louder than the Ephesians for their Diana, with such a noise; "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." If they live among us, we ought to compel them to unity. A woman not contracted, must not be forced to marry, because she is free; but if she be willingly contracted, and afterward dislike, she may be justly forced by the law. These are contracted to the church, therefore may be justly compelled; "Compel them to come in, that my house may be filled," Luke xiv. 23. But can faith be constrained? It is against the nature of faith to be compelled. How then? There is no help left but our prayers: let us desire that as at first the whole world was of one language, so that it were now all of one faith. Let us beseech our Lord of faith, to send us our lady faith; that every one may have faith in his own heart, and all our faith may be one in Jesus Christ.

The third point is the propriety, *your* faith. The faith of all is one, as it reflects on our Saviour Christ; yet every soul that will go to heaven, must have a particular faith in itself. All of us believe one thing, yet the act of thy faith cannot save my soul; it must be my own faith. No man can be saved by a common faith in any religion. For the substance, it hath a community with the rest of the saints; for the availability, it hath a propriety to every believer. One bird cannot fly to heaven with another bird's wings. Now it is called *your* faith two ways; by the right and interest you have in it, and by your proper use of it.

1. Your faith, because you have a right and interest to this faith. As St. Jude calls it the "common salvation," ver. 3, so it may be called the common faith. If no Christian be excepted from the right of salvation by Christ, then none is excepted from the right of faith in Christ. The faith that God delivered to the saints, is your faith: take your handful out of his sheaf; your portion is in this common stock. It is, saith our apostle, "like precious faith," ver. 1; not appropriated to Peter or Paul only, the rest secluded, but common to all the saints. He that excepts himself, deceives himself; he that excepts others, doth wrong to Christ. There is a woe to such; "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men," Matt. xxiii. 13. They have a bridge over the gulf, whereby themselves are escaped; and then take it away, lest it should help others. But "when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren," Luke xxii. 32. Show others the mercy thou hast tasted; teach them to escape damnation by that way thou hast escaped it. So David, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul," Psal. lxxvi. 16. Woe to them that engross faith, that enclose God's commons, that make that several and peculiar, which the Lord hath laid open and made common! Thus the Pharisee despised the poor publican, yet went home less justified. The Pharisees reproached them; "Have any of the rulers believed on him? But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed," John vii. 48, 49; but themselves were more cursed. Shut not the door of heaven against thy brother, lest God shut it against thine own soul. Divers gifts are appropriated to divers men; but faith is general to all

the elect. There is a part of the body for seeing, a part for hearing, a part for smelling, a part for tasting, a part for walking, a part for speaking; but all parts are for feeling. The eye feels, the ear feels, the tongue feels, &c. Faith is like that sense of feeling, common to all. All are not seeing parts, nor all hearing parts, nor all smelling parts; but all are feeling parts. "Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles?" 1 Cor. xii. 29. Others may have particular graces; faith is a common grace to all. It is a devilish malice to grudge another man faith. When one wished that none might go to heaven, but himself, his wife, and his daughter; another replied, it were far better that none might go to hell, but thyself, thy wife, and thy daughter.

2. Your faith, because every one must have a proper and peculiar use of faith. Thou canst not see Christ with another's eyes, nor walk to heaven on another's feet. Get true faith of thine own; though little, let it be true. If it cannot be as great as the best, let it be as precious as the best; a little piece of gold is as good gold as a great piece, excepting the quantity. Keep thy faith, though thou bear about in thy body "the marks of the Lord Jesus," Gal. vi. 17. Whosoever thou art maimed, let thy faith be sound. If a man receive a wound, he is glad it is not to death; if he have sickness, that it is not mortal. So keep faith, and keep life. Lose not thy faith, and thou shalt never lose Christ.

The fourth and last point is, the society. *To* your faith; to, implies some accession. Faith is a great queen; it is base to let her go without a court and a train. The queen shall be brought to the king in raiment of needle-work: the virgins that be her companions shall follow her, Psal. xlv. 14. The virgins are virtue, temperance, &c. Naked faith is no faith. Let us not be solifidians, as the papists call us, lest we be nullifidians, as they are. Faith is of Rachel's humour; "Give me children, or else I die." The want of good works makes faith sick; evil works kill her outright. Good deeds are such things, that no man is saved for them, nor without them. Thou hast need of thy faith, or thou canst not be saved; Christ hath need of thy works, or he will not save thee. Not that he needs them for himself. "My goodness, O Lord, extendeth not to thee," Psal. xvi. 2; but for his children, "but to the saints that are in the earth," ver. 3. So that in this respect, loose the ass and the colt, for "the Lord hath need of them," Matt. xxi. 3: unbind your covetous desires, be free in the works of mercy, for the Lord hath need of them. You ask, Why should I part with my goods, seeing my faith serves my turn, and is sufficient to save my soul? Yes, but the Lord hath need of them. Use for himself, because need for his; and what you lay out to these little ones, he takes it to himself, he will pay you again. Thus faith, like that queen of the south, comes not alone to Solomon; she brings her train after her. Faith is this queen; let repentance be her usher to go before her, and good works the court that follow her: so let her come to the King of mercy, the presence-chamber of Jesus Christ.

"To your faith virtue." We have laid the foundation, and are now come to the walls of this spiritual house. It were a foolish cost of a foundation without walls; then said in derision. This man began to build. Virtue: this is a special material. It is fit to begin with the definition. But we must first see what is the virtue here meant, before we can define it. Jerome says that virtue in the Scripture is sometimes taken for the great power of God: as the prophet speaks, *Virtutes Domini nuntiabit in insulis*: and Psal. xlvii. he is called, *Domine virtutum*. The

philosopher called virtue, the rule or method of living well. Piscator understands virtue here, righteousness towards others, whereafter they that live are called good men. In a word, virtue is taken in a double signification: 1. In the latitude; so for all graces and good endowments; as, "Whatsoever things are true, &c. if there be any virtue, any praise," Phil. iv. 8. Thus understood here, it is but the *genus* to all these succeeding graces; knowledge, temperance, &c. all are virtues. 2. In a restrained sense, it intends some special habit, directing a man to lead a good life; soberly, as to himself, righteously, as to his neighbour, godly, as to the Lord, Tit. ii. 12. First therefore we will consider virtue in the copious acceptation; and so we may deduce this general doctrine.

Faith without virtue can neither make a man good in himself, nor just before the Lord. Faith must have virtue with it. God requires grapes of the vine, (implanted to Christ by faith,) not for his own diet, but in testimony of our faith. If faith have ingrafted us into the vine, we must be bearing branches. And though we shall not be rewarded for our works; yet, according to our works, Rev. ii. 23. Virtue must wait at the heels of faith. There is a great sea of difference between the papists and us, about good works; which, God knows, are scant and cold among us all. We both agree that they are to be done; both our doctrines persuade to well-doing; but when they talk of merit in them, here we part company; they travelling to heaven by their works, we by our faith: which of us speed best, rest in the conclusion to prove. They cavil that we hold not good works necessary: we hold them as necessary as they, but in another kind of necessity. They in a necessity of priority, we in a necessity of posteriority. They to bind God to us, we as already bound to God. They to make him our debtor, we in acknowledgment of a debt due to him: even our alms is not a gift, but a debt. Therefore it is said, that no man hath a right in his own, but only the use and disposition. As the wealth of the seven plentiful years supplied the want of the seven barren, so the wealth of the rich is given to supply the necessity of the poor. Our alms brings not God accountant to us, but helps us in our account to God. The papists hold them necessary, as of hired servants, they look for wages for them; we, as of children disposed according to the nature of our Father.

But if we be only justified by faith, why are we rewarded according to works? Works are of two sorts: Inward, or infused; such as God works in us: these are here virtues, theological or moral, as patience, &c. Outward, or acquired; these we draw out of the former, or rather God out of us. The former are as the principal, these the interest. Now God doth not so much call us to account for that he gives us, but for the employment and increase of that should be made to his use. Therefore he that buried his talent was condemned, though he had it. The others were rewarded, not because they had their talents, but because they had employed them, and gained by them. One came with, Lord, here is thine own; yet he was answered with, Cast that unprofitable servant into utter darkness. But the other, Lord, behold, thy five talents have gotten five more; then, Well done, good and faithful servant: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord. God calls him faithful, because he used his faith to the producing of good works. So, Matt. xxv., not according to the internal habit of virtues or vices, but according to the works proceeding from them, is the reward bestowed. Christ says not, you have believed, but, you have done; Come, ye blessed.

Two things fall necessarily here to be observed; the invalidity of merit in our virtuous works; the necessity and commodity of these virtuous works in themselves. Here is faith preceding, and works proceeding.

1. The insufficiency of our virtues, and their effects, which are good works, to merit, or to justify our souls before God. It is a silly illation of the Romists, that because we must add to our faith virtue, &c. therefore faith cannot alone justify. We do not commend a solitary faith, you see her required company. The eye alone of all parts of the body doth see; but the eye that is alone, or separated from the body, doth not see. We pronounce that to be no justifying faith which is without virtue and works. But that faith qualified with works, doth notwithstanding justify without works; this we maintain against men and angels. We separate not faith and works in the person justified, but in the act of justifying. In fire, though light and heat cannot be divided the one from the other, yet the one may be considered without the other. But how shall St. Paul and St. James be reconciled; the one saying, we are justified by faith, the other, by works? Is the spirit of unity and truth divided? No; the one speaks of a justice of justification, the other of a justice of testification. The one acquits before God, the other approves before man. The one is without us, lent; the other within us, inherent: the one we receive, the other we return. Paul, like a doctor in the schools, reading; James, as a pastor in the pulpit, preaching. The one establishing a real faith, the other confuting a verbal faith. Piscator doth thus clear it: he says that St. Paul and St. James doth handle two diverse questions; Paul, that faith doth justify; James, what kind of faith doth justify. The one properly teaching justification, the other sanctification.

Virtue as a servant follows faith her mistress, but when she comes to answer the justice of God, virtue runs behind the door, with a, Lord, be merciful to me a sinner; and so leaves the burden on faith's shoulder, which only answers it in the blood of Jesus Christ. Faith is like Rachel, and virtue, her maid Bilhah; though Bilhah supply the defects of Rachel, yet still let her remember that Rachel is her mistress. Christ is our Husband, and we his spouse: now it is fit the Bridegroom should be alone with the bride in the secret chamber, all the servants and attendants being shut forth; but when the door is opened, and the Bridegroom cometh into the waiting room, then let all the servants and hand-maids attend; then enter virtue, temperance, &c. Out of the point of justification works cannot be sufficiently commended; into the cause of justification they must not be admitted. David had a great army of soldiers at his back, yet he slew Goliath alone, had none to help him. Faith alone conquers Satan, but it hath a host of seconds with it. Faith, like John, that beloved disciple, leans on Christ's breast; good works, with Peter, follow Christ. The story of Judith's proceeding with Holofernes may be here entertained for a fit similitude, Judith xiii. Bethulia is in danger of Holofernes, the terror of the East, as we of the justice of God. Judith undertakes for the safety of the Bethulians; faith for the safety of Christians: all Bethulia being too weak to encounter him, as all our obedience is too little to answer God. Judith goes accompanied with her hand-maid; faith, with virtue. The hand-maid waits on Judith all the way; yet in the act of deliverance Judith is alone, and her hand-maid attends without the door. Virtue is ever waiting upon faith; but in the mighty act of deliverance she dares not come in, but lets faith alone with the whole business. It is she that goes to

the throne of grace with confidence, and obtains mercy through the mediation of her sweet Saviour Christ.

2. The necessity of virtuous actions. The law, though it have no power to condemn us, hath power to command us. The law sends us to Christ to be saved, and Christ sends us back again to the law to learn obedience. The former is plain; "The law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith," Gal. iii. 24. The other is as manifest; "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments," Matt. xix. 17. "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men," Tit. ii. 11. There is the grace of God, and salvation with it: whither doth it send us? To the denial of ungodliness and worldly lusts, that we should live soberly, &c. He that believes will keep the commandments. Now the keeping of the law is twofold; legal, evangelical. Legal: so Adam might have kept it; so Christ did. Evangelical; Christ's righteousness imputed to us: he kept it for us, and we strive to keep it in him. That is true "faith which worketh by love," Gal. v. 6. A man is a perfect Christian inwardly through faith before God, who hath no need of our works; outwardly, before men by his works, for our faith profits them nothing. We call a painted man a man: some painters are so skilful in casting their colours, and can paint a face so lively, that at the first blush you would think it to be a face indeed. But try it by the effects, hold your hand to it to feel some warmth, it is but a cold board or block. Many can thus lively paint their faith with the colours of profession; that God is their God; and though few be saved, they are sure to be of the number: excellent fire! But let the poor come near to be warmed with works of mercy, or others look for the light of virtue; there is neither light nor heat in it, a mere painted fire; a Pygmalion's block, faced only like faith. But the gospel that gives salvation, chargeth us with the law's obedience. Esther being brought up in her young years under Mordecai, though she was afterwards married to king Ahasuerus, and an imperial crown of gold set on her head, yet was still obedient to Mordecai, as before; she "did the commandment of Mordecai, like as when she was brought up with him," Esth. ii. 20. When he charged her to speak to the king, albeit with hazard of life, she obeyed; "If I perish, I perish." We were under the rudiments of the law, as she under Mordecai: now we are freed by the gospel, married to the great King Jesus Christ, crowned with his grace, enriched with the royal apparel of his righteousness; yet still we must be obedient to the law, as queen Esther to Mordecai. Epaminondas gave his soldiers leave to feast and sleep, while himself walked and watched about the army. Christ will not deal so with us; but rather as Abimelech said to his soldiers, What you see me do, do ye so likewise, Judg. ix. 48. Though in justification, Be it unto thee according to thy faith; yet in salvation, Every man shall be rewarded according to his works. "Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God," Matt. v. 8. They must lead virtuous lives on earth, that ever expect in heaven to see the Lord Jesus.

All this while we have considered virtue in the larger acceptance, comprehensive of all the rest. Strictly, St. Augustine defines it to be nothing else, but *diligere diligendum*, to love that is to be loved. Thus it hath a sweet reference to all the graces following. To love this is knowledge; not to be seduced from it by allurements, is temperance; not to be removed from it by calamity, is patience; to do this for God's cause, is godliness; to communicate it to others, is brotherly kindness; to dilate it to all men, is charity. (Ambr.) Knowledge seeks virtue, temper-

ance finds it, patience suffers for it, godliness possesseth it, charity communicates it. These are so linked together with a golden chain of harmony, like the tabernacle's curtains of blue silk, that pull one, pull all. Hath any man virtue? he must have knowledge; the ignorant are not capable of the habit of virtue. If there be knowledge, temperance will follow: for folly is the mother of surfeit, and digs its own grave with its teeth; but abstinence is the daughter of wisdom. If temperance, then surely there will be patience. Temperance doth no wrong, patience suffers it. He that abhors to hurt others, will much less hurt himself. If patience, there must needs be piety; for the thankworthy patience is that, which for conscience toward God endureth wrongful grief, 1 Pet. ii. 19. If we be content to suffer evil for God, surely we will do for God. If godliness go before, fraternal kindness will follow after; for no man can love the invisible God, and hate his visible brother. If kindness to our brother in Christ, then charity to all. A heathen will be kind to his friends; a Christian must be charitable to his enemies. This is a golden chain: the wicked have a chain, their "pride compasseth them about as a chain," Psal. lxxiii. 6; the cords or chain of their sins, one end whereof reaches to hell. But this chain is tied to heaven by the one end thereof; fasten the other end to thy conscience, it shall draw thee up thither.

The papists say, images are the books of idiots; but the prophet calls them teachers of lies, and all know that they are occasions of sin. Let me give you a picture without the offence; behold an image without sin. It is of virtue: you shall no sooner see the medals, but you will straight know the face. Conceive her a virgin of an unspotted chastity: fair, yet never courted with a lascivious language. She hath a face white as is heaven, mixed with some lovely red; white with her own innocence, ruddy with blushing at others' naughtiness. Of her Saviour's complexion; "My Beloved is white and ruddy," Cant. v. 10. She hath a brow clear as crystal, wherein God hath written wisdom. This is her courage; she may be affronted, she cannot be affrighted. She hath eyes that never sent out a wanton look; those casements were never opened to let in vanity. She is not poring upon the earth; but *nititur erectos ad sidera tollere vultus*, directs them to heaven, where they shall one day see her desire, even the glory of God. "Thou hast ravished my heart, my spouse, with one of thine eyes," Cant. iv. 9. The Lord loves those eyes. She hath lips like a thread of scarlet, and her speech is comely, Cant. iv. 3. She hath the tongue of angels: when she speaks, she ministers grace to the hearers. She discourseth the language of Canaan most perfectly; and never opens, but the first air she breathes echoes with the praise of her Maker. Her ears are like the *sanctum sanctorum* of the temple; none but the High Priest must enter there. They are stopped to the songs of any siren, open to the mournings of any poor. What gracious words she receives in at those doors, she sends them like jewels to be laid up in the cabinet of her heart. She hath two hands; one of equity, another of charity; none for injury. She gives every one his due for justice' sake, some more than their due for mercy's sake. She gives, forgives, does that to others which she expects at the hands of Christ. She hath bowels of mercy; the members of Christ are as dear to her as her most inward and vital parts. She feeds them, as considering what it were to have empty bowels herself. Her knees were never stiffened with pride: she can easily bow them to give her superior homage, but throws them down at the footstool of her Maker; yet still her heart is lower, and

she never riseth without a pardon. Her feet are still travelling the ways of piety, and running the race of salvation. She knows this life is a journey, and no time to stand still, therefore she is shod for the purpose, with the "preparation of the gospel of peace:" she never rests, till she is gotten within the threshold of heaven. She hath a white silken garment, the snow of Lebanon is black to it; not woven out of the bowels of worms, but out of the side of her Saviour. She is clothed all over with his righteousness, which makes her beautiful in the sight of her Maker. She is girt with the girdle of truth; and sins not, not because she cannot, but because she will not. (August.) She hath a crown promised, blessedness: her Redeemer, even the King of heaven, did bequeath it her in his will, and she shall wear it in eternal glory. And let every soul, that knows and loves her on earth, or hopes to enjoy her reward in heaven, call her blessed.

"To virtue knowledge." Virtue without knowledge were like a beautiful damsel blind, or a fair house that hath not a window in it. Virtue is like a pearl in the shell; there must be knowledge to break the shell, or we cannot come at the pearl. Ignorance is dangerous. Thus the devil carries many to hell, as falconers carry their hooded hawks, without baiting. There is no wretchedness so pitiable, as that which is not known to the sufferer. If men will not know God, God will not know them. Therefore he sends away the wicked with an "I know you not;" but, "The Lord knoweth them that are his," 2 Tim. ii. 19. "They have made princes, and I knew it not," Hos. viii. 4; that is, I did not approve of it. Wilt thou not know? thou shalt not be acknowledged.

The work of regeneration begins at illumination. The first thing that sunk in our first parents, was knowledge: now where the wound began, there must begin the medicine. Thou seest in a tree buds, leaves, flowers, and fruits, and bark, and pith; yet all these are but the juice diversely digested and sent forth. So here in a Christian, faith, virtue, temperance, patience, charity, godliness; yet all these are but the knowledge of Christ diversely concolored: knowledge is the light of virtue.

The papists indeed magnify ignorance: good reason, for ignorance magnifies them. Our way to heaven is knowledge: perhaps they have a way by themselves. Like owls, they keep a whooting in the dark, but are blind in the broad day; never ask them, poor souls, as Philip the eunuch, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" but, Dost thou read at all? No, we may not be suffered to read. It will be very hard for a man to stumble over the threshold of heaven, or to go blindfold to salvation.

Concupiscence, though ever sinful, yet could not bring forth sin without the consent of reason; and this would never consent so long as the eyes were open. For sin is a thing so ugly and deformed, and so like the father the devil, that it is unreasonable for a man's soul to yield to it. Hence Paul calls sin a work of darkness; for Satan doth hide it from us in the birth, and would hide it from us in the growth, only on our death-bed and anguish of soul he shows it us in the fruit. In this sense, that may rightly be understood, that no man sins knowingly at the very instant of the committing. Though he have the habit of knowledge in the general, yet hath he lost it in the particular. As we say of the coward, there is fear in his heart, even while he feareth not; in regard of the habit. And the slave hath an habitual service upon him, even when he sleeps; he serves though he takes his ease. There may be the habit of knowledge in the mind, yet not the use of it in some special act. The devil, to utter his damned commodities,

dealeth as some trade-men about their bad wares; puts out the true lights, and sets up false lights in their stead. In the time of superstition he put out the word preached, that man did scarce know sin in general. In these days of profaneness, he puts out the word applied, that few consider what sin is in practice. So that now, he that coming from the mount, as Moses, and hearing the world's confused noise, would think it the noise of war, conquering or conquered; but being among them, he finds it the noise of joy and dancing, revelling and roaring. Not because men do not know these sins in general, but they will not know them in these particular facts. Lust, like a thick smoke, dims the eye of knowledge.

Now the means to prevent this wickedness, is to keep open the eye of knowledge. This is done both by the doctrine of truth in general, and the application thereof in special. The general knowledge of truth is more easy, for which of us is ignorant what sin is? Knowledge, while she walks in generals, is in her own jurisdiction; sense and affection have nothing to do with her, but she may freely give her sentence. Lo, then she dares call usury, usury, and not a moderate improvement of money; pride, pride, and not handsomeness; covetousness by its own name, and not thirstiness. But when she descends to particulars, wherein all actions do consist, and disputeth whether this or that special act be sin or not, here sense and affection put in for a part, challenge an interest, and overway. And as it is in an ill picked (or as we say, packed) jury, whereof there is one wise man, another honest man, five knaves and five fools: the greater part overrules the better part, these ten overbear those two. The five senses, and as many affections, are the knaves and the fools; science is the wise man, conscience the honest: now neither science the wise, nor conscience the honest, can be heard, nor give in their verdict; but all goes with the mad senses and frantic affections.

Here we see the use of preachers, who may speak freely, and help us to retain the truth in particular. Admonition is called by the Greeks *νομοθεσία*: as it were, a restoring or putting of the mind in order. When the understanding is (as it were) beside itself, and out of joint; transported with some sudden passion, or prevented by an evil custom; this repairs it. So Paul delivers the use of it, Eph. iv. 12, for the putting again in joint of luxate members. This continual public preaching is necessary: as a taper set on the table to give light to all in the house; if this light waste itself, what hurt does it to thee? yea, if it go out in its own stench, yet it lightens thee so long as it lasts. But thou sayest, Let not me take counsel of him, that gives none to himself. Yet he might build an ark for Noah, that was himself drowned in the flood: he may light thee to heaven, though himself go darkling to another place. Woe to him if he do not preach! if he do preach, take thy portion. *Quod bene dicit, tuum est: quod male vixit, suum est.* But if he preach not, thou mayst perish. Where if you had good eyes and thankful hearts, you would see and acknowledge how God hath blessed you more than the Romanists. The devil was feigned to send a letter of commendations to the popish clergy. Amongst many other things, he thanks them for their ignorance, but especially for their silence. For settling our estate we require a learned lawyer; for our sick body, a learned physician; and for the soul that is most precious, shall we not desire a learned divine? In law thou canst not hazard thy estate; in physic thou ventur'st but a mortal life; but here thou mayst lose thy soul. The body dies, the physician is paid; let

the estate be lost, thy lawyer hath his fees before : but if the minister save thy soul, yet he is not regarded, nor rewarded ; if he lose it by wilful negligence, he hath lost himself. Thus requisite are preachers to give the light of knowledge. But yet if in this night of sin we will do any profitable work, we must either ourselves have a particular light of our own in our hands ; or if we cannot, we must get another to hold the candle to us, that we may see the deformity of sin ; lest knowledge being blinded, and lust leading the way, we both fall into the pit of destruction. John the Baptist was Christ's harbinger, and went before him, that is, the glory of heaven. Knowledge is like John, that shining lamp ; without that, we cannot find the way to the glory of heaven, nor be brought to Christ. Thus in general ; now let us further observe five conclusions.

1. That by knowledge is here meant an insight into heavenly things. Indeed Augustine distinguisheth between knowledge and wisdom : Wisdom, saith he, is an intellectual apprehension of eternal things ; knowledge, a natural apprehension of temporal things. But there is no true knowledge, but that which can make the knowers blessed. Christian wisdom seems the world's folly. (Greg.) What is more foolish than to declare a man's meaning in his words ? to bless them that curse us ? to suffer rather than to do evil ? to resist our oppressors ? Yet this is Christ's commended wisdom ; and he that is the Wisdom of the Father, shall one day crown it. Yet there may be a holy knowledge in these lower things. Oh, would to God thou wert wise, and wouldst understand and know the last things ! that thou wert wise in the things of God, wouldst understand the vanities of this world, and foresee the torments of hell. (Bern.) Thou wouldst abhor the plagues of hell, desire the joys of heaven, despise the temptations of earth. The great affection we bear to the world, shows that we know it not.

2. The apostle's earnest exhortation to knowledge, intimates that naturally we want it. Aristotle compares our wits at the beginning to a fair table, whereon is nothing written, but it is apt to receive all forms and figures. But he is deceived, for it is a dark vault, wherein is no light of grace, and no more of the light of nature than the little spark or snuff affords. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God," 1 Cor. ii. 14. By nature he is subject to two enemies of knowledge, ignorance and error. By ignorance we know not things necessary, by error we know them falsely. Ignorance is a privation, error a positive obliquity. All ignorance cannot be helped, all errors cannot be escaped. From ignorance comes vice, from error heresy. Many striving to expel ignorance, fall into error : as an empiric, to cure one disease, causeth a worse ; so quenching thirst with a draught of poison. Some are so deeply possessed with folly, that they scarce differ from beasts. Hence we see that knowledge is not easily had. In the West Indies, they that by digging follow the veins of gold, run under high mountains and stony rocks, many miles ; yet the interest of ore sufficiently defrayeth the expenses of labour. But knowledge is attained not without greater difficulty ; for the soul in the body, as a prisoner in a dungeon, takes in nothing but through the grate, sees only through windows and cloudy spectacles. "The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God," 1 Cor. iii. 19. Therefore the first way to knowledge is, to know thine own ignorance. He that dotes on his own folly hath no hope of wisdom ; nor can a man become what he would be, unless he hates being what he is. (August.) They can never come to true wisdom, whom the opinion of

their own false wisdom deceiveth. "Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise, let him become a fool, that he may be wise," 1 Cor. iii. 18. Confess thy ignorance ; this is the way to get knowledge.

3. That knowledge is not the cause of sin, but ignorance ; for virtue is begotten and nourished by knowledge. Knowledge must go before virtue ; (Chrys.) for man desires not that he knows not : unknown evil is not feared. Indeed there may be a disjunction of these two in respect of their moral parts. The heathen had virtue without knowledge, and we have knowledge without virtue. But as theirs was not true virtue without knowledge, so neither is ours true knowledge without virtue. There may be a servant that knows his master's will, and doth it not. And this shall aggravate his wretchedness, to know what he should follow, and not to follow what he doth know. (Isidor.) The sun does not heat all men to whom it shines ; nor doth knowledge, when it hath taught men what is to be done, presently inflame or enable them to the doing of it. It is one thing to know where riches are, another thing to be master of them. It is not the knowledge, but the possession of them, that makes rich. But to say that knowledge is a spur to wickedness, is all one as if a father training up his son to be an archer, another should tell him, that by aiming most fairly he should miss most foully. No, certainly, there is no virtue can batten or thrive, but that which sucks on the breasts of knowledge.

4. Seeing we must join with our faith knowledge, it is manifest that an ignorant faith is no faith. The papists stand hard for their implicit faith ; it is enough, they say. Their proof is, "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith ?" Matt. viii. 26. As if there were no difference between a little faith and an implicit faith : between a little man and a great elephant ; the little one is a man, and the great one is a beast : between a little star and a great cloud ; that is true light, this is very darkness ; that turns to water, this remains fire still. A little faith, with knowledge, is true and saving ; a great presumption, with ignorance, is damning. A small tree is better than a great shadow ; that may bear fruit, this is nothing. A juggler could never show more tricks, than they with this involved faith : they are very like ; for these also cast a mist before men's eyes, and juggle away their souls. When the devil comes with his fiery darts, their shield of faith is so wrapped up that they cannot find it. It is like ware in a pedler's pack, mislaid ; he hath it, but he knows not where it is. It is truly called the collier's faith. The devil catcheth him : How dost thou believe ? I believe as the church believes. How believes the church ? As I believe. This man was saved, say they ; but for all that, I do not think that the devil and the collier so soon parted : sure, if he had no better weapons, Satan would have another bout with him, and such a one as would cost him his soul. Believe as the church believes, we ask you no more ; this and the sign of the cross is sufficient. Oh the multitude of souls they thus beguile ! But add to your faith knowledge : "They that know thy name will put their trust in thee," Psal. ix. 10. They that know not what they should believe, cannot believe to their own comfort.

5. Lastly, this knowledge must be added to virtue also. The Romists love all blind graces ; they commend a blind faith, a blind obedience, a blind devotion, whose mother is ignorance. But the apostle bids us add knowledge to these. And virtue itself, lustre it with what gloss of obedience and devotion they can, I say not, it goes halting toward heaven ; but is like a seeled dove, it would mount to heaven,

and hovers upward, but strikes at a tree and falls, if it want knowledge to direct it. But why should I say virtue without knowledge is blind, when indeed it is not at all? A man may do good, and not know it; but not well: true virtue is not without knowledge. But as some do ill, and yet think it good; so others do good, and yet think it ill. For the former, "Whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service," John xvi. 2. For the latter, Joseph's mistress meant him a shrewd turn in betraying him to prison, which was Joseph's step to promotion: or as the thief wounded a passenger, and intended to kill him, yet with his stroke cut and let out an ulcer, whereof he was ready to die: neither of these can be called virtue. For good and well must in all actions meet: wicked is not much worse than indiscreet. Knowledge without virtue makes a man's mittimus to hell. "If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth," John ix. 41. Like the woman that hath a candle in her hand, Luke xv. 8; but as the Romish Vulgate did read it, instead of *domum everrit, domum everit*: so these, instead of sweeping the house, pull it quite down. So much light abused on earth, so much darkness inflicted in hell. Virtue without knowledge, is either, like Laodicea, proud, and knows not whereof, Rev. iii. 17; or mad, and knows not what to do. I conclude with John ix. 6. Christ made a medicine for the blind man's eyes of his own spittle and the earth's clay. The first signifying the knowledge of Christ by his word, that comes out of his mouth; the other, the knowledge of ourselves, who being made of earth, do naturally savour of nothing but clay. Now of both these materials Christ made one lump, tempering them together; so both these knowledges must be so melted together, that they be not severed. To have the clay, knowledge of ourselves, without the spittle, knowledge of Christ, were to east us down to desperation. To have the spittle, knowledge of Christ, without the clay, knowledge of ourselves and our own unworthiness, would puff us up with presumption. Both do well together, that we may know our own selves in ourselves wretched; yet in the grace and comforts of God, everlastingly blessed.

Will you now take a short character of the knowing man? He desires to know all things, but first himself; lest having acquaintance in every place, he should die a stranger to his own heart. And in himself, not so much his strength as his weakness. To know our own virtues, makes us proud; our own vices, humbleth us. Both his eyes are never both at once from home; one keeps house, while the other goes abroad for intelligence. He is blind in no man's cause, but best-sighted in his own. He confines himself to the circle of his own affairs, and thrusts not his finger into needless fires. His heart's desire is to know God; and he knows there is no better way to know him than through Jesus Christ. Heroin consists his happiness, for so he makes sure work for his soul. It is the best, and therefore first regarded; and he never rests till his faith be built on assurance, that God hath pardoned his sins, and given him a place in heaven. The world he so far seeks to know, that he may abhor it. He sees the falseness of it, and therefore learns to trust himself ever, others so far as not to be damaged by their disappointment. He knows this to be a short and miserable life, and therefore studies the way to a blessed and eternal one: that this world shall perish, therefore is loth to perish with it: that money may make a man richer, not better; and therefore chooseth rather to sleep with a good conscience than a full purse. He had rather the world should account

him a fool, than God; therefore desires no more wealth than an honest man may bear away. He knows this world's delight consists of crochets and short songs, whose burden is sorrow; only heaven hath the best music, where glorious angels and saints sing for ever to the Lord of hosts. He knows his own ignorance, endeavours to science; and for what he cannot apprehend, he begs wisdom of God; not of every thing, but only of so much as may make him blessed. He knows how to make his passions, like good servants, to stand in a diligent attendance, ready at the command of reason, of religion. If any of them, forgetting their duty, be miscarried to rebel, he first conceals the mutiny, then suppresseth it. He will not see every wrong done him, knowing he hath done more to his Maker. After continual acquaintance with the Scriptures, and humble familiarity with the Holy Ghost, he knows the way to heaven perfectly, and runs uppace till he gets into the arms of his Saviour.

VERSE 6.

And to knowledge temperance.

This grace of temperance may be here diversely understood.

1. For such a discretion as may season all these graces: so taken it is *sal omnium virtutum*, the salt of every virtue. Devotion without discretion, is like a hasty servant that runs away without his errand. Profession of faith without temperance, is turned into hypocrisy, or such a preposterous zeal, that is like fire not on the hearth, to warm, but in the top of the chimney, to set the house on a flame: virtue without it is folly. A man may so indiscreetly hold virtue, as to lose it; another may so discreetly forbear meddling, that he doth more firmly hold it. (Greg.) Patience without discretion wrongs a good cause: a man must bear his own injuries patiently, but not God's, nor the church's. Moses pleaded the people's cause to God with prayers and tears, but God's cause against the people with sword and vengeance. Godliness without temperance, is devotion out of the wits. Gregory observes on the vision of the four cherubims, Ezek. i. 10, that the first proportion of those creatures' faces was the countenance of a man, which, saith he, did signify discretion, or this temperance. See them allegorized: the just man, by mortification of the flesh becomes a calf ready to be sacrificed; by fortitude in his spiritual war, he is a conquering lion; by contemplation of the celestial glory, he is a triumphant eagle; by reason of his temperance, he is an exemplary man. (Greg. in Ezek.) Brotherly kindness without temperance is brotherly dotage. So kindness runs into cruelty: thou feedest thy friend's sensual appetite, flatterest him in his lusts, concealst his faults, followest his humours; all in kindness: this is to spill his soul in kindness. Charity, lastly, without temperance, is prodigality; it gives with an open hand and shut eye: and so a man may for his charity go to the devil, when, instead of God's friends, he rewards his enemies. Thus hath temperance relation to all these graces.

II. For such a discretion as may moderate knowledge, and qualify that heat to which it is addicted. "Knowledge puffeth up," 1 Cor. viii. 1. Some men so bluster on their knowledge, that they hold all the world dunces besides themselves. There is somewhat of poison in it, without the corrective of tem-

perance. Hence comes singularity of opinions. Some conceit themselves so wise, that all the sober and peaceable spirits of the land are mere fools to them. Poor souls! who does not pity their blind madness? One cries, My mysteries be to myself; another replies, Thy foolishness be to thyself: the former is the schismatic, the other the libertine. An indifferent man might decide; Let not all the folly be to one, nor all to other, but let them both part it betwixt them. One is so wise that he cares for no preacher at all; another wills that such a factions one shall teach him, and nobody else. Whether is the madder of the two, he that will altogether fast, or he that will feed on nothing but bones? The grace of an action is the manner, the grace of the manner is order, the grace of the order is discretion. (Bern.) Temperance is not so much a virtue itself, as a marshal or moderator of virtues. It is not enough to do a good work, unless the due place, fit manner, and convenient time, be observed. If not in the right place, it is as a man lights a taper, and puts it beside the candlestick. If not after the right manner, it is as one that is gone a good part of his travel, but must come back again, because he hath mistaken his way. If not in due time, it is like him that would never water his garden but when it rained. If not to the right person, it is like a man that forgetfully salutes his friend ever by the wrong name. If not to the right end, it is like Julian, that never was bountiful, or did a man a good turn, but to damn his soul.

III. It is taken for such a moderation of the mind, whereby we so demean ourselves, as neither to surfeit on fulness, nor to despair on want. Not that the most temperate man can so master his passions, but that at some times he may overjoy his content, or overgrieve his trouble. When the most equal weights are first put into the evenest balances, there is a little swaying on both sides, and appearance of some inequality; yet after a little motion they settle themselves in a just poise. This temperance is a steady and habitual firmness, that hath no critical fits. The frantic, though he be sober eleven moons, if he rage one, cannot avoid the imputation of madness. When there is no disturbance, to be quiet is not worth any thing. The husband told his wife, that he had one ill quality, he was given to be angry without cause; she wittily replied, that she would keep him from that fault, for she would give him cause enough. It is the folly of some that they will be offended without cause, to whom the world promises that they shall have causes enough. "In the world ye shall have tribulation," John xvi. 33. When this cause of disquiet comes, then to be resolved and peaceful, this is temperance. The balances that are most ill matched in their unsteady motions, yet come to an equality, but stay not at it. The perverse worldling may restrain his passion; yea, may be so well composed, that ordinary things shall not stir him; but when a new and unlooked-for cross comes, then he is out of temper, hath lost temperance. Like a fencer, that stands upon his usual wards and postures, and plays well, in his school; but abroad he meets with a new trick, a blow that quite puts him from the rules of his art, and so is beaten with shame. Indeed the best man's temperance may fail in one particular act, but this doth not take away the habit from him.

This temperance must guide our conversation. God's sacrifice and service must be reasonable, Rom. xii. 1. Let zeal inflame temperance, and temperance qualify zeal. (Bern.) Too much remissness nourisheth vices; too much strictness killeth virtues. Without this moderation, fear passeth into despair, grief into bitterness, love into flattery, hope into pre-

sumption, joy into dissoluteness, anger into fury. The want of temperance, instead of cherishing, destroys: like the idolater, so rapt with the fair image of the goddess, that coming to kiss it, he bit it. It altogether overdoes. "Be not righteous over-much; neither make thyself over-wise," Eccles. vii. 16.

*Qui plus posse putat sua quam natura ministrat:
Posse suum superare, se minus esse potest.*

But enough of this kind of temperance: men are not so hot that we need to cool them; but rather so cold that we had need to heat them. Few amongst us are so over-zealous to outrun Christ; it is well if yet we will follow Christ. We need not so much add temper to your zeal, as zeal to your temper; and wish you so much of both, as may bring you to salvation.

IV. Lastly, temperance is taken for a moderate use of outward things; and comprehends in it abstinence, when we eat no more, drink no more, go no braver, than natural equity and moral decency requires. Now if the first degree to virtue be to avoid the contrary, behold the beauty of this fair grace, by viewing the blackness of the opposite sin, intemperance. Generally it extends itself to all immoderations; but especially it is appropriated to four. There is intemperance, 1. In lust; so it is called incontinence. 2. In apparel; so it is called pride. 3. In meats; so it is called gluttony. 4. In drinks; so it is called drunkenness. All which are but the effects of intemperance.

1. Incontinence. To this intemperance all are naturally prone, but in a different sort. Some quite expel and mortify this desire by grace; for he that is one spirit with Christ, will scorn to be one flesh with a harlot, 1 Cor. vi. 17. The virginity of the body may be lost, and yet the soul preserve her maidenhead. "These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins," Rev. xiv. 4. This is not intended against marriage, there is no defilement in that. "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled," Heb. xiii. 4. Our adversaries call it a sacrament: what, and a defilement too? Do they use to make sacraments of pollutions? They might be married, yet not defiled with women; neither with carnal nor spiritual harlotry, nor with adultery nor idolatry; and so remain spiritual virgins. Others there are that keep in this corruption by civil modesty; they will not express it, yet have it. Many heathens could thus suppress their corruption, not mortify it. Their intemperance is to them like a mad-brained wife to a sober man; he looks her up, and goes abroad without trouble; but when he comes home he is wearied with her scolding. Others there are that care not to let their intemperance burst out, but they want opportunity: now the thief cannot rob till he come at a booty; so the sin is in them, even while they forbear the act, and they are intemperate persons. There is a sort that shame not the eruption of this sin, without respect (I say not of conscience, but) of credit; *quorum luxurie meretrix non sufficit omnis*, that in the lust of fed horses neigh after women, Jer. v. 8. The means to avoid this intemperance are,

(1.) By subduing the body to the soul. "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection," 1 Cor. ix. 27. The body is that part which is against the Lord. The body will beg, but let a shameless beggar have a shameless denial. When the body does what the good soul dictates, there is a breathing saint; when the soul consents to the body's appetite, there is a blind man led by his dog. Because the serpent's head had led the way so long, now the re-pining tail would needs lead; but then the whole ran into mischief. When lust undertakes to guide

a man, and reason is fain to follow, there is a precipice to destruction.

(2.) By debarring the flesh all lust-provoking meats and drinks. It is wretched to have this noisome fire, wicked to feed it with fuel. Sodom found that "fulness of bread" was the mother of unnatural filthiness. High diet is adultery's nurse. You shall seldom see a man continent that is not abstinent. (August.) The heat is taken at a tavern that is laid at a brothel-house. Abstain then, for it is fasting spittle that must kill this tetter. He that will ever be running for fuel, never meant to put out the fire.

(3.) By avoiding beautiful temptations. "Flee fornication," 1 Cor. vi. 18: resist other sins, flee this. Stand not to try thy strength, but run away. *Parthus latens ab hoste fuga est.* Joseph stood not to bandy terms, and dispute with his mistress, but fled from her. If thou wilt endure conference with a harlot, she will conquer. Like Ulysses, stop thine ears, her charms shall not take thee. "Many have run out of their wits for women," 1 Esd. iv. 26. Satan having conquered the woman, never came at the man, but left the woman to do that; he thought she would be devil enough to tempt man. Solomon with all his wisdom, Samson with all his strength, were thus mastered. One overcame a lion, yet a lioness overcame him. The other could find out the harlot from the true mother; yet a harlot found out him, and made him forget his Maker. "The people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab," Numb. xxv. 1: the daughters of Moab, light by nature, for they were begot in incest. Lot's daughter lay with her own father while he was drunk, and called her son Moab, which signifies, "The son of her father." Impudent strumpet, not to be ashamed of so foul and horrible a fact! Thus they were light, and that by nature; they had it by kind, it cost them nothing. Even the sons of God were tempted to folly by the daughters of men, Gen. vi. 2. A woman fair is man's snare; think them thy she-devils, sent and taught to seduce and spill thy soul. A harlot the more beautiful, the more baneful. (August.) It is rare to see a woman chaste that is poor and fair. *Stat quaris quaris meretrix mercabilis arte.* Bring gold enough, a little cunning shall serve for whoredom; the devil makes his highways easy. Perhaps all do not sell their bodies that sell their souls; some sin, but set no price on it. I am persuaded that no one inducement so soon turns women to popery, as their indulgence in this sin. If God would afford pardons on the pope's rates, this sin would be infinite; but his justice will not be so answered.

(4.) By meditating on the punishment. If in the act of thy lust thou couldst see into the dark doors of hell, and behold the adulterers and their harlots embracing flames, quenchless flames; howling, and shrieking, and cursing their glasses, their tires, their bawls, their panders; bound to eternity of insufferable horrors: this would cool thy heat. For lustful kisses, kissing of fire; for soft beds, beds of despair; for wanton songs, gnawing their tongues; for heating delicates, everlasting famishment; for silken curtains, to wish a rock for their pillow, and a mountain for their coverlet. Rev. vi. 16: this, oh this would shackle thine intemperance. What men think most pleasing, is most plaguing: to have their lusts granted: "So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust," Psal. lxxxi. 12. They desired it, they had it; this was the greatest plague. Think thou seest beyond thy beauty, old age; beyond old age, sickness; beyond sickness, death; beyond death, judgment; beyond judgment, hell; beyond that no limits of time or torments, but all endless, endless. Thou criest, God be merciful to me; but be also merciful

to thyself: weep for thy sins, and beseech God to mortify thy lusts by the death of Christ.

2. The second kind of intemperance is in apparel. Pride, pride? why there is no such sin, all is but fashion. Indeed pride hath lost itself in the name of fashion. This was wont to be called the woman's sin: "The daughters of Zion are haughty," &c. Isa. iii. 16: there is pride and her wardrobe. But now it is a question whether the women keep their character still; the men have endeavoured to be as proud as they: not that the other are excusable; innumerable are their boxes, and powders, and paintings; how they daub their mud walls with apothecaries' mortar! It is a sign that they love a vizard better than a face. "God shall smite thee, thou painted wall," Acts xxiii. 3: painting is for walls, not for faces. If nature's defects and furrows cannot be filled up with these colours, yet art shall supply all with rich attires. As that painter should have drawn Venus very beautiful; but when his cunning failed in her face, he drew her in exceeding rich apparel: because he could not make her fair, he made her rich. They dye their hair too; but this seems to be no new fashion, for Cyprian writes of it in his time. They got a flame-coloured hair, an ill presage: it is not safe coming so near to that colour. They spend more time betwixt the comb and the glass, than betwixt their family and the church. They metamorphose their heads, as if they were ashamed of the head of God's making, proud of the tire-woman's. Sometimes one tire is half the husband's rent-day. This is the monstrousness of our pride; and what shall we do in the end thereof? Jer. v. 31. Jezebel was the daughter of a king, the wife of a king, the mother of a king; yet her painted face and proud heart threw her out at the window, and she was trampled under horses' feet. But Jehu would bury her; no, the dogs had done it to his hand. Oh the greatness of our land's intemperance this way! we have learned all things of our neighbours but this, to be proud good-cheap. Hospitality and noble attendance is changed into a vessel that runs on four wheels. It is a fashion to build great houses, as the ostriches lay eggs, and then to leave them. When the poor come thither for relief, there are none but daws to chatter to them; the lord or the knight is at London. Their mercers and tailors share the poor's due. Great men gather up their wealth and their credit nearer about them than in former times; then it consisted in good housekeeping and many servants, now in two or three trunks of apparel and a boy to brush them. Many follow Absalom's fashion, to carry a forest of hair on their heads; as if that were their grace, which God hath forbidden as ungracious. Christ says, the body is more worth than raiment; but some strive to make their raiment more worth than their bodies: like birds of paradise, their feathers are better than their carcasses. To pull down, if it were possible, the height of this pride, consider.

(1.) Thy beginning: remember the rock from whence thou wert hewn. "From following the ewes great with young, he brought him to feed Jacob his people," Psal. lxxviii. 71: David was not ashamed of his beginning. Say thou art born noble; yet art thou not made of any finer clay or metal than the meanest. We have all one common mother: and the proudest dust once dead, shall putrify and stink for all his perfumes as soon as the poorest. Though all have not the same clothing, yet all have the same skin.

(2.) Thy progress. What can thy brave rags better thee? a golden bridle makes not the better horse. If thy coat be made of wool, the sheep wear it before thee; if of silk, the silly worm may pull down thy

pride. The bowels of worms hath clothed thee, and thou shalt feed the bowels of worms. Because thou flourishest with the flags of vanity, thou thinkest it is thyself; like the fly on the coach wheel, that makes so glorious a dust: so let Heliogabalus boast of his silken halters.

(3.) Whatsoever the outside be, look to the linings. The body is more worth than the raiment; therefore the soul is more worth than the body, for the body is but the raiment of the soul. Why despisest thou thy poor brother? I have more lands: haply, and more sins. I have braver apparel: a neat outside, and a slutish inside. I am fairer: perhaps in face, and fouler in heart. Thou art rich in the poor commodities of this world, and poor in the rich commodities of the other. Peacock, look down to thy feet.

(4.) There is only one garment worth having and saving. "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ," Rom. xiii. 14: this is "the best robe," Luke xv. 22. The papists buy the beggarly righteousness of sorry saints, and neglect this. We have worn our own innocence to rags; let us put on Christ's. Though our garment of inherent righteousness be very thin, yet if it be lined with Christ's imputed righteousness, it shall keep us warm: if embroidered with his, it shall make us acceptable to God. If we love a silken garment woven out of the bowels of a worm, how much more should we love the garment woven out of the bowels of Jesus Christ! Thus hath God allowed to some a great measure of honour, a great measure of riches, a great measure of prosperity; but to none one dram of pride.

3. The third kind of intemperance is in meats; in making those things injuries to the body, which God ordained to be conservatives of the body. Good meat, which is the creature of God, is offered to the art of the cook, who makes work for the mouth, which makes work for the stomach, which makes work for surfeit, which makes work for death, which makes work for the devil. A sin so genuine and natural to this nation, that pride is not more proper to Spain, nor lust to France, nor drunkenness to Germany, than gluttony is to England. For method's sake, let me dissuade you from it, by considering the manner, the measure, the matter, the effects, the end of it.

(1.) For the manner: this is merely circumstantial, and may thus be expressed; too soon, too late, too daintily, too fast, too much, is gluttony. Too soon: "Woe to thee, O land, when thy princes eat in the morning!" but "blessed art thou, O land, when thy princes eat in due season, for strength, and not for drunkenness!" Eccles. x. 16, 17. "Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning" to follow riot! Isa. v. 11. Their matins are their junkets, and their morning sacrifice is offered to their belly. Too late: such are midnight revels; intemperance makes no difference of times. Too daintily; above the estate; and herein the poor may fault as soon as the rich; *tam late*, if not *tam laute*. Indeed men have *talem dentem, qualem mentem*. Every one hath an Eve's sweet-tooth in his head, that longs for forbidden things. Too fast; that is, with voracity; we call it, a canine appetite. "Greedy dogs which can never have enough," Isa. lvi. 11. Too much. He that allows his body less than he owes it, kills his friend: he that allows his body more than he owes it, franks his enemy. Give it not what the throat, but what nature needs. The wise man will distinguish between his body, and the lust of his body: his allowance therefore shall be such as may preserve nature, not please intemperance.

(2.) For the measure; it is an insatiate desire of

delicacies. So the rich man said, "Soul, eat, for thou hast," &c. Luke xii. 19: not only, Body, eat, but, Soul, eat, and satiate thyself. The belly is no troublesome creditor; it is contented with a little, if thou givest it what it should have, not what thou canst give. (Sen.) It is not the constitution of nature, but the concupiscence of lust, that longs for abundance. This invented sauces; *non tam condimenta, quam blandimenta*. Here is a study to be sick when men are enning in gluttony. *Ut saturitas transeat in esuriam, natura mutatur in artem*. This made Philoxenus wish his neck as long as a crane's, to prolong the sweetness of his meats. This is not *necessitatem supplere, sed aviditatem explere*. Such are to be reckoned in the number of living creatures, not of men. (Sen.) They make their belly their god, Phil. iii. 19; for that they like best, and love most, is their god. The heathen had a god of drunkenness, but I never read that they had any of gluttony. To make the belly a deity; how base is this idolatry! yet Hugo thus describes their luxurious worship. The belly is their god, the kitchen their temple, their lungs the organ-pipes, the altar their table, the cooks are their priests, flesh roasted, boiled, or broiled, their sacrifices, and their incense the odour of their sauces. But this sacrifice is to the devil, whose belly is filled with the froth of luxurious gluttons: instead of graces, sauces; instead of praising God, belching blasphemies. They have these virtues our apostle speaks of, but in a strange way. They have knowledge, which dish best pleasest their appetite; patience, to sit four hours at one meal; fortitude, to encounter with an ox ready prepared; peace, till they have filled their stomachs; yea, faith, hope, and charity too; their faith warms in their kitchen, their hope lies in their mess, and their love boils in their kettle. This is the measure of gluttony, which indeed cannot be measured. All is to satiate curiosity; to fill more than the belly, even their eye. But as too much rain drowns the fields, which moderate showers would make fruitful; so this plethora of diet, instead of conserving nature, confounds it.

(3.) For the matter; it is great feasting. Jerome wrote to Eustachius in the desert, If I did eat any thing boiled, it was a luxury; so great was his temperance. All our art is too little to please our palates; we have piles of dishes to make barricadoes against the appetite. Feasts indeed have their just allowance: our Saviour himself honoured a great feast with his presence and miracle, John ii. But they must not be unseasonable; as, to feast when we need to fast: when God calls to mourning, then to revel, Amos vi. God threatens plagues, they fall to dances; therefore the banquet of these jovial fellows shall be removed, ver. 7. Not excessive. Nabal the churl made a feast like a king: you know a churl's feast; he feeds his family with the mouldy remnants a month after. Not profane: such was Belshazzar's, when the temple was ransacked to furnish his cupboard of plate. Nehemiah read the law of God every day of the feast: if men did think of that law, they would not make God and Belial meet at one board. Joseph and Mary went up to Jerusalem to the great feast with Jesus, but there they left Jesus, Luke ii. Twelve years they could keep him, yet at a feast they lost him. Beda says, the men went in one company, the women in another; the children sometimes with the father, sometimes with the mother; betwixt them both Christ was lost: so easily is Christ lost at a feast. It is observable, that in the temple they found him, ver. 46: they lost him at a feast, but they found him again in the church. The end of such feasts is commonly

the beginning of a fray. Upon the Sodomites feasting heaven rained down fire and brimstone. Upon Job's children feasting the house fell down. Against Belshazzar feasting the finger on the wall wrote characters of destruction. What Dives hath dined, the devil takes away. If gluttony be the founder, Satan is the confounder. The host provides meat for the belly, the guest a belly for the meat; death destroys them both. "Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall destroy both it and them," 1 Cor. vi. 13. Paul says, that their end is damnation, Phil. iii. 19. It is heavy, that their end is damnation; but it is worse, that their damnation is without end. Let us evermore suspect these riotous meetings, among them that feed themselves without fear, Jude ver. 12. It is written of good Job that he feared his children at a feast: "It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts," Job i. 5. Let us be like the deer, who are ever most fearful at their best feeding. Beware lest your indulgence of the throat be the suffocation of grace; be jealous of a great feast. But I shall hold you too long at a feast, unless my cheer were better: I therefore pass to,

(4.) The effects; which are manifold and manifest. The throat's pleasure did shut up paradise, sold the birthright, beheaded the Baptist; and it was the chief of the cooks, Nebuzaradan, that first set fire to the temple, and razed the city. These effects are, 1. Grossness; which takes away agility to any good work; which makes a man move like a tun upon two pottle pots. Cæsar said he mistrusted not Antony and Dolabella for any practices, because they were fat; but Cæsar and Cassius, lean, hollow fellows, who did think too much. The other are the devil's crammed fowls: like Æsop's hen, too fat to lay. Indeed what need they travel far, whose felicity is at home; placing paradise in their throats, and heaven in their food? 2. Maciency of grace; for as it puts fatness into their bodies, so leanness into their souls. God fatted the Israelites with quails, but withal "sent leanness into their soul," Psal. cvi. 15. The flesh is blown up, the spirit doth languish. They are worse than man-eaters, for they are self-eaters: they put a plenisry into their bloods, and an apoplexy into their souls. 3. Consumption of their estates: for it is a costly disease; it makes way for either a writ or a mittimus. Their patrimony runs through their throat. Man, that is the lord of all creatures, hath the least mouth of all creatures. When temperance, that just steward, is put out of his office, all runs to decay and ruin: if satiety go before, beggary will follow after. 4. Sickness to their bodies: they wrap up diseases in their full morsels, as pills in pop. Men desire strength of body, and length of days: *sed prohibent grandes patine.* Gluttony was always a friend to Æsculapius. But for the throat's indulgence, Paracelsus, for all his Mercury, had died a beggar. Aches and aye-mes are incident to intemperate houses: gouts, plenuries, dropsies, &c. *Quoniam nisi diutius nequeunt contingere mensis.* (Horat.) We complain the shortness of our lives, yet take the only course to make them shorter.

(5.) Lastly, the end is rotteness and death. Why dost thou feed that flesh so fat, that must feed the worms? The daintiest of flying, swimming, or running creatures are buried in our bowels. Dost thou ask why we die so soon? we live upon deaths. (Sen.) The best diet shall leave thee *putidum et putridum cadaver.* The finest food shall make no better dust. When moderation itself cannot avoid dying, how thinkest thou to prop up thy tabernacle with surfeit? Lay hold on temperance: the physician says, nothing is better for the body than tem-

perance: the lawyer says, nothing is better for the estate than temperance: the philosopher says, nothing is better for the wits than temperance: the divine says, nothing is better for the soul than temperance. It is good for the body, good for the brain, good for the estate, good for the soul: readily therefore admit temperance. For further help against intemperance, take these four considerations.

(1.) That abstinence is man's rising, as intemperance was his fall. We that have lapsed from the joys of paradise by meat, let us recover it again as well as we can by abstinence. (Greg.) I speak not here for fasting only; though that have the due use, the due place. It hath a time and place in the midst of sorrow; for repentance comes not before God with a full belly and meat between the teeth. The use of it is, to prepare the soul for goodness, not to merit by it. The papists hold it not as a help of piety; but an immediate part of God's worship, to be satisfactory. But I commend in abstinence three rules. 1. That it be not too much; for it is better to abstain every day a little, than some days wholly. They are moderate showers that make the ground fruitful. An easy shaking roots the young plant faster; a hard shaking roots it up. 2. Remember the poor in your abstinence. "Wherefore have we fasted, and thou seest it not?" complain the hypocrites. God answers, Because in your fasts ye exact your debts; you show no mercy to the poor, Isa. lviii. 3. Let the abstinence that makes thee look pale, beget blood in another's cheeks: let thy fast be the poor's feast. They eat the lambs out of flock, and the calves out of the stall, Amos vi. 4: that is sometimes bad enough, but they forget the affliction of Joseph, ver. 6; that is worse; this enhanceth their damnation. Your tables abound with dishes, their bowels sound like shawms: take away here, and bestow it there; bate a mess at thy table, and send it to the poor's table. Nehemiah allowed some liberty to the rich, so it were joined with liberality to the poor: "Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet;" but be sure to "send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared," Neh. viii. 10. Think it is Christ that hungers, while thou riotest. Godfrey of Boulogne would not be crowned with gold in that place where his Master had been crowned with thorns. Do not thou pamper thyself when Christ starves. Christ is hungry, and he must satisfy you. It is Christ that begs of you, and he must give you: it is Christ that lies at your gates, and he must let you into the gates of heaven. True feasts of charity are not only banquets, but sacrifices; "with such sacrifices God is well pleased," Heb. xiii. 16. 3. Abstain from all sin: the praise and crown of abstinence is amendment of life. "When ye fasted and mourned, did ye at all fast unto me, even to me, saith the Lord?" Zech. vii. 5.

(2.) Consider, it is God's blessing that makes fat, and not meat. Man lives not by bread, but by the word of God, Matt. iv. 4. Daniel looks as fair with his pulse, as the rest with their liberal portions of the king's meat. If God's blessing be separated from those edible materials, they yield no nourishment. He that could turn stones into bread, can turn bread into stones: and make wine infatuate, not exhilarate. He can rot the grain in the clods, blast it in the ear, wither it in the blade, consume it in the barn; yea, when it hath passed the flail, the mill, the oven, he can make it gall in the palate, in the stomach poison. He can either give thee meat and no stomach, or stomach and no meat. Be temperate then, and bless God; for every creature is "sanctified by the word of God and prayer," 1 Tim. iv. 5. Pass not by his blessings with shut eyes, as not glorifying the Cre-

ator, nor look on them with doting eyes, as too admiring the creature. Commend moderate meat to thyself, and thyself to the blessing of God.

(3.) Consider, that if it be so wicked to devour meats gluttonously, what is it to devour men? to swallow up "a man and his house, even a man and his heritage?" Micah ii. 2. Such devourers were the Pharisees, and under the colour of long prayers. These are monstrous epicures: the poor man's bread is his life, Job xxxi. 39, and he that takes it from him is a bloody man. The usurer keeps a slender diet, but his stomach holds abundance of mortgages, forfeitures, and is oppressed with such oppressions. "He hath swallowed down riches, and he shall vomit them up again: God shall cast them out of his belly," Job xx. 15. God shall one day say to such men, Restore what you have devoured. When the chirurgion opens the epicure's dead body, he finds undigested crudities: when God shall unrip the oppressor's dead conscience, there will be found five or six impropriated churches, there a depopulated town, there thousands of acres of decayed tillage, there the lands of orphans and the dowries of widows. Many devour that on earth which they shall digest in hell.

(4.) Lastly, if thou wilt riot, let me show thee a banquet; "He brought me to the banquetting house, and his banner over me was love," Cant. ii. 4. "Eat, O friends," &c. chap. v. 1. "This is that bread which came down from heaven: he that eateth of it shall never die," John vi. 58. This is *panis verus*, though not *panis merus*. As he is both the Physician and the medicine in respect of his blood; so he is both the Pastor and the food in respect of his body. He feeds his lambs, not on his grounds, but on his wounds. All men eat the bread of God: the saints, the bread that is God himself. They that have ransacked sea and land for rarities, never found such a dainty. Here satiate, here be intemperate; think your souls can never feast enough on this dish: with this only immoderation God will never be angry. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled," Matt. v. 6. Christ is the life whereby we live, "for in him we live, and move, and have our being," Acts xvii. 28. And the life which we live, now live not I, but Christ liveth in me, Gal. ii. 20. Let epicures boast their delicacies, this be the food of our souls.

4. I come to the last kind of intemperance; and this in drinks; we call it drunkenness. My theme is still temperance: wherein I confess, that as physicians coming to their patients, often catch some of their diseases; so you may say, that I fall into the vice I reprove, and that against excess I speak excessively. But it is a sin I durst not lightly or slightly pass over; a disease the whole world is sick of, and I would also put in my ingredient to cure it. All drunkenness is not with wine; "They are drunken, but not with wine; they stagger, but not with strong drink," Isa. xxix. 9. There is a threefold ebriety. 1. Of wine; "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess," Eph. v. 18. 2. Of forgetfulness; "The Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep," Isa. xxix. 10. 3. Of lust to sin; "They have erred through wine," Isa. xxviii. 7: which I take there not so much to be intended against this corporal, as that spiritual drunkenness; for it is said, "They err in vision, they stumble in judgment." I am not to deal with that dry drunkenness, but only with the first, and haply the worst.

Man hath a threefold appetite: natural, which is common with plants; this insensibly covets nourishment. Animal, common with beasts; this sensibly desires needful nourishment. Rational, proper to man; this reasonably desires fit and proper nourish-

ment. All these appetites desire drink; without which the spirits natural, vital, animal, would consume the firmamental heat; that would waste up the primigenial humidity, and so the spark of life would burn out; as the lamp is extinct without supply of oil. The veins suck the stomach dry of moisture; hence comes emptiness; upon that, sense of that defect: upon that, the desire of repletion; and this is thirst. Drink is the good creature of God, whether it be wine, &c. It serveth alimentially for the body's strength; "Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities," 1 Tim. v. 23. Physically, to refresh body and mind: "Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto those that be of heavy hearts," Prov. xxxi. 6. Moderate wine is physical; immoderate, baneful. (August.) It is made for pleasure, not for fullness. It is given to make glad the heart of man, Psal. civ. 15. Civilly, for show of honest gladness, and maintenance of amity. So our Saviour supplied the want of wine at a wedding, John ii. Nehemiah bids the people at their feast, to "eat the fat, and drink the sweet," Neh. viii. 10. It was ill done of Lyceurgus to cut down all the vines; and false of Mahomet to say, that in every grape there is a devil. Only intemperance makes the sin, abusethe creature, offends the Creator; only against this bends my discourse. Herein, for method, I desire only to consider two things, the dam, and the litter. Yet first, before I show what brood this monstrous mother brings forth, consider how she is bred herself.

Drunkenness is produced from the concurrence of many causes. The main is, an inordinate desire of drink. The original of all vices is from ourselves; there is a harlot within, which commits all these whoredoms abroad, concupiscence. Not he that drinks wine, but he that inordinately loves wine, is the drunkard. "They count it pleasure to riot in the day time," 2 Pet. ii. 13. Their soul daneth in the cup, and their eye delights in the colour of the wine, Prov. xxiii. 31. Their life is the life of frogs; like dies, they live by sucking. As it was said of Bonosus, they are not born to live, but to drink. They drink not for necessity, but luxury; not for society, but for satiety; indeed, not for their friends' sake, but for the drink's sake. He is not so much a drunkard that is overtaken unawares; as he that loves and frequents it, though he carry it away more strongly; he that is tied to his cups. Therefore, Woe to them that are strong to drink! Isa. v. 22. A strong body without strong grace, is stronger to sin. Thus the strongest is the weakest; strong to commit sin, weak to resist sin. They drink not once, against dryness, nor a second time, against sadness, but continually, for madness. This love of drink is the beldam; there are also other concomitances. Evil company; "Come, I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink," Isa. lvi. 12. They will urge a man with *ἡ πικρῇ, ἡ ἀπιδῇ*: but God dischargeth such men our society, 1 Cor. v. 11. And healths: He that will not be drunk for the king, is no friend to the king. (Hieron.) Here is a professing from the bottom of his heart, to the bottom of the cup, that such a great man's health shall be pledged: perhaps it must be done on the knees; rank idolatry! wherein men make gods of others, beasts of themselves. For this purpose they have their she-saints, their mistresses, sometimes little better than strumpets. Here is the little difference betwixt a papist and a drunkard; the one hath his will-worship, the other his wine-worship. It was a noble answer of a prince, when one told him how deep a health he had pledged for him; Do not, saith he, drink my health, but pray for it.

Look now upon the dam, drunkenness. Aquinas, disputing whether drunkenness be a sin or not, objects that no vice is opposed to it; as, to temerity, cowardice; to prodigality, avarice; therefore it is no sin; but he answers, that there is a vice opposed to it, though it wants a name, because it is so unusual; as the forbearing of all sustenance. It is questioned also whether a sick man may drink medicinally for his health, and be drunk with it; but we may affirm, that there is no medicinal cup to the body, that is poisonous to the conscience. It is folly to think that the cause of many sicknesses should be physic for one; or that the endangering the soul can be good physic for the body: no good physician will prescribe it, no divine will allow it. Say with Constantine, It is better to be still afflicted with our disease, than be recovered by such a medicine. This vice is the plying of the pot: *nocturno torpore nero, torpore diurno*. The Mantuan poet, Eclog. ix. rehearseth the drunkard's seven draughts.

*Funde iterum: potare semel, gustare: secundus
Colluit os potus: calefacta refrigerat ore
Tertius: arma siti, bellumque indicare quatuor
Aggreditur: quintus pugnot: victorie seati est:
Septimus (Ænophili senis hæc doctrina) triumphat.*

The first draught doth but taste the wine; the second washeth the mouth; the third cooleth it; the fourth threatens war against thirst; the fifth fights with it; the sixth overcomes it; the seventh triumphs over it. All this is taught by Ænophilus, a lover of wine, an old drunkard. This is the drunkard's doctrine. Let us hear the philosopher, somewhat more sober and stayed. Aristotle makes seven degrees of it: 1. Necessity, a man must drink. 2. Commodity, a man should drink. 3. Pleasure, he may drink. 4. Fullness, he may not drink. 5. Satiety, and that is bad. 6. Ebriety, and that is worse. 7. Madness, and that is worst of all. Here be the deadly draughts, to which drunkenness runs headlong. *Fertur equis auriga, nec audit curvus habenas*. The sea knows its bounds, but not the deluge of drunkenness. We see the dam, let us look upon the litter or effects, which are many and hideous.

(1.) It makes room for the devil. All sins break in at the loss of the sence, or capitol, reason; thence the enemy commands the whole town: the eyes are wanton, the tongue blaspheming, the hands stabbing; all mischiefs. *Intrudunt urbem somno rinoque sepul-tum*. So were the Trojans conquered; and for this cause, I think, ever since, drunkards are called true Trojans. It is a dead sea, no fish can live there, no virtue thrive here. It is the root of all evils, the rot of all goodness: the devil could find no rest in dry places, Matt. xii. 43; he loves the low countries, the wet ground, moorish and marshy souls. The great behemoth loveth the fens, Job xl. 21. Of all reasonless creatures, he chose the drunken hogs, Mark v.

(2.) It overturns the estate. "The drunkard shall come to poverty," Prov. xxiii. 21. He consumes more in a day than he earns in a week. He lies open to others' plots, and hath no rule of his own spirit, but is a city without walls, Prov. xxv. 28. He is a cunning thief: he needs no other oppressors, for he is a pillar to himself. He rails on cormorants, yet devours himself. He throws his house out of the windows; it is fit his house should throw him out of the doors.

(3.) It poisons the tongue; swearing and lying are the ordinary effects of it. The drunkards made songs upon David. It thinks itself a Caesar, and falls a taxing all the world. O but *in vino veritas*; it is false, for no man's good name is spared. If he be *multe bibens*, he is sure *plurima dicens*: he often

utters that in a moment, whereof he is driven to repent all his life. *Arcum demens detegit ebrietas*. A drunken inveigher against King Pyrrhus, being brought to his answer for those criminations, said, We spake all that is objected, and would have spoke more if the wine had not failed us. Such a one will speak of God most, when he thinks of God least; but the mouth inured to blasphemous or scurrilous speeches, is no fit trumpet of God's praises.

(4.) It intoxicates all reason. Bacehus was called *Liber pater*; but his sons are not *liberi*, free-men, but slaves, bound to sleep. They are out of the way with strong drink, Isa. xxviii. 7: they are either out of the way, or reeling in the way. "Wine and women will make men of understanding to fall away," Ecclus. xix. 2. We keep our doors shut against thieves; yet let in this thief that is worse. Oh that a man should voluntarily let a thief in at his mouth, to steal away his wits! Young Cyrus refusing to drink wine, gave this reason to his grandfather Astyages: I took it to be poison, for I have seen it spoil men of wit and sense. Alexander that overcame all, was overcome by wine. (August.) If the body chide the foot for stumbling and hurting it, the foot may lay the fault in the head for not guiding it. "The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play," 1 Cor. x. 7. We have them that sit down to drink, till they cannot rise to play; they must sleep as they lie: they are as "he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast," Prov. xxiii. 34.

(5.) It enervates the strength. *Vinum ab implendo venas*. (Isidor.) Instead of filling veins with blood, it drowns them. It brings rotten teeth, stinking breaths, trembling hands, running eyes, gouts, and dropsies. All these are the waiters on drunkenness; all strive which shall bring a man soonest and loath-somest to the grave. He is gone in his standing, gone in his understanding, gone in strength to help himself: we commonly say of the drunkard, he is gone. If his belly be made a tomb of drink, drink will make his body a sepulchre of his soul. (August.) It is somewhat, that it alters the complexion: *rino forma perit, rino corrumpitur ætas*. But worse, that it dissolves the constitution; for how should his firmamental lamp burn, that is ever drowning it in deluges of riot?

(6.) It is the bawd to incontinence. After drunkenness follows chambering and wantonness, Rom. xiii. 13. Ambrose says of lust, that it is fueled with junkets, enkindled with wine, inflamed with drunkenness. *Vina parant animos veneri*. (Ovid.) I will never believe the drunkard to be chaste, says Hieron. Drunken Lot became incestuous Lot: hence sprang the Moabites and Ammonites, those mortal, almost immortal, enemies to the church. Whom the vices of Sodom could not taint, lust infected. The flames that destroyed Sodom, hurt him not: his own fire scorched him. (Origen.) In this sense it may be said, *Vinum læt libidinis*.

(7.) It is an incendiary to quarrels and homicides. *Bacehus ad arma vocat*. Drunken Alexander killed Clitus, for whom sober Alexander would have killed himself. The Danes and Norwegians once purposing for England, fell drunk on ship-board, and so slashed one another that there was the end of their voyage. We often hear of such riotous meetings, that some drop dead in the midst of their sins. Be they never so protesting their kindness; yet *infatus est ebrius abstinuisse locis*, they that may be kind at first, will be cruel at last. Drunkards kiss when they meet, and kill when they part: *hæc faceret non sobrius unquam*.

(8.) Lastly, besides all other plagues, it is a woe to itself. "Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who

hath contentions? who hath wounds without cause?" Prov. xxiii. 29. The merry madness of an hour, is paid with the afflictions of a tedious age. "Woe unto them!" saith the prophet, Isa. v. 11. "Woe to the crown of pride, to the drunkards of Ephraim!" Isa. xxviii. 1. When the carouser pours in his wine, it troubles him, and he would give somewhat to avoid it; when it offends the stomach, it troubles him worse; when it comes up again, it troubles him worst of all. One Fornerius writes of a monk at Prague, who having heard at shrift the confession of drunkards, wondered at it, and for experiment would needs try his brain with this sin; so accordingly stole himself drunk. Now after the vexation of three sick days, to all that confessed that sin he enjoined no other penance but this, Go and be drunk again. Sure his meaning was like Seneca's, *Secleris in scelere supplicium*. It is a torment and affliction to itself. You see the dam and her litter; learn we now to avoid it, because we are men, because we are citizens, because we are Christians.

Because we are men: while the wine is in thy hand, thou art a man; when it is in thy head, thou art become a beast. The drunkard cries to his fellow, Do me reason: but the drink answers, I will leave thee no reason; scarce so much as a beast, for they will drink no more than they need. Diogenes being urged to drink immoderately, cast the drink on the ground: being reproved for that loss, he answered, If I had drunk it, I had lost both the drink and myself.

Because we are citizens, and therefore should lead civil lives: drunkenness is an uncivil exorbitance. It was a good Persian law, that no man was compelled, but every one did according to his own pleasure, Esth. i. 8. Here was no compulsion, but it was left arbitrary, *ut bibat arbitrio pocula quisque suo*. It were somewhat if but so much moderation were observed at our feasts. We fault in those very ethnic observances, and think it a discourtesy not to be intemperate for company.

Because we are Christians. "Thou, O man of God, flee these things," 1 Tim. vi. 11. The grace of God that brings salvation, teacheth us to live soberly, Tit. ii. 11, 12. We are children of the day, let us cast off that work of darkness, Rom. xiii. The Rechabites forbore wine in awe of their earthly father, Jer. xxxv.; and shall not we forbear drunkenness in awe of our heavenly Father? Yes, lest that curse fall on us, that our table be made a snare before us, Psal. lxxix. 22; yea, lest we be not admitted into the kingdom of God, Gal. v. 21. Let not "your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and so that day come upon you unawares," Luke xxi. 34: drink every draught as if it were thy last draught. The poor woman would appeal from drunken King Philip to sober King Philip; so will any man from a drunken Christian to a sober heathen.

Thus in some poor measure I have described this monster of intemperance: a sin so odious, that it is abhorred of God, despised of angels, derided of men, pleasing only to devils. (August.) Yet have we small hope to subdue it, for it is insensible: "They have beaten me, and I felt it not," Prov. xxiii. 35. Bernard calls it a gross devil; he that is possessed with it, falls into the fire, and into the water, gnasheth and foameth, Matt. xvii. 16. Now as all the disciples could not cast out that devil, so nor all the preachers this. It is a habit hardly put off. When a gentleman heard that his son was given to dicing, he answered, The want of money will make him leave it. After he heard that he was given to whoring; yet saith he, marriage or old age will

allay that fury. But when he heard that he was given to drunkenness, he was hopeless, for he knew that sin would increase with years. A gamester will hold as long as his purse lasts, an adulterer as long as his loins last, but a drunkard as long as his lungs and life last. A philosopher once chancing into a company of drunkards, where a musician ruled the lascivious riot, presently charged him to change his harmony into a Dorian. By this means he so wrought them, and brought them to sobriety, that casting away their garlands, they were ashamed of all they had done. But our drunkards have not the patience to hear such music. Saul was vexed with an evil spirit, but David's harp expelled him. Oh that we knew that instrument or lesson which could work such a reformation! We would double and treble that note, which might effectuate such a cure. But the drunkard's noise is louder than the preacher's voice; the sound of the pot drowns all reprehension.

VERSE 6.

To temperance patience.

PATIENCE is that virtue which had rather suffer evil and do none, than do evil and suffer none. (August.) It hath these degrees: it does not wrong; it receives it, not with stupidity but sense; it does not vex him that offers to vex it; it returns not wound for wound; it does not hate the offender; it loves him, it does good unto him, it entreats God for him. (Chrys.) For patience consists not only in bearing injuries, but in forgiving the injurers.

But why doth the apostle next to temperance annex patience? Temptations of pleasure move not many, whom the sense of injuries enrageth. Men may refrain from hurting others or themselves; therein is temperance; but others will hurt them; to bear this with a quiet mind is patience. A Christian may live without doing wrong, not without receiving wrong. The wolf will not worry a wolf so long as there is a lamb in the field. This virtue is better understood than practised; like Cassandra, better known than trusted. Therefore admitting that you understand it, I will apply myself to the affections, that you may embrace it. This let me endeavour by leading you through certain gradual considerations.

1. That it is the condition of mankind to suffer. When thou considerest thyself, there is presented to thee a man, a naked man, a poor man, and a miserable man. Thou mournest thy mortality, blushest at thy nakedness, despisest thy poverty, weepst for thy misery. (Bern.) Now, what thou must bear, bear patiently.

2. That miseries are not only incident to men, but more proper to Christian men; "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution," 2 Tim. iii. 12. This was Christ's prognostication, "In the world ye shall have tribulation," John xvi. 33. This the apostle's prediction, Through many tribulations you must enter the kingdom of heaven, Acts xiv. 22. What saint was ever crowned before he had combated? (Jerome.) Search the whole Bible over. But it is said, The churches had rest throughout all Judaea, &c. Acts ix. 31. And there was peace in the days of Solomon, peace in the days of Constantine, peace in the milken times of Queen Elizabeth, and yet still greater peace under the reign of our present sovereign, that king of peace. Yet though we be freed from public oppressions inflicted

by magistrates, not from private molestations. In the most halcyon days we find bitterness. If there be not an Esau, there will be an Ishmael; if the hand of mischief cannot reach us, yet the arrows of slander and contumely will stick in our ribs. All men are necessitated to miseries, that bend their course toward the kingdom of heaven. (August.) Hence it is that St. Paul gives a piece of armour to the feet; Let your feet be "shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace," Eph. vi. 15. Our feet are naturally tender; if they be bare, clods, flints, thorns, will gall them. Our affections, if they be not shod with patience, will be so pricked with crosses, that we shall be weary of our journey to heaven. It is no unusual stratagem in war, to stick the way full of thorns, and ends of pikes, to wound and disrank the adversary. So the devil besets our way of peace, that we had need of leg-harness, patience. Though all parts be armed, yet if the feet be naked, Satan will wound us there; as Achilles was wounded in the heel, when all other places of him were invulnerable. Thus was Job armed, Jam. v. 11. St. John, speaking of great war and great victory, concludes, "Here is the patience of the saints," Rev. xiv. 12. Therefore Paul expressly, "Ye have need of patience, that," &c. Heb. x. 36.

3. That all afflictions come by a supreme providence, therefore be patient. "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and not evil?" Job ii. 10. Whatever be the instruments, he looks to the high Agent; "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord," Job i. 21. So David, "Remove thy stroke away from me: I am consumed by the blow of thine hand," Psal. xxxix. 10. Whatsoever is the weapon, it is thy blow. So he snibbed the sons of Zeruiah, concerning the blaspheming of Shimci: "Because the Lord hath said unto him, Curse David," 2 Sam. xvi. 10. So our Saviour told Pilate, "Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above," John xix. 11. God's providence is the mother of necessity: now patience makes a virtue of this necessity. Other creatures modestly and silently obey, and shall man vex himself with impatience? *Quicquid superi valere, peractum est.* To wrestle with fate, is to provoke fate to wrestle with us; and then who falls? "Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?" Lam. iii. 37. Murmur not, my son, thy Father did it. We strike at God, and he says to us, as Caesar said to Brutus, Is it thou, my son? Well may he strike us, and let us only say, It is thou, my Father, and be silent. "These things hast thou done, and I kept silence," saith the Lord, Psal. l. 21. Wicked men strike the just God, and he holds his peace: the just God strikes wicked men, and they murmur.

4. Think thy crosses meant for thy blessings: punishments are good for none but the patient, to them only they are signs of favour. David not only concludes thus, "By this I know that thou favourest me, because mine enemy doth not triumph over me," Psal. xli. 11; but also thus, Because thou hast afflicted me, therefore I know thou lovest me. "If ye be without chastisement, then are ye bastards, and not sons," Heb. xii. 8. This only frees us from bastardy: or rather secures us, for indeed adoption frees us. Whom God smites not, he loves not. (August.) Let the Christian understand, God his Physician, tribulation his physic. Being afflicted under the medicine, thou criest. The Physician hears thee not according to thy will, but thy weal. Thou canst not endure thy malady, and wilt thou not be patient of the remedy? Let it not be true of us, that we can bear neither our evils nor their remedies. A

man is sick of a pleurisy: the physician lets him blood; he is content with it; the arm shall smart, to ease the heart. The covetous man hath a pleurisy of riches; God lets him bleed by poverty; let him be patient, it is a course to save his soul. "When we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world," 1 Cor. xi. 32. We speak for the flesh, as Abraham did for Ishmael; "O that Ishmael might live before thee!" Gen. xvii. 18. No, God takes away Ishmael, and gives Isaac; he withdraws the pleasure of the flesh, and gives delight to the soul. God threatens not to punish the wicked: I call it a threatening, for promises come from mercy, but that is a grievous punishment. "Why should you be stricken any more?" Isa. i. 5. Let me have none of that mercy! Art thou afflicted, why complainest thou? that which thou sufferest is not thy damnation, but thy castigation. Refuse not the rod, as thou wouldest embrace the inheritance. Regard not so much what portion thou hast in the punishment, as what interest thou hast in the covenant. He that knows he shall reign in heaven, will patiently suffer upon earth.

5. That all crosses are deserved, and come not upon us against equity. Equity, I say, considered in respect of God, not in respect of men; they come from a just Author, though from an unjust instrument. Thy sins have procured it: "Thy way and thy doings have procured these things unto thee," Jer. iv. 18. No misery had afflicted us, if no sin had first infected us. "Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?" Lam. iii. 39. That man may well suffer patiently, that knows he suffers justly. David felt the spite of his enemies, Psal. xxxviii.; yet he acknowledgeth his sin the cause; "I will declare mine iniquity; I will be sorry for my sin," ver. 18. "For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God," 1 Pet. ii. 20. But a man is often punished for that he never did. I answer, in that act for which he suffers he may be innocent, yet in others, guilty. David could clear his innocence in respect of Saul, not in respect of God. For Saul, "Lord, if I have done this, if there be iniquity in my hands," Psal. vii. 3. But for God, "If thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?" Psal. cxxx. 3. Let them be evil, be sure thou suffer either for or (at least) with a good conscience. For he refuseth to be an Abel, whom the malice of Cain doth not exercise. The sweet rose grows among sharp thorns, (Greg.) "As the lily among the thorns, so is my love among the daughters," Cant. ii. 2.

Therefore "overcome evil with good," Rom. xii. 21. Be so far from snatching God's weapons out of his hand, that thou rather master unkindness with kindness. This St. Paul makes to be the work of patience: "See that none render evil for evil," 1 Thess. v. 15. We think it ignominy and cowardice, to put up the lie without a stab, a wrong without a challenge. But Solomon says, (to whose wisdom all wise men will subscribe,) that it is the glory of a man to pass by an offence. It is more honour to bear an injury in silence, than to overcome in return. (Greg.) *Satus est tutius injurias perferre, quam inferre aut referre.* The greatest magnanimity is patience. Yet, oh into what unfortunate times are we fallen, when every wrong must be answered with blood! How hath the devil bewitched us to glory in our shame, that the wretchedest and basest cowardice should ruffle it out in the garb of valour! Yet if the gravest bishop in the land do breach this, our impatient gallants will not believe

it. Indeed how should they credit man, who will not be persuaded by God himself? Oh yet that our tears could wash off the guilt from men's souls, as easily as we can convince them by arguments! we would then, with Jeremiaah, wish our heads fountains, and our eyes spouts, to cleanse our land from the blood thus shed, and the brave opinion of shedding it. Among Christians he is only the wretched man that does wrong, not he that suffers. (Hieron.) It is a great virtue not to hurt him that hath hurt thee. (Hugo.) This was in those days truly noble; now nothing but revenge. Job is counted a fool, and David a coward. With them it was valour to bless those that cursed them: we think that patience is an argument of baseness. What is the difference? There was the faith and patience of the saints; here is the infidelity and impatience of sinners. Let such men know,

1. That God shall condemn them for invading his office; for vengeance is his; and that they call courage, he shall judge outrage. Then it will be but a poor plea, to say, Such a one wronged me. Who gave thee leave to quit thyself? Is not God able to punish? Thou art cruel, and wilt carve too deep: let God alone, he is merciful and just.

2. To what purpose are magistrates, if every man may be his own judge? Thou mayst complain to the deputy, not with thine own hands punish the injury. If a man have matter against another, "the law is open, and there are deputies; let them implead one another," Acts xix. 38. Let men's causes fight a while, that their souls may be in peace for ever. "There is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another," 1 Cor. vi. 7. That is a fault; but some so abuse the law, that that which should redress wrong and mischief, is perverted to be the greatest wrong and mischief. Whom their hands dare not strike with blows, their purses shall vex with suits. We may say of such citizens, as it was of some popes, they are not *urbani*, but *turbani*.

3. Remember that the Lord Jesus shed his blood to make thee friends with God; and wilt not thou be friends with thy brother? Cannot the blood of Christ, that bought a whole church of God, buy the forgiveness of one wrong at thy hands? Take heed, lest for not showing mercy thou find no mercy.

4. God is patient towards thee, though he be provoked every day. He invites us to be patient, that is Patience itself. Do thou bear with others, God bears with thee. (August.) Is there a Too much, which thou canst suffer for so patient a Lord? How wouldst thou endure wounds for him, that canst not endure words for him? A man reviles thee, thou art impatient; how wouldst thou afford thy ashes to Christ, and write Patience with thine own blood?

5. The examples of the very heathen may put such impatient Christians to the blush. When that Tarentine was angry with his faulty servant; I had stricken thee, had I not been angry. He had rather he went unpunished, than, for anger, punish him beyond his deserving. Xenophon, to one that railed on him, replied, Thou hast learned to reproach, and I to contemn thy reproaches. When Metellus inveighed against Tacitus in the senate, he answered, It is easy to find fault with him that is not willing to reply. The blame lies on your malice, not on my patience. When one told Diogenes, Many despise thee; he returns, So wise men must suffer of fools. The same envious tongue that would speak a man worse, doth indeed confess him better; for the object of envy is goodness. Another being reproved by his friend because he did not correct his provoking servant, answered, Because I have found one I have more reason to correct, that is, myself. Thus for

morality they excellently commended this virtue: we have the seal of God put upon it, "Be shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace," Eph. vi. 15. Nothing but the gospel of peace can give true patience. There's was an opinion to stupify men's senses; but the knowledge of peace in heaven is the soul of patience. Hereby we have a resolution that nothing shall hurt us; for sin is the sting of all troubles: pull out the sting, and deride the malice of the serpent. Sin makes our burden heavy: take away that, all is tolerable. Sin turns the grave into a dark dungeon; which remitted, is a perfumed bed of quiet rest. Sin shows the devil horrible, God a severe Judge: let the gospel remove that, God is thy Father, the devil his and thy slave. Therefore the prophet well annexeth blessedness to the remission of sins; "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven," Psal. xxxii. 1. And our Saviour says to the man sick of the palsy, "Be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee," Matt. ix. 2. Yea more, we are resolved that all things shall work together to our good: all things, then even our sins. Not that sin is good in itself; but, as Bernard, The miraculous hand of God disposeth our very unrighteousness, to help us to righteousness. And that first in respect of God, manifesting and magnifying his mercy in forgiving it: "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound," Rom. v. 20. And in respect of ourselves; working in us a sorrow of repentance, not to be sorrowed; a humility to be honoured, a faith to be crowned. (Bern.) Thus God casts us into the fire, not to be consumed as dross, but refined as gold; that at last we may resolve, not only to die in the Lord, but for the Lord Jesus.

6. Consider that all sufferings shall have an end. The rod lies now on the godly, but it is not in the right place: at last Christ shall lay it where it shall abide, even on the wicked, there it must rest for ever. "The rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous; lest the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity," Psal. cxsv. 3. So Abraham told Dives of an exchange: Before Lazarus had sorrow thou hadst pleasure: now therefore you have changed turns and places; "he is comforted, and thou art tormented," Luke xvi. 25. To the godly ease shall come. Hope is the mother of patience. The wise men rejoiced to find the star; the woman, to find her piece of silver; our lady rejoiced to find our Lord: Christ always returns with increase of joy. "The righteous is delivered out of trouble, and the wicked cometh in his stead," Prov. xi. 8. Here is the vicissitude. "The wicked shall be a ransom for the righteous, and the transgressor for the upright," Prov. xxi. 18. Here is the redemption or ransom. Misery, like a vulture, must have somebody to prey upon: the world destines the righteous to it, and for a while they suffer; but God ordains the unrighteous to it, and they must suffer for ever. God shall speak to sorrow, Deliver me my servant, let that man go whom thou now afflictest; and take this reprobate in his stead, torment him for ever. "Ye have need of patience," Heb. x. 36. Why should we be patient? Because ye have so short a time to suffer; "Yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry," ver. 37. Why, what shall he do when he is come? "I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you," John xvi. 22. "The Lamb shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes," Rev. vii. 17. But how are we sure of this? Because "it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall

be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels," 2 Thess. i. 6, 7. "Jacob served seven years patiently for his wife Rachel; and shall not we serve longer for our dear Husband Jesus? Love suffers all things, 1 Cor. xiii. 7. he loves not the Lord, that will not suffer for him. *Quam passus amor, nec se ulla dicere possunt.*" Be patient therefore until the coming of the Lord," James v. 7. "Lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh," Luke xxi. 28. If these meditations could sink and soak into our hearts, they would be mollified with patience. It is truly said concerning the wicked, their pleasure is short, their pain everlasting. The contrary is as true concerning the faithful; their pain is short, their joy eternal. "The hope of the righteous shall be gladness; but the expectation of the wicked shall perish," Prov. x. 28. Upon Shimei's execration, David thus comforted himself; "It may be that the Lord will look on mine affliction, and the Lord will requite me good for his cursing this day," 2 Sam. xvi. 12. David suffered much of Saul, before he wore the promised crown: no matter what we suffer on earth, so we may be crowned in heaven.

Lastly, consider that Christ our Lord suffered all patiently for us; that Lamb was dumb before the fleecers and butchers. Such lambs must we be, that have neither horns to dash, nor nails to tear, nor teeth to bite, nor flight to escape; but patiently to submit ourselves to the will of our Shepherd. Such lambs were the martyrs; their persecutors were more weary *ferendo*, with striking, than they *ferendo*, with suffering. But none ever suffered like the Lord Jesus; the just for the unjust, from the unjust, 1 Pet. ii. 24. He is not only our Redeemer, but our example; he taught us both in his doing, and in his dying. "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" Luke xxiv. 26. As he was anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows, so first with the oil of sadness above his fellows. Indeed the Deity suffered not, yet he that is God suffered. Now all this is to teach us patience. Let us look unto Jesus the founder and finisher of our faith; who endured the cross, and despised the shame, and is now set down at the right hand of the throne of God; therefore let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Heb. xii. 1, 2. By death Christ came to us; by death let us not gudge to go to Christ.

Patience, you see, is an excellent virtue; you have heard many commendations of it; if it had no other, this were enough to praise it, that it cures our griefs. Many cannot away with other graces, because they curb the will, and abridge delight, and impose hard things to the flesh. They cannot away with charity, because it takes out of the purse; nor with abstinence, because it restrains the appetite; nor with humility, because it abates pride; nor with chastity, because it debars lust. But methinks each man should love patience, because it cures his pains and mitigates his sorrows. Natural men care no more for virtue, than that cruel judge did for equity; yes, if they knew a virtue that would ease their burdens, and qualify their griefs, they would love it. Methinks even wicked men should use this virtue, and make much of it, though for no other purpose than Pliniod used Moses, to remove the judgments. Our provid hath it, Of sufferance comes ease; let us be patient then, if but for our own benefits.

VERSE 6.

And to patience godliness.

BEFORE we come to the definition of godliness, let us conceive some reasons of this connexion, and immediate adding of piety to patience.

1. Because the pillar of patience is godliness; it cannot stand without it, it is firm being upheld by it. For true patience cannot befall a reprobate; (stupidity may, as to Nabab;) not by an absolute impossibility, but by the indisposition of his heart to receive it; as a spark of fire falling upon water, ice, or snow, presently goes out; which fastening on wood, or such combustible matter, kindles and burns. The food whereupon true patience lives, is faith in the gospel of peace. Saul was a moral man, yea, a zealous man, while he was Saul, and Gamaliel's scholar; but when he was made a Christian he was called Paul; he was not a Paul before. So patience in ethies is not rightly named. As Sylvius when he was chosen pope said, *Enemum repente, ceperunt Pium*, Forget Ananias, and accept me your Pius; so to suffer before conversion, was but stupidity in quiet; now, the persons being changed, change also the name, call it patience.

2. Because godliness teacheth a man patience; it is the imitation of God, and our God is patient. Now if we feel this mercy from God, let us show it to them that are his. He that will not tolerate man, makes himself unworthy to be borne with of God. God hath in his hand vengeance, in his heart patience. We pray for pardon as we give pardon; we would be both to have our own lips condemn us.

3. Because patience will do the soul no good without godliness: the glory and comfort of all suffering, is God's cause. Neither is the reward given for suffering, but for suffering well. This is thank-worthy, if for conscience toward God, we endure grief, 1 Pet. ii. 19. Tribulations are the marks of Christ; but then they must be borne for Christ. Herein Paul delighted himself; "I take pleasure in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake," 2 Cor. xii. 10; thus being prouder of his iron fetters, than a bragging courtier of his golden chain. The departures of the saints are not *mors*, sed *immortalitates*. If Julian so honoured his soldiers dying in the wars, how much more shall Christ honour his! "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints," Psal. cxvi. 15; such as undergo in Christ's cause Christ's cross. No death is comfortable, unless in the Lord, or for the Lord; and that man's life is well bestowed in suffering death, when to patience is added godliness. Our life is the Lord's by many dear titles; therefore not too good for him when he requires it. Thou art a depository, to whose trust is committed a precious jewel; perhaps thou hast much ado to keep it from the subtleties of tempters, and violence of attempters; yea, lust a corrupt desire untruthfully to spend it upon profits or pleasures, cuffs and vanities; and thou never art in true quiet, till he that delivered this jewel, thy life, to thee, doth resume it. But then thou must tarry till he calls for it, for God refuseth the soul that comes to him before he sends for it. When the Indians, to avoid the Spanish slavery, grew to a practice of killing themselves, the Spaniards dissembled a killing of themselves also; threatening upon their meeting in another world to afflict them there more than before. Indeed, if the troubles and angusties of this world so disappear thee, that thou castest away thy own life, those very same in a far heavier measure shall find thee out in the other.

There is no comfort in suffering death, except godliness bless our patience. Julian writes, that among the Grecians there was a law, that if a sick man drank wine without the advice of his physician, though he saved his life by it, he should be put to death for it; because he did that was not permitted him. Bitter then must be their punishment, that take not wine but poison; that precipitate their lives into certain destruction; having no command from God, that he requires it, no promise that he will reward it. Our Saviour teacheth us, being persecuted in one city, to flee into another: if we willingly run into unnecessary death, he will say, Who required this at your hands? who had you run from England to Rome for poison, and from Rome back again to England with treason? You may have patience, but here is no godliness. The good sheep knows the voice of his shepherd, and stays for his call. Those glorious martyrs that now have a permanent triumph in heaven, were not so madly prodigal of their bloods, as to throw them away without a warrant. They that possess this laurel, washed their garments, not in their own bloods only, so they might have been still red and stained, but in the blood of the Lamb, that changes them into white. "Therefore are they before the throne of God; and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them," Rev. vii. 15. That sinful Mary washed and bathed herself, not in her own blood, but in her tears, saith Chrysostom. And of St. Peter he asks this question: When he had denied his Master, did he shed out his own blood? No, but his tears, and so washed away his sins. We are not sent into this world to suffer, but to do; and when we do suffer, to add to persecution patience, to patience godliness. The way to triumph in secular arms, was not to be slain in the battle, but to keep their station. In the Roman warlike discipline this was the rule, not to follow desperately, nor to fly basely. So it is in our Christian battle, not to invite danger, nor to shrink from it. Indeed God betimes in the world called for this bleeding witness: he sealed his acceptance of Abel's sacrifice, by accepting Abel for a sacrifice; who before all example, first dedicated martyrdom. (Chrys.) And as soon as Christ came into the world, after the receiving of the wise men's oblations, he would immediately be glorified with that hecatomb of innocents. But to offer this without God's asking, shall bring but a poor reward; for while piety is not preserved, the crown of patience is lost. "Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator," 1 Pet. iv. 19. Put not piety from thy patience; thy wounds shall be healed, and thy soul rewarded.

4. Because patience without godliness, when it receives injury of man, may do more injury to God. Let us write the wrongs to ourselves in the dust, to forget them; that is patience: the wrongs we have done to God in marble, to remember them; that is godliness. To bear meekly with thy persecutors, is commendable patience: to be silent at God's dishonour, is condemnable baseness; it is no less than treason; thy silence makes thee guilty. Thou pleadest thyself to be the son of God: he is a very bad son, that can hear his righteous Father blasphemed with patience. Cursed is that patience that hinders a man from godliness. Christ is thy brother, he bought thee with his blood, thou art his coheir: canst thou behold him gored with new wounds, and hold thy peace? Thou believest not, for then thou wouldst speak; as the psalm hath it, "I believed, therefore have I spoken," Psal. cxvi. 10: no defending of faith, no faith. The inhabitants of Meroz took not part with

God's enemies, yet were they cursed for not taking part with his friends, Judg. v. 23. Indifference in God's cause is blamable: not to oppose them that oppose God, is to be his enemy. How easily are we moved at our own injuries! how patient at God's! Let our own credits or riches be troubled, we rage like lions; let God's honour be questioned, we are as tame as lambs. If the aspersions of scandal lights upon our names, there is suit upon suit, from court to court, all to beggar the raiser of it. Let the Lord's dreadful name be blasphemed, we are so far from spending a penny, that we will not speak a syllable. Like Jonah, we are more moved for the loss of a gourd, than for all Nineveh. Moses can brook Miriam despising him, and go away silent, because himself only was interested, Numb. xii.; but when the people had idolatized, he brake the sacred tables in passion, burned the calf, scattered the dust on the waters, and in detestation of their wickedness made them drink it. We have patience enough, but piety is thrust out of doors. Such unfortunate and apostate times are we fallen into, that to uphold God's honour is held uncivil tartness: such men are saucy, and such sauce is too sharp for proud and vicious stomachs: this dissolves the knot of friendship. Let it; better a holy discord, than a profane concord. Care not for that mirth which must grieve the Holy Ghost: disclaim that peace which must be at war with Christ. If they refuse thee, thou knowest who will receive thee. When they had excommunicated him, Christ welcomed him, John ix. 35. "Fear not them that kill the body," &c. It is worse losing the Lord's favour, than thy landlord's: better part from thy cottage on earth, than thy inheritance in heaven.

Necessary therefore is the accession of piety to patience. It is an abhorred sin to temporize. When a chaplain must measure his speech by his lord's humour, the truth of the Lord of hosts is abused. Against oppression he dares not speak, because it is his lord's fault; nor against pride, because it is his lady's; nor against riot, because it is his young master's. He must not meddle with the ulcers that stick on his great one's conscience: hell will take that patience. Let them be ashamed of Christ, that care not for his being ashamed of them. For us, let us plead God's cause, for his sake that pleads our cause in heaven.

Godliness is taken by the philosophers in a threefold relation: for religion towards God, which they held a devout adoration of their idols. For religion towards their country: when any died for their country, they were said to die piously. For religion towards their parents: so *Enecas* was called *Pius*; and for this they gave those additional names of *Pii*. Our apostle meant it not in this latitude: it must here import some particular grace, as appears by the rank. Yet let us a little consider it in the larger acceptance. So it is such a gracious habit, as prefers God's glory before all things, and refers all things to it.

For the former, godliness aims immediately at the Lord's honour. There was one following Christ, but hearing of his father's death, he first desires leave to bury him: perhaps he gaped for an executioner, or meant at least to thrust in for an administration. No, saith Christ, "let the dead bury their dead," Matt. viii. 21, 22; thou hast a living Father, (let the dead go,) that can give thee a better inheritance. But to bury one's father is godliness: yes, but, saith Jerome, to neglect our very parents when God requires it, is piety. Himself testifies, "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me," Matt. x. 37. This falls heavy on some; the voluptuous loves his wife better; "I have

married a wife, and therefore I cannot come," Luke xiv. 20. The uxorious husband obeys his wife's precepts, sooner than God's. The covetous parent loves his child better than the Lord; oppressing God's children to enrich his own; so his young ones be warm in the nest, let Christ shake with cold. Love the Lord, and love thy children, or friends; but if necessity enforce the loss of one, whatsoever thou lovest, lose not the Lord Jesus. (Hieron.) Another said, "Lord, I will follow thee, but let me first go bid them farewell which are at home," Luke ix. 61; as if any friend were to stand in competition with Christ. But we have always somewhat to do when we should follow him: as Elisha said to Elijah, "Let me first kiss my father and my mother; then I will follow thee," 1 Kings xix. 20. Uriah was so earnest of fighting the Lord's battle, that he would not go down to his house, nor sleep with his beautiful wife. Such a zeal as prefers God's service before all other things, that is godliness.

For the other, it refers all to God's honour; in all things that it does, speaks, or suffers, it declares a purpose of heart to glorify the Lord. All things and actions are *ordinabilia ad Deum: Deus finis*, all else *ad finem*: what should man desire more than to serve that God who preserves him? "Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God," 1 Cor. x. 31. This is the end of our creation, the beginning of our salvation, the perfection of our happiness. Hast thou wisdom? refer it to the glory of thy Maker; otherwise, like the moon, when thou art lightest to the world, thou art darkest to heaven. Hast thou strength? use it to resist Satan, to conquer (not another, but) thyself. Woe be to them that are strong to sin! Hast thou old age? let thy life grow white with thy hairs; lest thou be full of days and fuller of sins. Hast thou honour? employ it to honour him that hath honoured thee. Hast thou authority? draw not this sword in thy private wrongs, let it not be sheathed in the injuries of the gospel. Hast thou riches? spend them upon godliness. Say not with Judas, "Why is this waste?" but with David, "I will not offer to the Lord of that which costs me nothing," 2 Sam. xxiv. 24. To this general piety there are two enemies, profaneness and hypocrisy.

Profaneness. There are two characters of a man truly pious, understanding and will; the one in his science, the other in his conscience; commonly this vice bewitcheth them both. As thou dost see thy own face in thy heart, so others do see thy heart in thy face. If a drunkard dare number his ebrieties; the lascivious, how often he hath been at the house of sin; who can blanch this ungodliness? But indeed wicked men have more boldness to appear ill, than the godly have to appear good, for "he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey;" or, as the original imports, is accounted mad, Isa. lix. 15. Any man that carries his face toward Zion, is held a hypocrite: he that is ashamed to do ill, shall be ashamed for his good. This is not a grain of ungodliness, but ungodliness in grain. Can you lament your losses on the seas, the wreck of goods in your ships, and not the shipwreck of a good conscience in your shops? The spider never builds but where are flies; Satan never placeth his nest but where is store of these ungodly lusts. Let them banish profaneness that ever expect the comforts of piety.

Hypocrisy. "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" John vi. 70. I, not another; emphatically, "I," the very Wisdom of God. "Chosen;" not entertained offering your service, not admitted as suitors, but chosen. "You;" not the refuse people out of the highways, nor the

great personages of the land; but you, whom I have elected to propagate my gospel. How many? "Twelve;" a little number: Christ's is the least college. Yet "one of you is a devil." Lay these particulars together, and sum up a hypocrite. "The congregation of hypocrites shall be desolate," Job xv. 34. The hypocrite is like Hosca's dough-baked cake, only hot on the visible side, Hos. vii. 8. Seeing the fire of God's altar, the zeal of the temple, cannot heat them, they are reserved to be baked thoroughly in the oven of hell.

Endeavour then to store thy heart with godliness; for worldly things, say as he did of eloquence, If they be present, I will use them; if they be absent, I do miss them. Follow thou godliness, other things shall follow thee. First seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness, then shall all these things be added unto you, Matt. vi. 33. While a man hunts after his own shadow, his back is upon the sun, and still his shadow is unovertaken before him: let him turn his face to the sun, and travel toward it, his shadow shall follow him. The profits and delights of this world are but a shadow; while a man hunts after them his back is upon Jesus Christ, that Sun of righteousness; and he can never overtake them; if he could, yet they are but a shadow. Set thy face and thy faith toward Christ, all these shadows shall wait upon thee. A painter had drawn Jove's picture, Juno's, and another man's that was his friend. That friend cheapened the other two, and last of all, his own. Nay, says the painter, buy the other two, and take the last into the bargain. Be sure of godliness; riches, honours, and pleasures, all those counterfeits of true happiness, shall come into the bargain.

Our discourse hath thus far dwelt on godliness in the latitude. In a stricter acceptance, I find it especially consisting in two things; adoration, and imitation of God.

Adoration of the true God in a right manner, is godliness. Nature hath written in every heart, that a superior power is to be worshipped; though it could not declare what power that was which might challenge it. Out of this ignorance sprung that multitude of imaginary gods, which St. Paul calls "dumb idols," 1 Cor. xii. 2. Now he that is dumb, is also commonly deaf: they could neither speak nor hear: "They have mouths, but they speak not; they have ears, but they hear not," Psal. cxv. 5. To avoid this sin, God gave an express law, Thou shalt have no other gods but me. Which negative precept especially forbids four things. 1. The having no God at all, as the atheists: "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God," Psal. xiv. 1. 2. The having strange gods, and not the true; as had the Gentiles; gods according to the number of their cities: every twinkling star was held a deity; yea, many so gross and base gods, that there were not worse creatures in the world, except themselves. 3. The having strange gods with the true, as had the Samaritans: "They feared the Lord, and served their own gods," 2 Kings xvii. 33; they swore by the Lord, and they swore by Malcham, Zeph. i. 5. They chose new gods; then was war in the gates. 4. The having the true God, but not aright, according to his will and word, as heretics. For this is the main difference between heresy and idolatry; that serves the true God with a false worship, this serves false gods with a true worship; both lateful.

Now seeing the principal part of our piety stands in the due and true worship of God, it is Satan's main stratagem to subdue it. If it were possible, he would have it himself, and draw us from the worship due to God, to the worship not due to himself. He is

proud still; he hath lost the height of his happiness, not the height of his pride. He would be a god, though a hellish god; a prince, though it be a prince of darkness. Good angels refuse to be worshipped; when John fell at the angel's feet to worship him, he said to him, "See thou do it not," Rev. xix. 10. But evil angels desire it. To this the devil persuaded Christ, to fall down and worship him; he durst be so bold with the Son of God himself. Devilish impudence! to request him that is worshipped of the angels of light, to worship an angel of darkness. But Christ soon choked him: "Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve," Matt. iv. 10. But howsoever he cannot bring men to worship himself immediately, yet he effects this often mediately. If Israel will but make a golden calf, the devil finds his own worship in that. If a papist bows to his crucifix, even here he finds himself honoured. Albeit they say, We give the image no worship, think it no god; no more did the Israelites think that calf their deliverer out of Egypt, yet was this a cursed sin. They say, they worship God before the crucifix; but God rejecting that worship, it stays in the crucifix. Such another policy had the devil to wound Israel, when he presented to them the whores of Moab, Numb. xxv. Was only adultery his aim? No, but idolatry also. "They have beguiled you in the matter of Peor, and the matter of Cozbi," ver. 18. The matter of Peor was wrought by the matter of Cozbi. "They went to Baal-peor, and separated themselves unto that shame," Hos. ix. 10. "They joined themselves also unto Baal-peor, and ate the sacrifices of the dead," Psal. cvi. 28. Baal was the Moabitish idol, Peor a mountain; there they worshipped, and feasted, and ate the offerings of the dead. Not of dead men, but of idols, which are dead things; for God is the living God. But could Satan effectuate this idolatry in such a people? We read, Numb. xxiv. Baalam itching after Balak's gold: heron he practises, and shifts ground, as gamblers do their standings for better luck; and would fain curse, but spite of his teeth he blesseth. Now he sees there is no way to make God forsake his people, unless they were first brought to forsake him. Therefore it is likely that upon Balaam's advice, the daughters of Moab and Midian were brought before the Israelites; light housewives, dancing, frisking, and flaring; their carriage promising tractableness enough, if the other would come on; so were they tempted to wantonness with those professed strumpets, and by that means to offer up to Baal-peor. This was the devil's trick, to effect that *arte*, by fraud, which he could not *marle*, by open war. Let me a little increase your detestation of idolatrous worship, that you may more sincerely worship God.

1. It is a pleasing sin, therefore more pernicious: few that love it can be brought to acknowledge it. A Turk believes nothing less than his Alcoran to be idolatry. A monk at his mass is so far from thinking himself an idolater, that he calls himself a spiritual man. Though nothing be more reprov'd in God's word, and punished in his works, than idolatry; yet there is in corrupt nature a strange proclivity to it. The prophet calls idols, delectable things: "their delectable," or desirable, "things shall not profit them," Isa. xlv. 9. The idolater is like a woman inflamed with love toward some proper young man; her affection is so set, that forgetting all modesty, she sends for him, and brings him to the bed of love: "Neither left she her whoredoms brought from Egypt: for in her youth they lay with her, and they bruised the breasts of her virginity, and poured their whoredom upon her," Ezek. xxiii. 8. Such a whore

is the church of antichrist, Rev. xvii.; whose doctrine, like the wine of fornication, goes down merrily, to the intoxication and poison of souls. Only the gospel hath brought this land a remedy, no other than the blood of Christ, to purge it.

2. It is an impudent sin, and goes to the furthest line of condemnation. It sticks not to take God's blessings with the left hand, and gives them away to his enemies with the right. So the Israelites received of God manna, food from heaven, and then sacrificed it to idols. For it is likely that in the desert they had no better cheer to feast the devil with, than manna and water; their beasts being hardly sufficient to maintain their daily sacrifice to the Lord. God gave them jewels from the Egyptians, as wages for their service; they melt them to make a calf. Yea, children, that are the chief inheritance on earth; "Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate," Psal. cxxvii. 5: children, the divided pieces of themselves; so dear, that Rachel mourns for them, and would not be comforted, because they were not: even these they sacrifice to Moloch. "Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils, and shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan; and the land was polluted with blood," Psal. cvi. 37, 38. But, "what will ye do in the end thereof?" Jer. v. 31. What? "Therefore was the wrath of the Lord kindled against his people, inasmuch that he abhorred his own inheritance," Psal. cvi. 40. "Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone," Hos. iv. 17. Let him alone? O fearful! when God takes away correction, damnation enters the doors. Sin shall now be the wages of sin, that death and destruction may be the wages of both: "Because Ephraim hath made many altars to sin, altars shall be unto him to sin," Hos. viii. 11. This is fearful: therefore I conclude this point, as St. John doth his First Epistle; "Little children, keep yourselves from idols;" yea, Lord, keep us all from them, by the grace of thy Spirit.

You see the danger of will-worship; let this contain us in the true adoration of God. Worship is twofold; civil, or religious. Civil, to men, in respect of their degrees in the church, commonwealth, or private family. In regard of age: give reverence to the grey head: of gifts; so Elisha revered Elijah: of place: in church; so ministers are to reverence their bishops: in commonwealth; so subjects must give reverence to magistrates: in private family; so children owe reverence to their parents, servants to their masters. To God only is due religious worship. They write that to the king of Benin the people give such reverence, that we scarce give more to God. They fall flat on the ground before him, covering their faces, and depart without turning their backs. But to all men give *summe*, *sed suo*: to God only, religious worship, who is so jealous of his honour that he will not give it to another. Be ye never so great, stoop to the Lord: honour him that hath honoured you: it is no discredit to your worship to worship God. Christ stooped low for our sakes; he "made himself of no reputation, but took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men," Phil. ii. 7. What the barbarians dreamed of Paul and Barnabas, "The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men," Acts xiv. 11, we found true in Christ; God is come down among us in the likeness of man; yea, indeed, a true man. God said once, in derision of our folly, "Behold, the man is become as one of us," Gen. iii. 22; but we may say truly, God is become as one of us. He that was so low, is now and was ever the Most High: let us

adore that blessed Jesus. The Lord saith, "when he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, Let all the angels of God worship him," Heb. i. 6. Do the blessed angels of heaven, and shall not men on earth worship him? I speak not only of a corporal adoration, though that also be due: "At the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, in earth, and under the earth," Phil. ii. 10. Neither do I think the bowing of knee at the name of Jesus to be a fruitless but harmless ceremony. As for their exception, that the bowing more at this than at other names of God, may breed an error of advancing the Son above the Father and Holy Spirit; we answer, that the truth of the Son's equality with the Father and the Spirit, is a mystery so hard for mortal wits to apprehend, that of all errors, that which may give them the most honour, is less to be feared. Bellarmine observes, that most heretics have denied the Son, none ever denied the Father, to be God. But why not bow we as well at the name of Christ? If any name be greater than other, it seems to be Christ: for he is called, "The Lord's Christ," Luke ii. 26. Bernard answers, Of all names given to him, still Jesus is the sweetest. Other are names of majesty, this of mercy: the Word of God, the Son of God, the Christ of God, all titles of glory: Jesus, of grace and redemption. The contemptible name, which Pilate so scoffed at, Jesus of Nazareth, is so preached and praised, that against all infidels it hath gotten the pre-eminence above every name. The condemning then of this honour due to Jesus, is rather an argument of spite, than an evidence of the Spirit; as it hath been said truly. To this name all shall bow: in heaven, angels and glorified spirits; on earth, men; under the earth, those that be now dead: for all shall appear before his tribunal with bended knees. Perhaps by "under the earth," are meant even devils and damned spirits: though they bow not willingly, yet they shall give an extorted adoration. Glorious angels, blessed spirits, and good men, have a voluntary genuflection; but the wicked on earth, and fiends in hell, shall be forced to it against their wills. So was Judas; "I have sinned in betraying the innocent blood." So Julian: "Thou hast overcome, O Galilean!" So the devils; "What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God?" Matt. viii. 29. That evil spirit said, "Jesus I know," Acts xix. 15; for even the devils believe and tremble. Wicked men now trample his blood, but shall one day submissively acknowledge his dominion: "Lord, when saw we thee an hungred," &c. Matt. xxv. 44. But this extorted confession shall be to their confusion; "Depart, ye cursed." Thus as every knee should bow, so every knee shall bow; if not out of faith, yet out of fear. "I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow," Isa. xlv. 23; Rom. xiv. 11. He is God, and shall be worshipped.

This I thought good to urge, because, as if we had been taught to be proud, there is little reverence among us. I am ashamed to speak it, many sit in the church as at a theatre; their hands are too idle to answer their heads, their knees too stiff to bow to Christ. Even to the gospel, which must save them, as they shall never be saved, their regard is little better than contempt. For shame of men and angels, where is our reverence? Do you come hither to give God a blessing, or to take it? Will a petitioner come to God with a covered head, or an unmoved knee? Ye shall reverence my sanctuary: I am the Lord," Lev. xix. 30. If he law challenged such reverence, what doth the gospel? If the blood of goats be so precious, that requires the Lamb of

God, the blood of our Lord Jesus! What is this, but to "give the sacrifice of fools?" Eccl. v. 1. God will dwell with him that trembleth at his word, Isa. lxvi. 2. We tremble like mountains; yea, the mountains quake at God's presence, saith the psalmist; we are not moved. "But as for me, I will come into thy house in the multitude of thy mercy; and in thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple," Psal. v. 7. Oh for one dram of this reverence! But indeed it is in vain to bend the knees, with unbended souls; it is a poor worship, to move our hats, not our hearts. But he doth best, that expresseth before men his zeal by his reverence, and commendeth before God his reverence by his zeal. It is fabled, that when Juno on a day had proclaimed a great reward to him that brought her the best present, there came in a physician, a poet, a merchant, a philosopher, and a beggar. The physician presented a hidden secret of nature, a prescript able to make an old man young again; the poet, an encomiastic ode of her bird, the peacock; the merchant, a rare hollow jewel to hang at her ear; the philosopher, a book of strange mysteries; the poor quaking beggar, only a bended knee, saying, I have nothing worth acceptance, take myself. Some come hither with prescripts of their own; they have receipts enough already, they care for no more. Others, like the poet, come to admire peacocks, the gaudy popinjays and fashionists of the time, blustering in their painted feathers. Others, like the merchant, present jewels; but they are hollow: come with critical or hypocritical humours; like carps, to bite the net, and wound the fisher, not to be taken. Some, like the philosopher, bring a book with them; which they read without minding the preacher, saying, they find more learning there than he can teach them. But blessed are the poor in spirit, that, like the beggar, give themselves to God. Juno gave the reward to him; God gives the blessing to these. "He hath filled the hungry with good things; but the rich he hath sent empty away," Luke i. 53. A reverent heart shall carry away the comfort: godliness in the humble dust of adoration, shall be lifted up by the hand of mercy.

Imitation of God follows; for what else is godliness, but to be like God? We were all made after his image; that was lost; now our regeneration is nothing else but the repairing of that image. "Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children," Eph. v. 1. True children will imitate their parents: if we do not follow God, we are bastards. Follow thy Father, as Aeneas did Aeneas, though *non passibus æquis*. "It is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy," 1 Pet. i. 16. By nature a Noah may beget a Ham, Abraham an Ishmael: but in grace, the Most Holy begets no children but saints. "He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked," 1 John ii. 6. He is no member that walks a contrary way to his Head. If Jesus go unto the mount to pray, and Judas to the Pharisees to betray, he is no apostle, but an apostate. This is my way, saith Christ, the light of truth: if you will go by darkness, because your deeds are evil, we shall never meet till we meet in judgment. Be you merciful, for your father in heaven is merciful, Luke vi. 36. God loves mercy; they that love it not, are not godly. I wonder what hope oppressors of their poor tenants, usurers with their forfeitures, contentious men with their law vexations, the malicious with their injuries, can have? The Father of mercies hath no children but the merciful. Judgment merciful shall be to him that shows no mercy, Jam. ii. 13. The poor man that both smarted with their cruelty, may taste the sweets of God's mercy. Wretched they! this cup shall never touch their lips.

Have mercy on me, says the poor wretch to his living oppressors. No. Have mercy on me, saith the dying oppressor to God. No: Go, ye cursed; you had no mercy on others, there is no mercy for yourselves. If thou see a man unmerciful, be bold to say he is ungodly.

Thus piety consists in the imitation of God. He may not be called pious, who follows not the example of God. Indeed this name is often usurped, seldom justified. There are some things, wherein it is no godliness to ambiguate a likeness to God. Contend not to be like him in the arm of his power; for this Nebuchadnezzar lost his kingdom: nor in the finger of his miracles; for this Simon Magus was cast down, and broke his neck: nor in the face of his Majesty; for this Lucifer was thrown out of heaven: nor in the brain of his wisdom; for this Adam was driven out of Paradise. But in the bowels of his mercy; according to this we shall be everlastingly rewarded. Never did, or shall, man or angel offend, in coveting to be like God in meekness, in goodness, in charity, in mercy. Imitate his morals, not his miracles.

To conclude, let me set this mark upon godliness: prove yourselves content, and I will assure you godly. "Godliness with contentment is great gain," 1 Tim. vi. 6. The apostle, seeing such universal labour for small gain, thought to win men with great gain. But what is that? godliness? Here is a paradox will hardly be received: he had need of good logic, for this is a hard position. The whole world thinks gain to be godliness, and doth Paul say godliness is gain? Micah had not so many opponents, four hundred to one, 1 Kings xxii. He shall have merchant with his adventures, landlord with his fines, patron with his simonies, usurer with his obligations, lawyer with his cases; all striving to confute this, crying out for gain, as the Ephesians for their goddess, Great is Diana of the Ephesians. Indeed "all men cannot," and many men will not, "receive this saying," Matt. xix. 11. "You will not believe it, though it be told you," Hab. i. 5. This saying may, like the Lord, look down from heaven, to see if any will regard it, Psal. xiv. 2. None, no not one. It may go from court to city, from city to country, and scarce one of a thousand will yield to it. But as the bride was decked for her beloved in garments of needle-work, and a vesture of wrought gold, with jewels and ornaments, Psal. xlv. 13, 14; so God trims up piety, sweet and beauteous in herself, with rich endowments of honour, pleasure, peace, and happiness; as it were, letters of commendations, that all might love her. No worldly gain can satisfy man's heart: Israel murmured as much when they had manna, as when they had it not; and rich men are as troubled with that they possess, as poor men for that they want. Jacob gave Reuben a blessing, but added, Thou shalt not be excellent, Gen. xlix. 3, 4. So God gives the worldling riches, but says, Thou shalt not be satisfied. But when piety cometh, content follows it: you found small peace in the world, you shall have great peace in conscience. When Christ brought salvation to Zaccheus, his mind altered: before he did nothing but scrape, now he was all for giving. This was not the first day that he seemed rich to others, but this was the first day he seemed rich to himself. Riches bring contention; godliness brings contentation. Gain hath often hurt the getters; piety is profitable to all men. Wealth comes, and a man is not pleased; honour comes, and yet he is not pleased; the lusts of the flesh are fulfilled, and yet he is not pleased; but when godliness comes, his cup is full: "The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I

have a goodly heritage," Psal. xvi. 6. As Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth," John xiv. 8; so, Lord, give us godliness, and it sufficeth. What the rich man falsely usurped, this certainly affordeth: Soul, rest, thou hast enough. If the Son make you free, ye shall be free indeed, John viii. 36; if godliness make you rich, ye shall never be poor.

VERSE 7.

And to godliness brotherly kindness.

FOR better method of proceeding in the description of this next grace, let me guide my discourse and your attention through these five particulars; the connexion, definition, distinction, conclusion, application.

First, for connexion and dependence, we must consider the reasons why the apostle joins immediately to godliness, brotherly kindness. We have three reasons.

1. Because brotherly kindness is the daughter of godliness. He that loves God for his own sake, will love his brother for God's sake. "Simon, lovest thou me? feed my lambs," John xxi. 17. What you have done to these little ones, ye have done to me, Matt. xxv. 40. He may best be good to his brother, that hath first learned to be good to his father. (Greg.) The river of charity springs from the fountain of piety.

2. Because brotherly kindness is the moderator of godliness. Some men's piety runs an impetuous pace; so fast that it forgets to salute their brother by the way. Those two disciples were so hot for Christ, that they would needs have fire from heaven upon their brethren. As Judas would have hindered Mary's piety by show of charity; so the Pharisees overthrew charity with the shows of piety; they "devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer," Matt. xxiii. 14. God loves not such mad zeal, that so fixeth the eyes on heaven that it despiseth to look on their poor brother on earth. Indeed when such an opposition meets us, that either we must forsake Christ or our brother, then himself reacheth us to leave all, and to follow him; but when there is no such necessity, God is often contented to depart from his own right, that we may succour our brother. "Go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice," Matt. ix. 13. Merciful works to thy brother, are for sacrifice, Heb. xiii. 16, and before sacrifice, Hos. vi. 6. God will forgive the omission of piety, upon good cause of fraternal charity. He will spare the wife from church to comfort her sick husband; the mother, to relieve her distressed child. We have those that will run so fast to a sermon, that they will not stay to give a poor orphan a penny. The true catholic hath a catholic care; and sets not the two tables at variance: both which look to God's obedience, as the two cherubims to the mercy-seat. I know there is a great commandment, and another (but) like unto it, Matt. xxii. 38, 39; but let not sacrifice turn mercy out of doors, as Sarah did Hagar; nor the flames of zeal consume the moisture of charity, as the fire from heaven drunk up the water at Elijah's sacrifice. Godliness works by brotherly kindness, Gal. v. 6. No man must look so high, that he overlook his brother. You fast and mourn, and I regard it not, saith the Lord, because ye exact upon the poor, Isa. lviii. 3. Charity is the king's highway to heaven: zeal, like Cush, runs apace; but love, like Ahimaz,

gets first to the king, because it runs by the way of the plain, 2 Sam. xviii. 23. Only that godly man which is kinder to his brother, comes with best speed to his Maker.

3. Because godliness is proved by brotherly kindness. This is our demonstration that we love God. With one and the same charity we love both God and our brother: the difference is in the degrees and respects: God for himself, others for him, and in him. There is nothing more easy than to ostent the love of God; but the lack of charity is the conviction of hypocrisy. There be many donations of the Spirit: though we speak with tongues of men; so many tongues as that divine poet wrote of Queen Elizabeth,

That Rome, Rhine, Rhone, Greece, Spain, and Italy;
Plead all for right in her nativity;

yea, of angels, if at least the angels have any language; (Hieron.) yet if we have not charity, we are as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal, 1 Cor. xiii. 1. Like Balaam's ass, that spake to better her master, not herself; or the sermon-bell that rings others to church, while itself still hangs in the steeple, and hears nothing. Though we had the gift of prophecy: so Balaam, Saul, Caiaphas prophesied; yet, wanting charity, the first loved gold more than God; the second, his lusts more than his obedience; the last condemned Jesus Christ. Though we had all knowledge, yet, wanting charity, we might, like the Pharisees, open the door for others, and not go in ourselves. Without charity we are nothing; nothing in respect of grace, how great soever by nature. (Aqu.) Yea, though we give our bodies to be burned; though we not only speak, but suffer; not do, but die. Of all sufferings death is the most terrible; of all deaths, burning. Now if I give; not by compulsion, but of mine own accord: as it is said of Christ, He "gave himself." Eph. v. 2. If I give my *body*: not only suffer loss of goods, and that is much, to take joyfully the spoiling of our goods, Heb. x. 34; but calamities in our body: as the father of lies spake truly in this; "Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life," Job ii. 4. If I give my *body*: not my child's body, as Abraham offered Isaac's; not only flesh of my flesh, but flesh that is *my* flesh. If I give my *body to death*, not only to pain and passion: yea, not to a natural death, this law must pass upon all men, but to a violent death. Lastly, to a death so violent, that there is not a greater torment; to be roasted and consumed in the fire, *to be burned*. Here be many acts of patience, of piety: yet if we hate our brother, all is lost. Therefore Stephen, when he died for godliness, forgot not brotherly kindness: "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge," Acts vii. 60; as if the want of this would discredit the cause, or endanger the reward. So did other martyrs, fetching this example from the Head: "Father, forgive them: for they know not what they do," Luke xxiii. 34. Thus necessary is this connexion: "He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now," 1 John ii. 9. If there could be a godliness destitute of this, it should never be welcome to Christ.

Secondly, for the definition of this philadelphia. It is a love to the faithful; to such as possess the same faith with us, and by that faith are adopted heirs to the same God, through the brotherhood of the same Christ. It is distinguished from charity by the nearness and dearness. By nearness, I mean not local, but mystical. Charity hath a great latitude, and is like the heaven that covers all; brotherly kindness like the sun that shines upon the one half at

once. The firmament sends influence to more than the sun, but the sun comes nearer to that object it blesseth than the firmament. By dearness; for the bond of nature is not so strong as the bond of grace. Our creation hath made us friends, and given us amity; our redemption hath made us brethren, and given us unity; we "are all one in Christ Jesus," Gal. iii. 28. Therefore though we are formerly bound to do good to all; yet here, by a new bond, especially to them that are of the household of faith, Gal. vi. 10. Be good to every man, more good to a Christian, most good to a faithful Christian; for thou art tied to him in the bond of the nearest fraternity.

Consider then here the ground of this brotherhood, which is the bond of adoption; which if it have power to bind God to man, and man to God, then much more to bind man to man. Religion is a binder: the gospel hath a combining power, to gather into one fold all the sheep of Christ wandering on the mountains of the broad earth. Friendship is a great uniter; it knows no other language but, I am wholly thine. It is ready to exclude those possessives, *mine* and *thine* from being any parts of speech, and to drown all propriety. Marriage is a great uniter, stronger than friendship, by God's ordinance; it knows no other method but composition. Among pagans it brought two into one lawful bed: the bride could challenge on her wedding day of the bridegroom, *Ubi tu Caius, ego Caia*, Where you are master, I must be mistress. Among Christians it goes further, not only to bring two into one house, but two into one flesh. As God by creation made two of one, so again by marriage he made one of two. But the principal attractive, congregating, and combining power in the world, to draw together heaven and earth, sea and land, east and west, Jews and Gentiles, and to make one of two, of ten, of thousands, of all, is the gospel, the bond of our Christian covenant, which makes us all one in the Lord Jesus. Thus we are compact under the government of one Lord, tied by the bond of one faith, washed from our sins by one laver, nourished by the milk of one gospel, feasted at the supper of one and the same Lamb, assumed by one and the same Spirit, to the inheritance of one and the same kingdom, and shall be brought all to one and the same salvation.

In the third place we come to the distinction. There are three sorts of brethren; by race, place, and grace.

By race: and that either by birth, such as have the same parents: so Jacob and Esau were brethren. Or by blood: so Abraham and Lot were called brethren, Gen. xiii. 8. So our blessed Saviour was said to have brethren and sisters, Mark vi. 3. Mary his mother was a pure virgin, as well after his birth as before his conception. Hebrides the heretic, abusing that text, He "knew her not, till she had brought forth her first-born son," Matt. i. 25, held that Mary had more children because Christ was called her first-born. But so he is called "the first-begotten" Son of the Father, Heb. i. 6; yet he is the "only-begotten" Son of his Father, John iii. 16. So he is called the first-born of his mother, not that she had any child after him, but because she had none before him. This word "until" doth only negatively exclude the time past, no ways affirmatively insinuate the time to come. So, "I am with you always, even until the end of the world," Matt. xxviii. 20; he doth not mean to leave us then, but to be with us for ever. The heaven must receive Christ, "until the times of restitution of all things," Acts iii. 21: what, no longer? yes, and after that restoring also. "Michal had no child until the day of her death," 2 Sam. vi. 23; and it is certain that she had

none afterward. Therefore James and Joses, Jude and Simon, were Christ's brethren by kindred. "Laban said unto Jacob, Because thou art my brother," &c. Gen. xxix. 15. Laban was his master, his uncle, his father, yet he also calls him brother. This is one kind of fraternity.

By place, such as are of the same nation. Thou shalt choose a king "from among thy brethren," that is, of thy own nation, not a stranger, Deut. xvii. 15. "Unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury," but not unto thy brother, Deut. xxiii. 20. I could wish myself separated from Christ, "for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh," Rom. ix. 3. So all Englishmen are brethren; all in nation, not all in affection; for some of them were so brotherly kind, that they would have powdered us: and they have left their spawn behind them; that if their power were answerable to their will, they would, in kindness, cut all our throats.

By grace: and this is either common, or special, that is, spiritual; by generation, or regeneration. In the former respect all men are brethren: God "hath made of one blood all nations of men," Acts xvii. 26. We are brothers by the mother's side, they call it the surer side: all our bodies are from the womb of one earth, returnable to the bowels of one earth. Brothers by the Father's side; all our souls are from heaven, inspired by the breath of one Creator. In the latter respect, we are all brethren in Christ. By creation we have a brotherhood with the creatures; so Job calls the worms his sisters, Job xvii. 14. By renovation we have a brotherhood with the angels.

You see the kinds of this fraternity; let us now come to the fourth point of the method, to draw some conclusions from it. Here consider two things, the necessity, and the practice; wherefore we must have it, and wherein it consisteth.

The necessity is great: our apostle would not have given it a room among these principal graces, if he had not found it worthy in itself, and yet generally neglected. It is worthy in itself; that virtue which is ranked with godliness, must needs be honourable. Here behold God's great goodness and mercy, who doth not only provide for his own glory, but man's good. A man would think, so long as he is served by godliness, what should he care whether we serve one another with kindness? Yes; he esteems no man his servant, that is not his brother's friend: if we be not kind to our brethren, he values not our kindness to him. David would little respect the peace-offers of the Ammonites, who had so villainously entreated his servants, 2 Sam. x. God abhors the Israelites' challenge of his paterfamilias, when they had beaten his servants that demanded his rent, and slew his Son. Our faith, knowledge, temperance, patience, concern ourselves; our virtue and piety, God; only these two last, brotherly love and charity, hath he put in for men. See his goodness; of eight he hath given four to thyself, allowed two for thy brother, and hath reserved but two immediately for himself, that owes all. Now albeit this grace be worthy in itself, yet we are apt to neglect it; therefore our apostle in his two Epistles urgeth it four several times; 1 Pet. i. 22; "Love the brotherhood," chap. ii. 17; "Love as brethren," chap. iii. 8; and lastly here in my text. St. Paul in his writings thrice; "Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love," Rom. xii. 10; 1 Thess. iv. 9; "Let brotherly love continue," 11eb. xiii. 1. Divers of the fathers in their several Apologies highly commended this virtue. This inculcating doth insinuate both the precious necessity and the common dissemination of it. All ages have complained of the want of it. The poet

wrote long since, *Fratrum quoque gratia rara est*. The prophet; "Take ye heed every one of his neighbour, and trust ye not in any brother: for every brother will utterly supplant," Jer. ix. 4. "Even thy brethren, and the house of thy father, have dealt treacherously with thee," Jer. xii. 6. Our Saviour; "The brother shall betray the brother to death," Mark xiii. 12. The apostle; "Ye do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren, 1 Cor. vi. 8. He tells them of false brethren, privily coming, &c. Gal. ii. 4. He reckoneth it as none of the least exigents he was driven to, to be in peril of false brethren, 2 Cor. xi. 26. Now what is so frequently taught, at last let it be learned.

Let us come now to the practice, wherein this philadelphia consisteth; and this we must consider negatively and positively.

First, what it forbids and debars, as opposites to it, and murderers of it.

First, contentious litigation, "There is utterly a fault amongst you, that brother goeth to law with brother," 1 Cor. vi. 6, 7. How unnatural is it, for one hand to strike another! Hath Christ made thee friends with God, and wilt thou not be friends with thy brother? So Abraham entreated Lot; Let there be no strife between us, for we are brethren, Gen. xiii. 8. So Moses endeavoured to pacify the two Hebrews; "Sirs, ye are brethren, why do ye wrong one to another?" Acts vii. 26. Art thou a Christian, and seekest to undo thy brother? It is one of the abominations which God's very soul hateth, Prov. vi. 19. But the more busy such devilish engines and incendiaries are to separate us, the more constantly let us hold together.

Secondly, an inveterate hatred; which is a most degenerate passion; to hate the son of a man's own mother. As Joseph's brethren hated him, because his father loved him, Gen. xxxvii. 4; a fault that cost them dear afterwards. God loves all his children; wilt thou hate him that God loves? My delight is in the saints, saith that royal prophet, Psal. xvi. 3. Let all brother-haters know their wretchedness. "He that hateth his brother is in darkness," 1 John ii. 11. That is miserable enough, to live in darkness, hellish darkness; but this is not all, for he lives in death: "Whosoever hateth his brother, is a murderer," 1 John iii. 15; and a murderer cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven. So that whosoever hates another condemneth himself, and is lost in a voluntary blood-guiltiness.

Thirdly, even anger itself is a traitor to this virtue: for as hatred is a long anger, so anger is a short hatred; malice is nothing else but inveterate wrath. The causeless anger is in danger of judgment, Matt. v. 22. A choleric disposition is no excuse; for as every man is either a fool or a physician, so every Christian is either a mad-man or a divine; a mad-man if he gives his passion the reins, a divine if he qualifies it. When a railing fellow reviled Pericles all day, and at night in the same time followed him home to his gate; he all this while not returning a word, now commanded one of his servants with a torch to light the brawler home to his house. Thus did an ethnic. Therefore if a brother offend upon ignorance, neglect it; if upon infirmity, forget it; if upon malice, forbear it: upon what terms soever, forgive it, as thou wouldst be forgiven of God.

Fourthly, oppression is a horrible breach of this fraternity. Let no man overreach or oppress his brother, 1 Thess. iv. 6. Even the Jew that might take usury of a heathen, might not take it of his brother. Thus our users' common distinction is taken away; for all Christians are brethren, and I think they deal not with infidels: unless they help

themselves thus, that they may take usury of Christians because themselves are none.

Lastly, a proud designation and contempt of their brethren. "Thou sittest and speakest against thy brother; thou slanderest thine own mother's son," Psal. l. 20. So the church complains, "My mother's children were angry with me," Cant. i. 6. Wilt thou despise him that is Christ's brother? Is he vile in their eyes whom the Lord Jesus bought so dear? We all grow up together "unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ," Eph. iv. 13. The poorest soul of this brotherhood must concur to make up the perfection of Christ. Comfort thyself, thou faithful spirit; they blush at thy acquaintance, scorn thy company, but the Lord thinks himself not perfect without thee.

Thus privatively, now positively. This brotherly kindness is showed in reprehending those we love. Thou shalt rebuke thy brother, and not suffer sin upon him; thou shalt not hate him in thine heart, Lev. xix. 17. So that not to rebuke him, is to hate him. He is not angry with his brother, that is angry with the sin of his brother. (August.) Hate not *vicium* but *vitium*. The best brotherly love is to the soul: love to his body is but the body of love; the soul of love is the love of his soul. Why did David so mourn for Absalom, wishing to have died for him, but in love to his soul? Now much of this love stands in a mild reproof: so let us live brothers on earth, that we may for ever live together brothers in heaven; and be so kind as to help forward one another's salvation. There are many other offices of this brotherly love, but they are no strangers to you; it is enough to have named them. Such as helping their poor estates; for the love of God is not in him, that hath, and refuseth to give to him that hath not, 1 John iii. 17. All are for the brotherhood, but few for their brother's good. Praying for them: this is the very first words of the Lord's prayer teacheth us; "Our Father;" not *my* Father, but *our*: we desire others should fare as well as ourselves. Some only pray for themselves and their families; as the Athenians offered sacrifice for none but themselves and their neighbours of Chios. But we have all one Father; and therefore he that speaks must plead the cause of the rest of his brethren. I pray not for these alone, saith Christ, but for all them, &c. John xvii. 20. Pray we for others, others for us, as Christ doth pray for us all.

I come to the last point, that is, the application; let this philadelphia dwell ever among us. There be divers brotherhoods.

The papists have their fraternities, yea, their paternities, their maternities, and their sisterhoods. Jesuits will not be called *fratres*, but *pateres*, holy fathers. But in the mean time they neglect their own fathers, they must not know them, nor call them so. They say to him that enters their order, What hast thou to do with thy father? thou hast no father but the pope. What hast thou to do with thy mother? thou hast no mother but the church of Rome. What to do with thy brethren? thou hast no brethren but these of the same order; or haply the friars, &c. What hast thou to do with thy sisters? these now are only the nuns. Here is a brotherhood.

The schismatics have a brotherhood, and they hold themselves the only pure brethren in Christ; but they have ill luck in it, for nobody else holds them so. It seems they dwell by neighbours that have little cause to love them, who are thus fain to commend themselves. They are so brotherly kind, that they turn charity quite out of doors. They will feed at your tables, though they will not brother with

you: and they have Scripture for it, that Elijah refused not the meat brought by an unclean raven. But if all rich men (for those burrs stick to no others) were of my mind, such pure, proud, factious, and scornful brethren should go seek their dinners. Albeit they take us for ravens, I am sure they are no Elijahs. You shall never come to taste their dishes; and they have Scripture for it, not to communicate, not to drink with them that are not their brethren; they mean, at home, and at their own cost. He that cannot rail against church government is not a guest for their tables. Every morsel they eat, they wish it were a bishopric. Here is a brotherhood, but it is a bad one, a mad one. These are black brethren, that love to soot and grime the face of their mother. They are so linked to the fraternity, that let another man fall into their hands, there is no mercy to be expected. Forfeitures fall to them by providence; and it is the man's unworthiness for which they undo him. Impudent wretches, that dare father their wickedness upon God's allowance! But they that thus despise the brotherhood of Christians, shall be found no brothers to Christ.

Libertines and profane persons have a brotherhood too; but commonly it is an ale-house brotherhood, and their kindred comes in by the pot. And this is no wonder, for briars and thorns embrace and twine more together than good plants. St. Peter says, Love brotherly fellowship; but these two, brotherhood and fellowship, have ill luck, they are continually seeking one another, but they seldom meet. For most men are either brothers and not companions, or companions and not brothers. Schismatics are all for the brotherhood, and nothing for society: libertines are all for society, and nothing for brotherhood. Neither of these do well asunder, happily well both together.

I might touch upon divers other brotherhoods; brothers of the Rosy Cross, brothers of the Reconciliation, brothers of the Elixir, chiming, cheating, rather cozens than brothers, more foolish than popish, and more knavish than either. But let them be buried in oblivion, whose very names make a stink.

If all these have their brotherhoods, let not us Christians be behind them. We have all one Father; "Call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven," Matt. xxiii. 9. All one mother; "Jerusalem above is the mother of us all," Gal. iv. 26. All one elder Brother; who is "the first-born among many brethren," Rom. viii. 29. For our Father's sake, for our mother's sake, for our Brother's sake, for our own sake, let us hold together as brethren. I cannot say with Paul, "Touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another," 1 Thess. iv. 9. There is too much need, there was never more. St. John mentions a whole church, called Philadelphia, brotherly love. Rev. iii. 7. St. Augustine thought it a fit name for all Christendom; for how far soever believers are dispersed, they are all brethren. All are brethren, but we that live together in one country are twins. It is therefore a most fit name for England; and the Lord make England Philadelphiam, that every one of us may love one another, and Jesus Christ may love us all.

"To brotherly kindness charity." We are now got to the roof of this spiritual house, charity. This is the highest round of the ladder: there be eight steps, this is the uppermost, as nearest to heaven. It hath a further extent than philadelphia; that is only to brethren in the same faith, this is to all, even to our enemies, Matt. v. 44. All men love their friends, but Christians love their enemies. (Tertullian.)

Beatus qui amat te, et amicum in te, et inimicum propter te. (August.) It is greater than faith and hope. 1 Cor. xiii. Faith shall bring in vision, vision shall thrust out faith : hope shall lead in possession, possession shall cast forth hope. "Above all things put on charity," Col. iii. 14. Here are three particulars : the action, "put on;" the affection, the robe of "charity;" the pre-eminence, "above all." We find a pre-eminence, if we read, above all : a necessity, if we read, to these all. Put it on, as either clothes for covering, or armour for defending. It is a good armour against Satan's temptations to sin, or accusations for sin. Of all men, seldom is any great sin fastened on the charitable : how should he speed ill, that hath so many prayers? It is a good covering; Job professes that he had warmed the poor with the fleece of his sheep, Job xxxi. 20. That charity which keeps the poor receiver's body warm, keeps the giver's soul warmer; whether it consists in bearing and forbearing, in case of wrong; or in beneficence and giving, in case of need. Put it on : wisdom and treasures hidden are unprofitable, Eccles. xx. 30 : this must not be hidden as a night-gown, or closet-robe, but worn. Yea, keep it on; it must not be a loose garment, soon on and soon off. Charity, some think, is a vesture that will be quickly worn out; therefore they seldom wear it, unless it be on high days, and then they give a little to a collection. But it should be rather like the Israelites' clothes in the desert, lasting forty years. If this grace be wanting, all the former are lost; brotherly love is not, godliness vanisheth, there is no place for patience, temperance is worthless, knowledge is obscured, all virtue pineth away. Oh that now your hearts, like those two disciples' going to Emmaus, had this doctrine of charity burning within you!

Here, for method's sake, consider we the motives to it, and the materials of it. The motives are deduced from the necessity, the dignity, the commodity, the danger of neglecting it. The necessity must be considered in respect of God, of ourselves.

The necessity of it in respect of God, appears by his charging us with it, both in the law and in the gospel, Lev. xix. 18; John xiii. 34. But how then does Christ call it a new commandment? It is answered, It is old in regard of the truth, new in regard of the use. Papists think it too new; they will be brotherly kind to their own tribe, love none but those that love them. They affect some new things, dethroning of princes, &c. but not this. Sectaries think it too old; they will none of charity : they love no old thing, but Adam's old sin of disobedience. Poor charity cannot find a bosom to rest in; it is too new for some, and too old for others. Paul bids us put it on; but some think it too costly a garment, and will not become them. The poet hath a fable, that an old man travelling with his little son, and having but one beast between them, the father did ride and the child went afoot : then the people exclaimed and said he was an unkind father, who being of able limbs would take his ease and put his tender son to trudge by him. Heron he set up his son, and went afoot himself : then they called him kind dotard, that would let a young boy ride, while his aged father travelled by him. Hearing this, he got up with his son, they did both ride : now the people railed on him for an unmerciful man to his beast : saying, they might ride by turns. Then they lighted both, and would neither ride; now the people began to laugh at them, that both would lead an empty beast, and go on foot themselves. Lastly, when he saw that nothing could please them, he went and drowned his beast; and lo, now he was derided most of all. This is charity's luck. The old man tells the young that

he ought to be charitable, because he is coming into the world, and hath his fortunes before him. The young man tells the old that he ought to be charitable, because he is going out of the world; that he may well spare his clothes that is going to bed. The father and son conclude, that if they should both be givers, this were the way to overload charity, to make others rich and themselves beggars. When neither of them gives, but leave charity empty, the world curses them for miserable wretches. Lastly, they consent to drown poor charity in the gulf of covetousness; and make open profession to the world, that they will not be troubled with such a virtue. Because thou canst not content all men, wilt thou refuse to please God?

The necessity of it follows, in respect of thyself. Things of greatest use should be of greatest estimation. Thou wouldest know if thou breathest Christian; the sign of it is thy charity. This is the pulse of faith; St. James's demonstration, Show me thy faith by thy works, Jam. ii. 18. This is the best testification of thy love to God, saith St. John. True religion must be considered both *quoad extra* and *quoad intra*; and so it is defined, Jam. i. 27, "Pure religion and undefiled before God is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." Here is a description of it, *quid in se, quale in alios*. In itself it is religion, a binding quality; and hath three proofs : by nature, it is pure; by quality, undefiled; by object, before God. Now *quoad extra*, for the effects : these are two; innocency in ourselves, charity towards others; relieving the widow and orphan. Religion is not only contemplative, but the greater part of it, like the mathematics, is in demonstration. There can be no assurance to thy soul, that thou art in God's favour, without charity. Indeed faith is the life of a Christian; but the breath whereby he is known to live, is charity : "Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing," 1 Cor. xiii. 3. But may there be a giving away of our goods to the poor, without charity? Yes; observe in those words five degrees : 1. It is a good man's part to lend, "He is merciful and lendeth," Psal. xxxvii. 26 : but here, "though I give;" whereas most men open their hands only to take : *give*, and give freely without expectation of repayment. 2. *My own*, not another's; for many will cut large shivers off another's loaf; but *my* goods : "Cast thy bread upon the waters," Eccl. xi. 1. 3. *All my goods* : not a little superfluity, not a competent portion, no, nor yet a great sum; but *all* : "Behold, we have forsaken *all*, and followed thee," Matt. xix. 2. 4. *Not to the rich, but to the poor*, such as have need, with a discreet election of objects for bounty : "Deal thy bread to the hungry," Isa. lviii. 7. 5. *To feed the poor, not to feast them* : not superfluously, but necessarily. Yet a man may do all this out of ostentation, curious ambition, or idle prodigality; and not from the internal habit of charity, which is a gracious love to Christ and his members; and this somewhat, this much, this all, is nothing at all with God. Thus necessary is charity, without which a man hath nothing in substance, or all things without comfort. A certain king of Northumberland, in that great controversy about Easter, some alleging for Peter, others for John, bethought himself that Peter was the porter of heaven-gate; therefore resolved to take that side, saying, He would make the porter his friend, that when he came thither he might be sure to get in. Whatsoever he dreamed of Peter, do thou by charity make Christ thy friend; he is the door of everlasting life; he must let thee in, or there is no entrance for thee. Yea, make him

thy friend, for he is the Lord of the kingdom. Thus also are the poor made thy friends, ready to receive thee into everlasting habitations, Luke xvi. 9.

The dignity follows. It is a royal office; yea, a divine practice. Mercy or charity is the sole work communicable to man with God. The Lord is content to acknowledge himself the charitable man's debtor: he hath lent to the Lord, and he will pay him again, Prov. xix. 17. But still this payment is not deserved of man, but conferred of God. It must needs be an excellent thing, that brings God to an acknowledgment. There is a usury in the world much applauded, more defended, most of all practised; the very shame of Christendom. It was a shame for a Galatian to be a circumcised Christian; it is more shame for a Christian to be a baptized Jew. It is a Jewish sin, send it back to the owners: we traffic many things, it were a blessed ship that could quite transport usury. I will tell you of a lawful usury, (not that the world runs mad upon, but rather runs from,) a practice that needs no patron to defend it, will reward and protect itself. Put forth thy goods for usury to God, not to thy brother: that usury shall bring thee a kingdom of peace; the other shall procure thee a place in torment. (Chrys.) Below perhaps thou contentest thyself with ten in the hundred, above thou shalt have a hundred for one. Now if it be true, that "the borrower is a servant to the lender," Prov. xxii. 7; then by lending to him, in charity to him, after a sort we have a hand upon God himself. And this is the dignity of charity, the great acceptance with God: so Christ honours it, "Come, ye blessed," &c. Matt. xxv. 34. Excellent grace, that is so gracious with Christ!

The commodity of it follows: it secureth all, it increaseth all, it blesseth all. It secureth all; like an ambassador, by lying lieger abroad, it makes all safe at home. It deriveth from the poor this prayer, God bless your store: it deriveth from God this blessing, "I will abundantly bless her provision," Psal. cxxxii. 15. It increaseth all; it makes friends, praying friends; as they beg of thee, so they beg of God for thee. For a benefactor is a petty creator: thou givest a penny, it is his patrimony. Their devotions are sent up to heaven for thy blessing; and, as the bishop told Monica, weeping for her seduced son, It cannot be that the son of those tears should ever perish: so be comforted in thy charity; it cannot be that they for whom are sent up so many prayers should ever perish: it leaves behind thee an everlasting memory; living thou art honoured, dead well reported; "He hath given to the poor; his righteousness endureth for ever," Psal. cxli. 9. Thus charity, says Chrysostom, is the most gainful art: it is a field sown, the crop is thine. "He which soweth bountifully, shall reap also bountifully," 2 Cor. ix. 6. How bountifully? Christ answers; a measure heaped, and shaken, and pressed together, yet running over. It blesseth all; a main act of piety in the law was sacrifice, a main act of piety in the gospel is charity. This is an evangelical sacrifice, with which God is pleased, Heb. xiii. 16. Now the poor are the altar whereon we must offer this sacrifice. Charity sanctifies all; give, and all shall be clean to you; you shall have new bags, which wax not old; new garments, which shall never be worn out; new gold, which cannot be rusted, Luke xii. 33. God is loth thou shouldst lose thy wealth, therefore bids thee trust him with it; it shall not be further from thee, but surer to thee. The Omnipotent shall keep it for thee that art impotent: no thief can break into heaven, to steal it from thee: it is out of the reach of the most merciless oppressor. Thou sayest, I trust in Christ to be saved; now dardest thou

trust him with that precious jewel, thy soul, and not with thy base worldly trash?

Lastly, the nature of neglecting charity, is the curse: Go, ye cursed, you did not relieve me, Matt. xxv. 41—43. If thou being rich wilt not give to the poor, he that is the most rich will give nothing to thee. "Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, shall cry himself and not be heard," Prov. xxi. 13. "Shouldst thou not have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, as I had pity on thee?" Matt. xviii. 33. There is judgment merciless to the unmerciful, Jam. ii. 13. If any man think the omission of this duty to be too severely judged, Chrysostom answers, that as it is a kind of homicide to take away from the poor, and he that doth it is a man of blood; so not to give to the poor is little less: for two ways is a lamp put forth, either by blowing it out, or by not pouring oil into it. He that can save, and will not, kills; so that the very want of charity is murder. This danger will be found great: they are not arraigned for want of justice, nor for want of wisdom, nor for want of temperance; but for want of charity, Matt. xxv. Now when a scholar is to be opposed for his degree, and but one question to be asked him, if he knew it before, he would perfectly study that. We know that one question will then be asked us, it is concerning our charity; let us study that thoroughly, that we may answer it well before the judgment-seat of Jesus Christ.

I come from the motives to the materials, wherein this external and practical part of charity consists. They are these; who, what, to whom, whereof, and how.

Who must give charitably: it seems this charge belongs only to the rich; "Charge them that are rich in this world," &c. 1 Tim. vi. 17. There is none simply rich, but God. Crassus thought himself not rich, till all Rome was poor to him: yea, unless he could maintain an army of forty thousand men, out of the very revenues and surplusage of his estate. None is properly rich, but in regard of the poor. Some think they are called the riches of iniquity, that is, of inequality: some have more, some less: let them that have most, give most; let them that have little, give of that little. A rich Pharisee may give abundantly, but the poor widow must cast in her two mites. "A man may be one that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God," Luke xii. 21: whereas others may be "rich in good works," 1 Tim. vi. 18. "If there be a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, not according to that he hath not," 2 Cor. viii. 12. Therefore the labouring man is not privileged from this duty; "Let him labour with his hands, that he may have to give to him that needeth," Eph. iv. 28. Though he may plead, that wife and children are bills of expenses; yet, "He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none," Luke iii. 11; not one out of a whole wardrobe, but one of two. "If thou have but a little, be not afraid to give according to that little," Tob. iv. 8. Thy family shall not want, but be kept warm with the blessing.

What must be given: not words, but deeds; a charitable heart hath a helpful hand. The good man's charity should dwell, as it is said of the Dutchman's wit, at his finger-ends. They for exquisite works: we for merciful works. To good deeds only stands open the gates of heaven.

To whom extends our charity: this munificent part of it to the poor. We favour and feast those who are recommended to us by their own greatness; who feast those that are recommended by Christ? When thou makest a feast, call the poor, lame, blind; and thou shalt be blessed, for they cannot recompense

thee: but God will, at the resurrection of the just, Luke xiv. 13, 14. To do good to them that do good to us, Luke vi. 33, such kindness a man may take up in the streets of Turkey. But how if they be vagrants and lewd persons? Yet be charitable to them, for these reasons: 1. It is better one unworthy creature should receive, than ten worthy should miss. The gracelessness of some beggars is too true, but many make this a general excuse to spare their purses. Thy own conscience in this is thy best guide. 2. Thy reward is not lost, though thy gift be fallen like good seed upon bad ground. Thy harvest is not in the man, but in Christ; not on earth, but in heaven. As our Saviour said, "Into whatsoever house ye enter, say, Peace be to this house. And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall turn to you again," Luke x. 6. So if the poor man be good, thy alms shall do him good; if not, thy charity shall turn to thee again. Howsoever the man be evil, yet the Lord is good. The unworthiness of the receiver takes not away the reward of the giver. "When they were sick, I humbled my soul with fasting; and my prayer returned into mine own bosom," Psal. xxxv. 13. I prayed for them, I was heard for myself. If thy charity do them no good, it shall do thee good. 3. Duty binds us to give obedience to evil princes, in conscience of God's ordinance. And as an evil subject serves God for his prince's sake, so a good subject serves his prince for God's sake. Thus obedience is given, if not to the person, yet to the office. So because God commends and commands charity, we must give, though to evil men. We give to the man, not to the manners. He is a man, his Maker will requite me: he is a Christian, I know where to fetch my reward.

Whereof must we give: not evil-gotten things, but our own. You talk of what you have given, not what you have taken away: God requires gifts, not spoils. (Ambrose.) As the Jews bought a burying-place for strangers with the blood of Christ, so many build hospitals for children with their fathers' bones. Thus one laughs that receives, but another weeps that loses: and perhaps his imprecations that is impoverished, will come sooner to God's ears, than his appreciations that is relieved. I would not have one poor man's just curse, for many poor men's good prayers. The cries of the poor against their oppressors, enter "into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth," Jam. v. 4. This cry comes from the more sensible soul; not always from the spirit of bitterness, but from the bitterness of spirit. When the oppressor hath built his alms-house, and hopes by his perfunctory devotions to be admitted to heaven, the curses of the undone wretches knock him down to hell.

Lastly, how we must give: and this may be considered in five circumstances.

1. Cheerfully. "As thou hast gotten, give with a cheerful eye," Eccles. xxxv. 10. A good countenance refresheth the poor man's mind, as well as the alms doth his body. Those liquors of oil or wine that pour out themselves, and drop of their own accord and maturity from their native places, are better than they that are pressed, and squeezed out by violence. Give without pressing: the Lord loves a cheerful giver. The good is doubled by cheerfulness. (Chrysost.)

2. Discreetly, not with confusion. Give so to-day that thou mayst give to-morrow. (Sen.) Confine not thy charity to the twelve days. The charitable man keeps Christmas all the year; gives so at once, that he may give still; as we sow the furrow, not by the bushel, but by the handful.

3. With a right intendment: not for thy glory, but for God's glory. (Chrysost.) The pharisaical giver, gives to himself, not to God: he aims at his own praise; what reward can he look for? Let him pay himself.

4. Opportunely: for *quantum moræ addis, tantum dono detrahis*. (Sen.) The more delay in giving, the less honour in the gift. It is an unclaritable charity, when men will give nothing to the poor, but what they cannot make use of themselves. The mouldiness gives their bread, the fly gives their meat, the moth gives their garments. Christ hath not their abundance, but their cast-off things. Though it be coarse, let it be wholesome. Know thy best things come from Christ.

5. Lastly, before thou give thy goods to the poor, give thyself to God. No man's works can please God, unless the person of the worker be first acceptable to him. (August.) So Cain offered to God his goods, not himself. Do not afford thy riches, and withhold thyself. Ananias kept back part of the portion; he had better have given nothing. He could never find in his heart to bestow his estate on the poor, that denies to consecrate himself to Christ. Some pretend that they have given themselves to God, but they will not part with any thing of their estates; but the devil confutes them, Job ii. 4. Thy riches are nothing to thyself: spare one, spare both. By charity, give part of thy wealth to the poor; by faith, give thy whole self to Christ.

Now shall I live to eat the labours of mine own hands, to see this sermon performed? I will not flatter you with the world's age, as man doth himself with his; but say it is old, exceeding old, white hairs are upon it. Why? Charity is cold. "Give them, O Lord: what wilt thou give? give them a miscarrying womb and dry breasts," Hos. ix. 14. We have dry breasts, there is no milk of charity in them; and a barren or miscarrying womb, not able to bring forth the comfortable issue of good works. Charity is a new commandment, and most men think it a new fashion. The Jesuits say we have translated charity out of our Bibles; but this is their old figure of lying; we find it frequently in our Bibles: I would to God neither we nor they had translated it out of our hearts. The Romists have a she-saint, called St. Charity: they beg for her, and get fair ditions and additions of patrimonies to her temple, or rather indeed to themselves. Let me beg for holy charity; no woman, but a divine and heavenly grace; and that not more for her self's sake, than for your own souls. We build great houses, but not for charity. Many build as Vacca did, a corner for himself; desolate places where they may hide, not live. (Sen.) Great men convey their charity out of the country in a caroech up to the city; and here contrive it into three or four inhospitable rooms. Perhaps they keep solemnly their own birth-days, like Herod; but at Christ's birthday they are gotten aside. They honour their own memories, whose lives are not worth a smile; but not his, without whom they had better never been born. *Rapit aula, rapit alea*: yea, with some the chimney of charity is made a movable, and carried in their pockets. Charity is dead, yet let us mourn for her, though it were as Rachel did for her children, not to be comforted because she is not. And albeit she never return, let us give her a farewell: Farewell, sweet charity. Though we never see thee again on earth, we shall one day meet thee in heaven, and find thee in the bosom of Jesus Christ.

VERSE 8.

For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our apostle hath led us from virtue to virtue, as one directs a traveller from town to town, till he comes to the desired city; they go on from strength to strength, till every one of them appeareth before God in Zion, Psal. lxxxiv. 7. He hath showed us a golden chain, the first link whereof is faith, and the last is charity. Now we say that we have them all: have you? then know that if they be in you, and abound, they shall keep you from unfruitfulness in your profession. To prove *sanctificationem cordis*, bring *testimonium operis*; let your outward life witness your inward grace.

Metinks I find in this verse three mystical members of a Christian: his heart, his hand, and his head. 1. "If these things be in you, and abound;" there is his heart. 2. "They make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful;" there is his hand. 3. "In the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ;" there is his head. His head conceives Christ, his heart contains Christ, his hand brings forth Christ. 1. His head, like Mary, conceives the knowledge of devotion; being illuminated by the Holy Ghost. 2. His heart travails in birth of it, growing in grace, and growing in spirit, till he be delivered. 3. His hand, that is, his life, like a midwife, helps him to bring forth that blessed issue. His head is enlightened, his heart is enlarged, his hand is enlivened.

"If these things be in you, and abound." I will not martyr the text, but begin as the apostle begins, with the heart. Wherein I conceive four particulars: the seed, the ground, the sowing, and the growing. 1. The seed, "these things." 2. The ground, "in you." 3. The sowing, which makes them to "be" in you. 4. The growing, so in you that they "abound" and thrive. First, for the seed, and herein observe two things.

First, we make choice of our seed, and allow it good, or else expect no good harvest. He that sows cockle, looks not for wheat: of tares cast into the ground, we think it impossible to find barley. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap," Gal. vi. 7. Who can wonder to see him reap a curse, that hath sown a curse? Thus it often cometh to pass, that the matter of sin is read in the punishment, as the crop is a remonstrance of the seed. Doth Adam sow the seed of ambition, aspiring above a man? he is brought so low as to be beholden to the beasts for apparel; there is the crop. Cain would not offer Abel a resting-place on earth, therefore the earth shall allow him none. Rehoboam would make his finger heavier than his father's loins, therefore his loins shall be made lighter than his father's finger. Samuel hewing Agag in pieces, showed him the harvest of his own seed: "As thy sword hath made women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among women," 1 Sam. xv. 33. If Gehazi will take Naaman's iniquity, he shall take Naaman's leprosy, 2 Kings v. 27. The dogs licked up Ahab's blood, 1 Kings xxii. 38. Why? Ahab had so served Naboth. You have gone a whoring from your God, Hos. iv. 12; "therefore your daughters shall commit whoredom, and your spouses adultery," ver. 13. When they shall say, Wherefore doth the Lord these things unto us? they shall be answered, As in their own land they did worship strange gods, so they shall worship their own God in a strange land, Jer. v. 19.

Whosoever sows evil seeds, either in quality or quantity, shall reap evil fruits.

Therefore the seed must be "these things;" let us sow holiness of life, that we may reap the life of holiness. It is God's mercy that every sin is not Benoni, the death of the mother: that the seed of lust does not burn up the ground; that earthiness does not, like a grave, bury the soul; drunkenness, like a deluge, drown the spirits; and epicurism, like an infected air, choke the vital breath. It is a wonder that the very elements of God fight not against him, whose sins fight against the Maker of elements. Paul tells us, 1 Cor. xv. that we must all die, and all rise again; and compares us to seed sown in the spring that is reaped in the harvest. If therefore thou wouldst reap a glorious body, sow a gracious body, "these things."

Secondly, we must have "these," all these; not one or two, but all. It is not enough to have faith, and leave out virtue: not knowledge without temperance, nor piety without charity. If thy journey be eight miles, and thou give over at the second or third, thou wilt fall short of heaven. Many will be contented with some, but few will embrace all. Men deal with God, as for their tithes, so for their lives. Let him that is taught communicate to his teacher in all his goods, Gal. vi. 6. In all? nay, put out this "in all," and we will compound with you. You shall walk in all the ways of the Lord, Deut. v. 33. In all? nay, put out this same "all," and we will consent to you. There are few that say, "All that thou commandest us we will do," Josh. i. 16. Sell all thou hast, and give to the poor; this the world thinks most unreasonable. He that hath not all saving graces in some measure, hath none in any measure. The Romists are so slaved to their superiors, that they will do all they are commanded by them. As a desperate Roman said of Catiline, Whatsoever he bids me, I will do. But says another, How if he should bid thee fire the Capitol? he answers, Catiline will not bid it; but if he should, I will do it. So they must do all the pope chargeth them; but how if he bid them fire the senate, blow up the parliament? they secretly reply, He will not command it; but if he should, we will do it. They give not this obedience to God: he chargeth them not to touch his anointed ones; against this they have their exceptions. But against the pope's mandamus there is no question, no exception, and from it lies no appeal. How insatiable man's desires are of this world! give Alexander kingdom after kingdom, he will not rest till he have all. If a covetous man had all the houses of a city given him, he would rife for the goods in them; if he had all the gold and jewels, he would also require the garments; if he had the city, he would also challenge the suburbs; yea, all could not satisfy him. But how little grace contents us! one or two, as Josh smote the earth but thrice, 2 Kings xiii. 18. We take insatiably of earth, very moderately of heaven; as if we were afraid to have too much grace, and that it would but trouble us.

"In you." We see the quality of the seed, now let us consider the nature of the ground. Man's heart is the ground for God's seed: holy seed requires holy ground. This seed is cast in by the ear; for unless God first come in by the ear, he will not be in the mouth, nor in the heart. (August.) But if it stay in the ear, and go no further, it will not sanctify, Matt. xiii. The ear is like a pipe, made to convey water, not to contain it. The heart is that home where it should dwell; as Mary laid up Christ's sayings in her heart. But as an incestuous heart is the basest of things, so a faithful heart is the noblest. Every heart is not fit ground for this seed: therefore

(seeing I am fallen upon the metaphor) be pleased to consider how this ground is prepared; and, to speak in the phrase of husbandry, it must be fallowed, stirred, and laid up, before it be sowed.

It must be fallowed. The word preached is the plough to break it up. It is broken up by the law, sowed by the gospel: break it up by Moses, sow it by Jesus. There is by nature grown over every heart a thick and hard crust; the menace of judgments must break this rough and tough mould. To this purpose, there is an information by doctrine, and a reformation by discipline. There are some tender-hearted; as David was snibbed with a word, Peter with a look. Some are quickly corrected; soft-hearted children, that weep at the least chiding. Others are harder; like nettles, if you touch them gently, they will sting you; therefore if the golden sceptre cannot win them, the iron sceptre must break them. But as we plough upon the fallows, so we must cautiously take heed of ploughing where the harrow hath gone before: so saith the prophet, "Break up the fallow ground," the unbroken heart; but spare the already broken spirit. "In you," in yourselves. Some can plough furrows on others' backs so do persecutors on the church; "The ploughers ploughed upon my back: they made long their furrows," Psal. cxxix. 3. The slanderers harrow men's good names; they sit and speak against their brethren, and slander their own mothers' sons," Psal. i. 20. Usurers harrow the estates of the poor; yea, harrow and grind their very faces. Arrant and arrogant hypocrites harrow and furrow their neighbours' simplicity: but the Pharisee is no fit husbandman to plough up the publican. But plough thyself, find some corner of thy heart to break up still. Satan is foundered, and cannot walk, upon rugged ground. The fallowed or broken heart he cannot abide; but God respects it: "A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise," Psal. li. 17.

It must be stirred. Our backwardness requires continual provocations. To be good is a thing hardly gotten, quickly forgotten. The art of bringing men's hearts to God, hath many passages, takes many courses, tries many experiments: as indeed there are many sorts of servants. A landlord had summoned his tenants to do him some service; yet being done, and they all present, the steward demands, which of them came for love, and which for money. They that came gratis, for love, were feasted in the parlour; they that came for reward had coarser fare in the hall. One amongst the rest would choose neither of these places, but walks by himself. The steward asked him his motive of coming, whether for love or money, that his place might be assigned accordingly. He replied, I come for neither love nor money, but for plain fear, and therefore I choose a place by myself. Thus some approach to God for reward, as Saul loved him for his kingdom. Some for love, as Mary that brought Christ a precious unction because she loved him. Others for fear; Ahab was humbled under fear of the vengeance. Now all our endeavour is to plant in men's hearts the love of God; that they might say with Peter, "Lord, thou knowest that I love thee." But this is effected, sometimes by promise of reward, that they may be led by profit: "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land," Isa. i. 19. There is "glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good," Rom. ii. 10. Sometimes by threatenings, that they may be won by fear: "Tribulation and anguish upon every soul that doeth evil," Rom. ii. 9. "Our God is a consuming fire," Heb. xii. 29. Now though perfect love cast out servile fear, as St. John speaketh, yet filial fear brings in perfect love; "There is mercy with

thee, O Lord, that thou mayest be feared." It hath been said of base fear, that it is an argument of a base and cowardly spirit. But of this fear it is true, that it is the argument of a regenerate and gracious spirit. He never loved God, that fears him not. With some of these the heart must be continually stirred.

It must be laid up; that is the husbandman's next course. Now the heart is laid up by faith; when a man believes, he is then fitted to receive any seed of goodness. As the enuch said, I believe, what hinders me to be baptized? Acts viii. 36. So, I believe, what hinders me to be loved, what hinders me to be blessed, what hinders me to be saved? Nothing; be it to thee according to thy faith. Humility, patience, charity, are now sown with fortunate success; faith hath laid up the heart. My heart is ready, says David: speak, Lord, for my ear is open; sow, Lord, for my heart is ready. If adversity come, sow my heart with patience; if thou take back the goods which thou once gavest me, sow it with contentedness; if prosperity come, sow it with thankfulness; if sin, sow it with penitence; against Satan's temptings, sow it with piety; against all malicious courses, sow it with charity. As wax to receive the impression of a seal, so the heart is softened and tempered to receive the image of God. Blessed is the ground which the Lord hath enclosed for his own garden.

"Be in you:" this is the sowing; God must first prepare the ground, and then sow his seed in it. It is he that unlocks the heart to entertain these graces. There are six keys whereby things are opened or shut, that God hath intrusted into the hands of no other, angel or seraphim. The key of rain; the Lord opens the heaven to give rain to the land in his season, Deut. xxviii. 12. The key of food; "Thou openest thine hand, they are filled with good," Psal. civ. 28. The key of the womb; "He maketh the barren woman to be a joyful mother of children," Psal. cxlii. 9. The key of the grave; "I have the keys of hell and of death," Rev. i. 18. The key of the mouth; "O Lord, open thou my lips," Psal. li. 15. The key of the heart; the Lord opened the heart of Lydia, Acts xvi. 14. In all these he openeth, and no man shutteth; he shutteth, and no man openeth, Rev. iii. 7. Now when he hath thus opened and prepared the heart, he sows in it this spiritual seed. Graces, like good herbs, will not grow of themselves: vices, like weeds, need no sowing. Man is no more born with virtues in his soul than with apparel on his back. It is not generation, but regeneration, that sows this seed. The seed is good, the sower is God, Gal. v. 22. Indeed there be ministerial deputies; so Paul plants, and Apollos waters, but still God gives the increase. This takes away from our best works all possibility of merit. A meritorious work must be our own, and beyond our duty. First, it must be our own: but "every good gift is from the Father of lights," Jam. i. 17. Secondly, it must be beyond our duty and debt: but, alas, having done our best, we are unprofitable servants. Heaven is indeed often called a reward; not factive, but passive; of covenant, not of merit: God gives it us, not because we have earned it, but because he hath promised it. Woe to us if we had no more comfort than we deserve! The last received as the first, every man a penny, Matt. xx.: not because they wrought harder that came in later; as Paul, that came in after the rest, yet abounded in labours above them all; but to show that God respects not the how much, but from how much; the love, more than the work; and that the reward is not of merit, but of mercy: for if it were of merit, he should have begun at the first; if it be of mercy, he

may begin where he will. Thus he gives all grace to us, that we may give all glory to him.

"In you;" not about you, not on you, but in you. Not behind you; as libertines that cast God's laws behind their backs, Psal. l. 17. They run so fast to the Samaria of riot, that they leave Jerusalem behind them. As Christ said to Peter, "Get thee behind me;" so these to godness, Keep behind me, I love not to see thy face. Not before you; as worldlings that send religion before them to threescore, but never overtake it. It keeps before them indeed but the length of Gracious-street; and they, like Solomon's fool, never come nearer it than the stocks. Moses saw Canaan before him, and desired it; these see it, and desire it not; they like the world better. Not about you; as profane persons in holy places live in the midst of virtues without virtue. That proverb is too often justified, Nearer to church, further from God. It seems to be taken from the Jews, who having the greatest light, had the darkest life; the nearer they were to the sanctuary, the further from sanctity. Such a man may say, *Inopem me copia fecit*: like foolish Indians, that have store of gold, and truck it away for rattles. An empty vessel bunged up close, though you throw it into the midst of the sea, will receive no water. The monastery is a place of devotion; the monk is in the monastery; yet perhaps the monastery itself, as soon as devotion, may enter into the monk. A man may be in a holy place, yet if holiness be not in his heart, it is not where it should be. Ishmael was an unbeliever in the house of faith, the family of Abraham. Not on you; as hypocrites, that have a show of sanctity on them, but no substance of sanctity in them; outwardly lambs, there is innocence on them; inwardly wolves, there is no innocence in them. Hypocrites cover their spotted hides with the lion's skin of Judah, sanctimony; so they beguile their brethren. They are always proudest that have the least cause. The utmost ambition of John the Baptist, was but to untie Christ's shoe; of that other John, the beloved disciple, but to lean on his breast; but Judas the traitor will dip with him in the dish, yea, kiss his sacred lips. But there was never holiness without humbleness. Dyers can set on their colours the fairest glosses with logwood, but they will not hold; when a shower comes the gloss is gone. The gloss of profession without sincerity will off in a storm; we must be dyed in grain to hold, and have these graces in us. The parts of ostentation are like loose corn, which the fowls peck up. As Jerome said of the Scripture, so I may say of godliness: It is not read in superficial leaves and letters, but in the marrow and substance of the heart. A hypocrite's profession is in folio, but his sincerity is so abridged that it is contained in decimo-sexto, nothing in the world to speak of.

But in you. What indeed hath a Christian to enjoy, but that which is in him? He may use the world, and that is without him; but he enjoys the Lord, and he is within him, 1 John iv. 16. Hast thou Christ? then he is within thee; "Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates," 2 Cor. xiii. 5. Hast thou the Spirit? He is within thee: "Know ye not that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" 1 Cor. iii. 16. Hast thou peace or joy? Rom. xiv. 17: they are within thee; little without. Have ye the kingdom of heaven? Christ says, it is within you. The heaven that is on earth is within us, though the heaven that is in heaven be too great to enter into us. Therefore it is said, "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord;" for it is too immense to enter into thee. Yet so much as thou art capable of shall be within thee. Many presume there is much god-

ness within them, but through their own blindness they are deceived. One writes of a widow, that being thick-sighted sent for a physician to cure her: he promised her good sight; she him, good money. He comes and applies medicines, binding them over her eyes; and still as he departs, he carries away with him some of her best goods. Thus he continues her pain, till he had robbed her house of all her substance. At last the cure being done, he demands his covenanted pay; but she looking about her house, replied that he had not cured her; for whereas before she could see some goods of her own, now she could see none: before she was thick-sighted, now poor-blind. It is so with us; while we were dim-sighted, we imagined many goods of grace in us; but now being truly enlightened, we confess ourselves poor; and hence fall on our knees to the Father of mercies, to supply us with his saving graces.

"And abound." This is the growing. After the ground is prepared, and the seed injected by the Spirit of grace, fructifying is expected; they must increase, multiply, and abound. Where two things are necessarily implied:

First, these things must be in us, before they can abound. "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them," saith Christ, John xiv. 21: we must first have them, before we can keep them. Therefore auditors in hearing sermons should bring intention. It is ordinary with many to commend the lecture to others' ears, but few commend it to their own hearts. It is morally true, what the Christian Tell-truth relates: A servant coming from church, praiseth the sermon to his master. He asks him what was the text. Nay, quoth the servant, it was begun before I came in. What then was his conclusion? He answered, I came out before it was done. But what said he in the midst? Indeed I was asleep in the midst. Many crowd to get into the church, but make no room for the sermon to get into them. Open thy heart as well as thine ear; if this seed be not sown there, it will never abound with fruits to everlasting life. You come not to a banquet to look on, but to eat: hither God calls, but then, "Eat, O friends," Cant. v. 1: they are sullen guests that depart away hungry. Ezekiel was bidden to eat the roll, chap. iii. 1. You may taste of the heavenly gift, Heb. vi. 4. and feel no sweetness; but eat it down, and it will be pleasant. Worldly things we seek to swallow down; therefore Christ calls the riches of the Pharisees, *τὰ ἐσθια*, things within them. "He hath swallowed down riches," Job xx. 15. But instead of nourishment they have taken a vomit. The adulterer lays lust next to his heart; the covetous lays usury, the malicious hatred, next his heart: "Their inward part is very wickedness," Psal. v. 9. But for spiritual things some out-house serves; as Christ himself could be allowed no room in the inn, the stable is held sufficient. But do you afford better things better places, let them be in you. Not only in your books; (and yet if these things were in the worldling's books, he would burn his study;) nor only in your heads, for some have much science, little conscience. Not in your mouths only, for many have an ill course of life, with a good discourse of language. But in your hearts, a holy closet fit for such heavenly jewels. Be sure first you have them, then next that you have increased them.

Secondly, it is not enough to have them, but to have them in abundance. The heart is but a little piece of ground, yet hath room enough in it for many seeds. God calls for this increase, 2 Cor. ix. 8: Rom. xv. 13; Eph. iv. 15. True virtue is not temporal, but is still ambitious of improving itself. (Bern.) The spouse of Christ must have many jewels, Cant. i. 10.

A jewel at the ear, attention to the word; a jewel at the foot, humility; a jewel on the forehead, modesty; a jewel on the hand, charity; a jewel on the head, constancy; a jewel on the heart, fidelity. He that hath a good number of these jewels, shall be admitted into the number of God's jewels: "They shall be mine in that day when I make up my jewels," Mal. iii. 17. Take the whole armour of God, Eph. vi. 11; one piece will not secure us: we know not which way the blow will come. If we have only the breast-plate, the blow may light on the head; if only the helmet of salvation, it may light on the breast; therefore take the shield of faith, that covers and defends all. Mars was called *Gradivus*: every Christian soldier should be *gradivus*; go to heaven by degrees.

For our bodies, no care can add to their stature, Matt. vi. 27. But we may add to our spiritual stature; growing up "unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ," Eph. iv. 13; for God's family admits no dwarfs. The rich man grows easily richer, the good man easily better. Rivers at the first head may be covered with a bushel, which after a few miles fill large channels. A drop of true grace works itself to "rivers of living water," John vii. 38. So is it said of our Saviour, "the third day I shall be perfected," Luke xiii. 32; perfection itself grows to perfection; and shall not we that are imperfect strive toward it? "In my Father's house are many mansions," John xiv. 2: not in the wilderness, not in Horeb, not on the mount, where Peter would build tabernacles, nor in any part of this life; but in heaven: therefore still labour to grow and abound, till you come thither. If a man cast a stone into the water, circle begets circle; so one true grace will beget many. We reckon of a physician that hath abundance of medicines, a lawyer that hath abundance of tricks, a usurer that hath abundance of monies, a merchant that hath abundance of wares: we affect abundance in all perishable things; oh then let us abundantly love grace, that Christ may abundantly love us.

"They make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful." I come from the Christian's heart to his hand; wherein we perceive the efficacy of grace. "Shall make you." Not persuade, nor entreat, nor move, nor allure, but make you fruitful, by a lively and strenuous operation. If patience be in you, it will make you overcome injuries; if temperance, it will make you abhor riot; if faith, it will make you believe above sense; if charity, it will make you beneficial to the poor. Evil men may show the good they have not, but good men cannot hide the good they have. It is like fire within us, it will make us speak, Psal. xxxix. 3; so powerful, that it can neither be suppressed nor expressed. This seed shall bear its fruit: one blessing is the father of another; therefore christen every blessing Joseph, upon Rachel's faith and argument, "The Lord shall add to me another son," Gen. xxx. 24.

Here is a kind of certainty in this constitution: as sin will make a man fruitful in naughtiness, so piety in holiness. As there is a relation betwixt this life and the next, by an unchangeable ordinance of God: mischief in this world, misery in the world to come; no repentance here, no salvation there; a devil on earth, no saint in heaven. But holiness in the seed shall have happiness in the harvest: if the course be gracious, the end shall be glorious. "Whatever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord," Eph. vi. 8. So there is a relation in this life betwixt the disposition and the actions. If the heart be full of lust, the tongue will be a trumpet of impudence, the eyes windows of

temptation, the gestures so many remonstrances of ready prostitution; all the wheels being like apt engineers, employed on the will's business. If avarice sit in the heart, like an epicure to feast on gold, oppression shall be the purveyor to provide it, brokage the caterer to fetch it in, usury the cook to dress it, and destruction the stomach to digest it. What evil seed is within, will appear without. And so if grace have *existentiam*, a being, it will have *apparentiam*, a manifestation. Hath David hope? he will wait for a kingdom in the extremity of persecution. Hath Abraham faith? he will not deny to God his only son. Hath Job patience? he will brook all crosses with an unmoved quietness. Hath Daniel temperance? he will not be enticed with the king's dainties. Hath Joseph chastity? he will never come near his mistress's chamber. Hath Paul fortitude? he dares fight with beasts at Ephesus. Hath Stephen a faithful resolution? he will be content to die for Christ, and be rained to death with a shower of stones. Needs must that virtue be fruitful that is stirring, and needs must that be stirring that is living, and needs must that be living that is quickened by Jesus Christ.

"Neither barren nor unfruitful." Here is a double effect; expressed negatively, but implying an affirmative or positive consequent; pregnancy and fertility. For if those privatives, barrenness and unfruitfulness, be taken away, there will necessarily follow a position of those contrary habits. It may be they both signify one thing, I am sure they intend both one sense. Yet I will take leave to resolve them into a double metaphor; pregnancy to the womb, fertility to the ground.

Not "barren." The barren womb hath ever been held a curse and a reproach. So John's mother insinuates: "The Lord hath looked on me, to take away my reproach among men," Luke i. 25. When Rachel bore Joseph, she said, "God hath taken away my reproach," Gen. xxx. 23. Whether carnal barrenness be a curse or not, I am sure spiritual is no less. "Give them, O Lord: what wilt thou give? give them a misearrying womb and dry breasts," Hos. ix. 14. When God gives salvation, he is said to take away barrenness: "Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear," Isa. liv. 1. Now only God can open both the wombs; of Rachel's flesh, and of Lydia's heart, Gen. xxx. 22; Acts xvi. 14. If the Lord propagate Abraham's carnal seed, much more his spiritual; "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God," John i. 13. It is often observable in the Scripture, that the children of women long barren proved most famous and excellent. Of Sarah, Isaac, from whose loins such multitudes were deduced. Of Rachel, Joseph, that wonder of men and angels. Of Hannah, Samuel, that great prophet and priest of the Lord. Of Elisabeth, John the Baptist; of whom the Lord himself testifies, "Among them that are born of women, there hath not risen a greater," Matt. xi. 11. So those saints that have been begotten of spiritual barrenness, and converted from a sinful life wherein they were habituated, have proved most notable instruments of God's glory. As Mary Magdalene, that was dispossessed of seven devils, was so honoured as to preach the first sermon of Christ's resurrection, and to have her memory propagated with the glorious gospel, Matt. xxvi. 13. Zaccheus, a publican, an extorting publican, a rich extortioner; yet how gracious was he to Christ! yea, how gracious was Christ to him! Luke xix. Paul, "born out of due time," 1 Cor. xv. 8, yet outstripped the rest, and was in labours more abundant than they all, ver. 10. Thus last have been best, as the last grapes make the sweetest wine. When God opens the barren womb, he brings forth the excellent-

est children to Christ. "Many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first," Matt. xix. 30. The last of all prove not the least of all, yea, often the best of all.

Now to take away barrenness from the spiritual womb there is required this proceeding; by preparation, by conception, by pregnancy, and by birth.

First, the womb must be prepared; for barrenness is upon all souls by nature. Therefore let us desire of God, as Rachel begged of Leah, "Give me, I pray thee, of thy son's mandrakes," Gen. xxx. 14. Little Reuben had gathered sweet flowers in the field; Rachel hath a mind to them: Epiphanius thinks, to help her barrenness. Plerius observes out of Avicen, that the seed of it doth purge *locum conceptionis*. Some have taken those mandrakes for lilies, and some for violets; but certainly they were amiable flowers, such as they wont to strew on the bridal beds. Beseech we the Lord to strew the beds of our hearts with such mandrakes. "The mandrakes give a smell," Cant. vii. 13: those holy seeds of grace will take away our barrenness, and prepare our souls for a holy conception. Yea, Christ must intercede for us, as Isaac entreated for Rebekah, "because she was barren;" and the Lord will be entreated of him, Gen. xxv. 21.

In the second place follows conception; and this is by illumination and sanctified knowledge. Ignorant papists gloriously boast their famous progeny of good works; but can a woman bring forth before she hath conceived? Such a progeny were a prodigy. Therefore first, "Teach me thy way, O Lord," and then "I will walk in thy truth," Psal. lxxxvi. 11. And first, "Make me to understand the way of thy precepts: so shall I talk of thy wondrous works," Psal. cxix. 27. If they were examined as Philip questioned the eunuch, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" Acts viii. 30, their negative answer would declare their soul not to be with child of grace. Thou mayst have a swelling, as the Pharisee, ("I am not as other men," &c. Luke xviii. 11,) imagine thyself pregnant, provide thee a midwife, that is, ostentation, to deliver thee; and gossips, flatterers, to witness for thee: but all is but a tympany; when death, that infallible midwife, comes, thou art delivered of nothing but wind, vain-glory. Christ calls himself the way, the truth, and the life. He that by understanding conceives not the way, cannot in heart bear the truth, shall not in success bring forth everlasting life. You shall have a pharisaical benefactor call together his gossips with a trumpet in the synagogue, Matt. vi. 2, as if he would ring them to church with a saints' bell: to behold what? his delivery: of what? of alms. Alms? very well; let us have some more such travails: nay, all is but some windy exhalation. Perhaps he hath got in some desperate forfeiture, and now he will glaze a church window with it; and that is all. *Spectetum admitti risum tenetis?*

Thirdly, after conception appears pregnancy; grace is born in the heart by faith and is sensibly felt. If therefore thou hast conceived it, thou shalt feel it move in thy soul; as John spring in the womb of his mother at the salutation of Mary, Luke i. 41. The pregnant woman hath many qualms; the soul in this plight feels many pangs: and is in Rebekah's case, when the twin brothers "struggled together within her," Gen. xxv. 22. If Esau had been there alone, there had been no contention; but when she hath also conceived a Jacob, that is spirit, Esau the flesh will oppose it. Nature can agree with itself, but not with grace. "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other," Gal. v. 17. No

soul bears grace without sorrow and compunction of heart for her sins. "A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow," John xvi. 21. Man's first and second birth begins in crying. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God," John iii. 3. Except a man be once born, he never can see the light on earth; except he be twice born, he never can see the light of heaven. There is pain in each birth, but here is the difference; after the sorrow of the first birth, comes more sorrow; after the sorrow of the second, comes eternal joy. "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again, till Christ be formed in you," Gal. iv. 19. Thy spiritual father hath pain in begetting, thy spiritual mother in bearing, and dost thou, the child born, expect indolency and immunity from sorrow? Yea, all plead conception. I ask you for your pangs: when stood your eyes full of tears, your hearts panting with groans, your prayers beating at heaven gates with importunities? Mothers have fears before their delivery, sorrows in their delivery, languishments after their delivery. Mary Magdalene's soul had no sooner conceived grace but she wept, and washed Christ's feet with her tears.

Lastly comes the production, or bringing forth, which is done by active obedience. Conception is *gratia infusa*, pregnancy is *gratia diffusa*, bringing forth is *gratia effusa*. Dost thou presume in thy soul the conception and pregnancy of grace, and yet leadest a profane, covetous, or dissolute life? Thou sayest no, I have thy word to the contrary; but thy life says yea, I have not thy word to the contrary: whether thou say no or yea, God and thy own heart know the contrary. Shall we say with the prophet, It is brought to the birth, and there is no power to bring forth? No, though it be often so with the body, it is never so with the soul: if the heart have conceived, it will bring forth. The penitent malefactor on the cross no sooner had his barrenness taken away, but presently he brought forth fruit: he condemneth himself, reproveth the other, justifieth Christ, glorifieth God. Store of good children are not naturally born on the sudden: but "shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth, saith the Lord?" Isa. lxvi. 9. Saving grace hath more validity than nature: he that gives strength to conceive, denies not strength to bring forth: that soul shall "be a joyful mother of many children," Psal. cxlii. 9. Yea, God can give *partum sine dolore*, birth without pain: "Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child," Isa. lxvi. 7. We read of Cornelius's good works; we read not of his tears, Acts x. Indeed this is a great wonder: "Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children," Isa. lxvi. 8. Nor ear hath heard, nor eye hath seen the like: yet God is the worker of such miracles; that a soul which hath long been barren, shall in one day be set a teeming, and produce gracious fruit to Christ.

But where now be our births? Leah in her old age growth barren, and ceaseth to bring forth children to her Husband Christ. Our Saviour delighteth himself with his Rachel, the church triumphant in heaven, now almost complete. Leah, the church militant, ceaseth to bear, and will so continue: except she give her son's mandrakes for her Husband's company, Gen. xxx. 15; forsake her worldly pleasures wherewith she is surfeited. I confess these are breeding days: and as we say, that the means of begetting hath more increased mankind, than the end; so there be spiritual births enough, but they are bastards, our sons are our sins. As one writes of

the popish clergy, who refuse a lawful wife, to abuse an unlawful harlot : God in his just anger took away their children; the devil in his wickedness hath given them bastards. So also are we barren souls to produce lawful children, good works; plentiful to produce unlawful fruits, wicked sins. Legitimate works are few, illegitimate many. The Romans had their legacies and inheritances given to their bastards; so we dedicate and bequeath all our desires, and delights, and means, to our iniquities. "Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death," James i. 15. "Lust, when it hath conceived," there is the conception of sin; "bringeth forth sin," there is the birth of it. "Sin, when it is finished," there is the growth of it; "bringeth forth death," there is the end of it. It hath a father, a mother, a midwife, a nurse. The devil, by suggesting, begets sin as the father; lust, by imagining, conceives sin as the mother; consent, by agreeing, brings it forth as the midwife; custom, by indulgence, brings it up as the nurse. Here is now no barrenness. The devil was never more busy to beget sin; concupiscence never more pregnant to conceive it; consent never more ready to act it; custom never more strong to continue it. Such a brood you have, Psal. vii. 14: there is longing, conception, birth. Such another, Job xv. 35. "They conceive mischief, bring forth vanity, and their belly prepareth deceit." Here is a quick despatch; they are no sooner delivered, but their belly prepares decay; it to again incontinently. These are monstrous births; it is pity that they are not abortive, and never suffered to see the light. Such a mother may curse the fruit of her own womb.

You see we are not barren: but better no light than that which burns us; better no children than bastards. Let us never give life to that which gives death to us. Leah said of Reuben, "This son shall comfort me:" we may say of our iniquity, This sin will afflict me. Many souls are pregnant, but they bring not forth a son of grace, but a daughter of the flesh: it is a daughter, not a son. The Jews have often been deluded in expectation of their Messias: among the rest, I have heard this story reported for one. A Christian was exceedingly in love with a Jew's daughter; who also so over-affected him, that though she might not marry him, yet suffered herself to be begot with child by him. This being perceived, according to their law she must be put to death for it. Her betrothed lover desiring to save her, dressed himself like a shining angel, and taking the benefit of the moon, called to them in a shrill voice to spare her; affirming that she was with child of the Messias. This was easily credited, her fault acquitted, her life spared. Now when the time of her delivery approached, the expectant Jews swarmed thither in multitudes. Delivered she was, but to their mockery and shame, not of a son, but of a daughter. At nine months' end, that virgin Jewess was brought to bed of a Florentine daughter. After such a manner many tympanous spirits in the world do travail; but when the child is born, it is not a son of the Spirit, but a daughter of concupiscence. *Parturiunt montes, excurret ridículus mus.*

If this be the progeny, barrenness is rather blessedness: God make us all barren of sins, but fruitful of graces, pregnant of salvation; that we may conceive, bear, and bring forth Christ. Indeed he had but one carnal mother, but many spiritual. He that doth my Father's will, is my mother, Matt. xii. 50. Indeed this is a conception which the world never conceived; but it is true from the mouth of Truth itself. Dost thou believe and obey? then art Christ's mother. When a woman said, "Blessed is the womb

that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked;" he answered, Yea, thou sayest true, she is blessed indeed, and all generations shall call her blessed; but I will tell thee who are rather blessed; "They that hear the word of God, and keep it," Luke xi. 27, 28. Mary herself was more blessed in receiving the faith of Christ, than in conceiving the flesh of Christ. (August.) Otherwise he might have been her son, and not her Saviour.

Not "unfruitful." Fruitfulness is that inseparable effect, which God expects from every tree planted in his garden. Is Zion his ground? it must be fruitful, Isa. v. Is the man of Judah his plant? he must be fruitful? Is the church his vineyard? he goes thither to gather fruits. The effect of sanctified knowledge, is fruits, Phil. i. 11. Art thou the spouse of Christ? thou art fruitful. We are married to Christ, "that we should bring forth fruit unto God," Rom. vii. 4. Hast thou the Spirit? it appears in the fruits: "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace," &c. Gal. v. 22. Hath a man known Christ? it is seen in the fruits: "For every tree is known by his own fruit," Luke vi. 44. Good works are compared to fruits for two special resemblances; odour, and taste.

For odour; God is pleased with the smell of our graces. "See, the smell of my son is as the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed," Gen. xxvii. 27. "The mandrakes give a smell," Cant. vii. 13. Not that our good works smell fragrantly of themselves, but in the merits of Christ. The virgin souls espoused to Christ, get their Husband's flowers; his perfumes make them sweet, Cant. i. 3. "All thy garments smell of myrrh, aloes, and cassia, Psal. xlv. 8. Thy garments: our clothes hide but a rotten carcass, perhaps a rotten conscience; Christ's garments are truly sweet. Thy garments: our best righteousness is loathsome rags, Isa. lxiv. 6. All thine; thy justice, thy mercy, thy grace, thy satisfaction, thy obedience: all; there is not a hem of thy vesture but, if it be touched with the hand of faith, is healing and saving. They smell of myrrh aloes, and cassia. They are comfortable; in the midst of my sorrows "thy comforts delight my soul," Psal. xciv. 19. Purgative; they cleanse our consciences, Heb. ix. 14. Sanative; by his stripes we are healed, 1 Pet. ii. 24. In his merits our mandrakes give a pleasant smell. Now that this sweet odour may be in our works, we must be sure to take out the scent of Adam, the ill savour of our native corruption. Our prayers are as incense, and the lifting up of our hands as an evening sacrifice, Psal. cxli. 2. Yet praise is not seemly in the mouth of a sinner. It is like Samson's honey out of the mouth of a dead beast. If you walk contrary to me, "I will not smell the savour of your sweet odours," Lev. xvi. 31. But if it be sanctified, it is "an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice well-pleasing to God," Phil. iv. 18. If charity toward some be separated from equity toward others, that sacrifice of alms is mingled with blood; as Pilate served those whose blood he mingled with the blood of their sacrifices, Luke xiii. 1. The form of a work is the life of it; and God may say, as the poet did to the harsh repeater of his verses, *Quem recitas meus est, &c.* The good matter is mine, the corrupt matter is thine.

For taste; some fruits have a sweet smell, but a bitter relish. The actions of the Pharisees smelt well, but when they came to be tasted, they were rue and wormwood. The gospel calls for relishable fruits; not such as impiety produceth. "What fruit had ye then in those things whereof you are now ashamed?" Rom. vi. 21, but fruit unto holiness, the end whereof is everlasting life, ver. 22. It is not enough to avoid barrenness, but to manifest fruitful

ness. To "eschew evil," that is the first lesson of Christianity; but not all, to "do good" is the perfection. 1 Pet. iii. 11. "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." 2 Tim. ii. 19: that is one step, but not high enough; we must also do the will of our Father. The forbearance of sin doth but bring Christ unto our doors; it is fruitfulness in good that settles him in our hearts.

"In the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." It is saving knowledge that takes away barrenness, and makes us fruitful in the works of obedience. "Who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof?" 1 Cor. ix. 7. We expect this of the earth that hath only nature; and shall not God expect it of us, who have sense to govern nature, reason to govern sense, grace to govern reason, Jesus Christ to govern all? The knowledge of our blessed Saviour is sweet and public: now after this confessed sweetness, how bitter would that question be, if I should dispute whether this knowledge be truly in us or not! We say we know him: but "hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments," 1 John ii. 3. And now the question grows bitter and bitter, from wormwood to gall. Let us appeal from men's lips to their lives: he that obeys him not, knows him not; if the princes of this world had known, "they would not have crucified the Lord of glory," 1 Cor. ii. 8. If we know him, we will not again crucify our blessed Saviour, and take upon us their office whom we so condemn: Judas's to betray him, Pilate's to condemn him, the soldiers' to crucify him. If he that despised Moses's law died without mercy, what punishment is he worthy of that treads under foot the Son of God? Heb. x. 28, 29. Profane Christians are worse than the Jews: they threw Christ down, but did not tread upon him; these tread under feet that sacred blood. When the Jew wounded him, out came blood and water; when the Christian shall wound him, out will come blood and fire. Paul calls Christ "that Rock;" when Moses smote the rock, out came water; if we strike it, out will come bloody water; not to purge us, but to judge us, at that day when we shall see Him whom we have pierced. We attain that now by the spirit of the gospel, which we could not by the letter of the law. The apostle calls that a "killing letter;" so it was *mortua*, dead, and *mortifera*, deadly; for sin was by the law, and death by sin. But if faith do not give us Christ, we are still under the law; and if our obedience do not testify our faith, the law was not more deadly than is the gospel to us; for it enlargeth our condemnation. Christ calls himself that "Stone," Matt. xxi. 44: we may be built on it, we may be spilt by it, according to our usage of it.

Circumstances of a sin give aggravation to it. The action is varied according to the person. We expect better things of well-promising professors than of impudent and prostituted libertines. Shall an officer that reforms the tap-house be himself found in a brothel-house? Were it not strange that the witch should tell the juggler he hath a bad conscience? or that the hypocrite should rail at the player? or the usurer challenge the thief? or the lay parson with his sacrilegious impropriation blame the poor vicar for looking narrowly to his poor remnants? It is all one, as if he that hath taken away my house should find fault with me for putting on my cloak. The dissolute shall speed better than the hypocrite, and lukewarmness is more offensive to God's stomach than frost-coldness. The thistle in the forest shall not fare so ill as the barren fig tree in the vineyard. Therefore, "though Israel play the harlot, yet let not Judah offend," Hos. iv. 15. The

offering brought with unhallowed hands, is worse than none at all. Nothing more useful than light and salt. Yet for the light, if it "be darkness, how great is that darkness!" Matt. vi. 23. And for salt, if it have lost the "savour, wherewith shall it be salted?" Matt. v. 13. Though men be never so profound in knowledge, if they be profane in conversation, their salt is lost. Salt keeps other things from putrefaction, but if it be putrified itself, what should season it? A sweet singer delights us all; but if a serpent hath stung him, who shall recover his voice? If the eye be out, what shall look to the eye? The manna kept, and not spent, rotted: good gifts smothered will come to nothing. Samson lost his strength in Delilah's lap: the strength of grace is lost in idleness. If Jerusalem forget her first love, presently her right hand forgets her cunning, Psal. cxxxvii. 5. There are three things observable in the infatuated salt. 1. The difficulty to be recovered, "Wherewith shall it be salted?" 2. The unprofitableness, "It is good for nothing." 3. The contempt and scorn, "It is cast out and trodden under foot of men." Neither is the unprofitable minister only this unsavoury salt, though Christ directed that speech to his apostles; if they be dark lanterns, if any fault be in those lights, the whole parish is full of snufflers; but also even every professor of godliness, that hath denied the power thereof, 2 Tim. iii. 5.

Such a one, like lost salt, is good for nothing. For that is good for nothing, that is not good for the end and purpose why it was made. If a knife be not good to cut, we say it is good for nothing; yet it may be put to some other use. If a plough be not good to break the ground, we say it is good for nothing; yet it may stop a gap. If a hound be not good to hunt, we say he is good for nothing; yet he may in the night give warning of a thief. But if a professor be not good for honesty, he is indeed good for nothing. *Corruptio optimi pessima*: the body of a dead man is more offensive than the carcass of a beast. Putrified flowers stink worse than weeds. A surfeit of bread (though it be the staff of life) is the most dangerous surfeit. "Son of man, what is the vine? shall wood be taken thereof to do any work? or will men take a pin of it, to hang any vessel thereon?" Ezek. xv. 2, 3. The vine fruitless, is of all trees most useless. Though it be compared to divers noble and worthy things: the tribe of Judah is called a vine, Isa. v. The good woman a vine; "Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine," Psal. cxxviii. 3. The best man a vine, John xv. 1. Though it be the vine that cheereth the heart of God and man, Judg. ix. 13; yet if this vine be fruitless, it is good for nothing, not so much as to make a pin to hang a hat on. Oaks and cedars are good for building, poplars for pales, very bushes for hedging, dottard wood for firing; but the fruitless vine is good for nothing.

It is observable that the refuse of other things have their uses. Sour wine will make vinegar; old rags paper; lees are for dyers; soil and rubbish is good to fat the ground; potsherds and broken tiles to mend high-ways: yea, they offer to sell combing of hairs, ladies and gentlewomen know if they be good for any purpose. But the fruitless vine, the savourless salt, the lightless lamp, the graceless Christian, is good for nothing. Let all yield to him, if he be fruitful; let him yield to all, if he be barren. The daughter of Zion would never have been so notorious a harlot had she not been first so rare a virgin. Julian had been less damned had he never been a Christian.

Consider the fearfulness of their judgment, John xv. 2, 6, where you find seven degrees of their fall:

1. They bear no fruit, this is their first step to hell. 2. Bearing no fruit, they are cut away from the vine: incision is blessed, but abscission most wretched. "Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?" Luke xiii. 7. To be excommunicated from Jesus Christ, is most accursed. 3. Being cut from the vine, they are cast out of the vineyard: the prayers of the church are not heard for them, nor are they suffered to suck on the breasts of her consolation, Isa. lxvi. 11. 4. Being cast out of the vineyard, they wither: needs must that branch wither, that receives no life of sap from Him that gives the sap of life unto all. 5. Being withered, they are bound into faggots, like the tares into bundles, Matt. xiii. 30. Not all knit into one, but many several faggots. An adulterer with his adulteress make one faggot. A drunkard with his pot-companion, another faggot. A seminary with a traitor, another faggot. The extortioner and his broker, another faggot. The whore-master and his pander, another faggot. All shall not be punished in the same degree, albeit in the same torment. 6. Being thus faggotted and coupled together, they are cast into the fire, the most terrible of all tortures. 7. Lastly, being cast into the fire, they burn and fry in those quenchless flames, "where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched," Mark ix. 48; in comparison whereof, our earthly fire is no more than if it were but painted. They are ever frying, never dying; in universal and eternal anguish. Universal upon every part of body and soul. For the body, they are bound hand and foot, and crowded into a prison of outer darkness, Matt. xxiii. 13: like bricks in a fiery furnace, not able to wrinch; having not so much as a chink where any cool wind may enter in to refresh them. Their seeing affrighted with ugly devils and darkness; their hearing, with hideous outcries; their smelling, with the odious stench of the filthy bodies under torture; their taste, with a raging thirst (begging one drop of ungranted water, Luke xvi. 24) and a ravening hunger, biting their tongues for anguish; their feeling afflicted with insufferable torments, in "a lake of fire burning with brimstone," Rev. xix. 20. And now if the pain of the body be but as it were the body of pain, the soul of torment is the torment of the soul. The fancy distracted with horrid imaginations, like a melancholy man's frightful dreams: being horribly astonished with strange apparitions; sad visions appearing to them with heavy countenances, Wisd. xvii. 3, 4. The will is vexed, that it must have the will in nothing. The memory with a fixed recollection of past things; what it once enjoyed, what it now suffereth, and what it must suffer for ever. It can think of nothing to administer comfort; that it was once happy more afflicts it. Now as the reprobates commit two evils, Jer. ii. 13, forsaking the fountain of living waters, and fall to the broken cisterns of their own digging; as there is in sin an aversion from the Creator, and a conversion to the creature; so there is in punishment: for aversion, the punishment of loss, a privation of all blessed comforts; for conversion to the creature, a punishment of sense, a position of all possible plagues. This is manifest by the rejection, "Depart from me," Matt. xxv. 41; from me your Redeemer, from me that made myself man for your sakes, from me that received such wounds for your remedy, from me that invited you with pardon, but you would none. Therefore depart from me, from my friendship, from my protection, from my presence, from my paradise, from my kingdom, from my sight; and from all those that go with me, choirs of glorious angels, communion of blessed saints: this is the privation. "Into everlasting fire," there is the position: a fearful place! God grant we may

never know more of it than by hearsay. I have been content to urge the danger of unfruitfulness, that you may prevent it. As Nineveh overthrew the message of her overthrow by her repentance, her sins were destroyed and herself stood; so may our provision of those torments in thought be the prevention of them in sense. God, in his mercy, threatens before he punishes, that he may not punish as he threatens. What David said of his enemies, "Let them go down quick into hell," Psal. lv. 15; we may in another sense wish to ourselves, our best friends. Descend we every day into hell by meditation, that at the last day we may not descend thither by condemnation. Let us often go to hell while we live, that we may not come thither when we are dead. Recollect we ourselves, and become fruitful trees; that when God transplants us from this nursery, he may set us in his own glorious garden. The fruits of the earth spring, bud, grow green, grow ripe, and then wither; but the fruits of the Spirit shall never decay. If they have filled God's vineyard on earth, they shall flourish in his Eden of heaven for ever.

"In the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

The object of our knowledge here is our blessed Saviour, comfortably described to us in four attributes: 1. Our. 2. Lord. 3. Jesus. 4. Christ. As he is Lord he can, as he is Jesus he will, as he is Christ he doth, as he is Our he should, save us. Lord; consider his mightiness. Jesus; consider his sweetness. Christ; consider his willingness. Our; consider his goodness, that gives us interest in himself, and vouchsafes us to challenge his mercy. Lord, in regard of his dominion; "The Lord reigneth; let the people tremble: he sitteth between the cherubims; let the earth be moved," Psal. xcix. 1. Jesus, in regard of his salvation; "He that is our God is the God of our salvation," Psal. lxxviii. 20; who came into the world to save sinners. Christ, in regard of the promise. God did promise him, and the Jews expected him, under the name of Christ: "Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ?" John vii. 26. "This is the Christ," ver. 41. Our, in regard of his appropriating himself unto us, not taking on him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham, Heb. ii. 16. He took our flesh, that we might take of his Spirit; and thus gave us an interest in himself. Our Advocate; "We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous," 1 John ii. 1. Our Lord, our Jesus, our Christ. Again, *Jesus in facto, noster in pacto*. Lord, in his power; his works declare him to be the Lord; who doth what he will in heaven, in earth, in the sea, and in all deep places, Psal. cxxxv. 6. The same works that the Father doth, doth the Son also. Jesus, in being made; he that is the Lord the Creator, was made Jesus a creature: "Made of a woman," Gal. iv. 4. "The Word was made flesh," John i. 14. The Word, what more powerful? Flesh, what more feeble? Made, what more wonderful? Christ, in being sacrificed and crucified for us; broken for our transgressions: "Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you," 1 Cor. xi. 24. The Israelites did eat a lamb roasted; we, the Lamb of God crucified. He was broken for us: breaking is taken from an alteration of the good estate of the body. So it is said, age breaks a man. Moses was a hundred and twenty years old when he died, yet was not his natural force broken, Deut. xxxiv. 7: it was recorded as a matter of admiration. "I am feeble and sore broken," Psal. xxxviii. 8: sorrow breaks a man. Our Saviour, though he was young, and of a most excellent constitution, yet was thus broken. No form or comeliness in him; why? because he was "a man of sorrows," Isa. liii. But what is age, sickness, and sorrow, to the hand of God? The

Lord did break him: "Wilt thou break a leaf driven to and fro?" Job xiii. 25. "As a lion, so will he break all my bones," Isa. xxxviii. 13. "Make me to hear of joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice," Psal. ii. 8. Christ was broken in all parts of his flesh, his head with thorns, his back with scourges, his hands and feet with nails, his side with a spear; only (that the scripture might be fulfilled) not a bone of him was broken. Our, in respect of the covenant: I will be your God, and you shall be my people, Heb. viii. 10. Infinite mercy! the Lord's Christ is become our Jesus, Luke ii. 26.

The sum of the instruction is to teach us how to know our Saviour; as Lord, as Jesus, as Christ, as our Lord Jesus Christ. He is Lord, let us know his majesty; Jesus, let us know his mercy; Christ, know his office; ours, know our own interest in him.

Lord: in this title consider his power: know him *hominem verum*, but not *hominem merum*. He is of Israel concerning the flesh, but also "over all, God blessed for ever. Amen," Rom. ix. 5. Grace from the Lord Jesus, Col. i. 2; from him as God, as the fountain of grace. Grace and peace through the Lord Jesus, 2 Pet. i. 2; through him as Mediator, as the conduit-pipe to derive it to us. Lord: this title is given him to distinguish and declare his power; as in weighty proclamations kings set down their names with their titles. So, "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful, gracious," &c. Exod. xxxiv. 6. Whatsoever the Father did to us, Christ did also, to prove him Lord. Did the Father create us? so doth the Son; "By him were all things created," Col. i. 16; by him, that is there called the image of the invisible God, and first-born of every creature. Doth the Father uphold the world by his providence? so doth the Son; he upholdeth "all things by the word of his power," Heb. i. 3. Doth the Father regenerate us? so doth the Son, Col. ii. 13. Doth the Father raise the dead? so doth the Son; "As the Father quickeneth them, so the Son quickeneth whom he will," John v. 21. Therefore is the Son called "The everlasting Father," Isa. ix. 6. God is as almighty in his Son as he is in himself. This is a mystery; to search too far into it, is presumption; to believe it, is godliness; to know it, is everlasting blessedness.

Jesus: in this contemplate his mercy. He hath not his name for no cause: the angel gives the *for*: "Thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins," Matt. i. 21. Jesus is his name, and salvation is with him. He that truly knows this Jesus, knows him both God and man, one Person, our Saviour. The word Jesus hath but three terminations among the Latins; Jesus, Jesu, Jesum. Take the three last letters, and they make *sam*, I Am, the incommunicable name of God. Therefore as the apostles did in their Epistles, so let us in our hearts, evermore join Jesus with God the Father. 1. Because "he that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father," John v. 23; he that dishonours one Person of the Trinity, dishonours all. 2. Because all good from God to us is by Jesus; for otherwise we may have riches, and honours, and worldly possessions, but not have them as mercies. No man comfortably knoweth God but by Jesus; there is no safe venturing on that infinite justice, without mercy at the right hand of it.

Christ: in this meditate on his office, and the purpose of his coming, which was to redeem us. "For God sent not his Son to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved," John iii. 17. "I came not to judge the world, but to save the world," John xii. 47. For this end he was appointed and anointed: "The Lord hath anointed me, to heal the broken-hearted," &c. Luke

iv. 18. Now let not God's purpose be frustrated; God sent whom he promised, do thou entertain him, into a pure heart. When Martha told her sister Mary secretly, The Lord is come; she, as soon as she heard it, "arose quickly, and came unto him," John xi. 29. The Messiah, the Christ, the Redeemer is come, that blessed High Priest that offered up himself an expiatory sacrifice for us; now arise, let us go and meet him.

Our Lord Jesus Christ: in this observe his performance, and free donation of himself to us. He is not only the Lord, and the Jesus, and the Christ, but ours. Whatsoever he did or suffered, was for us: "The Messiah shall be cut off; but not for himself," Dan. ix. 26: not for devils, not for angels, not for himself; for whom then? for us men and for our salvation; the lost sheep, the sinners, the rebels. "Unto us a son is given," Isa. ix. 6. To us a Saviour is born, Luke ii. 11. This our is a possessive; in knowing him a Lord, there is fear; in knowing him a Jesus, there is comfort; in knowing him a Christ, there is hope; in knowing him ours, there is assurance.

Our: God loves these appropriations of mercy, if they be of the breed of faith. So he taught us to pray, Our Father; not by an epithet, holy Father, righteous Father, omnipotent Father; but by a pronoun, Our Father. Yea, he admits every particular hand of faith to take his own handful out of this sheaf, and to turn our into mine. Though he be the God of all, yet Paul says, "My God," Phil. iv. 19; "My God shall supply all your need." Though he be the Lord of all, yet saith Thomas, "My Lord," John xx. 28. Though he be the Saviour of all his people, yet saith Mary, "My Saviour," Luke i. 47; "My spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour." Though he be the Father of the spirits of all flesh, yet he chargeth a faithful soul, "Thou shalt call me, My Father," Jer. iii. 19. If God say unto thy soul, I am thy salvation; why mayest not thou say to him, Thou art my God? The Romists challenge us of over-boldness, and peremptory arrogance, to say, My God, as if we did engross Christ; but indeed they engross him, that confine him to Rome. But why? Because the frantic merchant stands on the quay, and cries, All the ships are mine; may not therefore a sober merchant stand there, and say, This ship is mine? Is there no Jesus to be had unless we fetch him from Rome? The Lord commands this voice of faith; "Israel shall cry unto me, My God," Hos. viii. 2. "Thou art my God, and I will praise thee," Psal. cxviii. 28. There is no presumption in the speaker where there is authority of the commander.

But now that we may assure him ours, let us assure ourselves his. *Marce, ut ameris, ama*. The best demonstration of our possession of him, is to find his possession of us. "My Beloved is mine, and I am his," Cant. ii. 16. Wouldst thou know the certainty of this marriage, and uniting of thy soul to Christ? When there is doubt made concerning a marriage, we search the register, and take out a certificate or testimony under the curate's hand; and that satisfies the court. So here go to the register, thy heart: there it is recorded, if it be at all, under the hand of the Holy Ghost; for, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God," Rom. viii. 16. Exhibit this in the court of thy conscience, and all the doubts are cleared. Are thy affections knit to Christ? art thou where thou lovest, rather than where thou livest? is the desire of thy soul with God? this is a blessed fruition. "A bundle of myrrh is my well-beloved unto me; he shall lie all night betwixt my breasts," Cant. i. 13; let him lodge in thy heart for ever. When thou art thus ravished

with him, he will be also ravished with thee; "Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister: thou hast ravished my heart," Cant. iv. 9.

The instruction is cleared to our faith, how we ought to know our Saviour; as Lord, as Jesus, as Christ, as ours. Now for our affections, let us make some use of it, and so conclude with application. For use, the true knowledge of Christ, according to these four terms, meets with four temptations. 1. Lord, meets with our pride. If thou be under a supreme Lord, why dost thou insult and domineer as if thou wert no servant? 2. Jesus, meets with our despair. Who can despair that knows he hath this Jesus for a Saviour? 3. Christ, meets with our disregard and neglect of his behests. If he be the Holy One of God, let us reverence him. 4. Our, meets with our covetousness and worldly affections. Let us not fly from that which is ours, and fly after that which is none of ours.

Lord. Art thou provoked to pride and presumption? humble thyself, there is a Lord above thee. When the apostles strove about matter of superiority, Christ rebuked them; "And the Lord said, Simon," &c. Luke xxii. 31. He is not there (as in other places) called Jesus, but the Lord. But why was his speech directed to Simon? Because he was most likely to be too confident, having most audacity, and being the chief speaker. The greatest gifts most endanger a man to pride. A father loves all his children well, but is most tender to the sickliest child: perhaps Peter was most sick of this disease; I am sure his usurping successors are incurable. Humble thy haughty mind, there is a Lord above thee; and such a Lord, as "resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble," 1 Pet. v. 5. Pharaoh cries, Who is the Lord? Who? even he that drowned Pharaoh in the Red sea. The slave durst not boast himself if he were sure that his lord heard him. When a great prelate durst write, I and my king; the king subscribed in act, I and my slave; and quickly took down the main-mast of his ambition. To question the titles of kings, hath ever been held treason: why then dare any presumptuous spirit oppose the word of this Lord? No; Say the word. O Lord, and my servant shall be healed, Matt. viii. 8.

Jesus. Art thou tempted to despair? Jesus is a name in which a faithful soul vanquisheth desperation. Despair is a sin that never knew Jesus. The drowning man would never sink, if he knew and felt an infallible stay in his hand. Desperation is like that beast that had no name given it, Dan. vii. 7. There were three specified, a lion, a bear, a leopard; but the fourth hath no denomination. To those four terrible beasts are likened four heinous sins; presumption to the lion, persecution to the bear, oppression to the leopard; and to the nameless fourth desperation. The lion; presumption hath been conquered, in Mary Magdalene. The bear; persecution subdued, in Paul. The leopard; oppression tamed, in Zaccheus. But desperation, without distinguishing the kind, is "dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; it had great iron teeth; it devoured and brake in pieces; and it had ten horns." It hath horns enough to push at God with blasphemy, at man with injury, at its own soul with distrust of mercy. Other sins are fearful enough, and have the rage of lions, and bears, and leopards, to make man's soul miserable. But the final ruin, never to be recovered while there stands a seat of justice in heaven, is desperation. Well, yet before any man fall into this gulf, let him look up and know Jesus; "Behold that Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world," John i. 29. Behold the Lamb of God, ye that are lions to your own

souls! hath his death put sense into rocks and stones, and can it not persuade you? Is the blood of Jesus shed for you, and will you in an impatient fury throw your own blood into the air with Julian, or spill it on the ground with Saul, or sacrifice it on a tree with Judas? Shall he open heaven, and ye shut it? he pull you out of the fire, and you run into it again? He drunk to you in a cup of passion, and you should pledge him in a cup of salvation; singing with that melodious prophet, "I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord," Psal. cxvi. 13. Will you then take a cup of death and despair, blaspheme his name, evacuate his merits, tread his blood under your feet, and die past hope? God forbid it; and the prayers of your lips, the tears of your eyes, the groans of your hearts, and the hope of your souls, heartily forbid it. No man can despair, that truly knows our good Lord Jesus.

Christ. Is not the great benefit of redemption yet thoroughly apprehended of thy soul? art thou tempted to distrust or disregard a work of such infinite price? Behold him; he is the Christ, the expectation of the Jews, the consolation of the Gentiles, the salvation of all; "A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel," Luke ii. 32. The creation by God's hand was a great work; but the redemption by Christ's death a greater work. In the creation he made man like himself; in the redemption he made himself like man. There he made us partakers of his good; here he makes himself partaker of our evil. (Granat.) There he only spake the word; here he did not only speak words, but suffered wounds: he wrought wonders, he endured thunders; what heaven, earth, and hell could inflict upon him. There man was made in the image of God; here God is made in the image of man. The creation was a work of his fingers; "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers," Psal. viii. 3. Redemption a work of his arm; "His holy arm hath gotten him the victory," Psal. xlviii. 1: yea, it was a work of his heart, even that bled to death to accomplish it. Now if it be true what the school speaks, If the saving of one soul be greater than the making of the whole world: (Aquin.) and the goodness of grace doth so far transcend the goodness of nature; then be thankful to God for his creation, but much more bless him for his Christ. If I owe my whole self for my creation, what have I left to pay for my Redeemer? (Bern.) I will serve thee, O Lord, because thou hast given me myself; but much more honour thee because thou hast given me thy Son Christ.

Our. Are we led aside with worldly affections, and a having covetousness? know, nothing is ours but Jesus Christ. "I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified," 1 Cor. ii. 2. This was that blessed apostle's resolution. Love him above all: affect nothing against him, nothing above him, nothing like him, nothing besides him, but what only for him. "Behold," saith Peter, "we have forsaken all, and followed thee," Matt. xix. 27. They lost nothing by it; When I sit on my throne, ye shall sit on thrones with me, ver. 28. If Christ be ours, all is ours: "All things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's," 1 Cor. iii. 21—23. In this heavenly conveyance there is, 1. The tenure, of great latitude, all things. 2. The tenants, of great happiness, ours. 3. The Heir, of great excellency, Christ. 4. The Landlord, of great majesty, God. It is said of the wicked, that they "forsake their own mercy," Jonah ii. 8. Their own, as proper to

them, more certain than the skin to their flesh, if they would have kept it; but, as Christ said to the Jews, "Ye would not." He that forsakes his own to snatch away another's, shall neither keep another's nor his own. See what you do, ye covetous; you leave your own Christ, for the world that is not yours; the substance for the shadow; and you shall lose both shadow and substance. Ours: this is the encouragement of faith and obedience: why do we so labour to be his, but because we are sure he is ours? Every man loves his own; let us never forsake our own Jesus.

You see now the use of this fourfold knowledge of our Saviour. Some men's pride lifts them up to presumption; let them acknowledge him a Lord. Some men's distrust casts them down to deperation; let them acknowledge him a Jesus. Some men's carelessness hurls them in security; let them acknowledge him a Christ. Some men's covetousness drives them to apostasy; let them acknowledge him ours. Consider him Lord, and be not proud: consider him Jesus, and be not desperate: consider him Christ, and be not dissolute: consider him ours, and be not runagates. Thou hast made thyself ours, make us all thine, O dear Saviour of the world.

Now for application, to bring all yet nearer home to our consciences. He is Lord, give him obedience. He is Jesus, and requires our hope. He is Christ, and requires our faith. He is ours, and requires our charity.

Lord: this challengeth our obedient service: "Hear ye him," Matt. xvii. 5. He is that great Prophet of the Lord, whom we are bound to "hear in all things," Acts iii. 22. Swear not; who commanded it? The Lord, Matt. v. 34. Be not angry unjustly: who forbade it? The Lord, ver. 22. Be merciful: who imposed it? The Lord, Luke vi. 36. Who obeys this Lord? Now this Lord forgive us: "If I be a Lord, where is my fear?" Mal. i. 6. He may ask indeed, where is it? and who can answer him with a demonstration? The lion roars, but who trembles? He that will not tremble at his words, Isa. lxxi. 2, shall feel his wounds. But if he be not our Lord to govern us, he will not be our Jesus to save us.

Jesus: this requires our hope; for in whom is our hope but in Jesus? When we are exercised with worldly troubles, with great molestation, we labour to extricate ourselves, and faintly say, we hope in Jesus; but concerning heaven, we all hope well enough for that. Yet when death comes with his offer to help us thither, where is our hope? alas, amazement hath mated it. We are like little children, that all the day complain, and yet when the medicine is brought them at night, they are not sick. Or like those that run all the week up and down the house, crying out of the pain of their teeth; and at last seeing the barber come to pull them out, presently feel no more torment. Or as tender bodies in a pricking pleurisy, call and cannot stay for a surgeon; and yet when they see him whetting his lancet to help them, pluck in their arms, and hide them in the bed. The true reason hereof is want of hope; but he that knows his Jesus, is comforted in hope. "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable," 1 Cor. xv. 19. For this life and for ever, repose we our hope in him.

Christ: this term exacteth our faith. Knowest thou Christ? Thou wilt trust him. "They that know thy name will put their trust in thee," Psal. ix. 10. Knowledge of Christ, and faith in Christ, are inseparable. "I know whom I have believed," 2 Tim. i. 12. My faith is not built upon ignorance, I know him well. Indeed though salvation belong to all men, yet all men do not belong to salvation.

None pertain to it, but such as take benefit by it; and none take benefit by it, (no more than they did by the brasn serpent,) but they that fix the eye of their faith upon it. He is Christ, the Lord's anointed, sent for that end, to save us: how great an injustice is this, not to trust our salvation on him, that was from all eternity appointed for that purpose!

Ours: therefore let us give him our love. The knowledge of a propriety challengeth an earnest affection. The good son loves his own parent; the brother loves the son of his mother; the chaste wife loves her own husband. Christ is our Father, our Brother, our Husband: ours, let us love him. "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee," Psal. lxxiii. 25. Let me lose all, so I may reserve thee. A philosopher could thus comfort himself when the tyrant threatened him: I will take away thy house: yet thou canst not take away my peace. I will break up thy school: yet I shall keep whole my peace. I will confiscate all thy goods: yet there is no premium against my peace. I will banish thee thy country: yet I shall carry my peace with me; for the wise man's home is wheresoever he is wise. So let the world take from us our riches, yet we have Christ: let it take from us our friends, yet we have Christ: let it take from us our liberty, yet we have Christ: let it take from us our wives and children, dear comforts, yet we have Christ: let it take from us our life, yet we have Christ; that is to us both in life and death an advantage. When David said to Mephibosheth, "Thou and Ziba divide the land;" he answered, "Yea, let him take all, forasmuch as my lord the king is come home in peace," 2 Sam. xix. 29, 30. Thus let the world take all, so we may enjoy Jesus Christ.

Conclusion. The sun and heart of the text concerns the fruitfulness of our knowledge of Jesus Christ. What nation ever had the knowledge of him more abundantly propagated? I may say to you as Christ said to his apostles, Blessed are your eyes, for they see; blessed are your ears, for they hear; but I cannot say, Blessed are your feet, for they walk; blessed are your hands, for they work; blessed are your hearts, for they embrace. Our eyes and ears do their office, all the fault is in our hearts: now the Lord open our hearts. We have knowledge, and it costs us nothing; bestow but the gathering of your manna, and it is yours. Aaron's bells give you music by day; as your city-waits by night: music in the streets, whereof they partake that pay nothing for it. A man needs not say to his brother, "Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest," Heb. viii. 11. Our knowledge is universal, or at least should be universal, for God hath not scantied the means. God hath poured out his Spirit upon all flesh: our sons and our daughters prophesy, our young men see visions, and our old men dream dreams, Acts ii. 17. They see visions, and tell you the visions they see. Your wise men desire not, like deep streams, to run silent to themselves; but in a sweet murmur sing you the songs of Zion. We have knowledge, and need not travel for it: you wander not from sea to sea, nor run from north to east, to seek the word of God, Amos viii. 12. To run to Rome for accomplishment of knowledge, is to go into an infected house to fetch out a rich suit, or to put the finger into a fiery crucible to take out the gold. What travel our younger gallants for? to hear news? Truly said he could better hear the news of Rome at Antium, than at Rome. Paris cannot tell more news of France, nor Madrid of Spain, than your Exchange in London of both. I am sure that England stands as near to heaven as Italy; and the good tidings of Zion is here safer, and sooner, and

sounder learned. It is then for knowledge: they that cross the seas to fill their brains with knowledge, travel northward for heat, and seek the candle that they carry in their hand.

The Cimmerians that live in perpetual darkness, though they deny a sun, are not condemned of impiety, but of ignorance. But Anaxagoras, that saw the sun, and denied it, is condemned not of ignorance, but of impiety. How great is our condemnation, if we know the light, and yet choose darkness! John iii. 19. Former times were like Leah, blear-eyed, but fruitful: ours like Rachel, fair, but barren. We give so general acclamation to the gospel, and the salvation by it, that we forget to observe the law. As upon some solemn festival, the bells in all steeples are rung, but then the clocks are tied up; there is a great untuned confusion and clangour, but no man knows how the time passeth away. So in this universal allowance of liberty by the gospel, (which indeed rejoiceth our hearts, had we the grace of sober usage,) the clocks that tell us how our time passeth, truth and conscience, which show the bounded use and decent form of things, are tied up and cannot be heard. Nay, there is rather a general acclamation to licentiousness, than true liberty: "All with one voice about the space of two hours cried out, Great is Diana of the Ephesians," Acts xix. 34. They cry so loud for their Diana's gain, that Paul the preacher cannot be heard; he must be put to silence. Moses and Joshua heard a noise; "It is not the voice of them that shout for mastery, neither is it the voice of them that cry for being overcome: but the noise of them that sing do I hear." You would think it the praising of God; no, it was the blessing of an idol. "The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land," Cant. ii. 12. Peace and prosperity are our flowers, and we sing like birds; but the voice of the turtle is not heard among us. All are merry, but who mourns for the abominations of Israel? All this while the Lord is angry, and would destroy us, as he once threatened Israel, had not Moses then, Psal. cvi. 23, did not Jesus now, stand in the breach for us.

Alas! where is our fruitfulness? We so confidently hope for our salvation by faith, that there is little honesty or true dealing amongst men. We have either left faith naked, as idolatry stripped the Israelites, Exod. xxxii. 25, or cut off half her garments, as Hanun served David's ambassadors, 2 Sam. x.; left her a rag of perfunctory service at church, but cut off obedience as superfluous. Or if we have left her any covering, it is such as John Baptist wore, a coat of camel's hair, some refuse and cheap outside; and a leathern girdle, a string of hypocrisy to hold it together: her food is locusts, mere speculation; and wild honey, only table talk. Some only care what they do, not what they believe; they are nature's moralists. Others care only what they believe, not what they do; and these are most frequent. We all plead ourselves by faith to be Christ's sheep; but where is our wool? In a good sheep we require not only flesh to feed on, but also wool to keep warm. In a Christian we require, not only faith for himself to live on, but also good works, a fleece of charity to warm others. You shall have a countryman profess conscience, but he dares not wish Job's wish, "If my land cry against me, or the furrows thereof complain: let thistles grow instead of wheat, and cockle instead of barley," Job xxxi. 38, 40. You shall have a courtier profess integrity; but if he should say with Job, "If I beheld the sun when it shined, or the moon walking in brightness, and my mouth hath kissed my hand;" this were to deny the God that is above, ver. 26—

28; sin enough to decourt him. You shall have a citizen profess charity, but dares he say with Job, If I have seen the poor without covering, and have not clothed him; if I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless; then let mine arm fall from my shoulder, and be broken from the channel-bone? ver. 19—22. If all should make such wishes, and have them granted, I fear the whole city would be an hospital. It is no great wonder to see a fruitful land turned into barrenness, but it is a miracle of mercy to see dry ground turned into water-springs, Psal. evii. 34, 35; to see our barren lives made fruitful of good works. He only that can turn stones into bread, can turn our stony hearts into that mercy to give bread. "Praise the Lord, mountains, and all hills; fruitful trees, and all cedars," Psal. cxlviii. I make no question but fruitful trees will praise him: but cedars and mountains? Yes, if stout cedars be bowed to obedience, and proud mountains to humility, they shall praise him. Yea, "dragons, and all deeps," ver. 7: the very dragons of our oppressions, being turned to mercies, shall praise him. The dragons and ostriches, the beasts of the field, shall honour me, Isa. xlii. 20. The deeps, even the deeps of our stratagems, being turned to simplicity and innocence, shall honour the Lord. Saul did not more speak against Christ, than Paul speaks for Christ. Thus we that were dry sticks by nature, fit for nothing but the fire, may be made fruitful trees by grace, to "keep his commandment without spot, unbreakable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ," 1 Tim. vi. 14. Which he work in us, "who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen," ver. 15, 16.

VERSE 9.

But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see after off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.

You have seen their honour and happiness, that beautify their faith with good works; that as by the one God justifies them, so by the other they may glorify God. Behold now their miserable estate, that boast of a naked and lean faith, "He that lacketh these things is blind," &c. *But*: the apostle disjoins them from fruitful professors, by a word of exception or separation, *but*. Whom doth he reject? The man that *lacks* these things. What if he wants one or two of those graces? They may come in time; but if he lack *these*, all these. In what state is he? *Blind*: his eyes be not like the eagle's, but the mole's. Is he stark blind? No, perhaps he may see *quæ ante pedes sunt*, things fast by him; but *not after off*: he wants the optics to see so far as heaven. How is he proved to be thus thick-sighted? Because he *hath forgotten*. Why, then, are they that are blind have commonly the best memories. This is true indeed concerning secular objects, the natural things of this world; but wilful spiritual ecceity is punished with oblivion. But there is a good forgetfulness, "forgetting those things which are behind," Phil. iii. 13. Nay, but this man hath forgotten his own *purgation*, how he hath been formerly cleansed: as the swine when she runs to the mud, forgets that she came out of the clear streams. Wherein consisted that purgation? He was washed from sin, the most sordid pollution and feculency. What, from all sin? No, but from

his old sins; for he commits new ones that bring him to the speedier damnation. Now as St. Augustine calls Psal. xli. the poor man's scripture, and 1 Tim. vi. the rich man's scripture, and Luke xviii. 11 the proud man's scripture, and the book of Job the afflicted man's scripture; so this text may be called the blind man's scripture: who is described by,

His penury. He lacketh these things.

His cecity. He is blind and cannot see afar off.

His apostasy. Hath forgotten, &c.

The sum is, whosoever shall trust his salvation upon a starved faith, and not order his life by the pre-mentioned rules, errs in darkness, and holds not that way which the light of the gospel hath directed him. He that hath the true knowledge of Christ will be fruitful, ver. 8. He that is unfruitful, vainly presumeth the knowledge of Christ, ver. 9. So from the connexion of both these verses, we find that true knowledge must precede sanctity of life. He that hath not these things is blind; and he that cannot see well, cannot walk well. Ye obey not; why? because ye know not, 1 John ii. 4. "Whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him," 1 John iii. 6. You sin; why? because you know not. Why are they "laden with sins, and led away with divers lusts?" Because they know not the truth, 2 Tim. iii. 6. Why are they strangers from the life of God? Because their understanding is darkened, Eph. iv. 18. The Romanists pretend, that they will help men to heaven by ignorance: and by ignorance they shut them out. They keep the keys, and neither enter in themselves, nor admit others, Matt. xxiii. 13. Every Christian in his baptism hath taken press-money of Christ, to be his soldier, and to serve him in the field of this world, against his and our enemies: now he will fight poorly without weapons; he must have the sword of the Spirit, and the shield of faith. And he must have these in his own hand; for he shall be smitten in his own person, therefore should resist in his own person. Now shall he be content to bear the blows, and let another wear the sword? But, say they, there are many hard things in God's word past common reach. True, and many easy enough within their reach: there is milk for weak stomachs, and strong meat for abler digestions: there are fords for lambs, and depths for elephants. In the most champaign places, some mysteries are as hillocks, higher than the rest: in the steepest hill there is some footing, whereby we may come to that height, to discover the land of Canaan.

But, say they, this takes away the glory of the church, when every man may control his teacher. Nay, rather let them know the truth, that they may avoid such as teach against the truth. Because some have been seduced, shall all be deprived? Then away with preaching, for it is the saviour of death unto many: away with the sacraments, for some eat Christ's flesh to choke them: away with Christ himself, for he is the fall of many in Israel, Luke ii. 34, and a stone to crush their bones to perdition. Then let the lamb cast off his fleece, because the lion hath worn it; because some quarrel in the army, therefore let no soldier have a sword. Then put out the candle, lest it burn the house. But, say they, put not knives into the hands of children: but the Scripture admits no such comparison; we rather put good swords into the hands of men. Discharge us of the Lord's service; or it is against the law of armies to take away our weapons. Indeed there is cause to commend the policy of their clergy, but not the honesty. For how should they have sold their bad wares, unless they had first put out the people's eyes? as thieves first put out the light, that they

may rattle the house more safely in the dark. Otherwise the merchandise of masses could not so easily have been vented abroad, but would have lain rotting upon their hands at home, if men were suffered to bring the light of truth into their pack-houses. But, say they, we have kept it from hogs and dogs. Yea, and from sheep and lambs too. Besides, all that have some uncleanness in their lives, are not to be reputed hogs and dogs: this is their mercy, but the mercy of God is more. They have a contrary spirit to Christ; for he often preached in the known hearing of dogs, the scribes and Pharisees, and would do so, rather than the children should want their bread. But, say they, some by searching the Scripture diligently, have erred shamefully. This is as good a reason, as if one training up a child to be an archer, should give him this principle and rule, that by aiming at the mark most fairly he should miss most foully. No; search that you may not err, John v. 39; not, be content to err rather than search. But now at last being ashamed of this, and convinced by common equity that the truth is not wholly to be withheld, they have published a part of it, the New Testament, with their Rhemish Commentary; not, say they, upon any absolute necessity, but to avoid corruptions by reading other translations. They found the people would no longer be made such fools, as when that universal mist was over the face of the earth; therefore they gratify them with a parcel of it. But as the people's curses before ran through their ears into their souls, for engrossing into their hands the grain of life; so their curses follow them still, for selling them such musty and mildewed corn. Their wickedness is no less now in poisoning them, than it was before in starving them. How blessed are we that freely enjoy that gospel, which can take away blindness, and give us the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ!

"But." Here is the diversity; this disjoins these blind and barren professors from the former, by a manifest opposition: as the future life shall put an everlasting difference between the elect and the reprobate, the one going to eternal pain, the other to eternal peace, Matt. xxv. 46. Here they are scarce distinguished; but then there shall be a great gulf fixed between them, Luke xvi. 26. So even on earth the Scripture disjoins them with a *but*. The adversaries of Stephen gnashed on him with their teeth, *but* he himself was "full of the Holy Ghost," Acts vii. 55. Stephen was under them for outward condition, but far above them for inward consolation. The waves may foam against the rock, and exercise their vain malice, but the rock is unmovable. "The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: *but* the way of the ungodly shall perish," Psal. i. 6. "Many sorrows shall be to the wicked: *but* he that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him," Psal. xxxii. 10. Destroy thou the wicked: "*but* let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice," Psal. v. 11. There was darkness in Egypt, *but* light in Goshen. The tares are suffered to grow up with the wheat, *but* in the harvest they shall be severed, Matt. xiii. "Slay utterly old and young: *but* come not near any man upon whom is the mark," Ezek. ix. 6. In the 10th of the Proverbs, the first fourteen verses have their medium distinguished with this *but*. Indeed most of them are but pairs of cross and thwart sentences, manifesting the contrariety of good to evil. 1. This is both in regard of a former ordination; "Jacob have I loved, *but* Esau have I hated," Rom. ix. 13. Some are of old ordained to condemnation, Jude 4, others to life. 2. And in regard of a present disposition; for the faithful love the things above, the wicked dote upon terrestrial objects. The saints

would but lodge in Samaria, their faces are toward Jerusalem; the ungodly do but lodge for a night in Jerusalem, their faces, their hearts, are toward Samaria. 3. And in regard of their future condition: the wicked are brought to a destructive end in a moment, Psal. lxxiii. 19; but mark the upright man, and behold the just, for the end of that man is peace. This is a secret and unseen distinction. There is little difference in outward show: vessels of dishonour have often the most credit; whereas the vessels of honour, elected to shine as stars in heaven for ever, are here sullied and kept under. Yet there is an invisible difference, *but* between them. Among men, where all reputation is measured by the aere, we enter rich men into our books, but refuse to trust the poor. But God in his book records Lazarus, and forgets the rich man's name.

"He that lacketh these things." It is a received maxim, that God and nature have wrought nothing in vain; no part or faculty of the body can be well spared. Thou hast two eyes, two ears, two hands, two feet; thou canst spare none of them. Man hath five senses; if he lose any of them, the very want will tell him the worth of the habit. The father that should sell one of his children, to buy bread for the rest and redeem them from famine, looks over them all, and at last concludes he can part with none. What part of thyself after much study couldst thou lose? Yet a man may lack some, and be saved too; with loss of a hand, foot, an eye, he may enter into heaven, Mark ix. But what speak I of our members; we are loth to spare the superfluities of this world: those same *adjectiva*, as Christ calls them: *adjectanea*, as Paul says. Our very delights have their set vicissitudes, and not one is omitted for fear of breaking the rank. Covetous worldlings will hardly spare the poor some of their fire to warm them, some of their water to drink, some of their ground to lodge on; though it were no more hurt to them, than the lighting of a candle at their torch. We can lack nothing for this world; but for heaven, oh the mercy of God! *quantum est in rebus inane!* we can quietly lack things that conduce to our eternal peace. What is the reason? A man never misseth what he cares not for. If a man lack riches, he complains, "Who will show us any good?" Psal. iv. 6. If he lack honour, he is glad to hear a friend in the court say to him, as Elisha to the Shunammite, "Wouldst thou be spoken for to the king, or to the captain of the host?" 2 Kings iv. 13. Few would answer with the Shunammite, "I live among mine own people;" I had rather dwell at home. If he lacks children, he is ready to say with that patriarch, "What wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless?" Gen. xv. 2. If an Ahab have a whole manor, yet he lacks Naboth's vineyard; that very nook disfigures his lordship. If Haman have Ahasuerus's favour, yet he lacks Mordecai's knee and cap; and is angry that other men think him not so good as he thinks himself. Though Joab have renown with David, yet a word of disgrace from Abner troubles his stomach; he can neither swallow it down, nor vomit it up; because another is not his friend, he resolves to be his own enemy. Let the engrosser's barns and granaries be never so full of corn, yet if he lacks price for it in the market answerable to his desire, he is ready to hang himself, and be epitaphed on as that pope, *Vixit lupus, moritur canis*. He that desires much, wants as much as he that hath nothing. The drunkard is as dry as the sweating traveller. The apostles said, Silver and gold have we none. Acts iii. 6. The devil says, All these are mine, Luke iv. 6; and the rich man, I have much goods laid up for many years, Luke xii. 19. Now take thy choice;

whether hadst thou rather lack with those saints, or abound with these devils? Say with Paul, My God shall supply all my need, Phil. iv. 19; and as Abraham answered Isaac, complaining for a sacrifice, God will provide. Lord, thou art my portion; and he is too covetous that Jesus Christ cannot satisfy. The Lord is my Shepherd; I therefore can lack nothing, Psal. xxiii. 1. A man may lack outward things, yet come never the later to heaven; yea, the sooner, the surer; but woe to him that lacks "these things!" This is the want now least feared, and this shall be the want most lamented. First seek the kingdom of heaven, then other things shall come in due place and time, Matt. vi. 33. Follow thou righteousness, the rest shall follow thee. There was a young man that thought well of himself; "All these have I kept: what lack I yet?" Matt. xix. 20. What? it is answered, "If thou wilt be perfect, give all to the poor," ver. 21: it is better lack all the rest, than lack charity. Terrene opulence is a mere titular thing; as Petrus Blessensis wrote to Innocentius, Bishop of Rome, concerning an ecclesiastical dignity in England, A prebend standing upon naked and pure supposals. But grace is solid and real; for "the blessing of the Lord maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it," Prov. x. 22.

Pray then to him that alone is able to supply these wants; as Paul, "For this I besought the Lord thrice," 2 Cor. xii. 8. What then? if after thrice praying we feel no full concession, shall we give over? No, pray still, and God will answer, "My grace is sufficient for thee," ver. 9. What is wanting in our endeavours, God shall make up with his sufficient mercies. We have need to sacrifice. Do we lack fuel? The Lord supplies us with penitence and patience, faith and love. Yet we lack fire: he gives us zeal, an immortal fire from heaven. Yet lack we an altar: he gives us a pure heart. Is there yet wanting a sacrifice? offer up thyself. "He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him," Psal. cxlv. 19. "The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing," Psal. xxxiv. 10. Then, Lord, take away the rest, and give me thyself. If we can hold Christ, no good thing shall be withholden from us, Psal. lxxiv. 11. Whatsoever we lack, let us not lack these things.

"Is blind." We come from the penury and want to the cecity or blindness, wherein his understanding suffers. Blindness is nothing else but a privation of sight; so ignorance is a destitution of knowledge. The school makes three sorts of this spiritual blindness. 1. Ignorance negative. The not knowing of impertinent things is tolerable: as we need not know how oft we have breathed, &c. To this knowledge we are not obliged. 2. Ignorance privative. This is considered in necessary things, and concerning ourselves; and is not so much our sin, as our punishment for sin; an affliction as much as a transgression. 3. Ignorance corruptive: which is a refractory and desperate averseness from knowledge: the other was *morbus mentis*, this is *morsus serpentis*. This is wretched, for a man to be ignorant of his own ignorance: Laodicea's disease, Rev. iii. 17; to be so blind as not to know her own blindness. Such an eye is not dark in the concrete; but darkness itself, in the abstract. Now if the light be darkness, how great is that darkness? Matt. vi. 23. It is both a sin and a punishment: a sin, Matt. xv. 14; Isa. lvi. 10; a punishment, Deut. xxviii. 28; Isa. lix. 10. Blind are we all by nature; like the man that sat by the way-side begging, Luke xviii. 35; sitting by the way, not seeing

the way: begging, but he knoweth not of whom. Now there is also a contracted blindness, an affected ignorance; and the cause is divers causes, as of the corporal, so of the spiritual cecity.

By abundance of rheum the eyes are harmed: so factious singularity is a hot scalding rheum to blear the eye of the soul. We have many such rheumatic spirits, that will go a new way, or no way. They care not for Noah's ark, the church; but climb up to a mountain apart, a private conventicle by themselves. They are blind, and see not the danger of the flood.

By a violent blow, or such accidental hurt. The eye is tender, and therefore hath two lids to defend it. *Non patitur lodum, fama, fides, oculus.* And Satan blinds this intellectual eye by a sudden blow given to the soul: the god of this world hath blinded their eyes that they believe not, 2 Cor. iv. 4. How is this? By filling them with vain imaginations and turpitudes, Rom. i. Lusts darken the mind.

By dust thrown into them. The dust of this world makes many blind: they dig like moles into the earth, and there lose the sight of heaven. Gifts blind the wise. Such men may sit on benches, be taken into councils, have their eyes of policy quick as eagles; and yet be blind. Perhaps they have the proud scorn of the Pharisees, "Are we blind also?" John ix. 40. To whom it is answered, "If ye were blind, ye should have no sin; but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth," ver. 41. These that have so much knowledge to heap up wealth, who dares call them fools for heaven? He that dares justify it: "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee," Luke xii. 20. He could see to fill his barns, but not to get salvation. The devil labours to keep men blind during the presumption of their lives, and only open their eyes in the desperation that waits on their deaths: like the Syrians, whose eyes were never opened till they were in the midst of their enemies, 2 Kings vi. 20. Sin shuts up men's eyes, but punishment opens them. For he that will be blind when he sins, shall be made wise when he suffers.

The sum is this; he that lacks grace, lacks knowledge. They that wander in by-paths declare themselves ignorant of the right way; so if a man be lewd in his manners, we conclude him blind for the way of salvation. If their work be full of cursedsness, murder, and destruction, we infer, "The way of peace have they not known," Rom. iii. 17. Oh the infinite number of blind souls! If all that be ungodly live in darkness, how few of this world have eyes! or if they have, they see not; "Bring forth the blind people that have eyes," Isa. xliii. 8. Every one indeed is ready to tax another's ignorance, not his own. If two blind men rush one upon another in the way, either complains of other's blindness, neither of his own. Oh that this blindness were a little removed, that by a self-inspection we might see our own hearts. If the sinner would look into that secret cloister, how would the spectacle amaze him! He should find a will more warped than a bow; affections more perverse than an unbroken dromedary; a soul bleeding with unstanch'd wounds; a chamber full of fiends; one holding down the reason, another dulling the memory, a third tempting the will, a fourth searing the conscience. Thus they possess the citadel, his heart; possessing they vex it, vexing they laugh at it, laughing they destroy it, and after destruction they torment it. How lies the poor ravished soul panting under these adulterers; slayed in the chains of a most miserable bondage, where the bread of life, and blood of Christ, are kept from her; beholding with Rachel her dear children, her affec-

tions, faculties, and addictions to good, butchered before her eyes; expecting the fatal hour, when herself must be haled to the great tribunal, and receive her eternal doom! Let us all therefore now look inward; be no longer blind at home, strangers to our own bosoms. Now he that opened the eyes of Paul, open ours; and rescue our soul from destructions, our darling from the lions, Psal. xxxv. 17; and ourselves from the hour and power of darkness.

"And cannot see afar off." The original is *μυωπέζον*, thick-eyed. It signifies *pate affectum tā μύωπος*, and that is derived *quasi pater tāς ὥπας: claudere oculos non penitus, sed parumper*. Some translate it, to wink; "He winketh with his eyes," Prov. vi. 13. Others, one that cannot open his eyes. But to take it as we here read it; one that "cannot see afar off;" now to the former word, *τεφλος*, this seems to be subjected *per quendam correctionem*: he is blind, *ut et non prorsus cæcus, cæcutit tamen instar lusciosi*. It is a voluntary darkening the eye to heavenly things. *Lusciosus* is such a one as sees a little at the day dawning, worse after the sun rising, never a whit after the sun setting.

"Afar off." What are those things afar off that he cannot see? He sees the sun, the moon, the stars; and these are afar off. So do the beasts, and some of them more clearly. What, is it meant of a physical remoteness; that he cannot see into the deep secrets of nature, not perceive how to derive benefits from the fountain-head? If he would have bread, does he not know to deduce it by a natural course; as first to till his ground, then to sow his seed, then to reap and carry it into his barn; and when he hath it there, to bring it under the flail, the fan, the mill, the oven, and so to perfect it into bread? If he would have cloth, and not to go to the shop for it; knows he not to shear his sheep, to spin his wool, to weave, full, and colour it, and to fit it to his own wearing? Or, is it meant of terrene objects, distanced off by a local interjection. Why he hath then a perspective glass, to represent a remote thing as it were at his foot; or some optic instruments, to stand on a tower and read a book lying in the streets; or some politic eyes, that by intelligence he may know in his chamber the state affairs of foreign kingdoms; or demoniac eyes, whereby he can see in a glass things as far as India, by a running delusion. So Saul was persuaded that he saw Samuel, who indeed was as far off him as heaven from earth. What, is it then meant for a searching into the secret purposes and fetches of men? But "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?" Jer. xvii. 9. The world's principal study is to keep their meanings afar off, as the fox preys farthest from home. The Labyrinth had a way out, but man's heart is more intricate and fuller of windings than Meander. You may travel with a man as far as the Indies, and yet still find the way into his heart a further journey. These things are far off, but we must look farther; not to the things beneath, but to them above, John viii. 23.

Those remote things which this man cannot see, are such as be separated from human sense, whereof flesh and blood was never an eye-witness. "For we walk by faith, not by sight," 2 Cor. v. 7. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned," 1 Cor. ii. 14. He may see the sensual things of this world, for they are at hand; but not the great mysteries of godliness, for they are far off. But both not the gospel bring heaven near us? and both not Christ say, "The kingdom of God is come unto you?" Matt. xii. 28. Yes, it may be near to men, and yet men far from it. Indeed the

saints that were once by nature "far off, are made nigh to him by the blood of Christ," Eph. ii. 13; but unbelievers and impenitents are far off still.

Heavenly things are far off from carnal sense: he that will believe no more than he sees, shall be for ever blind. The best things are invisible to human eyes. God is invisible: Moses saw "him who is invisible," Heb. xi. 27. Light is invisible: God dwelleth in the light, which "no man hath seen, nor can see," 1 Tim. vi. 16. Christ is invisible: "Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more," John xiv. 19. It was a great miracle that dying Stephen should see him at the right hand of his Father; and so wonderful a vision to John, to behold him in that glorious majesty, that he fell dead at his feet, Rev. i. 17. The Spirit is invisible; like the wind, the sound whereof we hear, but see not whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth, John iii. 8. His power is invisible: his power and God-head are called the invisible things of God, Rom. i. 20. The kingdom is invisible: "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God," John iii. 3. The best eyes see but in a riddle: "Now we see through a glass, darkly," 1 Cor. xiii. 12. Here faith supplies all defects; for it is the office of faith to believe that we do not see, and it shall be the reward of faith to see that we do believe. (August.) "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed," John xx. 29.

These are the remote objects: in every pious thing there is somewhat afar off to human eyes. In devotion or worship of God, the prostration of the body is seen, not the humility of the soul. Eli could see Hannah's lips pay their tributes to God, he did not see the zeal of her heart; but she spake in her heart, and Eli thought she was drunk, 1 Sam. i. 13. In the sacrament, bread and wine are seen of reprobate eyes, but there is an invisible thing far off to them: the body and blood of Christ, that nourisheth the soul to everlasting life in the gospel: how near is the history, how far off the mystery! In the word preached, the world perceives *sonum*, *non sensum*, the audible sound, not the profitable sense. As an ignorant man sees the painted images of virtues; he says they are goodly pictures, but he knows not what they mean, the moral is far off from his apprehension. As little children, who look upon the babies in a book, regard not the matter therein contained. Concerning a Christian, the world can see his house well furnished, his grounds well stocked, his barns well filled, his purse well monied, if these things be; but the joy of his spirit, the peace of his conscience, the grace of his heart, these are things afar off from the world. The peace and prosperity that accompany the church, they delight to see and taste; that every man may sit under his own fig tree, and drink the milk of his own flock: but the remission of sins, the effusion of grace, the communion of saints, the possession of comforts: those spiritual privileges, more glorious than the states of kingdoms, are invisible and too far off. Let us not look "at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal: but the things which are not seen are eternal," 2 Cor. iv. 18.

Oh that your eyes could look a little beyond the earth. There are two several countries afar off: they lie beyond the poles, yet undiscovered, farther than the glass of the Scripture presents to the eyes of faith. The countries are heaven and hell. There are two ways to them, which be near and visible, piety and profaneness. There are two doors to pass, before men arrive to either of them, death and judgment. Many think these far off, they "put far away the evil day," Amos vi. 3; and say, "The vision that

he seeth is for many days to come, and he prophesieth of the times that are far off," Ezek. xii. 27. Men oppress, riot, lust, blaspheme, as if the judgments were far off: as that malefactor, being asked by whom he would be tried, answered deridingly, By Christ and his twelve apostles. It was replied, that they were in heaven. No haste, quoth he, I am content to tarry till they come. "But the end of all things is at hand," 1 Pet. iv. 7. And let them read and tremble, Rev. xxii. 12, "Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me."

If you could see so far off as hell below: if the smoky gates of that bottomless pit were opened to give you but a glimpse of the damned spirits under torture; those flames, those shrieks, those fears and horrors; that palpable darkness mixed with unquenchable fire; the reprobates ever boiling, never consumed; ever dying, never dead; ever crying, never pitied; where the covetous churl, that would not give a bit of bread, begs as fast for a drop of water; yet if rivers should run into his mouth, what were it to quench those rivers of brimstone that inflame it? where there is no intermission of complaints, no breathing from pain: after millions of sorrowful years, no possibility of comfort. If the stroke of a temporal misery be so smart, that often death is wished to ease it, what is the full vial of God's wrath! If the rack of a gout, convulsion, or strappado be so cruel, what is everlasting torment! If this sight so far off might be admitted us, how would we weep and bleed for our sins, how incessantly pray for pardon, how rectify our crooked and cursed steps; that we might never come to such a place, as to see Abraham afar off! Luke xvi. 23. Oh that we knew these things in this our day; but alas, they are hid from most men's eyes, Luke xix. 42. If men's foresight were but half as sharp as is their sense, that would be their greatest fear which is now their chiefest pleasure. Let Dives come out of hell to his former riches, the sensible world shall admire his charity. Let Judas be ransomed out of hell, he will no more betray. Let Esau find that favour, he will never again sell his birthright. Nabal then would no longer be a churl, nor Ahithophel a false counsellor, nor Ahab a bloody tyrant, nor Cain a fratricide. There is not a piece of a line in the Scripture, which speaks of that lake of fire and brimstone, but by a hundred thousand parts it importeth more than it expreseth. Believe that you cannot see, lest you feel that you would not believe.

If you could see so far off as heaven above, or might be admitted to look into that glorious house. Kings use not to dwell in cottages of clay, but in royal courts fit for their majesty: what is then the court of the King of kings! This world seems glorious, such a earluncle as the sun to lustre it, stars far more precious than chrysolites, a pavement checkered over with various colours, adorned with innumerable delights: now if God hath provided such a habitation for his enemies, what a one is that he hath ordained for himself and his friends! Earthly princes have dwelt in cedar and ivory; but the palace of the Highest hath a wall of jasper, a building of gold, a foundation of precious stones, and gates of pearl, Rev. xxi. We see now but the pavement of it: oh how goodly is it stuck full of lights, more sparkling than diamonds! Did the centurion say, "I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof?" Matt. viii. 8; and yet Christ was then but in his humbled estate: do thou say, I am not worthy to enter into thy shining and glorious house. It was said, he that hath been once at Ormuz, will never love his own country again. He that hath had a glimpse of heaven, how poorly will he think of this

earth, which many lose their own souls to purchase! Lord, lift up our eyes to see thus far; let the scales of earthly affections quite fall off; carry us up to thy glory. Thou that didst lay clay upon the blind man's eyes, and so open them, take away this clay of earthliness from our eyes, whereby they are shut. Cast into us the beams of that celestial glory; and because we cannot yet ascend to that, let that come down upon us. Ravish our eyes with thy own beauty, that, like eagles, we may disdain all objects but the Sun. Thou that hast prepared heaven for our souls, prepare also our souls for heaven. Thou art not far from every one of us, Acts xvii. 27; thou art near to us: bring us also near to thee, O God, show us thyself, and we shall love thee. Let us see thee, O blessed Jesus, now with the eyes of grace, and hereafter with the vision of perfect glory.

"And hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins." We see the curse that lies upon his understanding; he "is blind;" now for that lies upon his memory; he "hath forgotten." To pull the words asunder, were to martyr the sense; they must be considered *sensu composito*, in composition. As they are, they describe a wicked apostate; yet separate them, and all signify good. There is a forgetfulness, this may be good (as to forget a wrong); there is a purging, this may be better; there is a purging from sins, this may be best of all: but put them together, he hath forgotten that he was purged from his sins, there is the misery. The earth, water, and man, are all safe while they keep their own proper places; but when the water overwhelmed the earth there was evil to man: the mixture and confusion spoils all. Good simples are often marred in the compounding, a good sentence lost in the mispointing. So here, purgation, and purgation from sins, and purgation from sins by the blood of Christ, all lost by the ingratitude of forgetfulness. This same "he hath forgotten" is the confusion of all the rest. It is said of Ahithophel, 2 Sam. xvii. 23, that seeing his counsel neglected, he saddled his ass, and rose; he prepared himself for a return, that was well; he gat him home to his house, that was better; he put his household in order, that was best of all: but when he hanged himself, and became his own executioner, preventing the mercy of David, the mercy of God, this was the bane of all. If after purging from old sins, this man had preserved the mercy in memory, and answered it in piety, he had been happy. But he gets new corruption, and forgets his former purgation; therefore God forgets his righteousness, and takes him away in his wickedness; in the sin that he hath sinned, he dies, Ezek. xviii. 24.

"Forgotten:" the original is *ad verbum*, λήθην λαβών, *ut qui oblivionem cepit*: one that did voluntarily attract forgetfulness to himself; the author of his own mischief; courting his own destruction: forgetfulness did not so much take him, as he did take forgetfulness. The poets wrote of Lethe, a certain Stygian river, that whosoever drank of it, forgot presently all past things. He willfully ingurgitates this Lethean drink, and calls in oblivion to lodge in his heart. The ungodly, as if they were impatient at the delay of their own vengeance, hasten to have their sins go before unto judgment, 1 Tim. v. 24. They scarce stay the devil's leisure to tempt them, therefore do it themselves. They tarry not till oblivion and ingratitude be offered to them, but they snatch it, like ravenous stomachs, that will not endure till their meat be dressed. This forwardness is expressed, Prov. i. 16, "Their feet run to evil." They rise early to put it in practice, Micah ii. 1. They draw it on with cords and cart-ropes, Isa. v. 18. They do not accept it as being offered, but extort it

as being prohibited. This saves the devil a labour, when men call iniquity to themselves. "The soul of the wicked desireth evil," Prov. xxi. 10: if it comes not, they will fetch it, fly to it; but they had better have crept like snails. For mischief comes soon enough, there is no need to seek it; it is more easily found than avoided. "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you," Jam. iv. 7. Give to God obedience, to the prince allegiance, to our superior reverence, to the weak assistance; only to the devil and sin, resistance. Give not place to the devil, Eph. iv. 27; for the devil hath no place but where it is given him. I like not that Jesuit's humility, that sitting in a chair, and seeing the devil approach, rose up to give him his seat; because, he said, he was more worthy of it than himself. But give him no place, saith St. Paul; admit no conference with him. He was a fool that went up and down the earth to find old age; which, if he sat still at home, would be sure to find him. Sin will come fast enough: let us not hunt it, nor snatch it; but rather strive to resist it, to expel it.

The points I am to speak of are four: there is

The corruption of the heart, Sins.

The danger of that corruption, Old sins.

The delivery from that danger, Purged.

The unthankfulness for that delivery, Forgotten.

The greatness of his misery (sin inveterate) commends the goodness of God's mercy. (that had purged him), and condemns the villeness of his ingratitude (that hath forgotten it). There is, 1. A sickness. 2. A lightening. 3. Before death. Old sin was a lingering sickness; purging, that is his lightening; but forgetfulness of it is his death.

First, for the corruption, sin: this is the most sordid feculency in the world. Lazarus lay full of sores at the rich man's gate, yet was he not so foul and noisome as the rich man himself within doors. Death takes away the body's filthiness; and Christ shall change our vile body, that it may be like his own glorious body; but he that dies in his sins, shall find his sins ever living in himself. Blessed is he whose sins die before his body: death can do that man no harm, though it rot his flesh to dust. The traveller that is pursued by a lion, throws off his cloak, and runs nimbly into his house, from the window whereof he beholds the lion tearing his garment, but rejoiceth that himself is safe. Death can but tear thy coat, and bloody it, as Joseph's was, but thyself art safe. There are many things we loathe which are not detestable, as our brother's leprosy, &c.: but that which is indeed most odious, is held most delectable. We shun sickness with hate, we follow wickedness with joy. Which consideration caused Nazianzen to say, that sin is in a better condition than sickness. For at a leazarous, leprous, diseased man, we stop our nostrils, and turn away our eyes; yet here is God's image. But to a prodigal drunkard, a rich usurer, a proud courtier, we insinuate ourselves; yet only for these we have a charge, *De non tangendo*; and there is the image of the devil. A man will not enter the house where he knows the plague is, for fear of infection; yet he will venture on the place where God is blasphemed, and never pretend the danger, saying with Abraham, "Surely the fear of God is not in this place," Gen. xx. 11. St. John would not tarry in the bath where Cerinthus was. There is no pestilence so deadly as sin. What a blessed turn is it then to be purged from sin! "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin," Psal. li. 2. The breaking of his bones, the soreness of his flesh, he complained of; but nothing so troubled him as his sins. Therefore there is no such comfort as the remission of sins. David

entitleth the 32nd Psalm his Learning; *Maschil*, or "Giving instruction." Why, what great learning is in it? Yes, the remission of sins; Blessed is the man whose sin is forgiven, ver. 1: there is no learning more sweet and blessed. For this Christ taught us to pray continually, "Forgive us our sins." The Lord's prayer in that one petition teacheth, that we are daily sinners, and that our whole life should be nothing else but a Lent, to prepare ourselves against the sabbath of our rest, and the Easter of our resurrection. (Luther.) The creed teacheth us to believe the remission of our sins, and that God will blot out all our transgressions, Isa. xlv. 22; yea, that they are so remitted, as if they never had been committed. The Lamb of God takes them away, by pardoning sins past, and preventing sins to come, and bringing us to that place where sin can be no more. (Lambor.) O blessed place, where is no sin! Heaven begins where sin ends. (Ambrose.) We cannot be so quit of it yet. It is well, saith Luther, if as God told Rebekah, the elder shall serve the younger. Our enemies are older, our sins greater, than we, yet they shall serve for our good; for they must needs be comprehended within that universal and indefinite number of "all things," that shall work together to our best, Rom. viii. 28. Thus if we could see the irksome filthiness of our sins, we would think our purging the greatest happiness. As David of his enemies, so let us comfort ourselves concerning our sins; though they compass us about like bees, yet in the name of our Lord Jesus we shall destroy them, Psal. cxviii. 12.

Secondly, consider further the danger of this corruption, old sins. That we translate, *τῶν παλαιῶν ἁμαρτιῶν*, must be thus supplied; *τῶν παλαιῶν πεποιημένων*, from sins that he hath done of old. This aggravates the danger of corruption; for an old ulcer is hardly cured. Long nurture is another nature. When a certain man had brought his possessed son to the disciples, and they could not cure him, he comes to Christ himself; and he demands, "How long is it ago since this came unto him?" The father answers, "Of a child;" therefore, if thou canst do any thing, pity us, and help us, Mark ix. 21, 22. A disease bred from a child is hardly cured; a sin of long continuance hardly purged. "They have afflicted me from my youth, yet they have not prevailed against me," Psal. cxxix. 2. If sin have infected us from our youth up, it is a great wonder that it prevails not still against us. The physician coming to his patient, inquires the time when he took his layre; if he have been long infected, it poseth his skill. There was a man blind from his birth, John ix. 1: but if so long blind, none can cure him but Christ. It was never heard since the world stood, that any man, save Christ, opened the eyes of one born blind, ver. 32. The same Physician found a patient sick of an infirmity eight and thirty years: he comes to him with a "Wilt thou be made whole?" Alas, he despairs it: yet Christ performed it; "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk," John v. 6—8.

"Old sins." How far must we look back to find out this antiquity? First, as far as the time of their perpetration; old sins, because done long ago, in the wildness of youth: "Remember not the sins of my youth," Psal. xxv. 7. "Thou writest bitter things against me, and makest me to possess the sins of my youth," Job xiii. 26. Youth hath a hotter aptitude and proclivity to sin; their blood is sooner stirred to choler, their heat to lust, their strength to intemperance. *Nequitie cursus celerior quam ætatis*, Their sins outrun their years, and they are discerned to be the children of Adam before their faces have discovered their sexes. Therefore it was the wise man's

counsel, "Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth," Eccles. xii. 1. And St. Paul charged Timothy to "flee youthful lusts," 2 Tim. ii. 22. The new earthen pots will retain the savour of their first seasoning. Season their youth with the fear of God, Prov. xxii. 6: as Obadiah said, "I fear the Lord from my youth," 1 Kings xviii. 12; as Timothy knew the Scriptures from a child, 2 Tim. iii. 15. The vanities of youth prove the vexations of age; and if there be any grace in us, that is now matter of repentance, which was then matter of joviance. It is enough to terrify the soul, the retrospection into old sins.

Yet let us look a little further back, to find this age of sin; even as far as the original, from whence comes all the copy of imitation. Be they never so new in act, they are old in example: "We have sinned with our fathers," Psal. cvi. 6. God tells them, they had rebelled of old: "As your fathers did, so do ye," Acts vii. 51. Antiquity is no infallible argument of goodness; though Tertullian says, the first things were the best things; and the less they distanced from the beginning, the purer they were: but he must be understood only of holy customs. For iniquity can plead antiquity; he that commits a new act of murder, finds it old in the example of Cain; drunkenness may be fetched from Noah; contempt of parents from Ham; women's lightness from the daughters of Lot. There is no sin but hath white hairs upon it, and is exceeding old.

But let us look further back yet, even to Adam; there is the age of sin. This is that St. Paul calls the old man: it is almost as old as the root, but older than all the branches. Therefore our restitution by Christ to grace, is called the new man. There is a relation, or rather an opposition, between the old man and the new: "As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive," 1 Cor. xv. 22. "The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit," ver. 45. Therefore he that makes all things new, Rev. xxi. 5, can also make us new: that "as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly," 1 Cor. xv. 49. Adam was made in God's image, but he begat a son in his own image, not in God's. The corruption of our nature is the image of the old Adam; the renovation of our minds is the image of the new, Col. iii. 10. Therefore "put off the old man," and cast it away; as Joseph forsook his coat rather than his faith; or as the young man, that left his linen garment and fled, Mark xiv. 51, 52. For better lose generation, than regeneration; better part with thy old corruption, than miss thy new hope of salvation.

Of old things, some are pleasant, some unprofitable, some pernicious. Pleasant is an old friend; "Thine own friend, and thy father's friend, forsake not," Prov. xxvii. 10; a good old servant, an old monument of honour, old truth, the old way, Jer. vi. 16. Unprofitable: an old tree past bearing, an old house past inhabiting, an old ship in danger of sinking, an old garment past mending, an old ill custom past curing. Pernicious; such is Satan, that old serpent, Rev. xx. 2; old sin: the old lion devours terribly, Nah. ii. 11, an old dog bites sore, that old serpent stings deadly. A woman when she is old brings not forth so goodly children as in her youth, 2 Esd. v. 53; she ceaseth teeming. But concupiscence, the older she grows, the stronger she is to bear the children of unrighteousness. The world is old and weak, man old and sick, sin old and more infecting, the devil old and more prevailing. The only way to evade their danger, is to become new; to talk with new tongues, Mark xvi. 17, and walk in new ways,

Matt. ii. 12; then shall we have new names, Rev. ii. 17, put on new garments, and have a portion in the new Jerusalem.

"That he was purged from his old sins." We have considered the corruption and inveterateness of sin; now observe what measure of mercy was extended to him in the delivery from it; "he was purged." This place seems not so easy at the first blush, as upon better search it will appear difficult. "He was purged," yet he is granted an ungodly person. Now how can a reprobate be said to be purged from his sins? For this is a sure ground, if God remit some sins, he retains none; if no sin be remitted, that man is not purged. If he be purged, how can he forget it? If he have forgotten it, how was he purged?

Some understand it thus: that this purging is meant by the shedding of Christ's blood, whereby the whole world is purged, John i. 29. But that all men are purged by Christ's blood, is neither a true position in itself, nor a true exposition of this place. The blood of Christ only purgeth his church, Eph. v. 26. And there are none admitted to stand before the throne, but such as have "washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb," Rev. vii. 14. If any soul be thus washed, he shall never be confounded. If this man were thus purged, how could he forget it? "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself," 2 Cor. v. 19. Yet no man thinks that the whole world shall go to heaven, for then were hell made to no purpose. So God loved the world, that he gave his Son; yet "the whole world lieth in wickedness," 1 John v. 19. Thus it is clear, expiation was offered for the world, and offered to the world; but those that are blessed by it, are separated from the world: "I have chosen you out of the world," John xv. 19. Salvation may be said to belong to many, that belong not to salvation. Now the reprobate forgets that a purgation was made for him by the shedding of the Messiah's blood, which is a wretched thing, to forget so great a ransom.

Go to the garden, and there behold thy Saviour groaning under the weight of sin, heavy enough to have pressed to death millions of angels, legions of men, the whole world; sweating drops of blood, as if he were cast into the furnace of God's wrath that melted him. Behold him offering that mouth, which spake as never man or angel spake, to a traitor to kiss. What the traitor sold, and the murderer bought, thou hast obtained: he is thine, not the Jews' that purchased him. Now hast thou gotten him, and yet forgotten him? That which tickles thy heart with laughter, made the heart of thy Saviour bleed: and hast thou forgotten it? His soul was pressed to death with the sins we never shrink at: his eyes wept tears of blood, ours flow with tears of laughter: he felt those torments we cannot conceive; we cannot understand what he did stand under. Were we so foul, that nothing but his blood could purge us, and do we forget that purging? Do we forget that cry, whereto heaven and earth, men and angels, stood amazed, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" The very senseless creatures did not forget it: the heavens were hung with black, the sun did hide his face like a chief mourner, and durst not behold his passion. Now, for man alone was all this passion, yet in man alone is least compassion. I know thou condemnest Judas, and that worthily; who sold Christ a man, there was murder: Christ his Master, there was treason; Christ his Maker, there was sacrilege. Murder is a crying sin, treason a roaring sin, sacrilege a thundering sin.

Thou condemnest the Jews for buying him: they bought him not to possess as their own; they should so have made the best purchase in the world, to have

bought Him that bought them. But they bought him to sell him again, as Simon Magus would have bought the Holy Ghost: given money for him, to have got money by him. "Buy the truth, and sell it not," Prov. xxiii. 23. They bought him to bind, abuse, mock, spit on, scourge, crucify him. Thou condemnest these; and shall not these, and the God of all, condemn thee, if thou use thy Saviour after the same manner? They crucified Christ in his mortality; thou crucifiest Christ in his immortality. Thy sin is, and thy judgment shall be, greater; because thy knowledge, and his glory, is more.

Hath he suffered all this to purge us, and will we not yet let him alone? Shall we not suffer the Son of God to be at rest in his heaven? Shall we blaspheme and swear him quite over, open his wounds with our oaths, give him new portions of gall with our drunkenness, pierce him again with our oppressions, defile him again with our lusts, run him into the heart with our homicides, and still forget all this? Take we heed, for he feels it, and therefore does not forget it: the lewd Christian may come to see him, even whom himself hath pierced. Do we offer violence to that glorified Saviour, and with a presumptuous hand, lifted up to the heaven, pull him down from his throne to his cross? Is it not enough that he died once for us? Are those pains so light, so slight, and have we so soon forgotten them, that every day we should redouble them? Is this the recompence of those infinite torments? In vain thy tongue cries Hosanna, when thy hand crucifies him. How darrest thou receive the sacrament with that hand, that is so imbrued in his blood whom thou receivest? He that sells that for a little pleasure, which Christ bought with so much pain, thinks Christ but a foolish buyer, and that he had a hard pennyworth; but indeed he proves himself a foolish seller, and, with Esau, will repent his bargain.

Now hath Christ done so much to purge us, and can we forget it? Can such a benefit die in our memories? No, let every redeemed heart remember his Redeemer. Forget not the passion of thy Saviour, O my soul; but let him be wholly fastened in me, that was wholly fastened to the cross for me.

Some understand by this purging, true regeneration: in this exposition the Romanists are confident and peremptory. But so taken, it is mistaken; for if he were regenerate, he could never forget it. Upon this collection they build, that a man may fall away from grace, and that without distinction, even totally and finally. Here they cry, We have conquered; the Calvinists are confuted, confounded. But this trumpet might be blown with a straw. Their logic is too hasty; they force their conclusion to ride post. As in their indulgences and pardons they move men to presumption, so in this they drive them to desperation: any way serves their turns to deceive. If this their position were true, that must needs be false, John xiii. 1, Whom he loves, he loves to the end; and that, Rom. viii. 39. Nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ; and then were Jesus Christ not the same, yesterday, to-day, and for ever, Heb. xiii. 8. But the Spirit of adoption is an everlasting Spirit; and God's mercy, like his majesty, endures for ever; and the gifts of grace are without repentance; God will never retract them, for he is no changing. "I am the Lord, I change not," Mal. iii. 6. Man is inconstant, riches are inconstant, honour is inconstant, friends are inconstant, a wife is inconstant, the world is inconstant; only I, the Lord, change not. He doth not to-day love dearly, and to-morrow hate deadly; but whom he blesseth, shall be blessed, Gen. xxvii. 33. Christ will not quench the smoking flax, but inflame the least spark of grace.

The light may be eclipsed, not extinguished. But they object Matt. xviii. 32, "I forgive thee all that debt;" yet he cast him into prison, "till he should pay all that was due unto him," ver. 34: the debt remitted is again required. I answer, that the scope of that parable is to show, that God will no otherwise forgive us, than we forgive others. For certainly if a man be once acquitted, he can never for that debt be damned. God's covenant depends not on our obedience, but our obedience depends on God's covenant. We are not therefore loved because we are holy; but we are therefore holy because we are loved. If this purging had been absolute regeneration, it could never be forgotten; for all the promises of God are yea and amen in Jesus Christ.

Some expound it thus: he was purged, that is, he thought himself purged; he was only clean in his own opinion. So Christ calls the Pharisees just, because they justified themselves, Luke xv. 7. This opinionative purging easily revolteth to profaneness: he that never had but the case of a sheep, may very well be a wolf. They slumber, and suppose themselves good Christians: their faith is but a dream, their hope but a dream, their charity but a dream, their obedience but a dream, their whole religion but a dream; and so their assurance of salvation is but a dream. They have regeneration in conceit, repentance and righteousness in conceit, they serve God well in conceit, do the works of piety and charity in conceit, and they shall go to heaven only in conceit. Get better assurance than only to think thyself good: pure and naked supposals bring no man to eternal life.

Others, as Luther, refer this purging to baptism; which exposition may carry a probable and profitable sense. This St. Paul calls the laver of regeneration; but he means the sign or seal of it. Our purgation by Christ's blood is not only granted to us in the charter of the gospel, but also confirmed in the sacramental seals. In the Old Testament there was circumcision, *contra peccati reatum*; and occasion, or the passover, *contra peccati panem*, as the school speaketh.

Answerable to these we have baptism and the Lord's supper: now it is the general consent of the fathers, that in the most complete baptism sin is not so taken away: *Quod non sit, sed quod non obsit: non quoad actum, sed quoad reatum*. Sin is still within the faithful, but it shall not be destructive to them in whom it is. Indeed if we consider the inward baptism of the Spirit with the outward, there is a true purging. The laver of regeneration cleanseth from the guilt of all sins. (August.) So Lactantius sings of the baptized infant,

Candidus egreditur nitidis exercitus undis:

Atque vetus vitium purgat in amne novo.

Aquinas says, this sacrament is a commemoration, a demonstration, a prognostication: a commemoration of Christ's death, that is past; a demonstration of Christ's grace, that is present; a prognostication of Christ's glory, that is to come. Thus can the God of power effect his will by weak means; as the aspersion of blood on the doors without, shall save the effusion of blood in the house within, Exod. xii. Naaman must wash in Jordan, the blind in Siloam, the lame in Bethesda, we in the sacred font. As none entered the sanctuary but they first washed in the golden laver; so ordinarily none enter the church, but they are first washed in this holy fountain.

Now to this, outward baptism is necessary with a conditional necessity; inward, with an absolute necessity. Baptism healeth not as a medicine, by its own inherent virtue; but as a seal of his mercy, by whose grace we are saved. (Pareus.) The necessity of it is derived from the commandment of God.

A man may have it, and yet be lost; as Magus had the sacrament of grace, but not the grace of the sacrament. Another may want it, and yet be saved; as that penitent malefactor was never washed in Jordan, yet received into paradise. Sacraments then save not necessarily, but ordinarily. Whence hath the water such virtue, that washing the body, it should purge the soul? Not because it is so said, or so sprinkled, but because it is so believed. (August.) It is not therefore enough to have the sacrament of faith, but the faith of the sacrament. He that believes, and is baptized, shall be saved. He that is thus baptized, is truly purged: and as upon Christ being baptized the Holy Ghost descended; so the Spirit, which once moved on the face of the waters, shall work with the water upon his soul. And as there came a voice to Christ from heaven, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;" so doth God the Father secretly speak to the baptized infant, Thou art my beloved child, with whom (though before I was angry) I am now well pleased. Before thou wast a child of wrath, an heir of perdition; but now "thou art my son; this day have I begotten thee," Psal. ii. 7.

If this wicked man had been so purged he could never have forgotten it. But he had only the baptism of water, not of the Spirit. And is not this a miserable and damnable sin, to forget a man's baptism? not to remember that his name is Christian? It is pity that ever the water of baptism was spilt upon his face. Wert thou born in sin, *non prius natus quam damnatus*, a stranger to the life of God? And lo, then did thy parents bring thee to the sacred font; and when thou couldst not answer for thyself, was not God pleased to take sureties for thee, witnesses of thy future obedience? Did the church open her bosom to receive thee to her motherhood, God to his fatherhood, Christ to his brotherhood, angels to their guard and society, all the elect to their prayers and charity; and canst thou forget all this? Wilt thou disclaim Christians, despise the angels, deny thy Brother, defy thy mother, reject thy Father, and run a course cross to piety and eternal life? Shall not, at that great day, men forsake thee, devils accuse thee, angels repudiate thee, the church be ashamed of thee, thy Father disinherit thee, yea, even thy Brother, now become thy Judge, the Lord Jesus, condemn thee? What can save thee, if thou forget thou wert a purged Christian?

Beloved, think of the end of your washing; it was that you should no more foul yourselves. "Be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord," Acts xxii. 16. The eunuch, being baptized, became a saint: he went down into the water a heathen, he came up a Christian. The cruel gaoler, baptized, became a zealous professor. Baptism is to amendment of life, Matt. iii. Therefore say with the spouse, "I have washed my feet; how shall I defile them?" Cant. v. 3. Forget not that sacramental vow made to God, in the presence of men and angels. Did it fly up to heaven, and does it not stay there to testify against thee? Thou vowedst thyself a soldier, not a neuter; to fight for the Lord, not to stand still and look on, much less to fight against him: for cursed is he that takes not the Lord's part, Judg. v. 23. Thou dost fight, thou dost fight; but against whom? not against the world, thy own lust, the power of Satan; but against thy brethren. Upon every slight occasion we must to law: like cocks of the game, that fight neither *pro patria*, nor *pro domo*; so we contend not *pro rure, jure, thure*; not for the title of inheritance, not for the right of the poor, nor for the cause of religion, but because one will not yield to another. Turbulent lawyers

are the abettors that set them on; the cockpit is Westminster Hall; and when they have pecked out one another's eyes, they pull their feathers. Is this to fight the Lord's battle? No, it is to be on the dragon's side. Do we war against the world? No, we fight not like Alexander, to subdue it to ourselves, but to subdue ourselves to it. Run through the shops of this city, and you may know by their weapons, false measures, false balances, false lights, false tongues, what they fight for. Oh the mercy of God! Have we forgot our names? Is there no memory of our Christianity left? We had but some prints and relics of it at first; and may we now say, as of Jerusalem, *Etiā perire ruina?* Is there no ruin nor stone left, to tell a man's self, this building was a Christian? It is reported of Orbilius, a grammarian, that he forgot not only the letters of his book, but even his own name. We forget both the prints and letters of the gospel, and withal our own names, that we are Christians. As God said to that evil servant, "Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee," Luke xix. 22; so he will speak to this apostate. By thine own name will I condemn thee; thou namest thyself Christian, yet shamest the profession. Now the Spirit of God purge us from this forgetfulness, and grant us never to forget our purging. Let us never forget such a benefit, that we may never be forgotten by the Author of it.

He "hath forgotten that he was purged." Here is his unthankfulness for this deliverance. What, blind, and forgotten too? How comes this to pass? Blindness should ever have the best memory: what is taken from one sense, is divided among the rest. The ear retains what it is intrusted with the better, when the eye wants occasion to direct it. The memory is like a eage, the ear is the door of it, the eye the window; good doctrines are put like birds in at the door, and fly out again by setting open the window. Indeed the defect of corporal sight hath often mended the memory; but it is not so for spiritual: "Having eyes, see ye not? and do ye not remember?" Mark viii. 18. They neither saw nor remembered. A carnal heart is blind to conceive, ready to forget: "Ever learning, never able to come to the knowledge of the truth," 2 Tim. iii. 7; slow to get, apt to forget. As "Know you not?" was a word often used by St. Paul; so, "Do ye not remember?" was frequent from our Saviour Christ. "Hold fast the form of sound words: that good thing which was committed unto thee, keep," 2 Tim. i. 13. 14. An auditor should not be like the sponge, that holds all water both good and bad; nor like the sieve, that holds no water, neither good nor bad; nor like the bolter, that keeps in the coarse bran, and throws out the fine flour; but like the sery, that keeps in the good seed, and casteth out the dust and unprofitable darnel. One said of our country, that it had fair houses, but had chimneys, because they have so little smoke of hospitality: so we have excellent ears, but bad memories; quick conceptions, brittle retentions: not a nation under heaven hears so many good sermons; not a nation under heaven sooner forgets them. Many arts are taught among us, of quick reading, of short writing, where by brachygraphical characters they will take a sermon verbatim; but there is one art I would some good body would teach it us; it is the art of memory; that as sermons are taken word for word in our papers, so they might be written sense for sense in our hearts.

Now if my power were answerable to my will, I would teach you this art. *Posse mihi is tribuit qui mihi velle dedit.* To dispose this discourse of memory into some method, lest it be confounded in that should teach it: the object of memory specified in the

text, is double; the estate of sin wherein we lay polluted, and the estate of cleansing wherein we stood recovered. So that the point is here confined to sins or good works. For our sins, let us first learn how to remember them, and then how we may forget them.

First, for their remembrance. Chrysostom says, nothing more helps us forward in a good course, than the frequent recognition of our sins. David specially entitleth the 38th Psalm a memorandum, "A Psalm of David, to bring to remembrance." Upon good reason, saith Euthymius, because he made it when he called his sins to remembrance: "Mine iniquities," &c. ver. 4. Paul thus remembers his former sinfulness of life. I was a blasphemer, &c. 1 Tim. i. 13; and so he became more zealous to save sinners than before he had been ferious to kill the godly; of a violent persecutor, he became a valiant sufferer. Our sins are innumerable, who can tell how oft he offendeth? Psal. xix. 12. Thou rememberest not the sins of one day; how great a mass have many days made up! too great a bottom for one hour's sorrow to ravel out. "Have ye forgotten the wickedness of your fathers, and your own wickedness," that you "are not humbled even unto this day?" Jer. xlv. 9. If we forget our sins, God will remember them. The wicked man would put out the eye of knowledge, and stupify the memory of infinite comprehension: "He hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten," Psal. x. 11. But, "These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes," Psal. l. 21. The forborne debtor may forget, but the forbearing Creditor remembers: every parcel is set down in his book. Ahab had forgot Naboth's blood, but God remembers it. Joab had forgot the murder of Abner and Amasa, but David chargeth Solomon to remember it: "Let not his hear head go down to the grave in peace," 1 Kings ii. 6. But if we remember our sins in the day of repentance, God will forget them in the day of vengeance. He will answer as Cato to him that struck him in the bath, and afterwards submitted himself to his mercy; I do not remember that I was smitten. Ananias pleaded against Paul, Lord, remember how much evil he hath done to thy saints: but the Lord answers, He is my chosen vessel, Acts ix. 13. "The times of this ignorance God winked at; but now he commandeth all men every where to repent," Acts xvi. 30. Repent then, and all shall be forgotten. At what time soever, what sinner soever, shall turn from what sin soever, heartily; I will put all his wickedness out of my remembrance: the Lord will forget it: I will be merciful to them, and their sins I will remember no more, Heb. viii. 12. But it is the Holy Ghost that brings all things to our remembrance, John xiv. 26. Now this Holy Spirit of memory teach us thus to remember our sins: that we may think of them with penitent sorrow, and God forget them to our eternal joy.

There is a way also for us to forget them: as we remember them to repentance, so we must forget them in respect of continuance. Otherwise the memory of them doth not reduce us to life, but forward us to death. This is to fetch poison out of a dunghill formerly cast forth. He that remembers his sins in sorrow, falls, like Abraham, forward on his face to God: he that remembers them to practise, falls, like the Jews, backward from Jesus Christ. If thou be on the mountain, have no love to look back to Sodom. If thou be in the ark, fly not back to the world, as the raven did. If thou be set on for Canaan, forget the flesh-pots of Egypt. If marching against Midian,

forget stooping to the waters of Harod, Judg. vii. If on the house-top, forget that is below thee, Mark xiii. 15. If thy hand be put to the plough, forget that is behind thee, Luke ix. 62. Themistocles desired rather to learn the art of forgetfulness, than of memory. Philosophy is an art of remembering, divinity includes in it an art of forgetting. The first lesson that Socrates taught his scholars was, Remember; for he thought that knowledge was nothing else but a calling to remembrance of those things the mind knew ere it knew the body. But the first lesson that Christ teacheth his scholars is, Forget: "Forget thine own people," Psal. xlv. 10; "Repent," Matt. iv. 17; first, "eschew evil," 1 Pet. iii. 11.

They which dye cloth, do not immediately change one contrary into another; but first turn white into an azure, then make it a puke, &c.; so we can never hold colour, or have our integrity dyed in grain, but by mediate degrees. What we did ill get we must well forget; (*Liricens*.) and happily unlearn what we did unhappily learn. They that work in wax, cannot form a new impression but by defacing the old; till Satan's image be extinguished, Christ's cannot be imprinted in us. We must forget the wilderness, that we may dwell in Canaan. Faith is that fair Helen, which drinks to us in a cup of Nepenthe, and says, "There shall be no more sorrow; for the former things are passed away," Rev. xxi. 4. The hearty draught of the living fountain, shall make a man not to "remember the days of his life, because God answereth him in the joy of his heart," Eccles. v. 20. The Scripture is full of this language. "Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old," Isa. xliii. 18. There are some dissolute persons, that laugh at the memorial of their sins: shall they not weep tears of blood for those smiles? Woe be to them that thus laugh! for they shall weep, Luke vi. 25. When they are past committing, they applaud themselves in recounting, in reporting their aspersions of fraud, blood, or lust; they glory in their shame, Phil. iii. 19. They remember that on earth laughing, which they must remember in hell howling. This is a cursed commemoration; when an old man shall glory in his former whoredoms, boast his homicides, yea, perhaps (if it be possible) make himself worse than ever he was. Some men lie to save their credits; and that is as if one should wipe his mouth on his sleeve to spare his napkin. But this man tells lies to increase his discredit, and to fill up the measure of his torments. As if his damnation could not otherwise be heavy enough, his tongue shall make up the weight which his hands failed to accomplish. Here is a damnable remembrance of sin; not by penitence, to cleanse the soul, but by impudence, more to foul it: "Why boastest thou thyself in mischief?" Psal. lii. 1.

No, but if thou hast had a flux of malice, as that woman a flux of blood, twelve years, Mark v.; now being cured, forget that bloodiness. If thou hast been depressed with worldliness, as another woman with a spirit of infirmity, eighteen years, Luke xiii.: now being rectified, forget that crookedness. Though blind from thy birth, as the man, John ix., now having thine eyes opened, forget thy former cecity. Though formerly deaf and dumb, Mark vii. 32, upon Christ's Ephphatha, forget those orities. Though thy charity were dried up, like that man's withered hand, Matt. xii. 10; yet now, upon the restitution of it, forget all dryness and niggardliness. Though thou wert a cripple from the womb, Acts xiv. 8, yet now, being recovered, forget all limping and halting with God. Though buried in the grave four days, yet now, being revived, forget all deadness in sin. Though before tormented with seven devils, as Mary Magda-

lene; yet, being dispossessed, forget the devil and all his works. Forget Babylon, but remember Jerusalem: "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, if I do not remember thee," let both my hand and mouth miscarry, and forget their offices, Psal. cxxxvii. 5, 6. Forget thy old sinful life: "So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty," Psal. xlv. 11. Forget not the mercies of God, lest God forget to do you good: but forget all the injuries of men: write the wrongs in their dust, and cover all offences done to you with a mantle of charity. The sum of all is, Remember your sins to repent of them, forget to practise them; that God may forget them in judgment, and remember you in mercy and salvation.

This be the method of memory in respect of sin; now for the works of grace; I do not mean such as God hath wrought in us, but such as ourselves by his grace have done. There is a rule how they may be remembered, and how they must be forgotten.

Our virtues and good works may be after some manner remembered. Our conscience is exceedingly comforted by the memory of our zealousness to serve God. (*Bern.*) The kingdom of God consists in "righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost," Rom. xiv. 17. Now if there be knowledge of righteousness, then certainly there will be peace of conscience; and these cannot be without joy of the Holy Ghost. Job hath a whole chapter of these holy remembrances, chap. xxxi. "If I have walked," &c.; and he concludes, "My heart shall not reproach me from my days," chap. xxvii. 6. So sick Hezekiah cheered himself; "Lord, remember how I have walked before thee with a perfect heart," Isa. xxxviii. 3. So Obadiah after a sort justified himself to Elijah; Didst thou not hear how I saved the prophets of the Lord from Jezebel? 1 Kings xviii. 13. The purpose of this repetition, is not to boast merits, but to seek mercies. Neither must this line of remembered goodness be there cut off, but extended forth still; like a man that counts his miles past, but yet goes on his journey. "He that is holy, let him be holy still," Rev. xxii. 11. The further men fetch their career backward to take their run, the further they leap forward when they have run. So a sober recognition of our former obedience, remembering what peace of conscience we had in that service, encourageth our future constancy. There are some who, looking to this record, find their own names blank. What, no good deeds? Yes, but they have lost their memories; they cannot call to mind where, or when, or how they performed them. Like the drunkard who sought all the inns in the town for his horse, when indeed he came thither on foot. These men may blame their bad memories, but the fault is in their bad hands and hearts. Some have their good deeds written upon hospital walls, perhaps lest God should forget them; but we will charitably construe it, that they were recorded there rather by the gratitude of the receivers, than by the popular desire of the contributors. Howsoever, it is somewhat that they have good deeds to remember. But too many have none at all: will you blame their memories? no, God amend their lives.

In another course, our good works are to be forgotten, and not mentioned: let them be remembered to enliven our obedience, and comfort our conscience; but rather than we should arrogate merit by them, oblivion take them. He that in pride remembers his virtues, hath indeed no virtues to remember, because he wants the mother virtue of all, humility. Here is one difference between good and evil men: both remember virtues; good men remember the virtues of others, evil men their own. They think on others' virtues as ensamples to imitate, these on their own as miracles to wonder at. The way to

have God remember them, is for ourselves to forget them. Abraham was content to offer up Isaac; but then he forgets it, therefore God remembers it. "Because thou hast done this thing," Gen. xxii. 16; there is the general. What thing? The particular follows; "and hast not withheld;" not thy servant, but "thy son;" and not only thy son, but thy "only son;" therefore "in blessing I will bless thee." Mary showed to Christ great kindness; but when she had done, she thought it not worth remembrance; therefore Christ repeats it, and amplifies it from point to point. Simon, thou gavest me neither water to my feet, nor kiss to my mouth, nor oil to my head; but she hath washed me with tears, kissed with her lips, and anointed my very feet, Luke vii. 44-46.

Who dares boast himself to God? If in a brave theomachy thy memory produceth a thousand good works, God's memory will bring forth ten thousand of thy sins, to knock thee down. Therefore let us cast down our most flourishing branches, Matt. xxi. 8, and our most glorious crowns, Rev. iv. 10, at the feet of Christ. If Sennacherib have conquered kingdoms, you shall hear him crack it; "Where is the king of Hamath?" &c. Isa. xxxvii. 13. If Nebuchadnezzar have built a stately palace, he must brag of it; "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the honour of my majesty?" Dan. iv. 30. David himself could not be content with the multitude of his people, but he must needs number them, 2 Sam. xxiv. 2. If Hezekiah have rich treasures, he must needs show them, 2 Kings xx. 13. Victorious Samson must glory in his conquests; "With the jaw of an ass have I slain a thousand men," Judg. xv. 16. But for us, though we give alms, let us sound no trumpets, Matt. vi. 2; though we fast twice a week, let us make no words of it, Luke xviii. 12. God best likes of those good works that be covered under the fleece of humble silence. So the Lord that seeth in secret will reward openly, Matt. vi. 4. The Christian's glory is his humility. (Leo.) St. Paul was "in nothing behind the very chiefest apostles;" yet he accounts himself nothing, 2 Cor. xii. 11. "I laboured more abundantly than they all," 1 Cor. xv. 10; yet he forgets it. "I speak with tongues more than ye all," 1 Cor. xiv. 18. "I speak wisdom among them that are perfect," 1 Cor. ii. 6. "I fought with beasts at Ephesus after the manner of men," 1 Cor. xv. 32. Yea, he calls all the former sufferings, "things without;" he had a thing within that troubled him, "the care of all the churches," 2 Cor. xi. 28. He was rapt up to the third heaven, and perfected his knowledge among the angels. Yet he esteems, *hoc atiquid, hoc magnum, hoc mirum, hoc totum, nihil*; he forgets all this in regard of merit, as if it were nothing. Whereas we, if we have done one thing well, or at one time well, think we have done enough. Orpheus going to hell to fetch out his wife Eurydice, had her granted him on this condition, that he should not turn back to look upon her till he had brought her forth. But being forward a good way, in an excessive love, *flavit amans oculos, et protinus illa relapsa est*, he looked back, and so lost both her sight and herself; but perhaps when he considered better of the matter, he was willing to be rid of her. This fiction is not without the moral; if we have any virtue, though it be as dear as a wife unto us, let us not dote on it with a self-loving admiration; lest by too much looking, and too well liking, we lose it. Let us not be too memorious of our good works; it is enough that God will not forget them. This deed shall be "told for a memorial of her," Matt. xxvi. 13. We had better have one written in heaven, than a thousand in earth;

whosoever forgets them, the comfort is, they shall be remembered of Christ.

The sum of all is this, unthankfulness is even forgetful. This is the first degree of apostasy. They "forgot his works," and "remembered not his hand, nor the day when he delivered them from the enemy," Psal. lxxviii. 11, 42. Nathan taxed David with this forgetfulness: How much hath God done for thee! yet hast thou forgotten it, and despised his commandment, 2 Sam. xii. 8. So Pharaoh's officer forgot Joseph, when he came to his preferment. "Joash the king remembered not the kindness of Jehoiada, but slew his son," 2 Chron. xxiv. 22. Hath God delivered, purged, blessed us, and can we forget it? Beware lest thou lift up thine heart, and forget the Lord, Deut. viii. 14. David would not suffer the blessings of God to lie unseem of men, unremembered of his own heart, but he proclaims them; "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul," Psal. lxxvi. 16. Let others write the kindnesses of their friends, I will relate to you the mercies of my God, Psal. xl. 10, and lxxi. 15. Of all faculties of the soul, the memory is most delicate, tender, and brittle, and soonest decayeth; and of all objects of memory, a benefit soonest grows old. Yet it is an easy work of memory to think on him that made us; here is no overcharging it with numerous objects; to remember only one thing, the mercy of thy God. It is no weakening to thy body, no decay to thy store, no emptying to thy purse: O then be thankful. And yet all thy riches, thy fatings, thy first-fruits, thy best oblations, are not so acceptable; it is more welcome than the bullock that hath horn and hoof. "Hath God forgotten to be gracious?" Psal. lxxvii. 9. He hath then left his old wont. No, David had forgotten the richness of his mercy; therefore he recollects himself; "This is my infirmity; but I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High," ver. 10. Not the moments, nor the hours, nor days of a few short afflictions, that his left hand hath dealt to me; but the years of his right hand, those long, large, and boundless mercies wherewith he hath comforted me. "When they forgot the Lord, he sold them into the hand of Sisera, and to the Philistines," 1 Sam. xii. 9. They that forget the Lord, shall be delivered into the hand of Sisera, captain of the enemy's host, that is, Satan; or to the Philistines, the lusts of the flesh; or to Moab, that is, the world. "Consider this, ye that forget God," Psal. l. 22: though you forget your own country, and your father's house; though you forget the wife of your bosom, and the fruit of your own loins; though you forget to eat your bread and take your sleep; yet remember your sanctification, forget not that you were purged by the blood of Christ. If you have treasures and gems, you desire a cabinet to put them in: I have showed you a cabinet for all the jewels of grace you have gathered, the memory. If you have received any good, there preserve it. Paul tells the Hebrews, "Ye have forgotten the exhortation," Heb. xii. 5; let it never be said of you, that ye have forgotten the exhortation spoken to you.

"Forgotten that he was purged." There remains yet one degree more of application and amplification of this point. Consider we the price of our purgation, and we shall more willingly part from our corruption. If the blood of God's Son was spilt and spent to discharge us of sin, how odious should sin appear to us! Oh let no sin be held so dear as to be retained, when God retained not his dearest Son for us. When Abraham offered up Isaac, God said, I see thou lovest me; but when God offered up his

Son for us (that were, not as God to Abraham, a friendly Creator, but) enemy creatures, we may well say, Lord, we see that thou lovest us. Abraham's offering Isaac was a grievous trial, both for the matter and the manner: that *talis, talem, taliter*. 1. That the sacrificer should be a father. It is contranatural and execrable for a son to slay his father, to give death to him that gave him life. Herodotus writes of some that held it impossible for a son to kill his father. A great lawgiver made no law for it, as a thing never to be done. If any were suspected or accused for it, they would conclude that either he had not done it, or that he was a bastard; they could not be persuaded that any son would commit parricide. But now it is more strange for a father to slay his son; for love more descends than ascends. We have read of young ones that killed their own dam; we never read of a dam that killed her own young ones. But here Isaac is doomed to die, not by the hand of an enemy, not by a stranger, not by an executioner, not by a murderer; but by a father, a mild, gentle, holy, loving father. Abraham might say, Oh that it were only his destiny to die, and not to die by the hand of his father. 2. That the sacrifice should be his son, his Isaac, his joy; not only his son, but his only son. Not one of many; yet Jacob cannot spare one of twelve, he weeps for Joseph, he is grieved to part with Benjamin. Yea, that it must be that son from whom the Messiah was to come; the hope of salvation to himself, and all the ends of the earth. 3. That he must die after such a manner; a sacrifice to God, who delights not in the blood of men; and this, himself not standing by, but with his own hand. Since he must die, oh that another hand might do it, and the father not see it! Dost thou lament thy son dying, what wouldst thou do if thyself wert commanded to kill him? God remembers this faithful service with an oath: "By myself have I sworn," that I will bless thee for it, Gen. xxii. 16.

Sure he was loth his tender son to kill;

But much more loth to break his Father's will.

But now to what purpose is all this? Yes, Abraham puts us in mind of God the Father; Isaac was a type of Christ: either gives up his only son, but with great difference. Abraham's duty was but a shadow of God's bounty. 1. Abraham at God's command was bound to do it, as a creature to his Maker; but who could command God? Children are commanded by parents, their parents by magistrates, those magistrates by princes, those princes by God, God himself by none. 2. Abraham did this for a loving friend, God did it for hating enemies; "When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son," Rom. v. 10. 3. Abraham offered a mortal son sure to die; God offered an immortal Son to death indeed. The one must have died though his father should never kill him; the other could never have died, unless the Father had delivered him to death. Besides, he that was mortal escaped, he that was immortal died.

Now wherefore did God all this? To purge us from sin. So he killed his Son, that he might kill our sin; he was crucified, that iniquity might be mortified. Ponder them, and weigh the reasons why our Saviour died. Samson suffered his hair, his strength, to be lost for Delilah: Christ suffered himself to be betrayed and murdered for us. Jacob endured fourteen years' service for Rachel: Christ above thirty years' passion for us. Rachel was fair, therefore Jacob loved her: we were foul and polluted, yet Christ loved us; he did descend from his own royalty, to deliver us from misery. Divers kings

have left their regal seats for a monastery: Christ forsook heaven for earth, a crown of joys for a crown of thorns. *Exemplum sine exemplo!* Many refuse heaven for earth's sake, because they know not those supernal joys: Christ knew heaven, for it was his own. All this for sin. Fie, filthy sin, that any soul should hereafter love thee! For this cause turn from iniquity to righteousness: do thou for God's sake not spare thy dearest sin, when God for thy sake did not spare his dearest Son. Fall not back to wickedness and pollution; remember thou art purged by Jesus Christ.

VERSE 10.

Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall.

THE scope of this verse is persuasive and hortatory; wherein the apostle labours to reduce Christianity to practice, that as men have a plentiful hope of salvation, so they may show a liberal argument of sanctification. "For every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself;" 1 John iii. 3. And he that is freed from damnation, walks after the Spirit, Rom. viii. 1. Neither can there be a sound testimony of conscience that we are in God's favour, if it be not joined with the integrity of life. That which from everlasting stood sure in heaven by God's decree of election, this make sure to yourselves on earth by your conversion from evil, and conversation in goodness. As God hath his *statutum est*, so must you have your *probatum est*. Christ hath bequeathed to all believers a legacy of glory, entitle yourselves to it by your faith and holiness. "Make your election sure." It was ever sure in God's prescience, now make it sure to your own conscience. Which when you have done, be established in your hearts; "ye shall never fall." He that hath a grant from the king under the broad seal, and hath also interested and strengthened himself in this grant, and hath approved himself *coram facie judicis*, wants now nothing but possession, which the sheriff cannot deny him. So the Christian having both these made sure to him, when death shall manumit him, the angels shall bring him to the inheritance, and the gate of glory shall give open way, the Porter not being Peter, but the Lord Jesus himself. A man in your city is to be made free by his father's copy; you demand proof that he is such a man's son; he proves it by testimony, you cannot deny his freedom. The Father of heaven makes all Christians free by Christ's copy; "If the Son therefore make you free, ye shall be free indeed," John viii. 36. Thou comest and demandest thy freedom: where is the testimony that thou art such a Father's son? here, my faith, and some measure of obedience. Christ will answer, "Well done, good and faithful servant: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord," Matt. xxv. 21.

"Wherefore the rather, brethren," &c. The whole verse may be distributed into.

An exhortation, Be diligent to make your election sure.

A confirmation, If ye do ye shall never fall.

The exhortation contains in it,

An induction, Brethren, be diligent.

An instruction, Make your calling certain.

In the former there is a word,

Of connexion, Wherefore.

Of affection, Brethren.

Of direction, Give diligence
Of election, Rather, to this than other things.
In the other is considerable,
The matter expressed, Make your calling and election sure.

The manner implied, How it may be made sure.

The confirmation offers to be considered by,

A qualification, If ye do these things.

A ratification, You shall never fall.

The first branch of the first particular of the first general, is the word of connexion, "Wherefore." This word infers a consequence on the premises, or is a reason of the precedent speech. The apostle had formerly discovered the danger of such as forget their own purging. But there are many that forget not that they were purged by the redemption of Christ, but remember it too much; and from this derive encouragement of a licentious life, quitting themselves from all sins by his passion. "But ye have not so learned Christ," Eph. iv. 20. Was your first lesson Christ's cross, and did you so construe it, "Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?" Rom. vi. 1. He that thus spells Christ, hath but small literature of religion. "Thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee," John v. 14. Here is a cure, a diet, and a danger. "Thou art made whole;" there is the cure. "Sin no more;" there is the diet. "Lest a worse thing come unto thee;" there is the danger. "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity," 2 Tim. ii. 19. Art thou a Christian? *Sit illi dominatio, a quo denominatio*, Acknowledge him thy Lord, of whom thou hast thy name and title: do not usurp that name unless thou lead an answerable life. Otherwise, though thou carry awhile the name of a Christian, thou wilt find at last the reward of an infidel. If ye call God, Father, "pass the time of your sojourning here in fear," 1 Pet. i. 17. Shall we acknowledge a Father, and deny him honour? The end of our conversion, is to amend our conversation; and that word which sounds peace, and joy, and remission of sins, leaves this lesson behind it, Sin no more. As upon a general pardon granted at a royal parliament, the prisons are emptied; yet the prisoners and malefactors, three memorable words spoken to them, *Exite, gaudete, cavete*, Go forth, rejoice in your liberty, but beware lest your sins bring you back again. He that draws arguments of presumption and riot from Christ's death and passion, hath not perhaps forgotten his Saviour, but remembers him to the improvement of his own damnation.

"Brethren." This is a word of relation, betwixt the persons to whom, and the persons from whom, this admonition is sent. This declares in the apostle two virtues; his humility, and his holy policy: both attribute to us some dignity, and require from us some duty.

For his humility; he prefers not himself to the rest of God's saints, but calls them all brethren. How contemptibly would he judge of the pope's arrogated primacy! What sacrilegious pride would he take it, to be called the father of all men, which is incommunicably proper to God himself! Indeed God bestowed upon Abraham this title, to be called "the father of all them that believe," Rom. iv. 11. But this was a fatherhood of example only. He might be a father in respect of generation to the Jews; he can be father in respect of regeneration to none. Himself was the son of faith, though called the father of believers. But "doubtless, O Lord, thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us," Isa. lxiii. 16. And this our title, to the fatherhood of God, and brotherhood of Christians, is through

Christ; who is both *Pater noster*, and *Frater noster*. Our Father: "Behold I and the children which God hath given me," Heb. ii. 13. Our Brother; "He is not ashamed to call us brethren," ver. 11. See here then the different spirit of St. Peter and the pope; one calls himself the brother, the other the father, of the saints. Indeed the pastor may call his people children; and Paul calls Timothy his son, when he commends himself to him; "Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith," 1 Tim. i. 2: when he commends him to others, he calls him brother; "Our brother Timothy is set at liberty," Heb. xiii. 23. But, saith our Saviour, "Call no man your father upon the earth; for one is your Father, which is in heaven," Matt. xxiii. 9. Christ doth not there forbid natural, civil, moral relations. Not natural; Jacob may call Isaac father. Not civil; the servants of Naaman spake unto him, "My father," 2 Kings v. 13. Not moral; as Elisha said to ascending Elijah, "My father, my father," 2 Kings ii. 12. Things that are subordinate one to another do not oppose one another: we have one Father in heaven, yet may have many ministerial fathers upon earth; but none in that sense that God is our Father. The father of the church, the pope cannot be called without wrong to God. This title he challengeth in St. Peter's right; but St. Peter himself thinks it wrong. Christ, say they, meant to turn over his right to Peter, as if he were to be his only heir: "Upon this rock I will build my church." But the church had a foundation from the beginning of the world; I hope Peter was not it. He calls us brethren, to show that he had but the privilege of a brother, and did no otherwise than all the rest bear the arms of the elder; he gives them all equal privilege. The Old Testament began in fraternity, Moses and Aaron: so doth the New; Peter and Andrew, James and John, Simon and Jude, Philip and Bartholomew, are also taken to be brethren; so among the twelve apostles, to be four pair of brethren. And as Christ took them from a humble condition of estate, so he gave them a humble opinion of themselves. For condition; he took no gymnosophists from India, nor philosophers from Athens, nor orators from Rome, nor rabbis from Jerusalem; but men of no learning. When he purposed to bring down the proud hearts of men, he did not choose orators to persuade fishers, but fishers to convert emperors. For disposition; though they were dignified to be apostles, yet they remain still humble brethren to the poorest. They had not a lust of sovereignty, but a zeal of charity. If therefore Peter had any primacy, it was not of honour, but of order. Howsoever, as Matthias for succeeding Judas the traitor was never the worse, so the pope for succeeding Peter the saint is never the better.

For his policy; he desires to win their souls, and therefore insinuates himself into their loves. We begin our letters to men of honour with, Honourable; to kindred, with titles of affinity; to friends, with terms of amity; the apostles with the best band, brethren; beloved in the best Beloved, Jesus Christ. The phrase of "brother" begins almost to be worn out; whether through curiosity, or curiality, such Christian salutations are thought too gross. But the apostles wanted to let in their holy counsel by the sweetness of their affection. Notwithstanding their apostolical authority, and beauty of graces, yet they took all courses to insinuate and work into their hearers' hearts. Even when they came with a rod, yet was it not without the spirit of meekness. In reproving of sins, they did it without passion, not without compassion. You may therefore well pardon us, if with points of humanity we illustrate points of

divinity; if, according to your capacities, from earthly things we reason to heavenly. So did our Saviour; If ye, being evil parents, can give good gifts to your children; how much more shall our heavenly Father give good things to you! Matt. vii. 11. Philosophers were enemies to the gospel; give us leave to confute them with their own reasons, to cut off Goliath's head with his own sword. All this while we give to secular learning praise, but no more than it deserves. It is a learned ignorance; yet if we can make it, like Balaam's ass, speak to purpose, you have no wrong. In all our courses we seek, not yours, but yourselves: we love your souls, let your souls accept of our loves. If you will answer God in obedience, you answer us in the desire of our hearts.

"Brethren." This title ascribes to the people some dignity; that by faith in Christ they become brethren to the very apostles, and have the fraternity of the heavenly saints. Alliance to princes is held a noble happiness; but let us bless him that hath by the cement of his blood allied us to those glorious and triumphant saints in heaven. Be thou never so poor, if a true believer, Peter and Paul, yea, Jesus Christ himself, is thy brother.

Again, this term is not without some requirable duty. Is the minister thy brother? hear him. If God had spoken only by angels, or by some raised from the dead, or by himself in thunder, this had been terror; but by thy brother, this is the sweetness of familiar mercy. The Lord doth raise up unto us prophets of our own brethren, Acts iii. 22. But take heed lest God's gentleness be abused by thy contempt: it is the word of thy Judge and Maker, though in the mouth of thy brother. I know that worldly greatness doth easily run into this scorn: What! shall such a poor man reprove me? Yes; "I have set thee over nations and kingdoms," Jer. i. 10. I have chosen him "to bear my name before Gentiles and kings," Acts ix. 15. "Thou must prophesy before people, and nations, and kings," Rev. x. 11. If thou be the shepherd, suffer none to pollute the fountain wherof the sheep should drink. I know that the poorer sort are presumptuous enough, but they want teeth and horns: The sons of Zeruiah are too hard for us. If our conscience and the salvation of our souls lay not upon it, it were better for us to hold our peace. I speak not only concerning the pains; if a man knew the burden, it would take away his stomach. Hierome on those words of Paul, "If a man desire the office of a bishop," &c. 1 Tim. iii. 1: Alas, who doth not desire it? But to be a bishop was then the first step to persecution: if it were still so, to be pricked for death, few would so much affect it. But I speak concerning the opposition of malice, rather than the imposition of labour; herein consists our sorrow and trouble. The shepherd having a lamb stolen out of his flock, vowed to God, if he could find the thief, to sacrifice a ram to him. But when in the pursuit he found a lion preying on it he made a new vow, that if God would deliver him from the lion, he would not only content himself with the loss of his lamb, but also sacrifice a bull to him. If a sheep be endangered, we vow sacrifice of thankfulness if we may recover it: but seeking the lost lamb, we meet with a lion, some great tyrant, that hath perverted him to feed his own humour and sensual lust; we are now fain to return without our lamb, and glad to escape the lion. The sick man loathes the cup wherein the potion was brought him, though it qualified the malignancy of his disease; so many for private quarrels hate the vessel, the minister, though he brings them the water of life. It is Satan's master-piece, or special trick, to put jar betwixt the pastor and the people.

Our feet should be beautiful, and we do what we can to gain your affections, to draw you on with sweet allurements to everlasting peace; yet still, as the prophet speaks, there are some that will contend with the priests. You give the physician leave to tell the disease of your bodies; the lawyer to show you any flaw in your estates; your horse-keeper shall tell you the surfeits of your horse; your huntsman the surrances of your dogs: only we must dissemble, and conceal from you the sickness of your souls. We will not do it: we will pray for you, and honour you, and love you; but your sins we will reprove, and what God hath bidden us, that we will speak. And for you that come hither to fetch seeds of lust from the temple, to seek out the devil in God's house, as if you could not find him in the places of prostitution; you that come hither to detract and traduce, and think to enhance your credits of learning and wit by disgracing the preacher; you come not as brothers and saints, but as enemies, and worse. If there be any such present, my admonition is well spent; if none at all, it is well and happily lost.

"Give diligence." *Studele, satagite, σπουδάσατε.* Terrene profits, though *tanto non digna labore*, come not without diligence. Doth a man reap without sowing! The apostle says, "Give to him that needeth," Eph. iv. 28; and, "Above all things put on charity," Col. iii. 14: yet he says withal, He that labours not, let him not eat. Doth he here put off that charity which he bids us put on? No, *indulget riro, non rito*; he would have us favour the person, not the fault; and relieve *egentes*, such as want; but withal *agentes*, such as work. The philosophers thought the world was immortal and eternal; for otherwise, say they, God were idle, and should have had nothing to do before the creation. They knew not the Divine contemplation of his own essence in Three Persons; they considered not that incomprehensible delight, nor that infinite business of rest, and rest of business, that he had in himself. They were deceived in that, but not in this, that idleness is not incident to God. How much less should it be in man, his servant, that begs of this God his daily bread! Until we come to the threshold of heaven, there is no rest of travail; but then we shall rest from our labours, Rev. xiv. 13. The idle person may seem to be God's outlawry: slothfulness is a remora that sticks to our sides, and hinders the bark from the voyage of bliss. God built his temple on a threshing-floor; there must be labour in that place, though after a different manner. As Christ did not wholly put his apostles out of their trade; he made them still fishers, but of souls.

It is a true maxim in philosophy, Art and nature bring forth nothing suddenly: and is it not so in divinity? Doth any man think, that hath lived all his years profane, to be made at his last hour a saint? Never tell us, that one malefactor sped so; for then we tell you, that one ass did speak; yet never was ass or ox heard speak since: grace that is presumed, may be missed. You have not wealth from the clouds without digging, and would you have blessing from the clouds without working? The labour of our bodies for this world, was but a curse; the labour of our souls for heaven, is a blessing. We may ignorantly give our bread to the slothful: God hath too much knowledge to give salvation upon such terms. "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly appear?" 1 Pet. iv. 18. He that gives all diligence to enter into heaven, finds great difficulty, but he shall get in; but he that lies sleeping in his sins, must tarry without. The foolish virgins knock at the door, but were denied entrance, Matt. xxv. 12. Would you needs sleep? sleep your last. When

Jupiter, in the fable, had invited all living creatures to a banquet, the tortoise came at the taking up of the table; whereat he storming, the tortoise excused himself, that his house troubled him: hereupon angry Jove adjudged him for ever to keep in his shell. So when God calls we have a house that hinders us, some lower, domestical, and earthly content; beware lest all our happiness be confined thither.

"Give diligence." This exhortation presupposeth no proper strength of our own to do this, for it is God's work in us. Augustine says, Sometimes I would have done this or that good thing; and I had will, but I wanted power; and again, I had power, but then I wanted will: either will or power were missing. Will and power, like the sun and clouds, would fain meet: the clouds strive to come to the sun, but they are too weak, and soluble, and melting: the sun would embrace the clouds, and call them near to himself; but then his beams are so hot, that they disperse them: these two could never meet till they were brought together by the wind. So our will to goodness, and our power of performance, cannot meet, till they be brought together by the Spirit, that holy wind which blows where it listeth, John iii. 8. The wheel runs round, not because it is made round, but because it is moved round. In the commandment, perceive what thou oughtest to have; in sin, perceive what thou hast not; in faith and prayer, perceive where it is to be had which thou desirest. (August.) "I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart," Psal. cxix. 32. By nature our feet are tied with the fetters of corruption, we cannot run. Wilt thou run with thy feet, before thou have eyes? or with thy eyes and feet, without thy heart? or with thy heart, before God hath freed it? Canst thou run the way without the way, which is Jesus Christ? We know whither our diligence must run for help: entreat Christ to entreat his Father; for he is delighted with his prayer, and requires it of him: "Ask of me, and I shall give thee," Psal. ii. 8. It was but hyperbolical in Trajan, it is true in our God, He can as soon cease to be, as to be good to his. God's hand was never shut from giving, if man's mouth be not shut from asking. Misery is the best orator for mercy: God loves to be solicited; "Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee," Psal. l. 15. He that inviteth all to come in mercy, will receive all that do come in justice. Yet cannot our petitionary diligence deserve this: it is obtained not *prece*, *sed pretio*; by the precious blood and merits of Christ.

"Rather." Let not the goodness of God, which without your desert hath chosen and called you to the profession of Christ, forgiving and purging your former sins, make you idle and careless. But rather strive to answer this mercy in your faithful conversation; lest you fall into that pit of destruction, from whence by his death he hath redeemed you. Let your obedience consent in a sweet harmony with God's mercies, that you may be capable of his promises, and not be cut off like withered and fruitless branches. "The rather." He doth seem to encourage this endeavour, partly by the benefit, partly by the danger, and partly by the reward: the first whereof incites our gratitude, the next our fear, the last our hope. 1. The rather, because you have received such benefit, as cleansing from sin by Christ's blood. Oh what sin should be so dear to us, as God's only Son was to him! 2. The rather, for fear lest a recidivation overthrow all your happiness. As Demas lost himself, by loving this present world, 2 Tim. iv. 10. Seven worse spirits may make a re-entry, when upon the expulsion of one there is found a vacancy.

Let's wife had as good have dwelt in Sodom still, as to look back after her deliverance. If the righteous turn away from his righteousness, in the sin that he hath sinned he shall die, Ezek. xviii. 24. A man hath been dangerously sick, is now something recovered; if by misgovernment he fall into a relapse, he exacerbates the disease. The first sickness of the body feeds upon ill humours, the relapse on the vital spirits. For a wound half cured to come to a new incision, is more painful than ever. It would grieve a traveller, got half-way forward his journey, losing all that, to return, and begin again. Are ye so foolish, that having begun in the Spirit, ye will be made perfect by the flesh? Gal. iii. 3. No, rather give all diligence to continue; and call upon God for perseverance, who alone can keep us from the gripping paws and grinding jaws of that roaring lion. It is said, Zech. iv. 9, that "the hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it." So it is God that begins the good work in us, and God that accomplisheth it. Indeed he chargeth us to give diligence; "Thy God hath commanded thy strength," Psal. lxxviii. 28; but he may command and go without, unless effectuate it, as it follows; "Strengthen, O God, that which thou hast wrought for us." I know that God's cleft may for a time lose some good means, and some great measure of grace; many have fallen foully and fully, none finally. It is only God's mercy that upholds us; giving us grace preventive, subsequent, co-operant: grace before grace, grace after grace. It is not of ourselves that we persevere to the end, and in the end; but we "are kept by the power of God unto salvation," 1 Pet. i. 5. 3. The rather, in respect of the reward: thus shall you be sure that you are written in heaven, never to be blotted out. There is no assurance in this world like it: wert thou sure to enjoy more kingdoms than ever the devil showed Christ, to be more healthful than Moses, to live longer than Methuselah; yet this is the end, *misero dormire sepulchro*, to lie hidden in the silent dust. Plot and project what you can, the best plot of all is salvation; and the best assurance, to live with Jesus Christ for ever.

"To make your calling and election sure." We have done with the induction, and are now come to the instruction; and herein first to the matter expressed, the making sure of our election and calling. Which we will first look upon *quoad ordinem*, then *quoad cardinem*, if I may so speak: first what is their order, then what is their dependence. For the order, the apostle puts vocation in the former place, which yet in propriety is the latter; for election is before all time, vocation in time: his purpose was toward us in Christ Jesus, before the world began, 2 Tim. i. 9. Calling comes afterward: this is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation, 2 Cor. vi. 2. But this is a right form and method of speech, to set that last, which is worthiest and weightiest. Besides, we pass by things nearer to things more remote: first, we must look to our calling, and by our calling come to assurance of our election. For dependence, we must know that our calling depends upon our election.

The determinate counsel of God doth not take away second means, but disposeth those passages into order. These two, election and vocation, are like Jacob's ladder, whereupon the saints ascend like angels to God: election is the top, vocation the foot. Jacob wrestled with the angel at the foot of the ladder, we must not be so proud as to wrestle with him at the top. To the height of election there is no climbing, unless we begin at calling, which is the lowest round. To say, If I be saved, I am saved,

without further care, is the devil's divinity. There is no certainty in that : look to thy calling, thus it is made sure. Otherwise to presume, is to pull down the ladder, and think to jump into heaven : never had man yet such luck. If Magus offer to fly up to heaven, there is a spirit to cast him down headlong. When our Saviour was on the pinnacle, Satan thought with a *Scriptum est* to break his neck : "It is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee," &c. Matt. iv. 6. But he left out a material point, "in all thy ways." That the people might know him to be the Messias, he persuades him to show them an unwarrantable miracle, to cast himself down in a bravery : but that was none of his ways ; he might descend by the stairs without such a precipice. This cunning he still practiseth on his members ; he sets them upon the high pinnacle of predestination, and persuades them there to a desperate precipitation, with, If I am elected, I am elected, &c. But this is none of God's ways, or prescribed means, whereby we may be acquainted with our own election. "I will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth ; and the earth shall hear the corn, wine, and oil ; and they shall hear Jezreel," Hos. ii. 21, 22 : there is a course and order for fruitfulness. So election in heaven calls to vocation on earth ; vocation calls for corn, wine, oil, that is, the fruits of a good life ; and these tell our hearts with comfort, that we are elected. God works by Christ, Christ by his word, his word by his Spirit, the Spirit certifieth our hearts, our hearts stand fast by faith, faith lays hold upon Christ ; and now back again, Christ presents us to God.

There are six ascents to heaven, as there were to Solomon's throne. The first and lowest is vocation ; "No man can come to me, except the Father draw him," John vi. 44. The second is repentance ; when God hath called the heart from sin, it melts into tears, and is smitten with a holy remorse. The next is faith, which believes the pardon of repented sins, and the adoption through Christ to peace. The fourth is the testimony of the Holy Ghost ; "The Spirit beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God," Rom. viii. 16. Albeit this Spirit works before, and begetteth the former graces, yet now it is especially felt. The next is peace of conscience ; all the clamours of sin, and terrors of the law, being quieted : "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God," Rom. v. 1. The last is good works, the fruits of a sanctified obedience, and effects of the former graces, which concur to the making up of this assurance. Thus here is, as in some great prince's court, first, the gate, that is, vocation. Then, secondly, we must come to the fountain, repentance, to be baptized in our penitent tears. Then, thirdly, to the common hall, faith, which gives us entrance to the throne of grace. Fourthly, we come to the King's special Favourite, his bosom Counsellor, the Holy Ghost. Fifthly, to the presence chamber, peace and security of soul. Lastly, having passed all these, we come to the glorious chair of state, the presential majesty of Jesus Christ. Thus by degrees we enter the doors of joy.

We know there is a sun in heaven, yet we cannot see what matter it is made of, but perceive it only by the beams, light, and heat. Election is a sun, the eyes of eagles cannot see it ; yet we may find it in the heat of vocation, in the light of illumination, in the beams of good works. It is a principle in reason, a perfect action is not received at first but imperfectly ; a habit is not gotten at the first ; salvation is not wrought on a sudden. "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day," Prov. iv. 18. St. Paul con-

siders the chain of our salvation, depending on four links, election, vocation, justification, glorification, Rom. viii. 30 : the first whereof hath no beginning, the last no ending. Here is the kindness of a Father, that singles out some special children, to whom he bears greatest affection, and intends most good ; and in this consists election. In good time he declares his affection, and makes his love manifest to them ; there is vocation. Then he conforms them to his own image, gives them place in court, the honour of children, the earnest of his Spirit, in token of assurance ; there is justification. Lastly, he bids them enter into their Father's joy, makes them co-heirs with his eldest Son in the possession of bliss ; there is glorification. God hath chosen us before the world, created us with the world, called us from the world, justified us in the world, and he will save us in the world to come. He that chose us when we were not, and called us when we were naught, and hath justified us being sinners, will glorify us being saints. The Husbandman of heaven chooseth out a plot of ground at his own pleasure ; there is election : he sows this with the immortal seed, by his word ; there is vocation : he waters it with the dew of Hermon, the graces of his Spirit ; there is sanctification : when it is ripe, he reaps it from the earth, and carries it into the barn of heaven : there is salvation.

The head of Nilus cannot be found, they say ; but many sweet springs issuing from it are well known. The head of our election is too high and secret to be found ; yet we may taste the springs, our calling, holiness, justification, and upright life ; and he that runs along by the bank of these rivers, shall be brought at last to that fountain-head, even the place and book wherein his own name stands written. Joseph may be a fit type to us of our spiritual deliverance. Consider him sold into Egypt, not without the determinate counsel of God, who preordained this to good ; "God did send me before you to preserve life," Gen. xlv. 5. Here is the difference, the brethren sold Joseph, we sold ourselves. Consider us thus sold unto sin and death ; God had a purpose to redeem us ; there is election. Joseph was delivered out of prison, Psal. cv. 20, and we ransomed out of the house of bondage ; there was redemption. Joseph's cause was made known, and himself acquitted ; we could not be found innocent in ourselves, but were acquitted in Christ ; wherein consists our justification. Lastly, Joseph was clothed in glorious apparel, and adorned with golden chains, and made to ride in the second chariot of Egypt ; so our last step is to be advanced to high honour, even the glory of the celestial court ; "This honour have all his saints," Psal. cxlix. 9. The creation of the world is a shadow of the regeneration of a Christian. First, there was an earth without form, void, and a darkness upon the face of the deep. Predestination is this great deep, which cannot be discovered or discerned. There the light was separated from the darkness ; here knowledge is separated from ignorance in the soul ; there is calling. Then was the sun created ; so here the bright beams of grace are diffused into our hearts, which fill us with spiritual joy ; there is sanctification. Lastly, Adam was created after the image of God, and placed in Paradise : so the new man is conformed to the image of Christ, and shall be reposed in the paradise of everlasting glory.

Object. 1. But if election stand wholly and only in the will of God, and that purpose be so long since and irrecoverably past, then cannot I alter it. Therefore if I be elected to salvation, howsoever I live, I cannot frustrate it ; and if I be appointed to confusion, what care soever I take, I cannot prevent it. A devilish speech, not to be uttered with mouth, nor

harboured in heart. God is not the cause of thy condemnation, but thyself: "God made not death; neither hath he pleasure in the destruction of the living," *Wisd. i. 13*. No; the surest way to the sea, is to take a river by the hand. If a man would know whether the sun shine or not, he need not climb up to the sky, for he may behold the beams on earth. So wouldest thou know whether thy name be written in heaven, never essay to get the view of God's own book, thou shalt find the beams of that grace in thyself. Consecrate thy ears to hearing, thy tongue to praying, thy hand to working, thy heart to desiring, thy body and soul to obeying; this is the course to make it sure. Yet are not these the efficient causes that make it to be decreed, but the means that make it certain to thyself. So Ambrose; Not by the merits of them that are saved, nor by their worthiness by whom they are called, but this is done only by the mercy of God in Jesus Christ.

It is a true rule, God that hath predestinated the means, hath not left out the end; with one and the same purpose he determined them both. Though man lives not by bread only, *Matt. iv. 4*, yet he that will not eat shall not live. There was a son that held this desperate opinion, to the great grief of his parents. One day he came to his father to borrow a horse, saying that he must be at Rome by such an hour. The father replied, If you must be there, you shall be there though you stir never a foot. Whereby he convinced him, that if he could not get to Rome without a horse, how should he get to heaven without motion? There is another story of an Italian, so opinionated of predestination; if I be elected, I shall be saved; if rejected, I shall not be recovered. He received a dangerous wound, and sent to the chirurgion to help him. The chirurgion being made acquainted with his impious assertion, told him, It shall be needless for me to use any means for you; for if your time be not come, you shall escape without medicine; if it be come, medicine cannot restore you. The patient smarting with grief, and seriously pondering the chirurgion's speech, that God sends no help without means, penitently recanted his error, humbly submitted himself to means, and so was cured of body and soul at once.

The Rhemists object, We believe our salvation sure, therefore it is madness in us to pray for it; for were it not madness to beg the creation of the world, which we know to be past already? Yea, it were madness not to pray for salvation: for the creation we know; our own election we know not but by our assiduous prayers for the assurance of it. If we neglect this duty, we lose all certainty. All men would come to the glory of God, but few will follow after the grace of God. *Beatus vult homo esse, etiam non sic vivendo ut possit esse.* (August.) Men would come to happiness, even by running that course which directly leads to wretchedness. He must be a saint, that will enjoy the communion of saints. If thou wilt be saved with those that are saved, thou must be sanctified with those that are sanctified. Take thy journey by holiness, if thou wilt come to happiness. Keep the coast of faith, if thou desire to arrive at the holy land.

2. But this makes a man slothful in God's service, the certainty of his own election. What need the heir take so much pains, that is born to the inheritance, as the hired servant? Nay, but rather this spurs him up to an extraordinary carefulness; as the apostle saith, The rather give diligence. Doth God tell me I shall never know mine own election without piety of life? then if I neglect piety I make myself incapable of assurance. I am sick, I faint

would know of the physician whether I should live or die; he tells me, that if I refrain such unwholesome diet, and take such a prescribed course, I shall live. If Eve fly to the forbidden fruit, she is sure to die for it. My father hath determined that I shall be his heir; he will not tell me so much in express terms, yet gives me a sign how I shall know it, by observing him with obedience. So God elects some men to be his heirs; this purpose he conceals in his own bosom, yet allows them certain signs and remonstrances whereby they may apprehend it, as faith in Christ, obedience to the gospel, &c. If we obey his will, and prove those effects of election in our consciences, we make that sure to ourselves, which was sure before in his decree through Jesus Christ.

3. But suppose a vicious person assumes, or rather presumes, I am sure of my election. Indeed there cannot a greater honour be done to God, than giving confidence to his promise. But what! demonstration of ungodliness, and evidence of salvation, found together at once? This holds like a sick man's dream. The wicked man's tongue may say this; but there is a bird within sings another note, the conscience. It is impossible for an ill liver to retain any sure hope of his election. The hypocrite is divided, and lives not together; his tongue walks Gracious-street, but his heart is a pest-house. His profession is like Whitechapel, but his conscience is as foul as the common sewer. His talk gives him rich in grace; but mark what gold comes out of his coffer; none but ship-coin, light or counterfeit metal. He is just as sure of heaven as a galley-slave is of the empire of Turkey.

4. But now, alas, saith the humbled soul, my godliness is so small, that I even despair of assurance. Be comforted; strive against thy corruptions, and by the Spirit of Jesus Christ thou shalt overcome. Paul was a sanctified man; yet he complains, "What I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" *Rom. vii. 15, 24*. Albeit he groaned under the weight of his infirmities, and felt the buffets of Satan, yet he knew that nothing could separate him from the love of God in Christ. *Rom. viii. 39*. Thou canst will that which is good; then hear God speak comfort, "If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not," *2 Cor. viii. 12*. Indeed where there is want of grace, content in that want, love of that content, indulgence to all these; there is neither ornament nor sanctification, nor argument of salvation. But dost thou feel thy wants? hath that feeling bred sorrow, that sorrow desire, that desire prayer, that prayer increased faith? faith shall bring down mercy. In thee there is the sense of infirmity, in the other is the infirmity of sense. The feeling of sin doth not annihilate the assurance of salvation. We feel the ache of a finger more sensibly than the health of the whole body; yet is the health of the whole body far more than the ache of a finger. Sanctification is itself, though joined with some imperfection. He that desired help for his unbelief, was accepted for his faith. Thus Ahijah answered Jeroboam's wife concerning her sick son, "He only of Jeroboam shall come to the grave, because in him there is found some good thing toward the Lord," *1 Kings xv. 13*. Some good thing, some grace, though it be no great measure, shall be accepted. God regards not so much the quantity, as the quality; not how much, but how true. Though our Saviour did chide his apostles for their little faith, yet he never rejected them that had any at all. Indeed if a man be not best at last, he was never truly good; therefore increase the oil in

thy lamp, and then be sure to enter into the bride-chamber of Jesus Christ.

5. But if one man may know himself elected, why may not another know himself reprobated? *Resp.* No, for God hath prescribed rules for the one, not for the other. Divers saints knew themselves written in the book of life, no man ever knew himself razed out. But did not Cain know this, when God set a mark upon him? I do not think on the one side with Josephus, that this mark was a token that God was appeased by Cain's sacrifice, and forgave the punishment of his fratricide; that is frivolous. Neither do I think on the other side, that this was a sign to himself of his eternal damnation. But only a mark of God's evident curse for this life, to deter others from such bloody attempts. I know that despair is ever ready to judge itself reprobated; but this is to requite God's mercy to thee with unmercifulness to thyself. Turn over thy book of his revealed will; if thou canst find thy name there written reprobate, believe it; but believe it not till then. He hath showed thee how to assure thyself of heaven; he never told thee that thou art doomed to hell. Though his justice be equal to his mercy, yet he is pleased to magnify his mercy over all his works. We are commanded to believe; "This is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ," 1 John iii. 23. Now to believe, is not only to put affiance in him, but to trust that we are justified by him. If we be justified, we shall be glorified: if we be glorified, certainly we are elected; for election is the foundation of all the rest. And this faith is not left arbitrary to our choice, but we are commanded to have it. "We are bound to believe our adoption: if our adoption, then our election; for the elect are predestinated to the adoption of children."

God knows those that are his; yea, and he makes them to know it. Satan knows not who are his, nor can themselves otherwise than conjecturally know it. The judgment of a reprobate belongs not to man, but upon special revelation. So David, in the 69th and 109th Psalms, prays not only against their sins, which we may do; but also against their persons, which we may not do. So Paul against Alexander the coppersmith, "The Lord reward him according to his works," 2 Tim. iv. 14. And St. John seems to allow the church such a judgment: "There is a sin unto death; I do not say that he shall pray for it," 1 John v. 16. And Paul; "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha," 1 Cor. xvi. 22. And the primitive church with one consent prayed against Julian the apostate. But this is to be done exceeding rarely; for who knows them that sin unto death? and never absolutely; for they may repent, and turn to the love of Jesus Christ. There is no prescribing to God's infinite mercy: it is true indeed, that the Scriptures threaten damnation to continued sin; yet the gospel promiseth mercy to repentance. God often saves *inter pontem et fontem*; and turns ravening wolves into mild and gentle lambs.

To conclude: in election we behold God the Father in choosing; in vocation, God the Son teaching; in justification, God the Holy Ghost sealing; in salvation, the whole Deity crowning. God chooseth of his love, Christ calleth by his word, the Spirit sealeth by his grace; now the fruit of all this, of God's love choosing, of Christ's word calling, of the Spirit's grace sanctifying, is our eternal glory and blessedness in heaven. In election God bestows on us his love; in calling he grants the blessing of his word; in justifying he communicates to us the sweetness of his Spirit; in glorifying he doth wholly give us him-

self. We see far with our body's eye, sense; further with the mind's eye, reason; furthest with the soul's eye, faith. The rational eye doth not so far exceed the sensual, as the spiritual exceeds the rational. Calling illuminates the mind with knowledge; sanctifying seals up the heart with spiritual comfort; salvation crowns all, even the soul with immortal bliss. This gradation of assurance is sweetly contracted by St. Paul; "Whom he did predestinate, them he also called: whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified," Rom. viii. 30. Wherein the fathers have found the four causes of our salvation. In predestination, the efficient cause, which is God's love. In calling, the material cause, which is Christ's death, delivered in his word that doth call us. In justifying there is the formal cause, a lively faith. In glorifying there is the final cause, that is, everlasting life. Paradise had four rivers that watered the earth: these four springs come from the Eden of heaven, and run through the earth; and howsoever neglected by many, they make glad the city of God. So Bernard sweetly: Eternal life is granted to us in election, promised in our vocation, sealed in our justification, possessed in our glorification. Conclude then faithfully to thy own soul, I believe, therefore I am justified; I am justified, therefore I am sanctified; I am sanctified, therefore I am called; I am called, therefore I am elected; I am elected, therefore I shall be saved. O settled comfort of joy, which ten thousand devils shall never make void! So I leave you to that, which can never leave you, the certainty of this comfort.

The questions being resolved, the doctrinal points that follow are two: first, that our election may be assured; secondly, how it may be assured.

First, that it may be made sure. There is a rule, No man is bound to an impossible thing: the apostle would never set us about that work which could not be done. It were uncharitable tyranny to impose that task whereof there is no possibility of performance. The ground of this assertion is the stability of God's purpose, "That the purpose of God according to election might stand," Rom. ix. 11. But how then is it said, "Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown?" Rev. iii. 11. Now saith Augustine, *Si alius possit accipere, tu potes perdere*. If another may take it, thou mayst lose it. The answer is easy; The crown of outward profession may be lost, but the crown of eternal election stands unmovable, to whomsoever it is decreed. The soul that is bound up in the bundle of life with the Lord, 1 Sam. xxv. 29, cannot be lost. To say the elect may fall away, and be damned, is a comfortless doctrine: "Rejoice because your names are written in heaven," Luke x. 20. St. Paul speaking of Hymeneus and Philetus, who were fallen from the faith, lest the church should be discouraged by the apostacy of two such notable pillars as they were thought, comforted them thus, "Nevertheless" (albeit those men fell off from Christ to their own damnation, yet nevertheless) "the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his," 2 Tim. ii. 19: his election is a foundation that shall never be removed. But Paul calls the Thessalonians elect, yet they fell away. I answer, they are called elect, not from the greater, but the better, part. It is called a heap of corn in the barn, though the bigger part of it be chaff. Again, by the law of charity we grant all those that profess Jesus Christ to be elect. But David prays that his enemies may be blotted out; "Let them be blotted out of the book of the living," Psal. lxxix. 28. This was not the desire of a petitioner, but the knowledge of a prophet:

blot them out, that is, I know they were never written there. But, "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" John vi. 70. This is to be understood of an election, not to everlasting life, but to the office of apostleship, which was changeable and temporary. "Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" 2 Cor. xiii. 5. Whence two things necessarily follow: first, if Christ be in us we are no reprobates; secondly, we may know this, "Know ye not?"

The certainty of election is a point wherein Rome makes some show of coming near to us; yet there is a great difference. They say, a man may know it by Divine revelation; so say we. They say, that men may have a certainty of hope; we stand for a certainty of faith. Theirs of hope is conjectural; ours of faith is infallible. Hope is an affection of the will; faith is a persuasion of the mind. Whatsoever God commandeth in the gospel, that a man must and may perform: but God commandeth a Christian to believe his own salvation; therefore he may, yea, ought to believe it, 1 John iii. 23. Indeed the law did command that which we could not do; but this is the difference between the law and the gospel: the law did impose duty, but gave no power of performance; the gospel commands and assists, gives grace whereby it may be obeyed; "The words that I speak to you, they are spirit, and they are life," John vi. 63. Again, that which God hath charged us to pray for, he hath charged us to believe; but we are bound to pray for everlasting life, therefore we are bound to believe it: "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them," Mark xi. 24. In every petition there are two grounds, the precept that binds us to ask, and the promise that binds us to believe: otherwise to what purpose do we conclude our prayers with Amen? Again, he that is the member of Christ, can never be cut off: if this could be, then should there follow a second baptism: for baptism is the sacrament of ingrafting.

Against the undoubted truth of this doctrine our adversaries bring two objections: first, say they, Where there is no promise, there is no faith; for these two are relatives; but there is no particular word to assure any individual person, therefore no faith. We answer, that there is a general promise: indeed God says not, Believe thou John or Thomas, and thou shalt be saved; but he says, "Whosoever believeth and is baptized, shall be saved," which is as good. The promises are indefinite, and the minister in Christ's stead applies them to every particular man's heart; If thou believest, thou shalt see the glory of God, John xi. 40. Hereupon our faith and obedience echo to God: "When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek," Psal. xxvii. 8. "I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, The Lord is my God," Zech. xiii. 9. Secondly, they object, We are taught to pray for the pardon of our sins daily; this were needless if we be sure of our election. I answer, we pray for the pardon of our sins, not because we have no assurance, but because our assurance is weak. The heart of a Christian is like a vessel with a narrow top; being cast into the sea, it is not filled suddenly, but by drop after drop. God throws us into the sea of his infinite mercy: if we had a capable nature, we should be suddenly filled; but this grace is received according to the measure and capacity of the receiver. Let it then stand firm against the gates of Rome, against the gates of hell, that our election may be made sure. There can be no presumption of the believer, where there is authority of the

commander. God never broke his word with any soul.

Now we come to the manner, how this may be assured. There are but two ways for a man to know it; either by going up into heaven, or by going down into himself. In the one there is presumption and danger, in the other is security and peace. Have we recourse to St. Paul for his direction, and see how he consents with St. Peter: the Spirit of God can best declare himself; "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God," Rom. viii. 16. Here are two testimonies: not God's Spirit alone; there may be presumption: not our spirit alone; there may be illusion: both must witness together, concur to make up this certificate. There is some question what this testimony of the Spirit is. Some take it to be an enthusiasm, or extraordinary revelation; but then were it rare, and to few. Some take it for the affection of the mind obedient to God, not out of fear, but out of love. (Origen.) But our spirit alone can testify this; what need is there of God's Spirit to it? Some refer it to the imitation of God, which makes us like him. But this testimony ariseth not from any act in ourselves, but from the Divine Spirit. Others think that this inward testimony proceeds from our good works; when our spirit does well through the Holy Spirit. But the testimony that riseth from the effects, is rather our conclusion, than the Holy Ghost's proposition. Some by this witness of the Spirit understand holy doctrine; (Theodor.) and the truth of the catholic faith. (Lyran.) But the apostle speaks not of any outward sign, but of an internal testimony. Therefore saith Chrysostom. The testimony comes not from the effect, but from the efficient; not of grace given, but of him that gives it.

This is then that inward assurance of the Spirit, whereby we know ourselves to be children of God. Cajetan says, it is not a testimony *de possibili*, that it may be; but *de facto*, that it is. This may be formed like a practical syllogism: the proposition is made by the gospel, Whosoever believes in Christ is chosen to life everlasting; man meditates upon this blessed promise, and sucks sweetness to his soul from it. Then comes the Spirit, illuminates the mind, opens the heart, begets a true faith: so that with freedom man's spirit makes the assumption, I believe in Christ, I renounce myself: all my comfort and assistance is in him. Flesh and blood cannot say this, it is the operation of the Holy Ghost. Last comes the blessed conclusion, which is the testimony, therefore thou art the child of God. The proposition is grounded on the promise of God, that is the object of faith which is believed: the assumption out of the former is the act of faith whereby we believe. Our assurance therefore is not, as Aquinas and Lyranus speak, *Non scientia, sed conjectura; non rei sed spei*: for children call upon their fathers, not with a conjectural persuasion, but with a confident assurance. This certainty is true; for though faith be of things believed, not perceived, yet faith itself is a thing perceived, not believed. There is a threefold assurance: first of opinion, when a man deceiveth himself by his own imagination. The second of persuasion, as the devils know the articles of faith without any comfort. Thirdly of resolution, which is not only in the truth of such an interest, but of our interest in such a truth. The first of these is in the will only, without the understanding; the second is in the understanding only, without the will; the last is both in the understanding and will. Now the testimony of our spirit must concur to this: for "if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God," 1 John iii. 21. This is the witness of a

heart purified and sanctified in the blood of Christ. "As in water face answereth to face," Prov. xxvii. 19, or the pure crystal glass lively represents the image set before it; so here the witness of our sanctified spirit answers the sanctifying Spirit.

This testimony may be perceived by many effects: especially take one; it is the right estimation of our sins. Now this estimation must be in respect of their terms, as they are past, present, or to come. We must find in ourselves, for sins past, grief; against sins present, combat; concerning sins future, hate and resistance. First, we must be grieved for the sins we have done. "Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of," 2 Cor. vii. 10: where is the thing operating, godly sorrow; the effect, repentance; the quality, not to be repented of; the end, to salvation. There be two sorrows, and they differ much: for worldly sorrow beholds God justly incensed; godly sorrow beholds God sweetly pacified. They also differ causally: the former grieves for the punishment, not for the sin; the other grieves for the sin, not for the punishment: this would be sorrowful for sin, though there were no hell to punish it. Cain groans under the penalty, David grieves for the iniquity. The one trembles as a slave, the other fears as a son. These penitent tears purge the heart from the foulness of sin, ease it of the burden of sorrow, and give it the cheerfulness of comfort. (Bern.) Therefore no repentance, no testimony. Secondly, for sins present, there must be in us a holy and valiant combat against them; the Spirit warreth against the flesh, as well as the flesh against the Spirit, Gal. v. 17. This combat can only befall the elect; whose soul is in the state of Rebekah's womb, when the twins struggled within her; Esau will not let Jacob rest, nor Jacob Esau. Two enemies in a country are too near, two in a city dangerous, two in a house worse, but two in a bosom smartest of all. And yet unless this strife be in a man, he can have no peace with God. Indeed for natural things, war and peace are contraries; yet this spiritual war is the only means to our eternal peace. The saints in heaven have no such strife, for they are wholly spiritual; the reprobates on earth have no such strife, for they are wholly carnal; only the regenerate believers in the militant church maintain this battle and feel the bitterness of this conflict. The pressure of native corruption is heavy. As in the ephialtes or disease called the night-mare, a sleeping man thinks he feels some heavy weight lying on his breast, and holding him down; he groans and strives to remove it, but he cannot: so this inborn corruption lies on the heart of a Christian, and he would fain be rid of it; he fights against it, and complains that he is forcibly overborne by it to do the evil he neither would nor should; but let him be comforted, Christ shall one day give him a full deliverance. No combat, no testimony. Lastly, concerning sins to come, we must find in ourselves hatred and resistance: "We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not," 1 John v. 18. He is always fixing his eye upon that rule, Phil. iv. 8, Whatsoever things are true, and honest, and just, and pure, and lovely, and of good report; if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, he thinks on these things. So that our sanctimony is this testimony; we know we are in God, by keeping his word, 1 John ii. 5. Hence it is that some books have read, make your election sure through good works: so Beza says he found it in two Greek manuscripts. This is a good witness, when a man reasons from the proper effects to the proper cause. "The foundation of God standeth sure," 2 Tim. ii. 19: it is granted; God is sure of it, but how may I be sure of it? Paul there answers,

"Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." Happy soul, that comes with this certificate, under the hand and seal of the Holy Spirit, to the gate of heaven. He may justly challenge mercy: I have done what thou hast commanded, perform to me what thou hast promised: I have worn the short white robe of innocency, give me the long white robe of glory. There is a private mark and a public mark: Go through the city, and set a mark upon the foreheads of them that mourn for the sins of the times, Ezek. ix. 4; there is the private mark: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant," &c. Matt. xxv. 21; there is the public mark.

Thus we see it may be made sure; now therefore let us go about it, and that with diligence. If you purchase lands, you buy the strength of law to make sure the tenures: if you drive a bargain, you will have earnest for assurance: if you let money to interest, you will not do it without good assurance. The common voice of all the usurers about the town, is assurance: the very stage knows them by no other names, but security and assurance. You bind a debtor to you surer than the Philistines bound Samson; and if he cannot loose himself, you put out his eyes, set him to grind at the mill, while you eat the flour. All is made so sure, that neither the corrupt man of law, nor the devil himself, can find a trick to untie it. But now for heaven and salvation, you play at fast and loose: the last thing that ever is assured, is your eternal bliss. Beloved, I would this were a slander, and that you could nobly confute my jealousy with your actual piety. Oh that upon so good terms I might be brought hither again, to recant it! for you are sure: when did you ever take so much pains to be sure of the pardon of your sins, as you do weekly to make sure your debts? The want of that assurance hath often broke your sleep; when did the want of this disquiet you? I will tell you; the purchase of your lands, the leases of your houses, the bonds of your monies, the care of your books, shall all at the day of judgment be bills of accusation and indictments against you. A man apprehended for a robbery, is convicted, condemned; yet by suit of friends reprieved, till they can get a pardon for him. In the mean time come some of his acquaintance, and will him to be of good cheer; they sing, dance, and drink with him. He answers, I am condemned, the sentence is past, the execution is ready; how easy it will be to get a pardon, I fear: if I were sure to escape, I could be merry with you; till then, I must say to laughter, Thou art mad, and to jovisance, Be thou a stranger to me. Thus stands the case with us; the law hath condemned us for transgression, the devils are ready executioners to hasten justice; show me my pardon, assure me that the great King of heaven hath forgiven me, I can then rejoice; till then, no comfort can down with me. There is a tale of a covetous man, that had nothing in his mouth but, It is good to be sure. If his servant went to sow his land, he would follow him. Why? O it is good to be sure. Though himself had locked the door, yet he must needs rise out of his bed in the cold, to feel it fast. Why? O it is good to be sure. Let him have told his money often over, yet he will tell it again. Why? O it is good to be sure. It came to pass that he fell very dangerously sick; and his servant, perceiving little hope of life in him, asked him, Master, have you said your prayers? Yes, I have said them. Nay, but say them again, master; you know it is good to be sure. No, says the worldling, it is more than needs, for I am sure enough of that. He bids his servant open his chest, and bring him all his gold in it, to look upon. The honest servant, willing to work his mas-

ter to repentance, having opened it, told him, Master, the devil is in the chest, he lays his paw upon all the gold, and says it is all his; because it was extracted out of the life-blood of widows, orphans, and poor wretches. Says he so? quoth the extortioner: then bring me the gold, the chest, the devil, and all; it is good to be sure. Perhaps from hence came that by-word, that the covetous worldling gets the devil and all.

Oh the vain assurance of these fugitive things! *Vel sequendo labimur, vel assequendo ladimur.* No, I will hold me fast by the Lord, for that is sure. "They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever," Psal. cxxv. 1. The dove makes moan to her fellow-birds of the tyranny of the hawk. One counsels her to fly aloft; but the hawk can mount as high as she. Another adviseth her to keep below; but the hawk can stoop for his prey. Another, to shroud herself in the woods, there she shall be sure; but alas, that was the hawk's manor, the place where he kept his court. Another bids her keep the town, there she was sure from the hawk; but so she became a prey to man, and had her eyes put out to make the hawk sport. At last one bids her nest herself in the hole of a rock, there she should be safe, violence itself could not surprise her. The dove is man's soul: she would gladly be secured from Satan. Come to me, saith Riches, here thou shalt be sure. No, wealth is the devil's stirrup whereby he gets up, and rides the covetous. Come to me, saith Pleasure, here thou shalt be sure; as if she were not as very a whore as Delilah, to betray thee to that Philistine. Honour says, Come to me, here thou art sure: as if the devil durst not come near the court gates; or greatness were a supersedeas to sin, or a protection against the arrest of judgments. No, there is no sureness in thy lands, none in thy moities, none in thy honours, none in thy pleasures: neither court, nor city, nor country, neither castles nor forts, can save thee: yet there is a Rock for this dove; "O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock," Cant. ii. 14. The clefts of this Rock are the wounds of Jesus Christ; fly thither, O my soul, and be safe. "Oh that I had wings like a dove! then would I fly away and be at rest," Psal. lv. 6. Thy wings are faith and prayer; hie thee to this Rock, there only thou art sure; all the devils in hell shall not pluck thee from the merciful arms of Christ. They shall never be plucked out of my hand, John x. 28. How are we sure that we are in his hand? If his Spirit be in our heart. It was a good argument of Manah's wife, If the Lord were pleased to kill us, he would never have accepted of our sacrifice, Judg. xiii. 23. So conclude thy own conscience. If the Lord were pleased to reject me, he would never have given me his Spirit. If I were a vessel of wrath, such a Comforter should never have come within my doors. "By this I know that thou favour'st me, because mine enemy doth not triumph against me," Psal. xli. 11. If Satan prevail not, sure then I am in favour, and the Lord Jesus hath reserved me to his eternal kingdom.

"Your calling." Calling hath divers acceptations; it is here meant of that spiritual and inward calling, wrought by the Spirit in the ministry of the gospel. Not every kind of vocation, but only that whereby a man is made a believer. (August.) Lydia attended to the things that were spoken, and the Lord opened her heart, Acts xvi. 14. She attended to the word: there is the outward calling; God opened her heart; there is the inward calling. In the trial of this vocation, I should consider, from what we are called, and to what. St. Jude says, we are "sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Jesus

Christ, and called." To be brought into the church, is vocation external; to be sanctified, is vocation internal; to be preserved in Christ, is vocation eternal. Here are the three parts of our incorporation to Christ; vocation by God the Father, sanctification by God the Son, preservation by God the Holy Ghost. "Vocation is the fruit of election: 'To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints,' Rom. i. 7. First beloved of God, then called to be saints. You have heard before, that calling is the way to assure election; but now you would be sure of your true calling: good reason, otherwise your journey to heaven would be like Hannibal's on the Alps.

There are many signs, like hands in a cross-way, to tell us the right: Thou shalt hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk in it, Isa. xxx. 21. I could tell you of love to the word preached, a sure effect of true calling. He that is called, loves the lowest stair of the pulpit, better than the highest stair of the tribunal. One loves the tavern, while another runs to the temple. What is the reason? This man is called, rather than the other. I could also tell you of a sincere and devoted affection to Christ; when we desire his company above all things, and love the place where his honour dwelleth. Whosoever thou art, O blessed Saviour, whether on the cross, in the grave, or in hell, I care not, so I be with thee, so I find thee my Saviour. This love should be to Christ, not so much for his bounty's sake, as for his own sake. This holy affection produceth our love to Christians: I love them, because God loves them; "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," 1 John iii. 14: *eos qui sunt fratres, et quia sunt fratres*: we love them that are brethren, and because they are brethren. What is true of this blind affection in the blood; that it ariseth often, not from any merit in the affected, but from the lust of the affecter; therefore the poets have called *amantes amantes*, lovers madmen: this is here made good of Divine love in the Spirit; I affect that man, not because he is good to me, but because God is good to him.

I might add another sign, that vocation testifieth itself in a plenary obedience, at least in respect of resolution. This must be to the whole law, during our whole life, with our whole heart. To the whole law: "I have respect unto all thy commandments," Psal. cxix. 6. During our whole life; "In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life," Luke i. 75. With the whole heart: as David speaks, "With my whole heart have I loved thee." Otherwise God will come against us with a but; "But I have a few things against thee," Rev. ii. 14. With a nevertheless; "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee," Rev. ii. 4. With a notwithstanding; "Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee," Rev. ii. 20. All these exceptives, but, notwithstanding, nevertheless, are against us. I know I must offend; I must suffer many sins; I will allow myself no sin.

I could also add another sign, how we may be sure that we are effectually called; that is, our dislike to this world. He that despiseth not earth, was never yet inwardly called to heaven. If the love of this world cannot stand with the comfortable assurance of our heavenly calling, let us divert our desires, and elevate our affections from things on earth, to things above, Col. iii. 2. But if none be called to heaven, but such as be sanctified and separate from earth, I fear that the greater number take the broader way. It is your method in the city: you say, there be more of the company than be of the livery; but for heaven, and the profession of the gospel, there be more of the livery than be of the company: "Many are called, but few are chosen," Matt. xxiii. 14.

To conclude, let me now characterize to you the man, in whose heart there is this assurance. He stands like an impregnable fort, upon whom misery and malice would spend all their shot: much they do, to their own shame, to his glory. Sin, like a flattering neighbour, hath often knocked at his door, and would have come in, but found cold welcome; and if it was importunate, was sent away not without repulse and blows. Perhaps it lurks about his out-houses, and spite of him will be his tenant, but shall never be his landlord. He hath some faults, but God will not see them. He meets at every turn with his railing and accusing adversary, Satan; but he stops his throat with a pardon sealed in the blood of Jesus Christ. He is never out of war, never without victory. Those roaring fiends set upon him proudly, and he beats them down triumphantly. The shield he always bears with him, was never pierced, faith. He hath been often tripped, once or twice foiled, was never vanquished. His hand hath been scratched, his heart is whole. Tyranny bends on him a stern brow, but could never dash him out of countenance. Is he threatened the surgery of the sword? he sees Isaiah under the saw, John in Patmos, cutting in pieces. Is he threatened drowning? he sees Jonah diving into that inextricable gulf. Burning? he sees those three servants in their fiery walk, and the Son of God amongst them. Is he threatened devouring? he sees Daniel in that sealed den of terrible lions. Stoning? he sees that protomartyr of the gospel sleeping in peace under so many grave-stones. Heading? he sees the Baptist's neck bleeding in Herodias's platter. He is sure that the God which gave them such strength, is not weaker in him: what could they suffer without God? what cannot he suffer with God? If he must endure their pain, he looks for their faith, their patience, their strength, their glory. The terrors of death amaze him not; for first he knows whom he hath trusted, and then whither death shall lead him. He is not more sure to die, than to live again; and out-faceth death with his assured resurrection. Like Enoch, he walks every day with God, and confers familiarly with his Maker. When he goes in humbly to converse with him by meditation and prayer, he puts off his own clothes, and takes a rich suit out of the wardrobe of his Redeemer; then confidently he entereth the presence-chamber, and faithfully challengeth a blessing. He hath clean hands, and a white soul, fit to give lodging to the Holy Ghost: not a room is reserved for the enemy; he that gave all, finds all returned to himself. He is so certain of his eternal election, and present justification, that he can call God Father, his Saviour Brother, the Holy Ghost his Comforter, the devil his slave, earth his foot-stool, heaven his patrimony, and everlasting life his inheritance. Those celestial spirits do not scorn his company, nor refuse to do him service. His heart is so devoted to Christ, that if misery, if death, if torments, stood in his way on the left hand; if parents, children, friends, wife, inheritance, stood in his way on the right hand; he would disdain all obstacles, and break through all difficulties, to come unto Him whom his soul loveth. He fixeth his spiritual eye upon the eternal things, that are not seen, 2 Cor. iv. 18: others see that is present, he that is to come. He walks upon earth as a stranger, his heart is at home. He hath laid up a sure treasure in heaven, a portion that shall never be taken away. He vexeth not himself with cares, he knows that he lives not at his own cost. Without omitting good means, he rests on the Lord's providence. Without the warrant of God he dares do nothing, with it any thing. Nor is his faith more valiant than his bowels are compassionate. He hath

tears plenty, both for his own sins and others' sufferings. He is no niggard of those showers on earth; he is sure never to weep hereafter. When he departs this life, his body sleeps in a peaceful grave; and those glorious angels bear his soul with triumphant songs to the glorified saints, where it is married to the Bridegroom Jesus Christ for ever.

"For if ye do these things, ye shall never fall." The doctrine of election, as it is to the faithful the sweetest assurance, so to the proud an occasion of presumption. A man may be so bold of his predestination, that he forget his conversation; so he may dream himself in heaven, and awaken from that dream in hell. Presume not, therefore, that thou art so surely *electus*, chosen, that thou become *elatus*, proud. Pride is no better an argument of an elect soul, than a tumid swelling is of a sound body. A proclamation is read, wherein a Christian king grants honour and wealth to certain of his subjects, with assurance of donation upon their just demand. One among the multitude leaps at the news, springs away, and stays not to hear it out; there is a condition following, provided first that they put on arms, and expel the Turk, which infests some part of his dominions. This man comes one of the foremost to demand the promised honours. He is asked for a testimony of his valour and service in such wars. Alas! he never tarried to hear that condition, and therefore lost the retribution. God so promiseth eternal life to men; but withal chargeth them to believe in Christ, and to do him faithful service against the devil, that great enemy to this kingdom. But how many are quite lost, for not staying to hear the proclamation of the gospel out! they run away with opinion of sufficient belief, and never think of obedience. But to prevent such false hopes, there must be *doing*: "For if ye do these things," &c.

In which words we considered two parts; the qualification, and the ratification. "If ye do these things," there is the qualification. "Ye shall never fall," there is the ratification. There is a condition premised, and a reward promised. If you for your part be doing, God for his part will keep you from falling. That is your obedience, and this is God's recompence. Your devotion goes before, and his retribution follows after. First, to take the qualification asunder, here be three circumstances; from the order, if first ye shall perform; there is the condition: *ye do*, not say or purpose, but do; there is the practice: *these things*, not what you list, but what the Lord commands; there is the sincerity. Thus it lies taken asunder: then being put together again, we shall find this the sum: the necessity of our active obedience.

For the condition, we must first do and then have, not first have the reward and then do. Indeed we must first have grace whereby to do before we do; but not the reward till we have done. Among men he first serves that deserves: for God, we can merit nothing by doing, yet we shall have nothing without doing. The good man says, I deserve not reward for my goodness, but I fear punishment for my sinfulness. Let me look to my obedience; let God alone with my recompence. The tenor of the Scripture doth always set the work before the wages: Well done, good servant; then, enter into thy Lord's joy, Matt. xxv. 21. First call the labourers; and if they have laboured, then give them their hire, Matt. xx. 8. I come, and my reward is with me; to give every man according to his work, Rev. xxii. 12. First we must arm, then fight; first fight, then conquer; first conquer, then triumph. "His reward is with him, and his work before him," Isa. lxiii. 11. His work is before him, but his reward he brings with him.

First seek the kingdom of heaven; first seek it, then find it. There is none among us but looks for eternal blessedness; but where is our precedent obedience? God is not such a prodigal, to deal his treasures among them that never sought to please him. Some are too bold with Christ, they spend too fast upon his stock; indeed through their own default, his riches make them poor. The conceit of his sufficiency causes them to neglect their own deficiency: they will fail in doing, yet Christ must not fail in crowning. They forget their first, yet expect God's last. They are deceived; if they will not first do these things, they shall fall. It was a prayer of the Jews every morning, so let it be ours, Lord, as thou gavest me an undefiled soul, so grant I may return thee an undefiled one again. Let us spend this short time in doing the works of grace; that we may spend that eternal time in possessing the riches of glory.

For the practice, or fruitfulness in good works: "If ye do;" not think or say, but do. Idleness never had the testimony of God's acceptance; it is a vice that damns itself. The idle person seems to be God's outlaw, out of the compass of his protection. Art and nature bring forth nothing suddenly; there must be growing degrees in the one, and intervenient labours in the other. The penny had never been theirs, if they had stood in the market idle till sun-set, Matt. xx. 8. The philosopher said, that a man should give a lazy beggar a bit and a blow: a bit to relieve his body, a blow to correct his mind. Nothing better pleaseth God, than the sweet composition of a man's hand with his heart; when the heart doth direct what the hand should do, and the hand doth do what the heart directs. For the hand is the best commentary of the heart: what a man does I am sure he thinks; not always what he speaks. We must serve God, as one said he would marry, *pro amore*, for love. Now there are four things comprehended in that word, and they are found by cutting off the first letter. *Amore*, with love: as life in the body, so devotion in the soul, begins at the heart. *More*, with the conversation, practical obedience, doing that which is good. *Ore*, with the mouth, setting forth God's praise. *Re*, with the estate; when we do not offer sacrifice to the Lord of that which cost us nothing.

There must be hearty love, lively practice, kindly thanks, costly service. When the good works of our ancient fathers and progenitors in this land are mentioned, presently the malicious cry out, Tush! they were idolaters. Were they so? then a man may well say, that those popish idolaters were better than these puritan saints. If their superstition set up churches, I am sure that these men's zeal pulls them down. Let them show us some doing of good. Things are said then to be true, when their appearance doth manifest their being, (August.) If a man have a righteous hand, I will believe him to have a righteous heart. Physicians judge of the body's health, not by the colour of the face, nor by the quickness of the eye, nor by the glibness of the tongue, (though these also may give some symptoms,) but by the pulse of the arm. It is not the lifting up of the eye, nor the bowing down of the knee, nor a demure and affected manner of speaking, nor the Bible under the arm, nor the hearing of four sermons a day, that justifies the sincerity of a Christian; but "if ye do these two things."

For the sincerity, "these things;" not what gain prompts, or lust suggests, but what God commands. What are they? Such things as appertain to knowledge, to virtue, to godliness. Every worldling is left-handed; he will be doing, but he hath no thanks for his pains. They that lay baits to entrap and enwrap their neighbours are still doing, to keep their hand in ure;

but this left-handed action is cursed. The rich saint makes a feast, so doth the rich sinner, but with great difference: the guests of the former are the poor, who can return no recompence; the guests of the other are the rich, who are likely to bid them again, Luke xiv. 12; so they toss the ball of courtesy to such as are able to toss it back to them again. There is a right-handed charity in those, a left-handed respect in these. "As we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith," Gal. vi. 10. Rich worldlings will do good, not to all men, but to some men; and of those, not to the household of faith, but, after a sinister sort, to the household of Belial, to flatterers, to panders, to drunkards. There is a perfect rule of this *râ âbrâ*; whatsoever is true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report. "Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do," Phil. iv. 8, 9. Martha had a busy hand, but not about these things. Cain had a working heart, Abithophel a working head, Joab a working hand; but Cain's heart, Abithophel's head, and Joab's hand, are ill met in one man. Thou expectest the same reward that the saints had; therefore thou must perform the same work that the saints did: "these things."

Now to reduce all these branches to their root, and as we have taken the words asunder, so to put them together again; all the particulars unite their forces in this one sum, or general doctrine: The mercy of God in our salvation requires our actual obedience; we must "do these things." All the bells of Aaron ring this peal. "Hearken unto the statutes and judgments which I teach you, for to do them," Deut. iv. 1. "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the law to do them," Gal. iii. 10; not sufficient to know them, but to do them. "Not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified," Rom. ii. 13. There was a woman that blessed the womb which bare Christ; but he replied, "Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it," Luke xi. 27, 28. Yea, that thou sayest is true, she is blessed indeed, and all generations shall call her blessed; but there are others also blessed, even as many as hear the truth, and do it. Blessedness is desired of all, but few will go to the price of it. "Blessed are they that keep judgment, and do righteousness," Psal. cvi. 3; that keep within the bounds of the one, and live in the practice of the other; the one being as it were their ear, the other their compass. "Be ye followers of God, as dear children," Eph. v. 1. The abstract of religion is to imitate him whom thou dost worship. Such a one hath done me insufferable wrong, how can I forgive him? God would. Another is gotten into my debt, and abuseth my patience, how can I forbear him? God would. Be thou a follower of God in grace, that thou mayst ascend to his glory. A man is travelling to this city, at least in his own opinion he thinks so, and tells all he meets that he is going to London; yet still he keeps his back upon it, and bends his course the contrary way. "So ridiculous a thing is it, for men to profess that they are going to heaven, when their whole life is directly forwarding themselves to hell. All men would come to God, few will be persuaded to follow after God, (August.) "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven," Matt. vii. 21; for many call Christ their Lord, yet serve the devil.

"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me," John xiv. 21. We must have the gospel in our hearts, and keep it in our lives; have it in hearing, keep it in obeying; our understanding must contain it, our actions express

it. (August.) Let us endeavour to turn the Scriptural words into works, and not only to speak holy things, but to do them. (Hieron.) For in vain we read the Scripture if we understand it not; in vain we understand it if we obey it not. "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves," James i. 22. We must first be hearers; for David hath branded the wicked man with this mark, He would not hear nor understand, that he might do well. A man may know the will of God, and not do it; but he cannot do it unless he know it. Then not hearers only, but doers; and that without any plea, or excuse, or fear of danger by holy obedience. The dove will not leave her flight because there are some ravens in the air; so the good Christian will always keep obedience upon the wing. "Depart from evil;" what, and speak good only? No, but "do good," Psal. xxxiv. 14.

*De virtute loqui minimum, virtutibus uti;
Illic labor, hoc opus est.* (Persius.)

To speak of virtue is nothing; the labour is to show the power of it in virtuous actions. *Magna dicere Golie sonus est; magna facere Samsonis opus est.* (Tertul.) To speak bravely, this is but the sound of a swelling giant; but to do heroically, this is the work of a valiant champion. It is not enough to say, as it is in the psalm, I believed, and therefore I spake; but, I believed, and therefore I wrought. No man can work unless he believes; no man can believe unless he works. Christian religion is more practical than theoretical; rather an occupation than a mere profession; dwelling, like the artisan's wit, at the fingers' ends.

Let this be understood to the confutation, to the confusion, of hypocrisy, which turns religion into a vizard; it hath mouth, and eyes, and nose, all but painted. Hypocrites are not like the heathen idols, save in one thing. "They have mouths, but they speak not; eyes, but they see not," &c. Psal. cxv. 5. These have mouths, and they speak; eyes, and they see; ears, and they hear; noses, and they smell; feet, and they walk; they have hands, but they do not work. Plutarch hath a tale of the moon, that she entreated her mother to make her a coat fit for her. Her mother answers, My daughter, it is impossible to fit thee with a coat; for thou sometimes waxest, sometimes waneest; art now in the full, by and by changing; to-day bigger, to-morrow less. The hypocrite is such a man in the moon; sometimes a giant, sometimes a dwarf; now great, presently small; evermore so changing, that no coat can fit him. Hypocrites are like pictures on canvass, they show fairest at farthest. Hear them speaking, and see them not doing, and you would think them angels; but see them doing, and hear them not speaking, and they are devils: or, at least, as you would judge of dancers, when you hear not the tune of their music: leaping and turning, in all points like mad-men. Their voice is the voice of Jacob, but their hands are the hands of Esau. Let thy life speak, and thy tongue hold her peace. Hypocrites have the running gout, but it settles most in their fingers. A beggar being reproved for his lazy life, answered that he had a secret disease lying in his bones, which for modesty's sake he must not declare: they believed him and relieved him. One among the rest being unsatisfied, would needs know of him what that secret sickness was, seeing that he appeared so well outwardly: he told him plainly, It is within, a disease lying in my bones; some call it idleness. Tell a hypocrite (whose zeal is so pepper-hot at the tongue's end) that his works be cold: Oh he hath a secret disease in his bones;

a seury dissembling humour, settled in his heart, and creeping through every joint. If you will, you may call it idleness, or hypocrisy; for I understand them as convertible terms. It must be very strong physic that purgeth this humour. They are only good, when on the sabbath day they are fowing taphouses, and scouring the common sewers and sinks of sin. But

*mendacia fallax
Dammat, et in mæchos gladium distingit adulter.*
(Prosper.)

Adulterers punish wantons, and presumption jadgeth weakness. Is not this to be doing? yes, they do till they undo a man: they do, but not "these things." They condemn that in others, which they applaud in themselves. But let us do what we should, that we may receive what we would: "The end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned," 1 Tim. i. 5. Then may we expect the reward, Well done, good servant: not well professed, but well expressed; not well known, nor well spoken, nor well purposed, but well done. This is the perfect rule, "And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God," Gal. vi. 16.

"Ye shall never fall." I come to the ratification: these words are diversely read: this is the best, Ye shall not fall. The original is literally, Ye shall not fall for ever, that is, Ye shall fall never. Such a phrase you have John xiii. 8, Thou shalt not wash my feet for ever, that is, Thou shalt never wash them. This seems to be derived from Psal. xv. 5, "He that doeth these things shall never be moved."

But here the apostle seems to attribute something to our works, as if the merit of our doing should preserve us from falling. No, he speaks not concerning the cause of mercy, but the way of grace. Our own works do not uphold us, but assure us by a token that we are upheld of God: they are the inseparable effects of that grace, by which we are kept from falling. So long as we feel thy pulse beating, we are sure thou livest; yet the beating of thy pulse is not the cause thou livest, but a sign by the effects. Bellarmine observes, that Christ says not definitely, You are unprofitable servants; but, When ye shall have done all that is commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants. Luke xvii. 10: say so, for good manners' sake, and the acknowledgment of humility. Nay, but rather subscribe to verity; say so, and say the truth: for Christ might give something in charge, to beget in us humility; but never any thing against the truth. The God of verity never bade us lie: say so then, and say truly, that we are unprofitable servants; for God is a loser even by the best of us, if we consider and compare the cost he hath been at with us, with our fruits. The earth restores us four for one; we scarce return to God one seed of four. Usury brings us back one above our ten by interest; we hardly restore to the Lord one of ten of his principal. We know no merit but Christ's; therefore we pray, Forgive us our trespasses, and give us our daily bread. He that beggeth mercies, boasts no merits: if thou ask an alms, never plead thy worthiness. As the servants to princes make their gifts better than their wages, so let us that serve God stand upon his gifts, not upon our wages. We are not upheld by our piety, but beholden to God's pity; we are kept from falling only by the grace of Jesus Christ.

"Shall never fall." Falling is twofold, of infirmity, and of apostacy; the one is a falling into sin, the other a falling into the state of damnation: there is weakness in the one, there is presumption and

obstinacy in the other. The former of these falls may befall the faithful, but not the latter; for there is no damnation to them that are in Jesus Christ, Rom. viii. 1. Indeed he may fall into divers sins, but never into that sinning sin: they be slips, not foils; or if foils, not falls; or if falls, yet falling forward to repentance, not backward from mercy. The faithful shall not fall into apostacy, from the Lord: the reason is, because God establisheth his goings: the Lord will preserve him, and keep him up, Psal. xl. 2. If that were understood of sin, that Solomon speaks, The just man falleth seven times a day, yet it implies his repentance; for he could not properly be said to fall seven times, unless he had rose six times; he doth not more often fall by sinning, than he riseth again by repenting. Thus he may fall into infirmity, but he shall never fall into apostacy.

And this is a sweet comfort, that those which are upheld by God's power, shall never fall away from Jesus Christ. Eli was priest of the sanctuary, yet he fell; Adam was in Paradise, yet he fell; Lucifer was in heaven, yet he fell: but whosoever is in Christ, shall never fall. Indeed he may fall into affliction, but not into destruction: he is laid under the rod of calamity, but he shall never be forsaken with the miserable. Death may trip down his body, Satan cannot get down his soul. His name is written in heaven; and until that name fall, which will not be though heaven fall, himself shall never fall. Though he wrestles with giants, against principalities, and powers, and wicked spirits in high places, yet he shall stand. Though death lay his body in the dust, yet it hath no power to touch his soul; he shall stand. The poor philosopher dying said, I have lived uncertain, I die doubtful, I know not whither I go or what shall become of me. The blind reprobate, what he would not credit presuming, he shall see then despairing; the gates of hell wide open, and a bottomless gulf ready to swallow him. The resolved Christian knows, that the mouth of the pit is shut against him; that the gate of glory stands open for him: that he is elected, not to fall, but to rise. No descent doth fear him, but his ascent doth cheer him: I go to him that is above. Now the mercy of God keep us from falling, and give us a blessed rising at the resurrection of the just, through the merits of Jesus Christ. Amen.

VERSE II.

For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

THE dependence of this verse with the former we shall in due place be fitly occasioned to consider: first, therefore, to the distribution. It may be distinguished into two main parts.

The passage, For so an entrance shall be ministered to us.

The palace, Into the everlasting kingdom of Christ.

In the passage are observable these four properties:

The sureness, So shall be, without fail.

The readiness, An entrance, without trouble.

The fitness, Shall be ministered, without let.

The easiness, Abundantly, without pain.

In the palace consider two things:

The royalty, It is the Lord's own kingdom.

The eternity, It is an everlasting kingdom.

In the sureness we find two circumstances; the reason, by way of connexion, in the word *for*; and the means, by way of relation, in the word *so*.

"For." This is a binding word, that knits the discourse together with a natural dependence. As if the apostle should thus declare himself: There are some blind, and forget the way of truth: what then? therefore make your election sure: why? for if ye do so ye shall never fall: how are we sure that we shall not fall? for so you have a full entrance to blessedness. If you study in mind, affect in heart, and strive in hand, to do these things, God will help your endeavour with his grace, you shall enter into his glorious kingdom. Plain and simple averring of the truth is sufficient in Holy Scriptures, which bind the conscience *authoritative*. God's Do this, or Believe that, is enough without any reason. For as in men's commands we examine what is enjoined, not who imposed it; so in these we examine who it is that chargeth us, not so much what we are charged. The precepts of superiors are sometimes evil, therefore we obey them only in good; but when the Lord commands, we do not examine, but execute. "It is the Lord." 1 Sam. iii. 18. Yet as Christ led the Jews as well by his miracles amazing them, as by his oracles instructing them; so his apostles persuade us, *et argumentis et orationibus*, and do not come evermore with a mandamus. As the father, to bring on his child a long journey, wins him by fair promises, lifts him over hard passages, holds him by the hand all the way; so the Lord doth allure us by gracious affords, persuade us by arguments, and rather than we should be weary of well-doing, encourage us with reasons; *for* so you shall enter, &c.

"So." This is a description of the means, and hath a relation to the former counsel. As if he should say, Make your election sure; and by living soberly and righteously endeavour the ascertaining to your own hearts, that God hath decreed you to salvation; for so you shall have a free entrance into the kingdom of Christ. That is the only means whereby you may be admitted, and without that you shall be excluded. There be numbers that would enter the kingdom of Christ, but they fail in their *sic*, they will not *so* enter. When Christ had made the lawyer tell himself who was the good neighbour, "He that showed mercy on him;" he presently upon it chargeth him, "Go, and do thou likewise," Luke x. 37. Wouldst thou arrive at heaven? set their precedents, who are now in heaven, before thine eyes; Go, and do thou likewise. So Paul left it in charge behind him, Be ye followers of me, and walk so as you have us for an example, Phil. iii. 17. If you would come to the place where we are, you must follow us in the works which we have done; so you shall have an entrance. *Sic*, whatsoever is a *non sicut*, dissonant from this *so*, is a hinderance. God sets us, as Moses on Nebo, upon the mount of a sanctified speculation, and shows us Canaan, with the way to it; so you must enter it, or not at all. One minds nothing but his cups, another nothing but his purse, a third only his courtesan; yet all these point to meet at heaven: but they fail in their *so*, for this is not the way thither. "The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life," 1 John ii. 16, is a broad way, but not to salvation. Of all the manuductions to the city of God there lies no way by three signs; the sign of the pot, the sign of the purse, and the sign of the punk. Therefore we say, the drunkard is a man out of the way, the worldling crosses the way, the adulterer dams up the way. All these fail in their *so*, therefore shall miss in their *aurō*, the desire of their hearts. One presumes himself a David, and thinks to conquer the Goliath Satan with Saul's armour: not so, but "in the name of the Lord of hosts," 1 Sam. xvii. 45. The seminary asks the pope, as Abishai did David, Shall I

smite the king? 1 Sam. xxvi. 8. Not so, for who can stretch forth his hand against the Lord's anointed, and be guiltless? Treason is not the way to heaven. Covetous men, like those stronger soldiers, will not give the faint and poor any of their spoil. Not so, saith David; "Ye shall not do so, my brethren, with that which the Lord hath given us," 1 Sam. xxx. 23. There is another so to salvation; and blessed is the servant whom his Master findeth so doing, Matt. xxiv. 46. This is the sureness; if you go by the means, you shall come to the end. So you shall have an entrance; an infallible rule, if you walk so, you shall not miss it.

"An entrance" shall be given you. I call this the readiness of the passage. The way is not hedged up with thorns, nor barricaded with bulwarks, nor mazed like an intricate labyrinth; there is an entrance. In the tractation of this doctrine, because it is the heart of the text, I will consider three things. First, the proposition, that the way to blessedness is open. Next, I will clear the way from certain obstacles, that may seem to cross the truth of this assertion. Lastly, I will declare wherein this entrance consists.

The passage to grace and mercy is open, and ready to entertain all entering feet. From the first fall, sin had shut it up, but now Christ hath opened it; "He that hath the key of David, openeth, and no man shutteth," Rev. iii. 7. The pope presumes he hath that key, and lets in whom he pleaseth. O miserable man! why doth he not then let in himself? Idolaters, sorcerers, adulterers, heretics, have had that imaginary key; yet could they get no entrance into heaven. Only Christ opens that gate, and gives entrance. Thrice was heaven opened to himself; at his baptism, Matt. iii. 16, at his transfiguration, Matt. xvii. 5, at his ascension, Acts i. 9. I know that the apertion of heaven doth often mean a manifestation of God's glorious power only; but in these places it signifies a visible fissure of heaven, that something might be seen far transcendent to the stars and planets. Such an apertion was to St. Stephen; "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God," Acts vii. 56. The Lord afforded him a vision of that, whereof he was instantly to have the fruition. The like paterfation was to Peter; he "saw heaven opened," Acts x. 11. Those visible scissures were figures of this invisible entrance. Into the Holy of Holies, the type of heaven, went only the high priest once a year; but Christ at his death rent the veil of the temple, to signify that he had made now a clear passage for all believers; "The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing," Heb. ix. 8. Indeed it is true, that from the beginning heaven was not shut to the faithful; for how then did Abraham enter into blessedness? As it was not shut to the Jews, so it was not open to the Gentiles. For they were "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel," and so "strangers from the covenants of promise: but now ye who sometimes were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ; who hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us," Eph. ii. 12-15. The Gentiles were esteemed as dogs; and the children's bread is not given to dogs, Mark vii. 27. But he that could make children of stones, can also make of those dogs servants. The gate then stands wider open *per Christum missum*, than it did *per Christum promissum*; by a Saviour born, than it was by a Saviour only promised to be born. That to the holiest was a typical entrance; this is a topical entrance. Therefore our salvation is now nearer, Rom. xiii. 11: for we do not go to the gate of heaven, but

rather the gate of heaven comes to us; "I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven," Rev. xxi. 2. Because we could not ascend to it, it doth descend to us. Christ calls himself "the door," John x. 7: which place being compared with Rev. iii. 20, "I stand at the door, and knock;" we find that he is the door, and yet he knocks at the door. He that hath a suit to the king, concludes with himself, I must go to the court, for the court will not come to me. Yet, "thy King cometh unto thee," Matt. xxi. 5. *Petit tua limine virtus*. Thus Christ promised the penitent malefactor, "This day thou shalt be with me in paradise." The blood of Christ is the key that openeth paradise. (Hieron.) "Through him we have access by one Spirit unto the Father," Eph. ii. 18. Thus the doctrine is cleared, we have "boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh," Heb. x. 19. He is the way, and the truth, and the life: there is no way but by thee, no truth but from thee, no life but in thee, O dear Lord Jesus.

In the second place, let us proceed to the removal of such impediments as might hinder this passage. There is no glory of entrance, where is no hindrance. Sin was the first obstacle. "So he drove out the man," Gen. iii. 24. It shut him out, and kept him out: angels that were his friends, were set to withstand his re-entrance. This taught him, that as sin cast him out of Paradise, so it would also shut him out of heaven, but for the mercies of God in the merits of a Redeemer. There are many enemies, backed by the malice of sin; but because they are numerous, and must be ranked to some generals, I will reduce them to four.

The world is none of the least; and in this there is a double opposition; on the left hand indigence, on the right hand opulence. They are both removed by Christ: the good things of this world he despised, that he might teach us to despise them; the evil things he bore, that he might teach us to suffer them. "Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world," 1 John v. 4: we so cast away this hindrance, whether of prosperous or adverse things, that we neither seek to be blessed in the one, nor fear to be cursed in the other. (August.) Faith is the principal in this victory: good works are underling soldiers, but faith is the captain, which commands all under the great General, Jesus Christ. *Opera bona vincunt executive, sola fides imperativa*. Is want a hindrance? No; there is treasure enough to be had in heaven, Matt. vi. 20. Is dearth? No; for a good conscience is a continual feast, Prov. xv. 15. Is exile? No; for the home we seek is a city to come, Heb. xiii. 14. Doth prosperity assault us? Indeed this is a sore bar to our entrance; for one man could foil the devil in his misery, whereas many have been foiled by the devil in their felicity. (August.) "For peace I had great bitterness," Isa. xxxviii. 17. The church's estate, saith Bernard, was bitter in the loss of her children's blood, more bitter in the oppugnations of her doctrine, most bitter in the vices of her professed friends. Thus the world hinders our entrance worse by its courtesies than it can by its crosses. Yet let it do its worst, faith follows Christ, and he is that great Marshal that makes way for us through the world: "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world," John xvi. 33.

The flesh steps in next to bar up our entrance: this is a Delilah in Samson's bosom, that seeks to cut his throat; it is like the moth in the garment, that breeds in us, and feeds on us. There is no man hath a worse friend than he brings from home. An

unfaithful servant is mischievous, an unfaithful friend more mischievous, but an unfaithful wife most mischievous. It is ready to prompt us, as Job's wife tempted him, "Curse God, and die," Job ii. 9. This Clytemnestra, for the love of her adulterous friend, Satan, will betray her own betrothed Agamemnon. The only course is to be bold with it; and to restrain it, lest it kill itself, and to mortify it, lest it kill us. This obstacle hath also Christ removed; not but that it still offers to withstand us, but that it shall never hurt us. Christ's assistance is stronger than her resistance; in Christ she is dead, though in herself she be deadly. Christ's innocent flesh was crucified, that this sinful flesh might be mortified. Let her do the worst to hinder my entrance, yet I shall enter; and for this "I thank God through Jesus Christ," Rom. vii. 25.

The devil is a master antagonist, a watchful and a watchful enemy. His weapons are temptations, whereby he makes men sin; and accusations, whereby he makes them despair for sin. But this hinderer is muzzled; "The prince of this world is cast out," John xii. 31. He is condemned himself, therefore his testimony is nothing worth. Doth he fright thee with thy sins? Answer him that the Lamb of God hath taken them away. Perhaps the politic serpent quiets thee in the settled opinion of thine own righteousness. O devil! wouldst thou have me turn justiciary, and trust to mine own righteousness? I am a sinner, or else what needed I a Saviour? "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick," Matt. ix. 12. I have infinite sins, but there is an infinite ransom paid for them. He was made sin for me, who knew no sin, that I might be made the righteousness of God in him, 2 Cor. v. 21. He that was righteousness, was made sin for us; that we who were unrighteous, might be made righteousness in him. (August.) Satan, do thy worst, we have an abundant entrance through Jesus Christ.

Death is the last enemy, but not the least enemy. Albeit it be hateful and hurtful to the wicked, because it ends their short joys, and begins their everlasting sorrows; yet to the faithful that fiend is a friend; while it hastens their going out of this world, it prepares their going into the world to come: "To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain," Phil. i. 21. That which meant us the greatest damage, procures us the greatest advantage. The Lord Jesus hath led captivity captive, and swallowed up death in victory. "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" 1 Cor. xv. 54, 55. Out of that strong one he brought honey; out of that eater of all flesh, meat for all spirits. Through the jaws of cold death, he hath opened the gates of eternal life.

*Mors, quæ perpetuo cunctos absorbet hiati;
Parcere dum nascit, sapius ipsa facit;*

While death strives to bar the way against us, it doth make way for us, into this everlasting kingdom.

Thus the hinderances being removed, we come to consider the matter of this entrance, wherein it consists, and how we are here said to have it. It stands in two things; our union with Christ and our communion with the Holy Ghost.

First, for our union with Christ: for if the Head be entered, the members cannot be denied. The personal union of the Son of God to our nature, was a great mystery; "Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh," 1 Tim. iii. 16. Yet let me boldly say, in respect of us, there is another nearer conjunction required to

this entrance: "He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit," 1 Cor. vi. 17. First, that hypostatical union was the conjunction of God's nature and man's nature in general; but this is a union of the Son of God's person and the believer's person in special. Secondly, though Christ took our nature upon him, and that with all human infirmities, yet clean void of all sins: in this he takes to him the believer's person with all his sins; though we be full of wickedness, he knits us to his holy and glorious self. He is the Head, we are the members; but some tyrant may cut off the members from the head. He is the Husband, we are the wife; but death divorceth man and wife. He is the Vine, we are the branches; but man may ship off a branch from the vine. He is the Corner-stone, we the building; but a foundation may be bereft of the edifice, and come to the temple of Jerusalem's ease, to have not one stone left upon another. But when it is said, we are one spirit with Christ, here can be no separation; spirit may be parted from body, not spirit from spirit, never from itself; not two, but one spirit. "Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm," Cant. viii. 6. The arm is the instrument of power; and the heart is the fountain of life, the first that lives, and the last that dies. If therefore we be set there as seals, there can be no disjunction; unless we could be plucked from his arms that is almighty; unless his heart could die, which is life itself. "Set me as a seal," &c. That petition is now a position; what the church then desired, it hath now enjoyed; their wish is our article, their Pater-noster our creed. Were we not deeply engraven on his heart, when his heart was divided with a spear for us? when in a manner he seemed forsaken of his own Father for a time, rather than his Father should forsake us for ever? That evangelical prophet testifies it; "Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands," Isa. xlix. 16. Were we not engraven there when his hands were pierced for us? "They digged my hands and my feet," Psal. xxii. 16. And they digged them so deep, that the very prints remained after his resurrection, and their fingers were thrust into them for evidence's sake, John xx. 27. Some have thought that those scars remain still in his glorious body, to be showed at his second appearing; "They shall see him whom they have pierced." That is improbable, but this is certain; there remains still an impression upon Christ's hands and his heart, the sealing and wearing of the elect there, as precious jewels. For the same affections he had on earth, he hath carried up with the same body to heaven. He cannot there *pati*, but he doth *compati*: "Saul, why persecutest thou me?" He that remembered us on the cross, will not forget us in the crown; as Pharaoh's officer forgot Joseph when he came to his preferment. For this that penitent malefactor prayed, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." As if he should say, Now happily thou thinkest on us, because thou art in the same fashion and passion with us, suffering the same torment, subject to the same death; perhaps thou feelest more grievous things than we. But when this passion is all over, thy sufferings past, when thou art exalted to glory, when thou comest to thy kingdom, Lord, remember me then. He did so; "This day thou shalt be with me in paradise." He remembers us now triumphing, as well as he did then suffering. The affection of love is noted to be most vehement in women: David spake of a transcendent and incomparable love, when he preferred it above the love of women; "Thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women," 2 Sam. i. 26; because they are naturally most tender and affectionate.

Therefore Christ, that he might wonderfully love us, was made of a woman; "God sent his Son, made of a woman," Gal. iv. 4. But because sin can harden the heart of any woman, therefore he took it of a pure virgin. And because every virgin is originally conceived in sin, to make it more pure and tender, he took it of a woman, of a virgin, and clear from all sin. Now this affection he took with him to heaven, and set it at the right hand of his Father there.

Thus his side was opened; through that breach we have entrance: his heart was pierced; through that heart we have entrance: every wound is a passage. Who condemns? It is Christ that justifies. Who shuts? It is the Lord Jesus that opens. Death seems to dissolve this union, but doth not: for look what was Christ's condition in the grave, such is the condition of all his members. In death the soul of Christ was severed from his body, as far as heaven is from earth; for his body was laid in the sepulchre, and his soul was in the hands of his Father; yet was neither of these separated from the Godhead. Chrysostom gives a familiar similitude to explain this: A man holds a sheathed sword in his hand; he draws out the sword from the scabbard, holds the sword in one hand, the scabbard in the other; here the sword and the sheath are parted one from another, but neither of both are parted from the man, for he hath them both in his hands still. So the Deity took Christ's soul from his body when he died, as a sword drawn out of the scabbard, but held them both in his hands, and at his resurrection put them together again: the soul was separated from the body, neither of these from the Lord. So it is with us; death, whether natural or violent, may rend the soul from the body, it can take neither from Christ. But why then is not the body quickened in the grave by his virtue, and by the inseparability of this union? As when an arm is taken with a dead palsy, it receiveth little or no heat, sense, motion, or life from the body; yet it still remains a member of the body, because the flesh and bones abide still tied with ligaments to the body. Our bodies in the grave are but taken with a dead palsy, they are still members of Christ, and shall by his virtue be revived; when again the soul shall be wedded to the body, and both body and soul to everlasting glory.

Thus we are sure, if Christ be entered, that our entrance is easy. We have obtained favour in the sight of the great King, his golden sceptre is held out unto us, let us enter, Esth. v. 2; go we "boldly unto the throne of grace," Heb. iv. 16; there is no quarrel against us in heaven, all is peace through Christ, let us enter. It is the voice of the King himself, Enter into the joy of your Lord, Matt. xxv. 23. All excuses of our not entering into this kingdom are taken away. It is storied of a great conqueror, that when he had vanquished his enemies, after a long siege laid to the castle wherein they had fortified themselves, and had opened that inaccessible palace, he sent some of his garrison to enter and keep it for him. They, ignorant of his victory, excuse themselves: There be giants. He answers, I have slain them. There be dragons about it. I have chained them fast. There is a deep trench, how should we pass over it? I have dammed it up. There are brazen gates, strongly guarded. I have set them wide open. There wants room for so many as thou sendest. No, there is room enough; it is as large as a city; therefore go in, and possess it. So when God sends men to enter this kingdom, they cowardly excuse themselves, as Israel did: There be giants, the sons of Anak; there are principalities and powers to withstand us. Christ answers, I have

slain them on my cross. There is a great red dragon. I have chained him sure enough; that blessed angel, with the key of the bottomless pit, and the great chain in his hand, hath bound the dragon that old serpent for ever, Rev. xx. 2. But there is a fortification of the law against us. Saith Christ, I have sealed that fort, performed full obedience to the law, and given satisfaction to the justice of God for you. But there is a deep trench, a sea of glass before the throne, Rev. iv. 6; how shall we get over that to the kingdom? "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world," John xvi. 33. But there is a high wall, and mighty gates, Rev. xxi. too high to climb over, and too thick to break through. You need not attempt such a course, for the gates are set open; "The gates of it shall not be shut at all," ver. 25. But there wants room for so many as thou invitest to this kingdom. No; "In my Father's house are many mansions," John xiv. 2: there is room enough for you all. Thus is this entrance ready for us; God grant we may be ready for this entrance.

Secondly, this entrance consists in our communion with the Holy Ghost; "The communion of the Holy Ghost be with you," 2 Cor. xiii. 14. When two princes would establish peace together, either sends his ambassador to other, as a pledge or earnest of that truce. So God, to confirm an everlasting league between himself and our souls, sends his Lieger, the Holy Ghost, to us; and we send our Lieger, our Saviour Christ, and our fidelity with him, unto God: he "hath sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts," 2 Cor. i. 22. An earnest seals the bargain, as a handful of corn is given to assure the whole field. We have begun to reap, therefore it is truly said, we have made our entry. This entrance consists in many felicities communicated to us by the Spirit, but I principally apply myself to that of St. Paul, "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost," Rom. xiv. 17. Paul calls it the kingdom of God; so doth Peter in this place: Paul saith, it is participated in this life; so Peter, that we have here an entrance into it. It must be understood of that fruition which we have of the kingdom of God in this life; for otherwise why should he mention and exclude meats and drinks, which have neither use nor place in heaven? Chrysostom and Haymo construe it thus; That meats and drinks are not of any power to bring us to heaven. But Peter Martyr calls this *alienam interpretationem*; for so neither is righteousness any cause, but a beginning of this kingdom. St. Augustine mentions one Urbicus, who by this text would prove, that Christians ought to fast on the Saturday, the Jews' sabbath, because the kingdom of Christ is not in meats and drinks. But then it would follow, that at other times, as on the Lord's day, or when we fast not, we should not pertain to the kingdom of Christ. But to our purpose, if it consist in righteousness, peace, and spiritual joy, then, having these, we have an entrance into it. If I seem too tedious in this instance, I answer with St. Peter, "It is good for us to be here; let us make here three tabernacles," Matt. xvii. 4; one for righteousness, another for peace, and a third for joy in the Holy Ghost. Where can we be better than in the kingdom of Jesus Christ?

For righteousness: this is not to be understood of a particular justice, giving every man his due, with Gorrhan; but it is the imputed righteousness of Christ, and our inherent righteousness proceeding from it. There is a righteousness wrought for us, whereby of evil men we are made good; and a righteousness wrought in us, whereby of good men we are made better; "Being made free from sin, ye be-

came the servants of righteousness," Rom. vi. 18. So far then as we are righteous, so far have we made our entrance. Where our desires are, there ourselves are; but we desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ; therefore we are there with him, *ubi amamus, potius quam ubi amamus*. Whether our conversation is entered, ourselves are entered; but "our conversation is in heaven," Phil. iii. 20; therefore we are there, not locally, but spiritually. To live after the manner of Israel, is to be in Israel, saith a father. If heaven be in us, then are we in heaven; but, we live not in ourselves, but Christ liveth in us; and the life which we now live in the flesh we live by the faith of the Son of God, Gal. ii. 20. He that hath the faith of eternal life, hath eternal life in his faith; he that believeth, is passed from death unto life, John v. 24. A Christian is like Jacob's Bulder; while his body, that lower part, stands on the ground, the top, his higher and better part, is in heaven. The apostle speaks of a thing already done, "He hath made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus," Eph. ii. 6. If a stranger be but come into your suburbs, you say commonly, he hath entered the city. If we now live like the saints, we shall hereafter live like the angels.

The next is peace. Peace is the daughter of righteousness: "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God," Rom. v. 1. "Righteousness and peace have kissed each other," Psal. lxxxv. 10. But how is it said then, "In the world ye shall have trouble?" John xvi. 33. How can trouble and peace stand together? It is true indeed that the wicked will molest us; but we must still go forward. Navigation is not to be lost because there are some sea-rocks. Doves forbear not flying home because there are some kites abroad in the air. God did not destroy all the Canaanites, lest the wild beasts should break in upon Israel. A country of India hath a law, that no man shall kill any ravens; they are let alone to devour the carrion, which else would corrupt the air. We have disturbers enough; some, by mischievous acts, against our lives, our wives, our children, our estates. Some, by scandalous speeches; such are calumniators, slanderers, flatterers. Others, by malicious envyings; as unfriendliness, suspicions, jealousies. Malice works mischief at home, and envy sends it in from abroad. *Suavia petit livor ut ignis*. Our happiness is their eyesore. Envy hath a lofty look, but not to look up unto heaven. There are Italian tricks. There was a beast risen out of the sea, "having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy," Rev. xiii. 1. A savage beast, that first deposed kings, and then exposeth them to death. A murdering point of religion; he that first invented it, was a bloody wretch. But from the devil it came, and to the devil let it go. These be our greatest peace-breakers. These may easily breed commotion in a kingdom, but God alone can pacify it.

I know there are homebred mischiefs enough; and many an Ahab doth trouble our Israel. The pestilent usurer, whose words are as soft as his fox-fur, is a licking dog that bites sore. The mouse told her young ones in the fable, that they should not fear the loud-crowing cock, but the still cat. Lord and lewd wantons disquiet us, but the oppressor doth more hurt sitting silently in his cash-house, than the other with all their noise in the streets. Caesar said, he feared not Antony, because his heart was in his tongue; but Cassius, because his tongue was in his heart. If all this be, where is our peace? Yes, patience is the daughter of hope: in their wrongs is seen our patience, in our patience our hope, in our

hope our peace. We have peace in the world, though we have no peace with the world. Our troubles are seen without, our peace is felt within. Travellers write of a certain island they call De Fierro, where no fresh water is to be had; yet there is a certain tree in it, which drops so abundantly, that it satisfies all men and cattle of the country. Our exigents and indignance are great, but there is an inward peace of conscience, that satisfies us all with the precious liquor of content. The Lord lays all that blustering wind, all the thunder and lightning of menaces, all the storms and tempests of persecution, with one sweet and peaceful shower of comfort. Thus though we have not yet that peace of heaven; yet we have a heaven of peace, that is, assured remission of sins, and reconciliation to the God of peace. Satan, the world, sin, all fight against us; that war is our peace. If the happiness of that place, as Augustine speaks, be peace in eternal life, and eternal life in peace, then have we some present entrance into it; for the peace of God that passeth all understanding, and surpasseth all commending, doth preserve us.

The last material is joy in the Holy Ghost; which ariseth partly from the hope of future reward, and partly from the sense of present comfort. For if there be such sorrow in the contrition of sin, what is the joy in the remission of sin? Rachel wept for her children, because they were not: we might have wept for our souls, because they were in worse case than if they had not been: no womb but a Rebekah's feels those conflicts. Every night wash I my bed, saith David, with my tears, Psal. vi. 6. We might have so washed our eternal beds. Mary Magdalene wept as if she poured forth water, not by drops, but by floods; Peter, bitterly. This winter lasted not long, the spring sun shone out with beams of comfort. Now one dram of their present joy did outvalue all the loads of their former sorrow. Like men overladen, we feel such ease when the cross of Christ takes all this weight from our shoulders. When sin is remitted, nothing afflicts. "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations," Jam. i. 2. What joy in trouble? Will the world believe you, St. James? They answer, Take you such joy, we will not meddle with it. Yes, he that prescribed it, proved it; he found affliction turn to his profit; he learned this benefit by good experience. As we say, human learning is men's pains in their youth, their recreation in their age; so what was the greatest sorrow to the heart penitent, proves the greatest joy to the heart pardoned. Who would not give the iron fetters of his thralldom, for the weight of gold in freedom? It is a false accusation, that the word of God brings with it sullenness and discontent; for the statutes of the Lord rejoice the heart, Psal. xix. 8. It is the tidings of joy, of great joy, of such joy that the mountains skip like rams, and the little hills like young sheep. So far as this holy joy is entered into us, we have entered into the everlasting kingdom of Jesus Christ.

"Shall be ministered unto you." I come to the third point, the fitness or preparation. We are not beholden to ourselves for this entrance, it is ministered to us. As neither the good which we would obtain, so nor the good by which we do obtain, is our own. The means is ministered, therefore it is called the ministry of the word, the ministration of the sacraments. The apprehension of this means is ministered, for it is given to us to believe, Phil. i. 29. The object of this apprehension is ministered; eternal life is the gift of God through Jesus Christ, Rom. vi. 23.

Admire the mercy of God, which doth not only prepare a kingdom for us, but also prepare us for

that kingdom. In the world there is no mercy to a sinner: it hath commonly been the fault even of men entered into this kingdom, to shut the door after them, and to keep out others. The ruler of the synagogue could not endure that the people should be healed on the sabbath day, Luke xiii. 14. When the blind men cried to Christ, "Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David; the multitude rebuked them, because they should hold their peace," Matt. xx. 30, 31. This is a malicious and uncharitable sin, when men are passed over the deep pit by a bridge, to pluck it up, and suffer none to follow them. Thou sayest, Such a one is a refractory and dissolute offender. What then? therefore shut the church door against him? This is thy mercy, but God's mercy is more: to repentance he ministers an entrance. Yes, saith the malevolent repiner, he seems to repent, but he is only humbled in hypocrisy: but what window hast thou into his heart? It is worse in thee to be so critical a censor, than in him to be so hypocritical a sinner. The lawyers say, Once bad, never good. The Cathari did use to excommunicate for ever; if a man were once revolted, never to be received; but this was but a puritan trick. Or if upon undeniable contrition, and humble submission, they admitted such a one to their outward service, yet they held him a reprobate: as the Gibeonites were permitted in the tabernacle, but with disgrace. The Brutii in Italy, for their revolting from the Romans to Hannibal, were upon their submission received again into the Roman protection, but might never be trusted for that trick. Paul says, "Neither idolaters, nor adulterers, nor thieves, nor drunkards, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God," 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10. Yet was Solomon an idolater, Mary Magdalene an adulteress, the malefactor on the cross a thief, Zacheus an extortioner, Noah drunk; yet did all these enter into the kingdom of God. The apostle adds, Such were ye, ver. 11; you were, but you are not. Neither did they enter into heaven idolaters, or adulterers, or extortioners, but they became new creatures: they were washed, sanctified, justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of God. Do thou turn from wickedness to piety, God will turn from judgment to mercy.

One of the puritans told Constantine the Great the strictness of their opinions; to whom he answered, Set up thyself a ladder and go to heaven alone. The Jews were such absolute malcontents, grudging the Gentiles any mercy. This envious fault is too common, and there is still some of this puritan blood that runs in many men's veins. That man thinks he loses what another gains: it is not enough for him to have a place in heaven himself, but he must be porter, or rather householder, to direct who shall come after him; to let in whom he please, his friends and acquaintance only. When the Jews saw that a great audience was at Paul's sermon, they were filled with envy, and fell to contradiction and blasphemy, Acts xiii. 45. When the elder brother heard the sumptuous and joyful entertainment of his lost brother, "he was angry, and would not go in," Luke xv. 28. So Rome thinks that the gospel's rising must needs be her falling. Therefore she cannot endure like a sister to communicate with us, but like a tyrant to excommunicate us. They think it is with them and us, as the poets imagined it to be with Castor and Pollux; when the one lived, the other died. Or as when the day comes, the night must end. Or as two buckets in one well, one drieth while the other dippeth. Or as the Jews might fear, when Agrippa built Casarea, and removed all the ornaments of Israel thither, that the flourishing

of that city would be the drooping of Jerusalem. Envy is sick if her neighbour be well.

But let this malicious heart hear God's argument and eviction: "Is thine eye evil, because I am good?" Matt. xx. 15. This was the prophet Jonah's discontent; when the Lord would not destroy them according to his threatening, "it displeased Jonah exceedingly," chap. iv. 1. God means to spare Nineveh; Jonah would not have it so. God thought it best; the man is of another mind. Here is an opposition of two, but the match is very unequal. I am certainly persuaded, that no man is like to gain much by such bargains. The potter is on the one side, and the potsherd on the other. Fire, thunder, lightning, says it shall be so; flax and tow says it shall not be so. Yet is weakness angry that he may not bear away the bucklers. Therefore he proceeds to argue the matter with God, ver. 2. But as Tully said of Romulus pretending a law to kill his brother Remus, it was a fault by the leave of Romulus; so if Jonah pretend reason why God should overthrow penitent sinners, this was a fault by the leave of Jonah. The disciples were not free from this error; when they brought little children to Christ for his blessing, "the disciples rebuked them," Matt. xix. 13. They that have part in the kingdom, grudge it to others. Only Jesus spoke for them: it is his goodness to answer for that which is not able to answer for itself: "Suffer them, and forbid them not." He doubles his charge; both affirmatively, "suffer them," and negatively, "forbid them not:" as in the king's writ there is not only a *capias*, but a *multatus omittas*. And as an additional security, "Let them come unto me." If I have given them a kingdom, will you not let them come to the King? Let this teach us to yield a joyful consent to God's doings; we must not dislike his will though it be to destroy; but when it is sweetened with mercy, let us vehemently love it. When Joshua told Moses of Eldad and Medad's prophesying in the camp, "My lord Moses, forbid them," he answers, Enviest thou for my sake? would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his Spirit upon them! Numb. xi. 28, 29. When Paul was called to be an apostle, those pillars envied not, but gave him the right hands of fellowship, Gal. ii. 9. They that went to heaven by the bloody way of martyrdom, prayed for others an easier passage; even their persecutors and murderers had their prayers. As Fulgentius notes on Stephen and Paul. Whither Stephen went before slain by the stones of Paul, thither Paul followed after helped by the prayers of Stephen. Let this comfort us in the mercies of our God; whosever grudgeth, whatsoever hindereth, the Lord doth minister an entrance unto us.

"Abundantly." I come to the latitude or broadness of this passage. Faith and a good conscience find an easy entrance to blessedness. "Abundantly:" it is demanded then, how the word of God makes the passage so strait and so narrow? "Strive to enter in at the strait gate," Luke xiii. 24; for "narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it," Matt. vii. 14. The answer is easy; the gate is not narrow in itself, but in respect of the unqualified enterers. It is too low for lofty and aspiring ambition, too narrow for imposthumated pride, too strait for gouty covetousness; but to faith it is broad. As it is *spaciosa* for the gloriousness, so *spaciosa* for the easiness: it is both a beautiful gate, and a bountiful gate. But this bounty is only to the poor; "He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away," Luke i. 53. Rich men scorn to be beggars, their dition admits no such condition. This gate is open, not *potentibus*,

to mighty usurpers, but *petentibus*, to humble petitioners. The Lord is rich in mercy. To all? No, but to all that call upon him faithfully. And with him is plenteous redemption: it is all one, abundant entrance. But, "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence," Matt. xi. 12. True, but it loves that violence that it suffers; as God was well pleased to be overcome of Jacob. This violence doth not take away the facility of entrance, but rather notes the faculty of them that enter.

It is true that there are many oppositions, yet is there still a sufficient entrance. We may say of it, as St. Paul speaks of his occasion of preaching the gospel, "A great door and effectual is opened, and there are many adversaries," 1 Cor. xvi. 9. St. Paul himself was a little feared with the apprehension of this difficulty, when he prayed thrice against those buffetings of Satan; but he was confirmed in the Lord's answer, "My grace is sufficient for thee," 2 Cor. xii. 9. Indeed flesh and blood, in the natural corruption of it, cannot enter the kingdom of God, 1 Cor. xv. 50; no more than a cable rope can be brought through a needle's eye. While it is whole it cannot pass; but untwine it, and lay it thread by thread, and then you may easily draw it all through. If the worldling would untwist his riches by charity, and the sinner untwist his sins by repentance, they may abundantly enter. There is an *abundanter* that shuts many out; abundance of worldly riches, and lusts of covetousness: for man's life consisteth not in this abundance, Luke xii. 15. And if not his natural life, much less doth his spiritual life, consist in it. There is an *abundanter* that lets many in. It is the grace of God which is abundantly shed on us through Jesus Christ, Tit. iii. 6.

But our apostle himself makes it a difficult thing to be saved; "If the righteous scarcely be saved," &c. 1 Pet. iv. 18. The apostle doth not intend any difficulty in respect of God's election, but in regard of our affliction; because through a fiery trial, and through many tribulations, we must enter into the kingdom of God, Acts xiv. 22. So scarcely saved, that by reason of their miseries they seem to the world not to be saved at all. Through much tribulation they must enter; but howsoever they shall enter. This doth not hedge up the way, but enlarge it. Stephen saw great happiness by Christ in his peace, but under the stones he saw heaven itself open. God doth receive, not reject, the son whom he doth scourge, Heb. xii. 6. If God do not think thee worthy of his rod, he will never think thee worthy of his crown. (August.) Doth any man find the way to blessedness difficult? himself is in fault. Dost thou complain the gate is shut? No, but thou art not habited for entrance. None might come to Ahasuerus's court in sackcloth, but they that come so are best welcome to God. It is said of the virtuous wife, that all her household are clothed in double garments, Prov. xxxi. 21. All God's servants have double garments; a black mourning garment of penitence, and a white robe of innocence. Either of these must be *restis talaris*, down to the heels, even to the end of their life.

If men be foul and impure, no marvel though there be strait entrance, for there is no entrance: in no wise shall any unclean thing enter into it, Rev. xxi. 27. But otherwise, *in via virtutis nulli est via*. Art thou wrapped in thy sins, and sayest the passage is narrow? It is abundant, but not to thee. Unload thy conscience by repentance, and those everlasting doors shall give thee entrance abundantly to the Kingdom of glory. It may seem hard at the first, because there is weeping to part with beloved sins, much ado to keep the eye from Sodom; but endeavour, and

thou shalt find it easier and easier. *Cupta vides sere Pergama, capta tamen*. "The gates of it shall not be shut by day:" by day, well; but yet they may be shut by night: neither, "for there shall be no night there," Rev. xxi. 25. The prophet entreats God to spread the heavens as a curtain; now he did spread them wide, when publicans and harlots were converted, and did enter into the kingdom of heaven. I conclude.

This abundant entrance is given to us by Christ: our own debts did make it narrow, his payment hath made it wide. As Paul pleaded to Philemon for Onesimus, so Christ to his Father for us. Philem. ver. 10, "I beseech thee;" Christ mediates, intercedes for us. "For my son," saith Paul; for my children, saith Christ. "Whom I have begotten;" Christ hath begotten us again of water and the Spirit; not only "in my bonds," but in my blood. Ver. 11, "Which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and me." So Christ; They were, O Father, useless and rebellious enemies, but now I have made them useful and profitable for thy glory. Ver. 12, "Whom I have sent again;" we were all run-aways from God and goodness, Christ hath sent us back again. "Thou therefore receive him, that is, mine own bowels." Receive them, O Father; shut them not out, but open thy everlasting doors of mercy to entertain them; and that so near, as unto thine own bowels: as thou art in me, and I in thee, so let them be one in us, John xvii. 21. Ver. 16, "Not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me." I have made them a degree above servants, even friends; I call you not servants, but friends, John xv. 15. Yea, a degree above friends, brothers to me: "He is not ashamed to call us brethren," Heb. ii. 11; beloved to me, whom I bought with my own blood. Ver. 17, "If thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as myself." As I of thy glory, so let them participate of our glory; "The glory which thou gavest me, I have given them," John xvii. 22. If thou count me a partner, that think it no robbery to be equal with thyself, receive them as myself, admit them to thy own blessedness. Ver. 18, "If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account;" so saith Christ, *Si quid debent, ego solvam*. Whatsoever they are indebted to thy justice, I will pay it; put it on mine account, take my reckoning on the cross for it. Ver. 19, "I Paul have written it with mine own hand, I will repay it." I Jesus have written it on the paper of the cross, with the ink of my blood, the pen being a spear's point; I will pay all. And his payment was good, who had power to suffer enough, and righteousness to satisfy enough. All this was to give us an abundant entrance; what shall we then do, but, as David, "I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord?" Psal. cxvi. 13. Hath Christ made us way? let us then enter in, and bless the name of the Lord.

"Into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." Some copies have read *Dei et Domini*, &c. so the vulgar Latin. Idacius Clarus against Vainadius the Arian, from hence proves, *Idem esse Patris et Filii imperium*, that the Son hath the same kingdom with the Father; and that in nothing he is unequal or inferior to him. Ambrose so reads it, and from it demonstrates against the Arians, *Unitatem substantiæ æterni Filii cum Patre*. For "every kingdom divided against itself, is brought to desolation," Matt. xii. 25. If the kingdom of the Father and of the Son were divided, how could they stand? If any man should distinguish a kingdom of Christ only, and so conceive a difference betwixt God's power and Christ's; yet that man

shall confess that Christ hath a kingdom, and that an everlasting kingdom. But how can his kingdom be called everlasting, whenas it is said, that Christ shall deliver up the kingdom to God the Father, and the Son also himself shall be subject to him? 1 Cor. xv. 24, 28. We must know that God did commit the government of the world to Christ, and therefore he is called by divines, *Patris vicarius*: not that the Father could be idle, but Christ was his Counsellor. Now this government given to Christ's mediatorship shall end; his mediation and interceding office shall cease. He shall reign no longer as the Son of man in the midst of his enemies; but he shall reign over them being vanquished, as God. Through the subjection of his human nature, the glory of his Godhead shall more fully appear, such and the same it was before eternity; neither shall this diminish, but rather increase, the glory of his humanity, when we see it personally united to the Son of God for ever. Thus we are sure that Christ hath himself, and will give us, an everlasting kingdom; for the love of God is from eternity in respect of our predestination, and unto eternity in respect of our glorification.

In this palace or court I consider two things; the royalty of it, in that it is a kingdom; and the perpetuity of it, in that it is an everlasting kingdom. Which give it two excellencies above all other principalities. First, in regard of the majesty which it hath from the King, who is above all kings. The place makes not the man, but the man makes the place: neither doth the kingdom honour Christ, but Christ honours the kingdom. Next, in respect of the immutability: the honour of earthly princes is often laid in the dust, but this is an eternal kingdom. The royalty of Christ is absolute, independent, universal, and everlasting: "He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end," Luke i. 33. The angel assures the virgin that Christ shall have the throne of David; and therein he shall reign for ever, and of his kingdom is no end. This *kai*, and, is not redundant, but expository. Here be two terms that signify an interminable thing; "for ever," and "no end;" a double universality, of place, and of time. It is "for ever;" it hath no limits, but extends over all; "no end."

Now it is fit that he should be so honoured, that was so humbled. Our sin brought him exceeding low, let his own righteousness exalt him exceeding high. He that thundereth in the clouds was lying, perhaps crying, in the manger. He had a kingdom even while he served; and Pilate could not undo what he had ignorantly done; nor alter his title, "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews." "He saith unto the Jews, Behold your King," John xix. 14. They spake truth in their mockery, when they "began to salute him, Hail, King of the Jews;" Mark xv. 18. If his kingdom had depended upon their lips, it had soon perished with himself; for now they gave him palms, and presently thorns: once, Behold our King; and again, "We have no king but Caesar," John xix. 15. Simeon told his mother, "This child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign that shall be spoken against," Luke ii. 34. He shall be *set*: he was set for, set against, set at naught, but not set by. He was set, by intention for all, by occasion against many, by apprehension for many, by permission for a sign that should be contradicted. But he that was a Lamb, is now a Lion: the flower of the field is become a rod of iron: that shining light is also a consuming fire: he that was a Servant, is a King; not indeed of this world is his kingdom; "My kingdom is not of this world," John xviii. 36; in *it*, not of it.

Here we may well consider these points; the supremacy of the King, the security of the subjects, and the eternal felicity of the kingdom.

For the former, by comparing earthly things with heavenly, we may observe the excellency of that regiment in which we stand, it is a kingdom; and the dignity of the Governor, he is an eternal King: "Unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever," 1 Tim. i. 17. All inferior kingdoms are derived from him, and subordinate to him. He doth not take away temporal kingdoms, that gives an eternal kingdom. He "who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords," 1 Tim. vi. 15, is content to distribute some honour among certain men; of whom it is too presumptuous to say, *Divisum imperium cum Jove Cæsar habet*; but, *Imperium summum sub Jove Cæsar habet*. The papists indeed more esteem *monachum quam monarcham*; with them *magus* is more than *magnus*, the priest is above the king. But there is no greater calling under heaven than a king. The king is above all, only under the Lord; he hath no peer in his dominions. (Tertul.) The power of a master over his servants, of a parent over his children, of a shepherd over his lambs, of a prince over his subjects, of a good man over himself, all these concur in a good king, all are eminent in our great King Jesus Christ. "I said, Ye are gods," John x. 34. There is a God by nature, the one only God himself; gods in opinion, such are idols; gods by participation, such are kings. God is an immortal King, the king is a mortal god. In Greek *βασίς* signifies a foundation; *λαός*, people: hence comes *βασιλεύς*, a king; the foundation of his people. But Christ hath made us all kings, Rev. i. 6. Spiritually, not civilly; "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers," Rom. xiii. 1. Spiritual kings have a dominion over sin, temporal kings over them. Princes and other men are equal in regard of natural being, unequal in regard of civil and moral being. The common golden coin, the golden candlestick, the golden snuffers, the golden chains, and the golden crown, are all made out of one lump of the same gold; yet is the golden crown more honoured than the rest. The common coin is the people; the golden candlestick that bears the light, is the minister; the golden snuffers, to cleanse those lights if they burn dim and foul, are the subordinate magistrate; the golden chains are the nobles for ornament, the senators for government: the last and best is the golden crown; this the king only wears, and all the rest are subject to it. One piece of gold is under another in value; all are under the sovereign, the golden crown. This world is the possession of men, men the possession of kings, kings the possession of God. "Great deliverance giveth he to his king," Psal. xviii. 50: he is the Lord's king. There is a double relation, between the king's God, and God's king. All men are his by a common right, but kings by a special prerogative; "Touch not mine anointed."

Thus by comparative and ascending degrees, we come to perceive the greatness of our Sovereign, Jesus Christ. He made kings on earth to have honour above all men, that himself might have the honour above all kings. Our neighbours of Rome cannot endure the supremacy of princes. The pope is the man. Kings must be his vassals, to hold his stirrup, to bear his canopy; to be exposed, deposed, disposed at his will, if they be not composed to his will. All royalty is confined to that chair, which the Lateran council calls, the royal race of Roman bishops. His titles are, Monarch of the Christian republic, and invincible assertor of priestly omnipo-

tence. But these attributes that he would have, ascribe that to him which he should have, and prove him antichrist for his labour; whom Paul says we shall know by this mark, that "he exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped," 2 Thess. ii. 4; above all augusteity. To manage outward affairs was ever the king's right. Solomon the king deposed Abiathar the priest; would it not be strange now if the priest should depose the king? Optatus against the Donatists; Above the king is none but God, who makes kings. Strabo writes of a high priest in Pontus that wore a crown, whose subjects were called Hieroduli; but he was a pagan. The Romists will be pagans, Donatists, Anabaptists, any thing, what you will, so they be no subjects. They that ascribe so much to the fathers, methinks should give credit to St. Chrysostom. Were he an apostle, a prophet, an evangelist, a bishop, a priest, a monk, saith he. But say they, amongst all these he names not the pope. Why, is the pope no priest, no bishop? Well, let us hear him on; Whether cardinal or pope, what cloth soever his coat be made of, the king is above him. Nicephorus writes of a king that going in his barge, his crown fell into the water; a bargeman leaped in after it, and taking it up, he put it on his head as he swam till he recovered the barge. The king gave him a talent for saving it, but cut off his head for wearing it. Our seminaries have done more than reach at the crown to save it, for they have endeavoured to steal it; and, if they were suffered, they would sink it, drown it, destroy it. But saith Christ, "Give unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's;" let Caesar have his kingdom, and let Christ have his kingdom. We distinguish between the eternal God and the temporal lord; but we obey the temporal lord for his sake that is the eternal God. (August.) And certainly he that refuseth obedience to the temporal king, hath yet made no gracious entrance into the everlasting kingdom of Jesus Christ.

Thus by degrees of comparison, and by arising from things inferior to things higher, if a kingdom of substitution under Christ be so great, what is the eminence of Christ's own supremacy? Kings are above other men; Christ is above all kings, above all things. Now in the second place let us consider our own safety and security under him. We have a King to rule us; a King of majesty, a King of mercy. It is a happiness to have a king; as the people said to David, "Thou art worth ten thousand of us," 2 Sam. xviii. 3; and, "Thou art the light of Israel." Any king is better than no king; tyranny is better than anarchy: "In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes," Judg. xvii. 6. In the reign of a bad king no man can do the good he would, but under no king every man doth what evil he list. The Israelites would have a king; their very first was a tyrant; yet were they then in better case than when they had none. Christians are safe, they have a King. It is a greater happiness that they have a good King. An evil prince is a plague to the people for their sins; that one evil man may punish another: "He is a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil," Rom. xiii. 4. They hurt much by their unjust commands, but more by their bad examples; for the commonwealth, like a fish, first rots at the head. It was the king of Syria's charge to his captains, "Fight neither with small nor great, save only with the king of Israel," 1 Kings xxii. 31. Scanderbeg would aim at none but the general: he said that he never knew body could move without a head. A prince falls like a great tree, that squaseth down

all the under-wood about it. Sometimes the people sin, and the prince smarts. God charged Moses, "Take all the heads of the people, and hang them up before the Lord," Numb. xxv. 4. The hand steals, the throat drinks, the head pays for it. Such was our King to us; we offended, he was plagued: "We like sheep have gone astray, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all," Isa. liii. 6. It is reported of a certain king, who knowing that either himself must perish or all his people, disguised himself like a mean soldier, entered the thickest troops of the enemy, invited danger, and was entertained with death. So Christ our King, having the choice put to him, that either himself must die, or the whole world perish, disguised himself in the humble habit of mortal flesh, for otherwise they would not have killed him: "For had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory," 1 Cor. ii. 8. Sometimes the king sins, and the people smarts; *delirant reges, plectuntur populi*; David commits the sin in numbering the people, and the people are plagued; the head plots mischief, the back or neck pays for it. To a commonwealth, the king is either the greatest blessing, or the greatest curse; therefore, a man should not show himself in the confines and extremity of his power: to can do ill, and will not, is noble. But we are under such a King, as can protect us from evil, and will supply us with good. Some doubt of his power; "If thou canst do any thing, help us," Mark ix. 22. Others doubt of his will; "If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean," Matt. viii. 2. But his power is infinite; "Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in heaven, in earth, in the seas, and in all deep places," Psal. cxxxv. 6. He can do what he will do, every where. All places are there named, but purgatory; perhaps he can do nothing there, but leaves all that work for the pope. His mercy is also infinite: it was but hyperbolical of Trajan, it is true of Christ; He can sooner cease to be, than to be good to his. It was nobly said by Augustus, that when he had done no good to his subjects any day, I have not been a king to day: there is no such day passeth by our King, Jesus Christ.

Now, lastly, let us come more narrowly to examine the felicity of this kingdom, whose law is truth, whose King is the Trinity, and whose bounds are eternity. The kingdom of heaven is taken divers ways: sometimes for the life of the just, under the similitude of the marriage of men, and of the carriage of men. So, "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son," Matt. xxii. 2: the elect are the guests bidden to the wedding. "The kingdom of heaven is likened unto ten virgins," Matt. xxv. 1: not that only virgins shall enter the kingdom of heaven. For as Paul says, "In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature," Gal. vi. 15; so, neither marriage is any thing, nor virginity, but chastity. Chrysostom, who was a great admirer of virginity, could say, The first degree of chastity is spotless virginity; the next, faithful wedlock. Christ was conceived in virginity, and born in marriage, to show that *calibutus* is not only *culo beatus*; whether single or married, if faithful, they are admitted to this kingdom. Sometimes the kingdom of heaven is taken for the church militant, mixed with good and bad. The kingdom of heaven is likened to a field, that had in it both wheat and tares, Matt. xiii. 24. The kingdom of heaven is likened to a net, that gathered of every kind, ver. 47. In a kingdom there be divers subjects, some true, and some false; so in the church, some be loyal, and others hypocrites. Therefore the course of

Christ in his kingdom is such, as good magistrates should take in commonwealths; to reward the good, and to punish the wicked. In this present state, among men the best are regarded least; Jacob is bound apprentice, while profane Esau rides a hunting; but in the future state the greater shall serve the less. Sometimes it is taken for Christ himself: "The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a certain king," Matt. xviii. 23: "Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory;" in respect of that kindly order whereby he governs it. "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a man," Matt. xx. 1; for Christ as man, is also a King. In that state he shall judge, in which he stood before a Judge: he bought that right and title in his manhood. Now can there be a sweeter government, than under our Saviour, that purchased his subjects with his blood? He was humbled, therefore "God hath exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name," Phil. ii. 9. Lastly, it is taken for the glory of Christ in heaven. Dost thou love riches? seek it where it can never be lost. Dost thou love honour? seek it where no baseness is. Dost thou love health? seek it where no sickness is. Dost thou love life? seek it where no death is. Bernard describes the glory of this kingdom, from that allegory, Rev. xii. 1, the "crown of twelve stars." Into this little ring let us bring the discourse of that infinite glory.

1. Let the first star be, memory without forgetfulness. Here we forget what we should remember, and remember what we should forget; we forget benefits, and remember injuries. There we shall have a perfect memory; Gregory sticks not to say, even of our very past miseries and faults. But how? We shall remember them, not with sorrow to distract us, but with joy of deliverance to confirm us: it shall be our fence, not our offence. When we remember how wretchedly we once lay, under the torment of such a sickness, under the tyranny of such a foe, and which was worst, under the pressure of such a sin; and now find ourselves delivered and safe for ever; how unspeakable will be our joy!

2. The second star is, reason without obscurity, understanding without error. "Now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known," 1 Cor. xiii. 12. The mist which sin brought over this intellectual light, shall be removed. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him," 1 Cor. ii. 9. As St. Augustine says, Faith cannot contain it, nor hope comprise it, nor charity comprehend it; it transcendeth the reach of all our thoughts: it may be obtained, it never can be sufficiently esteemed.

3. The third star is, a perfect will of good without perturbation. This is a main difference betwixt paradise and heaven. There was a power not to sin; here is no power at all to sin. The regenerate man on earth hath a will not to offend, shall have there no will nor possibility to offend. Here he hath a desire of rest, there the rest of desire.

4. The fourth star is, the clarity and impassibility of the body. Christ "shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself," Phil. iii. 21. This mutation is not by any propenseness of nature, but by the operation of Christ. This consists in four properties; in clarity, in subtilty, in impassibility, in incorruption. For clarity; "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars for ever," Dan. xii. 3. Christ as the Sun, it is enough for us to be as stars. "There is one

glory of the sun, another glory of the moon, another glory of the stars," 1 Cor. xv. 41. Christ the Sun, gives glory to the moon; the moon, that is, the church, hath a great glory; and the same glory is to every particular star. When Christ was transfigured, "his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light," Matt. xvii. 2. Such glory shall our bodies have, as is able to lighten the darkest corners of hell: "It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory," 1 Cor. xv. 43. For subtilty and agility; it shall be made movable according to the quickness of our thoughts: as Christ's body, being risen, was suddenly out of one place into another: As they spake, he stood in the midst of them, Luke xxiv. 36. Christ says they shall be like the angels, who are said to have wings, in respect of their speedy removal. "There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body," 1 Cor. xv. 44: a spiritual body is as quick as a spirit itself. For impassibility; though it retains solidity, yet it remains invulnerable. Every thing now vexeth it, a sword, an ague, a thorn; then no violence can dint or daunt it. Though the body stood in the midst of an army, it could not be hurt. The violent, murderous, and massacring cannon, which now makes a lane where it spits, cannot then wound our impenetrable breasts. Here our bodies have heaviness and weakness, there lightness and power: "It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power;" so that it can powerfully move from place to place. It shall be strong as a spirit, and one spirit is able to conquer many men. For incorruptibility; the body is so corrupt now, that it is fain to have the soul instead of salt to preserve it. Then it shall be clear, and shine pure as the sun, which at that time shall also exceed itself in glory. This is the glory of the body, which is but the body of glory; besides the soul of glory, which is the glory of the soul.

5. The fifth star is, the renovation of all things. "I saw a new heaven, and a new earth," Rev. xxi. 1. Not that there is an abolition of the old, but an alteration of them from being old. The same things may remain, but not in the same state. Fire shall purge out the corruption, and all things shall be restored to their first majesty; no man can deceive, or be deceived. (Prosper.)

6. The sixth star is, universal charity without envy. Every one shall be a king, and possess a kingdom, yet shall there be no repining. Though it be imparted, it shall not be impaired: the number of heirs shall not impeach the inheritance. (August.) That glory shall be to all, that is to some; every one shall have as much as any one. An earthly kingdom, like the zodiac, admits but one sun: in this all are kings, and every one hath his crown. There is laid up for me a crown; and not for me only, but for all those that love the appearing of Jesus Christ, 2 Tim. iv. 8. About the throne were four and twenty seats, and on the seats four and twenty elders, that had on their heads crowns of gold, Rev. iv. 4. By which number is signified the whole court of the saints. On earth the ambition of a crown brooks no rivalry; breach of faith to get kingdoms is held no sin; but this shall never get the kingdom of heaven. A kingdom made Absalom a parricide in will. Abimelech a fratricide in deed, that he murdered seventy persons, his brethren, the sons of Jerubbaal, upon one stone, Judg. ix. 5. This hath made some traitors to their dear friends, that would have died for them; to their dearest Friend, that hath died for them: friends to their enemy, Satan, that will torment them. They are worthy of kingdoms that pay so dear for them. Here it is otherwise; different glory, perfect charity. "In my Father's house are many

mansions," John xiv. 2. Now saith Gregory, If there were no difference in degrees of glory, Christ would have spoke of one mansion, rather than of many. "They received every man a penny," Matt. xx. 10. But he says, many mansions, because there are distinct orders of saints; and one penny, because there is but one and the same glory of them all. On earth there is a difference of works; in heaven there shall be a difference of honours. So much as one doth here excel another in grace, so much he shall there excel him in glory. But howsoever there be not to all the same dignity, there shall be the same felicity. There can be no repining at another's more glorious clearness, where shall reign in all one most gracious dearness.

7. The seventh star is, the common and universal joy, an effect of the former. Where all love others in pureness, all rejoice in their happiness. Besides the joy in our own salvation, it shall be also unspeakable in the salvation of others: not only of wife, children, or former friends; for there all shall be equally dear and near unto us. What abundance of joy is this, when it shall rejoice a man to behold that measure in another, which he hath not in himself! (Gregor.)

8. The eighth star is, a love of ourselves only for God's honour. The glory of God shall so swallow us up, that it cannot be so great for our own salvation, as for his glory in our salvation. It is much on earth, if a man love God for his own sake; but in heaven he shall love himself for God's sake. It shall ravish him with delight, to see God honoured in himself, whose image he shall then bear in perfection.

9. The ninth star is, the beatifical vision of God; when there shall be no marks to keep us from the mount of the Lord, no bounds to separate us from that border of glory. When it shall no more be said, Whosoever toucheth the mount, shall surely die, Exod. xix. 12; but the contrary, Whosoever toucheth the mount, shall surely live. The sight was then so terrible, that Moses said, I exceedingly quake and fear, Heb. xii. 21. This sight shall be so comfortable, that every one shall say, I exceedingly rejoice and love. We shall see the Deity so glorious; even the Lamb advanced in our flesh to be one person with God. How we love to behold the majesty of princes, in all the state, magnificence, and pomp of their courts! But this heavenly vision for one hour is worth a thousand years' speculation of their glory. This is the diamond of the ring, the precious stone of the gate, the brightest star of all, to behold the glorious presence of God.

10. The tenth star is, the fulness of pleasures. "In thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." Psal. xvi. 11. *Festinitas sine labe, tranquillitas sine labe, serenitas sine nube.* (Bernard.) Corrupt flesh reasons, What is there to do in heaven? The lascivious thinks there is no other heaven, but amongst his fair paragons. O poor and unblest understanding! what is a mortal piece of painted dust, to those glorious bodies outshining the sun in his greatest splendour! These we shall there see; these love, admire, and rejoice in for ever. There is not a thought can bring other than pleasure. Look we outwardly, there is joy in the society; look we inwardly, there is joy in our own felicity; look we forward, there is joy in the eternity. (Bern.) This is the chain of delights; there is a secure safeness, a safe peacefulness, a peaceful pleasantness, a pleasant happiness, a happy everlastingness. (Prosper.)

11. The eleventh star is, the continual praising of God for his glory. "Blessing, and glory, and thanks-

giving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever," Rev. vii. 12. This is an everlasting song. From new moon to new moon, and from one sabbath to another, all shall worship the Lord, Isa. lxvi. 23. We shall incessantly sing to God in the temple, which is God himself the Temple: "I saw no temple therein; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it," Rev. xxi. 22. There shall be no weariness of this merriness. How meanly soever we judge and rarely practise this duty on earth, there is no joy or delight in heaven shall more content us.

12. The last star of this crown is, the last passage of my text; which is the eternity of all, it is an "everlasting kingdom." The monarchies of the Chaldeans, Persians, Grecians, Romans, those four tyrannous beasts, Dan. vii. are brought to nothing. Their dominion was taken away, ver. 12; but "His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away; and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed," ver. 14. The heathen rage, and the kings oppose; but let them do their worst, "Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion," Psal. ii. The gates of hell (that is, hell-power, for their gates had strong fortifications; or hell-policy, for they held their council in the gates) shall not prevail against this kingdom. Ye shall not sow, and others reap; ye shall not plant vineyards, and others drink the wine: this was promised as a blessing to Israel. But this land of promise is sure, and abides for ever. Why dost thou fear or doubt, because thou seest earthly kingdoms to perish? Therefore is the kingdom of heaven promised to us, that we might not perish with earthly kingdoms. (August.) This is the crown of twelve stars, wherewith the God of mercy crown all our heads in the everlasting kingdom of Jesus Christ.

VERSE 12.

Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth.

I ACKNOWLEDGE to your comfort, that you know and perform in some measure these commended duties, and have made a good progress in them. Yet though you be confirmed, I will not so give you over, and leave you to yourselves, for there is danger of relapsing; but will diligently solicit your memories, and incite your affections, to a more zealous observation of them. I do not confirm you, as if you were wavering; but only admonish you, as being established in the truth. The gravity and weight of the business require it: in a matter of such consequence, admonitions are never superfluous. Therefore let it not seem tedious unto you.

This verse is spent upon the pastor and the people; and therefore to be applied to the preacher and the parish. I will not be negligent to remember you of these things; there is the minister's duty. You must know them, and be established in the truth; there is your duty. It is easily distinguished into the pastor's informing, and the people's performing: his preaching, and their practising; his diligence, and their obedience.

In the former we may note,

His piety; desirous to bring them to the premeditated kingdom.

His vigilance; admitting no neglect of their souls, what discouragements soever affront him.

His modesty; professing that he doth rather remember them than teach them.

His fidelity; he will do it always, without weariness of that which may tend to their edification and comfort.

His sincerity; he doth not incite them to vain and unnecessary things, but "these things" that build them up to salvation.

In the other part, which is their proficiency, we have commended,

Their illumination, They knew these things.

Their confirmation, They are established in the truth.

"Wherefore," *ἐὰν*, for this cause. This the first praise of his diligence, the foundation whereon it is grounded; which is derived from the precedent verse. Because the foundation of eternal life is to be laid here, and in this life an entrance must be made to that everlasting kingdom, or there will be no fruition hereafter; therefore I will take all possible pains to prepare your souls for it. Now it is certain, that the foundation of eternity is to be laid in this life: the proposition is proved by St. Paul; "Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life," 1 Tim. vi. 19. The state future follows the former; as the upper building follows the foundation. If we live ill, that is a bad foundation; if we live well, that is a good foundation. "This day is salvation come to this house," Luke xix. 9. *This day*, for it must come in the day of grace, or it will not come in the day of glory: now, or never. The penitent malefactor might say to Christ, To-day thou art with me on the cross; and Christ says to him, To-day thou shalt be with me in paradise. If Christ first be with us below, then shall we also be with Christ above. The kingdom of God must first come into thy heart, before thy heart can come into the kingdom of God. A wicked life doth (even on earth) make an entrance into that lower kingdom of darkness. Interior darkness begins exterior darkness, inferior darkness. "He that believeth not is condemned already," John iii. 18. "Thou art in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity," Acts viii. 23. As God said to Abimelech, "Thou art but a dead man," Gen. xxi. 3. Sin is the very threshold of hell, and the fuel of that unquenchable fire; her very "steps take hold on hell," Prov. v. 5. Mislivers, and misbelievers; next them stands hell. So faithful goodness hath one foot already in heaven: therefore look to thy life; for we must go out of this world by the mortification of the flesh, that shall come to heaven by the vivification of the Spirit. Such is God's mercy to us, that we who have deserved punishments external on body, internal on conscience, eternal on both, should not only escape these, but have in present a gracious entrance into blessedness. But, alas, we see our wretchedness, we do not see our blessedness: we know that a picture but begun, is not of perfect beauty; let us tarry till God hath finished his work. We are now the sons of God in grace and peace; we shall be the sons of God in glory, 1 John iii. 2.

"I will not be negligent," *οὐκ ἀμελήσω*. This is the second praise of his diligence: it is well furthered by his sedulity. Negligence of good duties is in all men damnable, in a minister execrable; in others robbery, in us sacrilege. Cursed is he that doth the Lord's business negligently, saith the prophet. God was so careful to avoid negligent ministers under the law, that the Levites were to bear no office till five and twenty, and to cease again at fifty: not sooner than the first age, for the disability of their mind; not longer than the latter term, for the infirmity of their body. There is not a calling of a greater la-

bour: he that rashly chooseth it, never understood it. If a man knew the weight of it, it would take away his stomach. It brings a man from a quiet to a laborious life: I have much ado to look to my own soul, how shall I look to the souls of others? (August.) It is indeed lawful to sue to be in the ministry; as Paul says, "If any man desire the office, he desireth a good work," 1 Tim. iii. 1: it is then lawful to desire, therefore lawful to express that desire. But let him think of the account: "They watch for souls, as they that must give account," 1 Heb. xiii. 17. Some have observed upon Christ's calling of those four apostles, in the 4th of Matthew, Simon, Andrew, James, and John; that Simon signifies obedient; Andrew, courageous; James, a supplanter; and John, the grace of God. And that a minister of the gospel should be accordingly qualified: he must be obedient as Simon, courageous as Andrew, and a supplanter of sin as James, and manifest the power of the grace of God as John. There belong to him, infusion, diffusion, effusion, and power of confusion. Infusion of knowledge, diffusion of grace, effusion of doctrine, confusion of error. St. Paul was so diligent in this office, that he was called The winged husbandman: one writes of him, that the earth might sooner have wanted room for him, than he neglected through the earth preaching. Now, too many make the ministry a matter of policy to raise themselves; and once gotten up, though no bishop suspend them, they put themselves to silence: ambition shuts up many lips. They see and say, that a painful teacher seldom comes to preferment. Therefore they will only raise themselves by silence. When Aristodemus bragged how great a fee he had got for speaking, Demosthenes answers, Say nothing, fool, I had more for holding my peace. Thus such a one thinks to speed; and therefore his motto is, *Sibi et musis*. But a good minister is not negligent, either in his pen or tongue; his tongue is the pen of a ready writer, and his pen is the tongue of a ready speaker. It is the negligent fashion, to grow rich, to grow fat, to grow lazy; when the fish is caught, to cast away the net; to starve the flock, when they have shorn the fleece. But negligence can never befall him that is truly called of Christ.

"To put you in remembrance," This is the third praise of his diligence, to fasten it in their memories. We must often be stirred up; line added to line, and precept upon precept; here a little and there a little. Some would have rare sermons, and those excellent ones; yet they can receive the doctrine but by drops, not by floods; for whatsoever is received, is received according to the capacity of the receiver. Others would have frequent sermons though they be meaner. And this course is better, for we need continual remembrances. It is no hard matter to produce a year's bird; to study up one rare sermon in three months: such sermons are for courts. The emperor that gave silver to his soldiers, was taxed by others that gave gold: but he answered, I did it of purpose, that all might have some: for it is better all should go away with pieces of silver, than a few only with pieces of gold. Indeed every minister is not a preacher: all cannot say with Paul, I was not sent to baptize, but to preach, 1 Cor. i. 17. To the building of the tabernacle there went not only purple, but goats' hair. Yet are all remembrancers of us in their places. We have many remembrancers, God bless us in the honest use of them. Other countries have larger bounds, goodlier buildings, stronger bulwarks, richer soils; only England hath the best pulpits. Oh that I could also add, that England hath the best conversations! could I what street pass through, but some monstrous and manifest sin would give me

the lie? We have many that hear the word all their days; yet being questioned concerning their faith on their death-beds, they answer as Ahimaaz to David, "I saw a great tumult, but I knew not what it was," 2 Sam. xviii. 29; so they would say, I heard a great noise, but I never knew what it meant. Some know the way twice on the Sunday to church, yet hardly learn there to know the way to heaven. But to your duty anon; first look we to perform our own. For a minister to neglect this office of remembrance, is to make the devil beholden to him; the negligence of the priest is the injury of the people, as the damage of the flock is the shame of the shepherd. (Hieron.) Now the Lord remember us to remember you, and remember you to remember him, and forgive the forgetfulness of us all.

"Always" to remember you. This is the fourth praise of his diligence, which shows it to be well followed; wherein we noted his fidelity, in the assiduity of his preaching. Now this duty cannot be performed by any minister of the gospel, without a constant abiding among his own; when we learn, that a president should be resident. Some have their pool lying in the country, yet they are still angling about the court. But they answer it with the proverb, No fishing to the sea, no service to the king. Indeed the apostles were ubiquitous, but ministers must be residentiaries. Now there is a distinction of parishes and charges: therefore let every man take heed to that flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath set him, Acts xx. 28. And Paul left Titus in Crete to "ordain elders to every city," Tit. i. 5. Residence is twofold, personal and pastoral. It is not so much the personal, as the pastoral residence, that is required *jure divino*. A minister may be pastorally resident, though not personally; in watching over the people's souls, and feeding them immediately by himself as much as he can, and mediately by as good as himself when he cannot. Another may be personally resident, yet not pastorally; when he is amongst them, and doth not diligently preach unto them. There may be a just non-residence, when the church hath employed a man about public business. Yea, it may be also just when it is necessary for the recovery of health, or needful maintenance, to keep himself from hunger and unrelieved penury: nature itself allows it. Herein every man's own conscience is his best direction. But they that preach altogether by an attorney, are like to be saved altogether by an attorney. As they wholly feed the flock by their deputies, so shall they go to heaven by their deputies. Some cannot endure to be resident in any place; but he that loves to be a runagate, not seldom proves a runagate; the wandering star is swept down by the dragon's tail, not fixed by the hand of Christ. "Always." The business of a minister is like the husbandman's, and that is compared to a ring because it is endless. "I have set watchmen, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence;" Isa. lxiii. 6: for Jerusalem's sake we have no rest. Paul adjures Timothy to preach "in season, out of season; to reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering," 2 Tim. iv. 2. We read that while men slept the enemy came and sowed tares, Matt. xiii. 25. Let the preachers but sleep a little, how quickly will Satan cast in the seed of errors! Let Moses be non-resident forty days, though he went to fetch the law; yet in this while Israel hath carved an idol. There is nothing more easy than to decline, if Christ set not watchmen over us, to put us always in remembrance.

"Of these things," *ἐπι τούτων*. This is the last praise of his diligence; whereby he hath fitted,

directed, and applied it to matter of the best consequence. Herein we observed his sincerity: "these things," that is, such as may save your souls. He aims at nothing but that which concerns their salvation. The minister must labour neither for praise nor for purse, but for conscience: he must fish for souls, not for riches. Some fish without nets, some with broken nets, some with whole ones but not clean; some have nets whole and clean, but cast them not; others have nets but not clean, and do cast them, but not on the right side; they like well to fish, but only where they are sure, with Peter, to draw up a fish with silver in the mouth. These are far short of St. Peter's integrity; they mind many things, but not "these things." There are three things in the ministry; work, reward, and honour: the good minister embraceth the first, minds not the other, only refuseth them not if they come. To desire it for the honour's sake, or for the wages' sake, is not good. There is a desire of good, and a good desire. The thing may be good, yet it is ill to desire it, if it be not fit for us, or we not fit to desire it. Simon Magnus had a desire of good, but not a good desire, when he offered coin for the Holy Ghost. His intention damned his petition; which was to give money for it, that he might get money by it. To desire this office that we may be honoured in it, is corrupt; to desire it that we may do good by it, is honest. So often as we seek glory and greatness in the ministry, we both mistake the office, for to be a minister is to serve; and we strive to be better than Christ, for he served. (Bern.) We are commanded to serve; we are forbidden to domineer.

Indeed there are too many that seek *opes*, not *opus*; rather the church goods, than the church's good. But let us aim at God's glory, not our own praise; let none of his honour cleave to our earthen fingers. Though spiritual fishers catch many souls, yet they must not ascribe it to themselves. This were, as the prophet speaks, to do sacrifice to their net, Hab. i. 16. Let us only mind "these things." An honest heart is required in all men, especially in a minister. When the apostles were to choose a twelfth into Judas's room, from which he had fallen by treacherous apostasy, they put it to God, because he knew the hearts of men: "Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, show whether of these two thou hast chosen;" Acts i. 24. They spake not of understanding nor memory, nor learning nor eloquence; but insisted only on the heart. Indeed the principal in a minister is an honest heart. A good wit for invention, doth well; a good judgment for disposition, well; a good memory, a graceful pronunciation, a comely presence, all do well: but the chief of all is a good heart. Diligence, and painfulness, and patience are good; but it is the sincereness of heart that commends the rest. "These things." I could be negligent, and not remember you; or remember you, and not always; or remember you always, but not of these things; but this is the perfection of his holy diligence, to remember you always of these things. Whatsoever is true, or honest, or just, or pure, &c. Phil. iv. 8; let us all be diligent about these things. The shepherds were "abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night," Luke ii. 8. As Christ at his first coming found the shepherds tending their flocks; so the Spirit of God guides us, that we the shepherds may be found well leading, and you the flock well following, at the second coming of Jesus Christ.

"Though you know them, and be established in the present truth."

The apostle takes it as granted, that they understood these things already, and were constant in the

assurance of the truth of them. A happy progress! Oh that we could say so to our auditories; and as Paul, "I speak to them that know the law;" Rom. vii. 1. But "Know ye not?" is a word often used by St. Paul; Rom. vi. 3; 1 Cor. iii. 16; v. 6; vi. 16; and in many other places. Know ye not? is it possible that you have heard so much, and still remain ignorant? Well, suppose you know; but are ye established in your hearts? If yes, O you are worthy to be commended, I will not withhold your just praise and acknowledgment. "Now I praise you, brethren," 1 Cor. xi. 2. Other grounds have received showers, and conceived thorns, "whose end is to be burned. But we are persuaded better things of you, and things which accompany salvation," Heb. vi. 8, 9. Fain would we be so persuaded of you also; but I fear then our persuasion were better than our experience. "For some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame," 1 Cor. xv. 34. It were to our shame indeed, if we did not know God. As in countries where be the greatest plenty of fruits, they have the shortest lives, they do so surfeit on their abundance; so we have the greatest plenty of spiritual food, but we turn the fulness into loathing and contempt. We have the best pulpits, but I cannot say we have the best lives. The Indians were the most beggarly and naked people, amongst whom was all the gold; so in the midst of God's mercies, and the riches of grace, we are the most poor, naked, and miserable in our conversations. Which being true, our commendation must be turned into commination: our, In this we praise you, into, In this we praise you not; "In this that I declare unto you, I praise you not," 1 Cor. xi. 17. But if your mind be established in understanding, your heart in affecting, your life in obeying, blessed are you; your minister shall praise you, the church your mother will praise you, the angels praise you, yea, you shall be praised of Christ himself.

I come to the conclusion. This concession makes way for a further imposition. Though you know these things, and be established, yet you must admit a further confirming. So Paul insinuates to the Romans, "I myself am persuaded of you, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able to admonish one another," Rom. xv. 14. Well, be it granted; "Nevertheless, I have written the more boldly unto you, as putting you in mind," ver. 15. No man runs so fast, but he may need some spurring. There is still something, that he would teach, and they should learn. So Ambrose, by praising the goodness they have, he provokes them to a greater degree and measure of it.

Laudataque virtus

Crescit, et immensum gloria calcar habet,

saith the poet. Virtue thrives by commendation, and glory is a spur to do well.

Acer et ad palma per se cursurus honores.

Si tamen horteris, fortior ibit equus.

The horse that would run well of his own mettle, doth yet mend his pace by the rider's encouragement. The apostle's commendation is not to quiet them in the conceit of their own sufficiency, but to incite them to a further degree of sanctity. The cessation of remembrancing may easily lapse us to forgetfulness. Thomas got such incredulity by a little absence, that he was hardly brought to believe an evidence; albeit his speech was the voice of one that doubted, not of one that denied: (August.) yet we see when illumination is but a little dusk'd, how good men fall into blind errors. The Italians have a proverb. It is good to be born wise, or born twice.

Surely we are first born, in respect of heavenly wisdom, fools; therefore we had need of a second birth: born once to come into the world, and then born again to overcome the world. This is not done without continual warring, and not that without continual encouraging. We vowed in our baptism, not only to be Christ's soldiers, and to fight manfully; but so to fight perpetually, and to continue this war unto our lives' end. *Aut sors, aut mors.* When Agamemnon said, What can a conqueror fear? Cassandra answered, That he doth not fear. If the minister do not ring continually this alarm bell, you will forget to fight. Though you be established, you must think there will be some offering to shake you. Therefore a Christian's resolution should be like King Alfred's:

*Si modo victor eras; ad crastina bella paraberis;
Si modo victus eras, ad crastina bella paraberis.*

If we conquer to-day, let us fear the skirmish to-morrow: if we be overcome to-day, let us hope to get the victory to-morrow. When you have fought the main battle, gotten the conquest, and are crowned with that triumphant wreath in heaven; as you bless God for many things, so you will bless him for this, that he gave you a good remembrancer upon earth, such a preacher as did always set you forward to your eternal rest. The Lord fail not us and ours of such remembrances, till we all meet together in that high and everlasting glory.

VERSE 13.

Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance.

THE apostle had formerly professed a good resolution, faithfully to sow in their hearts the seed of life. Now lest any man should think his carefulness a meritorious or supererogative work, himself confesseth it to be no more than just. It is but the payment of a due debt. And this not due for a while, but during life; "As long as I am in this tabernacle." But it is granted, that they know the truth, and live in the faith; yet they may be asleep; I will therefore stir them up, for living men may sleep. But what, is there a new lesson to be given them? No, that I need not, but even rub over the old, by putting them in remembrance. Here he seems to back his diligence by certain arguments; they are four in number, and forcible in nature: derived,

From the consideration of his office, I think it meet.

From the opportunity of the time, As long as I keep this tabernacle.

From the security of men, To stir you up.

From the necessity of admonition, By putting you in remembrance.

First, the consideration of his own office and calling moves him to it; it is a meet and just thing for him to observe it, and the neglect were to do a manifest injury to God, to his church, and to his own conscience. Secondly, the opportunity of the time moves him; for this life is but a tabernacle, and will not stand long; and therefore he resolves to apprehend occasion as it is offered, and to thrust in his sickle while the harvest lasts. Thirdly, the security and dulness of men move him; who are naturally so averse and stupid, that they had need be stirred up, roused from their slothful couch, and by all instiga-

tions be set forward to religion. Lastly, it is the use of his office, and due exercise of his calling, always to put them in mind of their last reckoning; and he cannot answer the neglect of it to the justice of God, who hath set him over them for that purpose.

"I think it meet." This is the first argument or motive: the nature of his office binds him to it. He must do justice to himself and his office. But this is imposed upon us by Him that sent us, therefore it is most unjust to withhold it; "Ye that are the Lord's remembrancers, be not silent," Isa. lxiii. 6. The precept is negative in sound, affirmative in sense. For this *not*, excluding the privation of speech, answereth after a sort to an *infitans*; in logic admitting any thing rather than silence. Be not silent, is not only, Speak, but implies a continual speech; for when a man ceaseth to speak, he is silent. "Be instant in season, out of season," 2 Tim. iv. 2. Not that Timothy should break through the rules of discretion, to preach at all times in themselves unreasonable. For there is a time to keep silence; "There is a time to speak, and a time to keep silence," Eccl. iii. 7. But in season, to them that will hear; out of season, to them that will not hear. Be not silent, hold not your peace: hold the truth, hold your faith, hold your profession, hold your zeal, hold your innocency; hold not your peace. Oh it is the basest tenure any minister can hold his living by.

But it may be objected, that it is wisdom to be silent. Many have suffed by eating, none by forbearing; many have sinned by speaking, no man by holding his peace. God shall judge many a one out of his own mouth. And, "If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man," James iii. 2. Now he that says nothing, offends not in word. But we take not silence in a metaphysical consideration, as a mere privation. That which hath no being, hath no working; and he that says nothing, says no harm. But we take it in a legal consideration; as a cursed omission, or neglect of that which should have been performed. As he that is bound to work, shall give an account of his idleness; so he that is bound to speak, shall answer for his silence. As the darkness in Egypt was a darkness that might be felt, so silence in a preacher is a silence that will be felt; it shall smart to the quick. There are graces personal, and graces ministerial. Personal graces are essential to a Christian, accidental to a minister; as faith, hope, charity, temperance, and the like. And these serve especially for the good of the receiver, the person in whom they dwell; in a second degree for the good of others. But graces ministerial, as preaching, exhorting, comforting, discerning of errors, confuting them, &c. respect him that hath them in the last place, and principally tend to others' benefit. "The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal," 1 Cor. xii. 7. If we hold our peace, we first wrap ourselves in a criminal mischief; because silence directly crosseth our vocation. A silent preacher implies as harsh a contradiction, as a dark light, a dumb erier. Next in a penal mischief; and that either of the greatest privation or loss in this life: the tabes and consumption of our graces and gifts. The idol shepherd that leaveth the flock, shall have his arm clean dried up, and his right eye utterly darkened, Zech. xi. 17. "Take the talent from him," Matt. xxv. 28. Or of the most grievous position of pain, and vexation of sense for ever: the blood of the lost being required at their hands, so long as there is a seat of justice in heaven. Therefore saith Paul, Woe unto me if I preach not the gospel! The minister's silence doth encourage the people's going to hell: "Thy prophets have seen for thee false burdens and causes of banishment; but they have not

discovered thy iniquity, to turn away thy captivity," Lam. ii. 14. It is a maxim in the civil law, *Ille doth allow, that doth not disallow*; and he that holds his peace, gives his consent. There is a case, Numb. xxx. 4. The father that hears his daughter's vow, wherewith she binds her soul, and holds his peace, consents that it shall stand. A mute indeed is no vowel, but a mute among vowels cannot avoid the office of a consonant. Certainly a disable minister is a grievous plague to the people. "Where is no vision, the people perish," Prov. xxix. 18. We kill daily so many men, as we see going to destruction, and say nothing to. (Greg.) Paul protested that he had "kept back nothing that was profitable" to the church, Acts xx. 20; and from hence inferreth, that he was "pure from the blood of all men," ver. 26. He could not therefore have been pure from their blood, if he had not diligently taught them the gospel. (Greg.) So himself gives the reason of this pureness; "Because I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God," ver. 27. The unwarned sinner shall die in his iniquity; "but his blood will I require at thine hand," Ezek. iii. 18. So that to be guilty of silence, is to be guilty of murder. Lord, we cannot speak so well as we should; yet always give us grace to speak as well as we can.

"As long as I am in this tabernacle." This is his second argument or motive; the opportunity of the time urgeth him. I cannot rise from the dead to admonish, therefore I will do it in the time of life, which is the due and afforded season. There is no preaching in the grave, therefore as long as I am in this tabernacle. Here observe three things.

First, every thing hath the time to be done. "The hour cometh, and now is," John iv. 23. The tree planted by the rivers of water, brings forth his fruit "in his season," Psal. i. 3. "Be not over-much wicked; why shouldst thou die before thy time," Eccl. vii. 17. Antichrist shall be revealed "in his time," 2 Thess. ii. 6. "Mine hour is not yet come," John ii. 4; I must do my works in my own time, "In due season we shall reap," Gal. vi. 9. If this be neglected, the angel swears, There shall be no more time, Rev. x. 6. Few men do mark what time is more than your usurers; they marry time and money together, and so breed an everlasting generation of interests.

Secondly, that therefore every man must do good in his time. While we have time let us do good to all men, Gal. vi. 10. Let us hear the great Shepherd and Bishop of our souls; "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work," John ix. 4. Occasion is happily taken, easily lost. While a minister is in his tabernacle, let him preach: he is now a movable, hereafter he shall be fixed. There shall be no sermons in heaven, for there all are full of grace; there shall be none in hell, for there all are past grace; therefore so long as I am in this tabernacle I will preach, "Shall thy loving-kindness be declared in the grave? or thy faithfulness in destruction? Shall thy wonders be known in the dark? and thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?" Psal. lxxxviii. 11, 12. But if there be no preaching in hell, how then is it said, that Christ "went and preached to the spirits in prison?" 1 Pet. iii. 19. I answer, there is no nunciation of the gospel, howsoever there may be a proclamation of judgment and a declaration of Christ's power, a publishing of what the reprobates have lost by not believing on him. Augustine objects, If there be any preaching in hell, what needed so much regard to it upon earth? Preaching on earth is to beget repentance: if there could be any in hell, it were but to increase vengeance. Therefore re-

member thy *quandiu*: preach while thou mayst, lest God stop thy mouth before thou wouldst. Tremble at that fearful judgment, "They gnawed their tongues for pain," Rev. xvi. 10. Their tongues were once tied up with gains, there they shall be loosened with pains. Flattery made them (like that shameless sycophant, that licked up the emperor's spittle) to lick the sores and vices of their maintainers, therefore they shall lick those unquenchable flames.

Thirdly, observe, that the apostle compares his life to a tabernacle; a little shed or tilt, wherein the immortal soul dwells. The metaphor is taken from soldiers, pilgrims, and shepherds; who for the better expedition of their affairs, are said to have movable seats. We are soldiers, and must dwell in tents, till we have got the victory. We are travellers, and must sleep in pavilions, till we come to our city. We are shepherds, and must lodge in the fields, in the folds, to look to our flocks; till the drought consume us in the day, and the frost by night, and our sleep depart from our eyes, Gen. xxxi. 40. This teacheth us the frailness of our life; which is still movable from one part of the earth to another, till it be removed to heaven; there it shall abide immovable for ever. There is nothing firm under the firmament; but above there is "a kingdom which cannot be moved," Heb. xii. 28. Why art thou proud, O man, that considerest thyself, whose conception was sin, birth a misery, life a punishment, and death a torment? The soul indeed that dwells in this tabernacle, is an immortal guest; created by God's hand, formed to his likeness, redeemed with his blood, beautified with his grace, and adopted by his Spirit. She requires not soft lodging and curious food of thee; but thy body's obedience to her, that she may give obedience to Christ; that she be not forced to serve, which should rule. *Dominam ancillari, ocellam dominari*. For the servant to rule, and the mistress to serve, is a preposterous overture.

Men live without considering themselves; whence they came, where they are, how they do, whither they go; that all these mathematical lines have earth for their centre. Whence came we? from the earth. Where are we? upon the earth. How live we? unworthy of the earth, or any blessing in it. Whither go we? to the earth: Earth to earth. We are composed of four elements, and they strive in us for the mastery; but the lower gets the better, and there is no rest till earth have the predominance. Yet wicked men live as if there were no earth to devour their bodies, nor gulf lower than earth to swallow their souls. Man's life is a spark, a breath, a smoke; a spark in the heart, a breath in the mouth, a smoke in the nostrils. A drop of water will quench that spark, a little hair can choke that breath, a little air take away that smoke. Look to thy ways, thou livest in a tabernacle, quickly dissolvable; the dart may light upon thee next. When Harold, king of Denmark, made war upon Harquinus, and was ready to join battle, a dart was seen flying into the air, hovering this way and that way, as though it sought upon whom to rest. When all stood wondering to behold what would become of this strange prodigy, every man fearing himself; at last the dart fell upon Harquinus's head, and slew him. This dart of death is ever hovering: watch, for thy turn will come.

"To stir you up." This the third motive to his diligence; an argument fetched from the security of men; who sleep till they be awakened, and when they are awakened, sleep again: therefore they need stirring. Wicked ones are dead, weak ones sleep, even the best have their naps. To the first you may cry as loud as the idolatrous priests did to Baal, but

they will not waken. To the second, though we call once and again, they will not stir; but let us give them no rest. He that to such a one knocks not mainly, knocks vainly: at last they will rise; because of our importunity they will rise, Luke xi. 8. To the last an easy stirring serves: his nap is not so long, nor his sleep so deep; but, "I sleep, but my heart waketh," Cant. v. 2. An ox hath strength enough, but dulness withal; there must be a goad to prick him on. The spirit is ready, but the flesh is heavy; we must be stirred upward, and spurred forward. Every good sermon hath in it two things, a bridle and a spur; to meet with two dispositions in men, inclination to evil, averseness from good. For the former precipice, there is a bridle; for the latter dulness, a spur: these must be strained, those restrained. Some run as fast as they can from Christ's ensign, and treacherously confederate with his adversary Satan; these be desperate offenders. Others will not oppose him so, nor take part with him, but cowardly stand and look on: like the cursed inhabitants of Meroz, that "came not to the help of the Lord against the mighty," Judg. v. 23. If a man could borrow of the one a little swiftness, to quicken the other's laziness; and of the other a little coolness, to allay the former's heat; this might make up a reasonable and indifferent temper.

Upon the whole face of the earth there is a universal slumber. As Sardis thought she lived, but she was dead, Rev. iii. 1; so men dream they are awake, but indeed they are fast asleep. I do not say, the usurer, drunkard, oppressor, the sacrilegious, are asleep; for they are dead. But I see professors of religion slumber; overgive themselves, though not give over themselves, to the world. Do you think they will ever be brought to heaven without stirring? No; it is well if perpetual punition can drive them to compunction; if often repeated rules can work any amendment. We call, and cry, and thunder; yet still complain as Æneas for his Creusa: *Nec quicquam ingeminans, iterumque, iterumque vocari*. All the day long have we stretched forth our hands, and lifted up our voices, Rom. x. 21. Paul told his Thessalonians, that he had no need to write unto them touching some duties, 1 Thess. iv. 9. Oh that we could say so of our people! "The words of the wise are as goads," Eccl. xii. 11: now the Spirit of God infuse into us that wisdom, that our words may be as goads, to provoke and stir you up to your own salvation.

"By putting you in remembrance." This is the last motive, drawn from the necessity of often preaching and writing; otherwise how should they be stirred up? Wherein we may consider two things; the necessity of the ministry, and the nature of that duty.

For the former, there must be remembrancers, that by them salvation may be conveyed to us; by them as instruments, not of them as principals. They do not give that of themselves, which the Lord doth give by them. He said to his ministers, Bring forth the best robe, Luke xv. 22. Though God gives you the robe of salvation, yet by their hands. But you think you have pick-locks to open heaven-doors, though they be not opened by us. John is the voice of the erier, Christ is the Word that doth cry: he that despiseth the voice of the erier, despiseth the erier himself. Now this necessity is not of infallibility, but of order: God can save us without it, but he doth not. John Baptist must give water, or Christ will give no blood. "How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" Rom. x. 14. They must needs forget, that have none to put them in remembrance. A people is never nearer their woe, than when they suspend

their preachers; when they say to their prophets, "Prophecy not," Micah ii. 6. The city is in hazard when they have tied up the alarm bell. News came to a town once and again, that the enemy was approaching; well, he did not approach. Hereupon in anger they enacted a law, that no man on pain of death should bring again such rumours, as the news of an enemy. Not long after the enemy came indeed; besieged, assaulted, and sacked the town; of whose ruins nothing remains but this proverbial epitaph, Here stood a town that was destroyed with silence. We have too many such towns; God keep them from such a destruction.

For the other, every true minister is a remembrancer. "If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ," 1 Tim. iv. 6. "Of these things put them in remembrance," 2 Tim. ii. 14. It is a civil term, proper to civil officers: "Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was recorder," 2 Sam. viii. 16. There is mention made of "Joah, the son of Asaph, the recorder," Isa. xxxvi. 22. The recorder is a prime office, well known in this city. This the apostle here naturalizeth to the church, and signifies ministers to be recorders. This remembrancing, or recording, is not a publication at random, but a commemoration, or a fetching back of some forgotten thing. The proper principle from whence it proceeds, is no other faculty of the soul but the memorative. The proper object is not occurrences of all sorts, but occurrences past.

You see now a preacher's errand; it is not a new invention, but an ancient record enrolled in the memory: as St. Jude speaks of "the faith which was once delivered to the saints," ver. 3. Once, not so much at one season, as in respect of the perfection: so given once, that it needs never be given again. We invent no novelties, but remember you of that which was delivered to us. "That good thing which was committed unto thee, keep," 2 Tim. i. 14. That which was intrusted to thee, not invented by thee; which thou hast received, not conceived; whereof thou art not a founder, but a keeper. (Lyricus.) Yea, Christ himself added no new precepts to the law, but revived and explained the old. Therefore he used to say, "It is written;" and that written law he expounded. But it is objected, "A new commandment I give unto you," John xiii. 34. This was not new in itself, but rather renewed; there being the addition of a new Spirit, that helps our infirmities. For, "I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning," 1 John ii. 7. But the preaching of faith is called a new righteousness. I answer, it is not a contrary righteousness to that the law required, but a different conveyance of righteousness. Both require a righteousness; the law an inherent, the gospel an imputed righteousness. The decalogue, without contradiction, is still that magna charta, to which as their common principle all doctrinal conclusions are reducible. The conclusion of the whole matter is, Fear God, and keep his commandments; for therein is the whole duty of man, Eccl. xii. 13. In arithmetic, when we once pass the number of ten, the latter numbers, though multiplied to millions of millions, are but compounded resumptions and repetitions of the former. When the works of God were crowned with their Maker's approbation, Behold, it is very good; all the inventions of men were but surveys and discoveries, all actions but imitations. "There is no new thing under the sun. The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be. Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? it hath been already of old time, which was

before us," Eccl. i. 9, 10. All are but remembrances of his work, but rehearsals of his praise. So after the full and perfect delivery of God's word, all praises are but like the 103th, the 106th, and the 107th Psalms; rehearsal psalms: or, as David especially entitleth the 38th Psalm, Memorandum; "A Psalm of David, to bring to remembrance." All prayers, but like the Levite's in the 9th of Nehemiah; rehearsal prayers. All sermons, but like Stephen's in the 7th of the Acts; rehearsal sermons.

But there are some that think to disparage all sermons, and shift off hearing with this objection, Nothing can be said but that hath been said. And when any good instruction is commended, they think by this exception to disgrace it. Grant that all is the same for the matter; yet for the method, I am sure there are many things now spoken that were never spoken before. Some of later times have averred, that all manner of usury is lawful: this was never said before. The devil himself durst not have been so impudent, as to have broached this in those ancient and purer times. Others have published, that tenths are not due to the church, *ex jure divino*: now for fourteen hundred years after Christ this was never spoken. The church would have denied her blessing to such a son, yea, refused him for her son, that should have said it. As Christ said in the case of unjust divorce, "From the beginning it was not so," Matt. xix. 8. We see opinions newly broached, that were never heard of before. There are daily productions of new acts, never done before. The blowing up of a state with gunpowder, whosoever speaks of it, speaks of a thing never spoken of before. Can yourselves think new thoughts, speak new words, execute new acts; and yet cannot we preach new sermons? Is there a necessity, that all suggestions of God's Spirit, and contemplation of man, must be disgraced for being old? Indeed we desire to tell you of the old righteousness, but we are fain to win your nice and curious attentions by new forms and methods. The good scribe bringeth out of his treasure things new and old, Matt. xiii. 52. What careth a wise man whether the balm be new or old, so his wound be cured by it? Let it be old or new, a present instruction, or a repetition, it is sufficient if it may profit your souls.

To conclude, all our sermons are but remembrances, and ourselves remembrancers. We can do no more, we can do no less. "We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard," Acts iv. 20. We cannot; not that it is absolutely impossible: but first for outward congruity of reason and law; for we can do what we may do: and then for inward resolution; the word being as burning fire shut up in our bones, that makes us weary of forbearing, Jer. xx. 9; or like new wine, which if it have no vent, will burst the vessels, Job xxxii. 19. I cannot, that is, I will not: love as strong as death, necessitates me; I can die, I cannot hold my peace. Howsoever I will speak; "If I perish, I perish," Esth. iv. 16. There is great need. Satan's remembrancers are abroad in every corner: mark how they vouch their precedents. The adversaries of Jerusalem slander her to Artaxerxes, that she is a rebellious city, seditious, and hurtful to princes and provinces, Ezra iv. 15. The Jews coloured their murder with a legal proceeding; "We have a law, and by our law he ought to die," John xix. 7. These instruments of the devil speak, and shall we hold our peace? Do they remember you of carnal things, and shall not we remember you of the Lord Jesus? The silence of a remembrancer in the king's exchequer, may diminish the king's revenues; and by the same fault, we may shorten the Lord's comings-in. It is true, indeed,

that his glory can find other issues; but to our shame; If thou hold thy peace, God will send deliverance another way; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed, Esth. iv. 14. No, pray you for us, that the door of utterance may be opened unto us: yea, Lord, do thou open our lips, and our mouth shall show forth thy praise. Our hearts shall meditate, our lips shall speak; and may the words of our lips, and the meditations of our hearts, be always acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, our strength and our Redeemer.

VERSE 14.

Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me.

THE apostle proceeds to amplify the reason, why he so plied them with the remembrance of these things. My life is but short. Why so? Because I am old. Yet an old man may wear out some years. Nay, but I know it is short. How can this be known? Yes, by God's revelation; as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me. I must die, I must die shortly. I know I must die shortly; my Saviour Christ hath told me so: therefore pardon me, though I inculcate, and beat so much upon one string; it is a lesson worth your learning, and I have but a small time to teach it you. "Knowing that shortly I must," &c.

"I know;" not perhaps precisely the day, or the place, or the manner. But death is not a stranger to my thoughts; my account is cast up, I am ready. I know.

"That I must put off," or lay down; willingly, not on compulsion; not pulled down, but laid down. It is a metaphor drawn from a wager; the faithful man doth wager, and pawn his soul to God.

"This my tabernacle;" not my castle, or strong tower, or standing house; but a tent, a movable, a tabernacle.

"Shortly;" the time is not so far off that I dream not of it; not, likely to happen in another age, and creeping on by slow degrees. The sun is not descending, but ready to set; the messenger knocks at the door; the clock runs upon the last minute; the epilogue is on the stage; the taper at the last glimpse; the oak falling under the latest blow of the axe. It is at hand; shortly.

"As the Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me." I dare take his word; he that died for me, hath told me that I now shall die for him. It is a shame for me to be unprepared, when such a Prophet hath certified me; both in prediction, and example, showing the way.

He speaks of an assurance; I know. What doth he know? That I must die; part with this tabernacle. How must he part with it? Put it off. When must he put it off? Shortly. How is he sure of that? The Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me. The whole may be distinguished into three generals:

A resolution, I know.

A dissolution, I must shortly put off this my tabernacle.

A revelation, As our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me.

The resolution is entire in itself; an infallible certainty of inevitable death; which is manifest to him, both by the common condition of nature, and a more sensible impression of vicinity: a thing that grows fast upon him. I know.

The dissolution is observable in divers circumstances: it is,

Personal, I, though an apostle of Christ.

Necessary, I must, there is no remedy.

Voluntary, Put off, willingly, without snatching from me.

Instant, Shortly, the decree cannot be suspended.

The revelation or premonition of his death, is referred either,

To the kind and manner of his death; or,

To the time prefixed of his dying.

"Knowing;" this is his resolution. The assurance of unavoidable death, is a doctrine well known; every one can say with Peter, I know. Nothing is more frequently repeated, nothing is more readily believed. *Cogita te mortuum, quem scis necessitate moriturum*. Think thyself, as it were, already dead, whom thou knowest necessarily to die. (Bern.) It is fit that death should effect death; the spiritual, a corporal; the death of sin, a death of punishment: a voluntary death brings a necessary death. (Bed.) Therefore, saith Chrysostom, let us make a virtue of necessity; let us offer God that for a gift, which we are bound to pay as a debt. This is a hard and woe-ful necessity. Man lost that life to which he was ordained, and found the death to which he was not ordained. (Anselm.) All men die in time, some before their time. The over-much wicked dies before his time, Eccl. vii. 17; in a season which the constitution of his nature doth not threaten. Thus sometimes die the godly, that they may be no longer vexed of the guilty; often the guilty, that they may no longer vex the godly. This necessity all must undergo, but with a diverse event. To the wicked, death is the beginning of sorrow; to the elect, the end of pain. The death of the wicked, saith Bernard, is evil in the loss of this world, worse in the separation of life, worst of all in the torture of quenchless fire. Death to the godly is good in the cessation of pains, better in the renovation of all things, best in the immutability of happiness. Therefore the saint that desires to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, that man doth not only die patiently, but he lives patiently, and dies joyfully. He loves Jesus Christ but a little, that doth not rejoice to go unto him.

But in this point, in vain I spend my breath, to tell you that I and you all shall lose our breath; you know it. Tell the oppressor, Thou shalt die; he answers, I know it. Dost thou know it, and wilt still live like a Christian Jew, extorting from thy brother? How shall Christ (whom thou supposest thy brother) give thee thy hope, when thou takest away from him his substance? Tell the worldling, Thou shalt die; he says, I know it. Dost thou know that thou must leave the world, and yet dost cleave to the world? Dost thou know thou must lose the possession of earth, and wilt thou not assure to thy soul the fruition of heaven? The drunkard says, he knows he must die, he can sing you songs to that purpose. Doth he know it, and yet keep his body so perpetually drunk, that his soul hath no time soberly to bethink itself? Is the gate of heaven so broad and wide, that he can reel into it? Drunkenness is no way to blessedness; as the poet wittily epitaphed upon a dead drunkard, who lived in the love of wine, and died in the strength of it:

If by the pot to heaven he got,

This I dare boldly say;

He was the last which that way past,

And first which found that way.

Tell the contentious, Thou shalt die; he answers, I know it. And yet wilt thou reserve war with thy neighbour, peace with the devil? Shall a turbulent spirit ever enter that city of peace? Tell the

deceiver, Thou shalt die, with all thy frauds: I know it. Dost thou know it? Why then is thy tongue Satan's anvil, whereon he sits forging his lies? Why dost thou swear away thy salvation before thou hast it? Tell the adulterer, Thou shalt die: I know it. Why then wilt thou be one flesh with a harlot, which must both rot under the clods; and not rather one spirit with Christ, who reigneth above the clouds? Do we know we must die, and yet run such lewd courses? We know that we must die; let us so live in faithful obedience, that we may know we shall live for evermore with Jesus Christ.

"Shortly I must put off this my tabernacle." This is the dissolution, wherein I considered four circumstances. First, the personality; *I*, though a preacher, though an apostle, one that have seen the Lord Jesus in the face; *I*. Next, the necessity, *I must*: there is no evasion, no prevention: I must lose a tabernacle, no mansion, a thing not worth keeping. Thirdly, the liberty, voluntariness, and willing heart of the apostle to do this; which he calls a deposition, or *laying down* of his tabernacle: it is not a thing violently extorted from me, but laid down with a quiet and temperate mind. Lastly, the instance and vicinity of it; it is not long a coming, but approaching so near, that I see it and feel it: the sands are almost out of the glass; but a few moments, and I depart; *shortly*.

I must: it is personal; *I*. The apostle out of that general necessity wisely collects a particular, a proper conclusion to himself, *I*. These singular deductions out of universal propositions, are profitable to men, and acceptable to God. All men are sinners; and I am the chief, saith Paul. All men are mortal; and I must shortly die, saith Peter. No degree of men is privileged from death; not a patriarch, not a prophet, not an apostle, could plead exemption: "Your fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live for ever?" Zech. i. 5. Abraham a great patriarch, Moses a great prophet, David a great prince, Samuel a great priest, John a great evangelist, Peter a great apostle; where are they? Their souls live in bliss, their bodies are dead in the grave. God doth often take away his ministers, and that for three reasons:

1. For their own sins; as Nadab and Abihu: they offered strange fire before the Lord, and there went out fire from the Lord that devoured them, Lev. x. 2. They offered strange fire, and they suffered strange fire. They sent up bellish impiety toward heaven, therefore hell came out of heaven upon them. So Hophni and Phinehas, those uncorrected sons of Eli; in one day they died both of them, 1 Sam. ii. 34. They desperately offended, the father too mildly reprehended; "they hearkened not, because the Lord would slay them," ver 25. So Zech. xi. 18, "Three shepherds also I cut off in one month, and my soul loathed them, and their soul also abhorred me." This God doth for the good of the people; that such might perish themselves, and not destroy others by their bad examples and unclean course of life.

2. For the sins of the people. As Solomon says, For the sins of the people there shall be many princes; so we may say, For the sins of the people there shall be many priests. God smites the shepherd when he means to scatter the sheep; he puts out the light when he purposeth to leave men in the dark. This was Paul's resolution, "To abide in the flesh is more needful for you," Phil. i. 24. For myself it is better to be dissolved, and to be with Christ; but to remain in the flesh is better for you. This may be better for my wife, for my children, for my friends, for those that depend upon me; but I mind none of those, but it is better for you.

3. For his own glory, lest what belongs to God should be ascribed to man. Christ cannot endure that that should be attributed to Paul and Barnabas which pertains to him: as the superstitious Lystrians, that called Barnabas Jupiter, and Paul Mercury, when they brought garlands, and would have done sacrifice to them, Acts xiv. 12. Princes use to change their deputies often, as the Turk does his bashaws, lest continuance should bring them to be taken for princes. So God takes away often a good minister, lest they being too confident of the servant, should forget the Lord. There are some sectaries, that think of their elders, as Simon Magus thought of the apostles, that they can give the Holy Ghost. They arrogate to the instrument, and derogate from the Agent. Let him speak the abortive figments of his own brain, yet their superstitious applause is, "It is the voice of a god, and not of a man," Acts xii. 22. Let another deduce sound conclusions from the sacred truth, and justify his sober assertions from the undeniable Scriptures; yet because the man is not according to their humour, the doctrine shall not have their honour. They must choose for themselves, a minister of their own faction; whereas neither prophets nor apostles were chosen by the people: the sheep used not to choose their own shepherds. Thus these professors out of their wits, hate Rome worse than hell; yet meet it, and congratulate it, in the same rank superstition another way. As they think it enough that the pope hath decreed it; so these think it enough that their elders have affirmed it. Thus the people made bishop, and their elder a pope. When men shall thus deify their minister, no marvel if God nullify the man.

Now, seeing we must die, do you pray for us, that we may do your souls good while we live. Pray, and make supplication for all saints; "and for me, that utterance may be given unto me," Eph. vi. 18, 19. Where the clergy may learn humility, and the people charity: we humility, that we need your prayers; you charity, to pray for us. Weak ones pray with us, malicious ones pray against us, covetous ones prey upon us, few pray for us. Examine your consciences; how seldom do we find place and memory in your prayers! Perhaps, morn and even you remember yourselves, but when is the preacher in your thoughts? Sure you have not found sweetness by him, or else you could not forget him. If we forget you, let our right hand forget her cunning. We will pray for you, do you pray for us, and our Mediator Jesus Christ pray for us all.

Again, seeing our life is so short, do you apprehend the means while it lasteth. Zacharias may be struck dumb: sickness may suspend us for a season, but death doth silence us for ever. Hear therefore while the voice soundeth; To-day if ye will hear my voice harden not your hearts, Heb. iii. 15. Though I trust God will never fail you successively of a diligent pastor; and we wish that those who in time come after us, may in worth go before us; that as they succeed us in place, they may exceed us in grace. But because certainly either death must take us from you, or you from us; as it is our part, while we keep on our tabernacles, to take pains; so let this be your part, while you have ears to hear, hear; while you have hearts to believe, receive; while you have hands to work, obey; that while there is a Saviour in heaven, you may be blessed.

I must: it is necessary, there is no remedy, but I must lay down my tabernacle. If heaven were to be had upon earth, saints should not dwell in tabernacles. But it is observable of our apostle, St. Peter, at the transfiguration of Christ, even whilst he had not knowledge enough to discern of Christ's kingdom,

that it was in heaven, and was mistaken in the place, ("It is good for us to be here,") yet he knew thus much, that eternity was not to be had upon earth; and therefore he spake but of tabernacles, "Let us build here three tabernacles," Matt. xvii. 4. Let us build. Well, men may build. Yea, let us build here. But what? Not mansions, but tabernacles. Even in the midst of that unspeakable glory, that little map of blessedness, that abridgement of joy and glimpse of heaven, he speaks but of tabernacles; putting a difference between Mount Tabor and Mount Zion. "If our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens," 2 Cor. v. 1. He calls it not the man, but the house; not of stone, but of mud walls, earthly; not a mansion, but a tabernacle; not such as God made, but ourselves marred, our house; not abolished, but dissolved; then, we have; not expectantly, many years after our dissolution, but we presently have; not a tabernacle, but a mansion; not to be built, but built already; not by man, but by God, a building of God, made without hands; not transient, but eternal; not on earth, nor in the air, but in the supremest place, the heaven of heavens. This leaving the tabernacle, signifies a migration, not only from the earth, but to the heavens. The loss of mortality precedes, the gain of immortality follows. "If a man die, shall he live again? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come," Job xiv. 14. The book of Job plentifully abounds with two things, impressions of mortality, and instructions of mortality. It teacheth us that we must die, it teacheth us how we should live. Both are propounded and compounded in that verse. A man must die and live again, there is no mortality; therefore all his appointed time let him watch, there is for morality. There are four remarkable circumstances in it: a dissolution, restitution, resolution, revolution. "If a man die," there is a dissolution; "he shall live again," there is a restitution; "all my days will I watch," there is a resolution; "till my change come," there is a revolution.

Man is by generation dust, by degeneration the ashes of that dust, mere rubbish. The soul in the body, as a prisoner in a dungeon, receives all through a grate. The body is but like St. Peter's prison, and death as the angel that frees us. "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom," Luke xii. 32. Fear not, though you be now tossed about in tabernacles, I will gather you to a kingdom. Israel was a flock removed often, from Canaan to Egypt, from Egypt to the wilderness, but was at last folded in Judea. We are now often removed in tabernacles; we shall have an abiding place. Now I go to the Father, saith Christ, John xvi. Christ led us, we must follow him. He went to his Father three ways. 1. The way of his passion; a sorrowful way. 2. The way of his resurrection; a joyful way. 3. The way of his ascension; a glorious way. "God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet," Psal. xlviii. 5. All this was for our sake; he entered into heaven, to appear in the presence of God for us, Heb. ix. 24. By those three works of Christ, we have three special benefits; all expressed by Paul, Eph. ii. 5, 6. By his passion he hath quickened us; by his resurrection, raised us up; by his ascension, made us sit in heavenly places. Now I go to the Father. Now; there is the brevity of this life, it is but a now. I go; there is the mutability of the world, it fades like grass. To the Father; there is the glory of future blessedness, to be with God himself for ever.

Indeed to the wicked death is more than a disso-

lution, even a destruction of the tabernacle. O death, how bitter is the remembrance of thee to a man of prosperity! Eccles. xli. 1. It is terrible, not only for the separation of his delights; but for the not separation of his sins. Beholding his sins with amazed eyes, he cries to them, O give me one hour's liberty. When he shall say to his lusts, covetousness, pride, drunkenness, Depart from me; and they shall answer, No, thou hast made us, we are thy creatures; we will go with thee to judgment, we will dwell with thee in torment. Let him fear death, that desires not to be with Christ; and let him refuse going to Christ, that hopes not for mercy of Christ.

But to the faithful, the grave is but a chamber; "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers," Isa. xxvi. 20; but a bed; "They shall rest in their beds," Isa. lvii. 2; a very parlour, where the Lord shuts up our bodies with the key of peace, and opens them again with the key of resurrection. Unto this hope the apostle lifts up our hearts by his own example. It is observable that to the two chief apostles, Paul and Peter, God did afford this privilege, in this mortal life to have a taste of heaven's joys, that they might feelingly and effectually raise up our affections to that supernal city. Paul was rapt up to the third heaven, and so ravished with this joy, that he knew not whether he had his body about him or not: "Whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell," 2 Cor. xii. 2. And methinks, when he comes down again out of heaven, he writes so contemptibly of these worldly things, that he calls them very dross and dung. Such respect hath any man of all things under the sun, that hath not tasted the sweetness of paradise. So Peter, together with James and John, on Mount Tabor, saw a glimpse of heaven. They beheld it, that they might preach it; preaching, lift up our hearts to it; and our hearts being lifted up to it, might be blessed in it. On purpose they were showed this glory, that they might inflame our affections with it. Imagine that it were possible for the most worldly soul here, to be lifted up so high as Paul; be admitted to look into paradise; to see that glorious society of saints and angels, and so much of that beatific vision as their nature is capable of; and from thence to look down again upon this earth, hanging like a little clod in the midst of the world; and see so many millions of men busied about nothing, like ants on a molehill, or flies in a sun-beam: how basely would he esteem this world, and condemn that which is now his glory, and for which he is content to venture his soul! Do you now wonder that we so much commend that blessed rest? When one gazing long on Minerva's picture, another asked him the reason of such curious speculation; he answered, Oh that thou hadst my eyes! So, oh that you had St. Peter's eyes! you would not admire our admiration.

"Put off," or lay down. It is also voluntary. The apostle calls himself a depositary, that hath a jewel committed to him on trust, which he is willing to surrender. A man that hath some precious treasure intrusted to him, is not only anxious to defend it from the violent attempts of others, or from their subtle underminings; but is also troubled in himself with some invasion upon his own honesty, by a corrupt desire to possess it, and employ it at his own pleasure; and never finds full peace from these reluctations, till the proprietary resume it. So for this sparkling jewel, our soul, which lightens our night of ignorance, and dark body of earth, lodging in our flesh, we are exercised with a continual trouble to preserve our life from sicknesses, and other offensive violences; and are tempted with covetousness to enlarge our term, to strengthen our tenure and state

in it; and to make it so much our own, as to spend it unthrifely upon lusts and surfeits; and we have no perfect peace till the Giver receive it back, till we have put it off from ourselves, and laid it up in God.

He doth lay it down being called for, not east it away without bidding; that were not to lay it down, but to run away from it. God says, *Thou shalt not kill*; if thou mayst not kill another, then much less thyself. *Sapiens non fugere debet e vita, sed exire.* (Sen.) The wise man doth not run out of his life, but maturely go out. This life is a warfare, where God hath placed some in the forward, some in the rear, some in the wings, others in the main battle; every man hath his station, and must not depart from it without his *munus dimittis*, without his passport. Neither light of nature, nor light of grace, directs a man to put out the light of his own life.

Not nature. Paul calls death an enemy: now, no man loves an enemy properly, and for his own sake, so far as he is an enemy. *Homicida in se, insultatus obijciatur*, saith Seneca. It is pity any hands should bury him, whom his own hands have slain. We may say of a self-murderer, as it was said of Cato: He slew himself, rather than he would say, Caesar hath saved me: so that man kills himself, lest Christ should save him. Cleombrotus read Plato's *Phædo* unadvisedly; otherwise he would not have destroyed a mortal body to make way for an immortal soul. The poet by that natural light condemned such attempts,

Qui sibi letum,

Insantes peperere moram.

Quam vellet æthere in alto,

Nunc et pauperem et duces perficere labores!

Those that have extricated themselves from misery on earth, by an unnatural violence upon themselves, if they might be restored to life again, they would endure ten thousand times more with patience. God hath tied the soul and body together with such a passionate love, that they cannot part without grief. Man is born with little insensible pain, but dies with extreme anguish. If the wisdom of God had not interposed that let to timorous nature, there would have been many Lueretias, Cleopatras, Alithophels; so many wilful funerals, that good laws should have found small opportunity of execution. But as God would have our birth bitter to our mothers, that they might love us the dearer; so he would have our death bitter to ourselves, that we might the more fear to hasten it. Man saith, it is a miserable privation for him, that hath seen the stars, the sun in his glory, and the heavens reconciled with the fruitful earth, both sympathizing in our benefit: for that man to be tumbled into a silent grave, neither seeing nor seen, incapable of comfort. Now what nature loathes, thy own sober heart dislikes, and God detests, do not accomplish.

Not grace, for all such in holy writ have their brands; as Alithophel, Saul, Judas. They slew indeed evil men, but after a worse manner. Our Saviour's direction was, When you are persecuted in one city, flee into the next. He says not, Despatch yourselves lest your enemies triumph over you, nor get others to do it that you may escape further torments; but save yourselves by flight, run not out of your own lives. *Non recipio animam, quæ me nolente egredietur de vita.* (Sen.) God will refuse that soul, which leaves the body before himself call for it. It is objected, that

Samson did this, yet he is reckoned in the legend and calendar of saints, Heb. xi. But his fact cannot be excused, but that by Divine revelation it was warranted; unless the Spirit of God did infuse this

into him, who purposed to work miracles by him. (August.) He prayed to the Lord, he was heard of the Lord; therefore I doubt not but his motion was divinely inspired. For God after that his strength was departed, assisted him in the act. Therefore, as Augustine says of Abraham's offering up of Isaac, that which without God's command had been no less than madness, when God commands it, proves obedience.

But Razis is commended for this; he "fell upon his sword; choosing rather to die manfully," &c. 2 Mace. xiv. 41, 42. Even that commendation is warrant enough to raise the book out of the Scriptural canon. But he called upon the Lord of life and spirit to restore his bowels again. Alas, this shall be common to the very reprobates. Yes, but he died nobly: it had been a better report to have died humbly. He did it, saith the author, manfully: and I do not say that he did it womanly. It was a great, but not a good deed; far more Roman than Christian.

But those virgins in the sack of Rome, that to prevent the ravisher slew themselves, are praised. St. Augustine refutes those praises: It is an error to think, that whatsoever is done on us, is also done of us. For then were chastity a virtue of the body, not of the mind. The polluted mind makes the body stained, though it did never act; but the body abused by violence cannot make the unconsenting mind guilty. Was Tamar to be condemned, because Amnon did defile her? It is consent that maketh the sin. As Augustine said of Tarquin and Lucretia, There were two persons in the action, yet but one offender: the other being not an actor, but a sufferer. Why then did Lucretia kill herself? If she were unchaste, why is she honoured? if she were chaste, why was she murdered? If that were no unchastity, where a woman is ravished; then this is no justice, wherein a chaste woman is punished. But saith the matron or virgin, If I be ravished and survive, the world will say it was done with my will. What world? That which knows nothing else but wickedness. Howsoever, David's testimony is sufficient: Lord, thou knowest mine innocence. But it is opposed, that the fear of death and cruelty may make them consent to these constupations. How can they tell what extremity may work upon them? What then? Is it better to commit a present murder, than hazard a future rape? Shall we perpetrate a certain sin, to prevent an uncertain shame? Shall we do that we cannot live to repeat, to avoid that we may live to repent? Oh let them, and let themselves alone that they may recover themselves; before they go whence they shall not return, even to the land of darkness and shadow of death, Job x. 20, 21. St. Augustine decides it; Do not you make havoc of your souls, because others have abused your bodies. Paul was in a strait betwixt this double choice, of life or death. Phil. i. 23; though he was desirous to die, yet he was content to live. In his wisdom he could choose the gain of death, yet in his obedience he refuseth not the service of life. (Ambros.)

But to do this argues a stout and valiant mind, fearless of death. Indeed such may be more admired for stoutness of mind, than commended for soundness of wisdom. But that is not magnanimity, but rather the greatest cowardice. Nature itself teacheth, that there is more valour to endure a miserable life, than to embrace a wretched death. That is far the greater mind, *quæ vitam arduam potest magis ferre, quam fugere.* There is no sorrow, no shame, no misery, that should force a Christian to so desperate a prevention. The servants of God never did this, when their souls were heavy to the death: their bodies in Job's plight, when a prick could have ended all his

woes; when the pulling away of the pillow would have eased all their griefs. They never paid the debt of nature, till their Creditor called on them for it; which time they would never have staid, if the service of their own hands might lawfully have released them. But as we cannot live without a *permissit*, so we must not die without a *dimittit*. Some that enjoy the world's paradise, desire to live; others that endure the world's purgatory, desire to die. St. Augustine's rule is good for both: Though thou desire life in thy election, yet embrace death in thy patience; and admit life in thy patience, though death be in thy desires. When God calls, be not troubled to put off thy tabernacle; till God calls, be not troubled to keep on thy tabernacle.

The causes of this unnatural sin are many. 1. Impatience of crosses; if they cannot have their will on others, in a cursed heart they will have their will on themselves; and so leap, like some fishes, out of the boiling caldron into the broiling flame. As Dido; *Sic, sic jurat ire sub umbras*. 2. Ambition of a name, and to be famed in the world for heroicai spirits. Yet, alas, they are plagued in that they affected, for their memory stinks above ground. Such a fire was in the blood of Razis. 3. Preservation of chastity; so Pelagia at fifteen years old. This is a grievous folly, to save the body from defouling by defouling the soul. 4. Infidelity; when they have no faith in God, no hope of good issue out of troubles. Thus did the younger Cato, to avoid the tyranny of Cæsar. God holds it a great indignity to him, not to be trusted; therefore justly plagues diffidence with desperateness. 5. Pride; when a man will not submit himself to God's will, but will choose not to be at all, unless he may be as he list himself. 6. Cruelty to others. Nero, that was so artificial in cutting throats, at last runs on his own sword, saying, I have lived dishonourably, I will die shamefully. Saul, being so bloodied against David and the priests, became as unmerciful to himself, to wreak his teen on his own bowels. Judas, that was so cruel against the innocent blood of his Master, became as cruel against the noent blood of himself. Ahithophel, thirsting after David's life, became as ill-minded against himself. He that is thus savage and merciless to himself, to whom will he be merciful? Let no man think him a friend, that is his own enemy. Trust not such a one: he who spares not his own blood, will never spare mine. 7. Desperation; when a man thinks that all the doors of mercy are shut against him, and there is not goodness enough for him in Jesus Christ.

But I forget myself, and hold you too long in disputing a question, which many a one hath disputed against himself in a moment of time, without reply; not with tongue, but with hand; not with sharpness of wit, but of sword. I will pronounce nothing determinately of any particular person; but we shall find it to be the end of usurers, murderers, traitors, and such branded wretches. I know the mercy of God may come betwixt the bridge and the brook, betwixt the knife and the throat; and repentance may be suggested to the heart in a moment, in that very instant. But this only may be; there is no promise for it, many threatenings against it, little likelihood of it. It were madness for thee to break thy neck, to try the skill of a bone-setter. Tarry, till God calls, patiently, and then lay down thy tabernacle cheerfully, and the Lord Jesus will receive thy spirit in mercy.

The use of this point serves to reprove the hasty wishers for death. In the least extremity, Let me die. Some of the saints have not escaped this infirmity. Elijah: "He arose, and went for his life to Beer-sheba," and after that "a day's journey into the wil-

derness," all to escape Jezebel; yet when he was there, "he requested for himself that he might die. It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers," 1 Kings xix. 3, 4. In the morning he died for his life; at evening, being a little weary, he prays for death. So Jonah; he first cries earnestly for life, "Out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice," chap. ii. 2. Some days after he begs and sues for death: "Take, O Lord, I beseech thee, my life from me; for it is better for me to die than to live," chap. iv. 3. Because Jezebel pursues him in the world, therefore Elijah must needs out of the world: because the Ninevites did not die, therefore Jonah will not live. If they had then departed, the one had died fainting, and the other had died chafing. They that desire death in passion, desire it only for fashion. For when sickness, death's messenger, comes, physicians are consulted, rewards promised, prayers conceived, vows offered, that death may be deferred. (August.) You remember the fable of the old man with the burden of sticks; wherewith being overladen, and weary of his misery, he calls for death to come to him. Death came, took him at his word, and asked him what he would with him. But he answered, quickly turning both his mind and language, I desire thy help to bear my burden of sticks for me. Young Clitipho in the comedy, being abridged of his lusts, had nothing in his discontented mouth, but, I would fain die. The wiser father replied, My son, first learn what it is to live. Desire life with aged Simeon, till thou hast got the Lord Jesus in thine arms; without whom the first death will be terrible, the second death intolerable. Miserable soul, with what courage canst thou set on thy way, which knowest not the Guide of the journey, Jesus Christ? (Bern.) If a man should live as long as Methuselah, if his head were as white as snow, yet it is not fit to melt till he have known Christ. Though his skin were as writhled as parchment, yet it is not time to be folded up, till his soul be ripe in the faith. If he knows not Jesus, he is not fit to die. Let us then desire to put off this tabernacle, when we are sure of that immortal clothing. "We do groan in this tabernacle; not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life," 2 Cor. v. 4. Then let us wish to leave the earth, when we perfectly know the way to heaven. Desire to live till you are inspired with grace; desire to die when you are assured of glory.

"Shortly" I must put it off; this is the last circumstance; the deposition is instant. How the apostle was assured of his approaching dissolution, I will not yet examine; but refer it to the due place, which concerns his revelation. That which I here only observe, is his principal intention; to express his own diligence, and to convey into their hearts a more powerful acceptance of his holy counsels, because his time is short.

First, to strengthen his own diligence. The less space a man hath allowed for his business, the more he should ply it. The fewer days, the fruitful lessons. "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day," John ix. 4. Near to his end he washed the disciples' feet; preached sermon upon sermon, of humility, charity, fervency; revealed many things before secreted: 1 told you not these things from the beginning. Jacob gave his best blessing in his last will. Moses made the best sermon to Israel near his end. David gave the best counsel to Solomon on his death-bed. Peter plies his preaching and writing, when he knows there follows instant silence. The devil hath "great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time," Rev. xii. 12.

As he is never idle, so then most busy when he perceives his term of rage expiring. Therefore let not God's ministers be negligent, for they have but their time, and that is short. May we all spend it to the peace of our consciences, the good of the church, and the honour of our Maker.

Secondly, to beget zeal and embracing of his doctrine in our hearts. The words of dying men have been most emphatical, most effectual. We remember what our fathers or friends spake last, because we hear them not speak again. The last words of good men are best: as the last glimpse of the candle is the most bright, the last glare of the sun going down most clear, the last speech of a dear friend parting with his friends, and departing out of the world, is usually most compassionate and pathetic. An admonition uttered by such a teacher, and at such a time, and to such an auditory, challengeth good attention, great devotion. "For love's sake I beseech thee; being such an one as Paul the aged," Philem. 9. This was his adjuration of Philemon, to grant his request for Onesimus. He is a preacher of Christ, hear him; an apostle, hear him; a dying apostle, O now or never hear him. We preach to-day, perhaps may not be able to-morrow: this sermon may be the last sermon; therefore hear while you may, lest you desire it when you may not. He that will be good at last, must begin at first. Occasion is like manna, it must be gathered before the sun is up; or like the pool of Bethesda, we must enter as soon as it is stirred by the angel. If we preach, must you not hear? If we preach to-day, ought not you hear to-day? I mean not only with your ears, hear us with your hearts. Show us not only our sermon in your tablets, let us see it in your hands: work it, and so preach it over again with your fingers. Be not mere earthly merchants, to fill your sails, and fill your ships, and fill your shops, and fill your houses, and cannot fill your souls. They write of some traffickers on the coast of Lapland, that they often buy their winds of the devil. Take heed, you that grow so rich in purse and poor in conscience, lest you buy your wealth of the devil. The learning of most preachers in the land, at one time or other, in one place or other, doth empty itself within your walls. Yet the wickedness of the greater part hath brought a scandal on the better part. And it is a country prayer, God bless us from the citizens of London: they will hear three sermons a day, but deceive ten plain men in an hour; they have so much preaching, that they are the worse. Poor souls, they are mistaken in this; men's wickedness comes not by too much preaching, but by too little practising. The Lord work in us a conscionable obedience, that we may not hear to our condemnation, but comfort. It is our part to preach, yours to practise, God's to accomplish. (Cyril.)

"Even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me," This is the revelation or premonition of the apostle's death. Some refer this to the kind and manner of his death; others to the time of his dying. Some say *καθώς* signifies the manner of his departure; that he shall so die as Christ showed him. Others understand by the word *ταχέως*, that he was to die shortly, because the Lord had revealed the instant of his departure. I know that I must not abide long upon earth; for Christ's word, the oracle of truth, hath spoken it; and I am sure to find the truth of the oracle, to suffer it.

They that refer it to the manner, conceive this revelation to be given him John xxi. 18, "When thou wast young," &c. It is added, "This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God," ver. 19. So that if this be the ground of the reve-

lation, certainly it intends rather the manner than the time. So Augustine, Thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, that is, to the cross. Then was Peter girded by another, when he was fastened to the cross. (Tertul.) That Peter was crucified, is the current and universal consent of history. First, If thou lovest me, feed my sheep, ver. 17: Christ told Peter in what vocation he should live; then in the next verse, after what manner he should die, which questionless must be a violent death, of martyrdom, though the particular kind be not specified. At last he concludes, and alludes to both, "Follow me." Be thou such a pastor in feeding my sheep, such a pastor in suffering for my sheep, as I have given thee example, (Theophil. Aret.) Peter asked his Master, whither he went, John xiii. 36. Jesus answered, "Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards." Jesus remembering this conference, together with his question, "Why cannot I follow thee now?" and his resolution, "I will lay down my life for thy sake;" tells him, "When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldst," John xxi. 18. (Rupert. Maldonat.) When thou wast a youngling in the faith, and didst gird thyself with thine own strength, it was thy folly to think thou couldst follow me whither I went. Therefore by denying me thrice, thou didst prove my words true, "Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now." "But when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldst not." When thou shalt feel the weakness in thyself, and grow strong in the Lord, my other saying will prove true, "Thou shalt follow me afterwards." They that say this "follow me" intends the manner of his death, that he should follow him in being crucified as Christ was, have strange eyes. It is not good to find out more in Scripture, than God meant should be found there.

Some contend that this revelation here mentioned, is not that John xxi.; for they say, it was not given at Jerusalem, by Christ immediately risen again; but at Rome, by Christ after his ascension. So Ambrose and Gregory cite this history from Linus, upon the Acts of Peter's Passion. But Origen, tom. 7. in Johau. referreth it to Paul, and that a great deal more probably than to Peter. The story is this: Peter being at Rome, imprisoned by Nero, and sentenced to death, by the importunity of the people, persuading him to save himself, and by the opportunity of Procensus and Martinianus' concession, who were governors of the watch, was overruled, and fled. Coming to the gates of Rome, there Christ met him, Peter asketh him, Lord, whither comest thou? Christ answered, I come again to be crucified. Now Peter knowing that Christ had an impassible and immortal body, presently apprehended, that the Lord was to be crucified in the servant. Hereupon he came back, and died on the cross to honour Christ, that had died on the cross to save Peter. Our credit answers this story, as countrymen do the report of travellers; they will rather believe it, than go to see it. Whether Peter were crucified at Rome or not, we are not certain; but that Peter is dead, we are certain: on this let us rest, that we may rest with Peter.

They that refer it to the time of his dying, understand it thus: That Peter should die, he knew in general; that he should die a martyr, he knew in particular; (Calvin.) "Signifying by what death he should glorify God," John xxi. 19. But that he should die shortly, he could not know, except by some later revelation in special. It is probable, that where Peter wrote this Epistle, even there he received this revelation. But it is manifest that he wrote this Epistle at Babylon: for he wrote the Second where

he wrote the First, chap. iii. 1 : but he wrote the former at Babylon : "The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you ; and so doth Marcus my son," 1 Pet. v. 13 ; therefore it is more likely and consonant to reason, that Peter died at Babylon, than, as the papists say, at Rome. Here they will distinguish, though thereby they destroy. They say directly, that by Babylon is meant Rome ; even that Babylon, "The mother of harlots and abominations of the earth," Rev. xvii. 5, is *ipsa Roma*, very Rome. So Papias in Euseb. To have some proof that Peter was at Rome, they are content to allow that Rome is Babylon. So that *Babylonis fuisse*, is all one with *Romæ præfuisse* ; for Peter to be at Babylon, and to be bishop of Rome, there is no difference. The infamy of that damnable name doth not deter them, so they may have some pretence of their apostolical title. Indeed they do not so much care for Christ, so they may enjoy Peter. (Calvin.) Let them but retain the name of Peter's chair, they will not refuse to seat their Rome in infernal Babylon. Much good do it them ; if they will not stick to call their glorious church, stigmatical and accursed Babylon, surely we need not stick much to allow them that Peter was at Rome. But hear we further.

We say, that this local Babylon was not Rome, but that great city in Egypt, now called Cayr or Alcayr ; which they say to be thirteen or fourteen German miles about. For Babylon is typical Rome, not Rome topical Babylon. The apostle did not speak by a riddle ; he did not date his Epistle from a place so called in an allegorical sense. Letters are dated from cities or places so usually called. Indeed Rome in the Revelation, is called Mystical Babylon : but this was not the first Rome, as it was in the days of Christ ; but the last Rome, such as it should be under antichrist. But St. Peter writing at and from Babylon, doth yet handle no point concerning the seat and rule of antichrist there ; which plainly sheweth that antichrist should reign, not in material, but in mystical Babylon. Thus they have gotten it allowed, that Rome is Babylon ; but it still remains to prove, that Peter was at Rome when he was at Babylon.

The apostle says that Mark was with him ; My son Marcus saluteth you, 1 Pet. v. 13. Now Mark is said to be constituted the first bishop of Alexandria in Egypt ; where he was put to death, and buried. (Nicéphor.) But these adversaries affirm, that Peter was at Rome five and twenty years. Now if Mark kept his episcopal seat in Alexandria, how could he be with St. Peter at Rome ? Who can untie this knot ? Admit that Peter was at Babylon, and then Mark might easily be with him ; for both those cities were in Egypt.

Divers have opinioned that Peter died at Jerusalem, by warrant of that place, "Some of them ye shall crucify," Matt. xxiii. 34 ; ye, that is, the Jews. Now if any of the apostles were crucified there, it must be Peter ; for none of the rest was crucified in Jerusalem.

Lastly, it cannot be proved that Peter was at Rome at all. For, 1. Paul, fourteen years after his first coming to Jerusalem, found Peter there ; as it is undeniably evident, Gal. ii. 1, 9. At which time they celebrated that apostolical council, Acts xv. giving the right hands of fellowship, that Paul should preach to the heathen, and Peter to the circumcision. If any say, that Peter came from Rome to the council ; what time then had he to visit Antioch, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, to all which churches he preached ? 2. When St. Paul wrote his Epistle to the Romans, St. Peter was not at Rome ; otherwise

he would not have forgotten so great a pillar in his liberal salutations. He mentions many, but no word of St. Peter, chap. xvi. 3. When Paul came to Rome, Peter was not there : he sent epistles from Rome, and many commendations from the brethren, as appears, Col. iv. 10—14 ; Philem. 23, 24 ; but no remembrance from Peter. If Peter had been at Rome, Paul would not have forgotten to send greeting from him. Yet more plain, "Only Luke is with me," 2 Tim. iv. 11 : then Peter was not there. "At my first answer no man stood with me," ver. 16 : had Peter been there, he would not have forsaken Paul. 4. It was fitter for Peter to be at Babylon, (for "the gospel of the circumcision" was committed unto him, Gal. ii. 7.) that he might follow the countries most frequented with his own people.

I conclude this point ; if Peter received the oracle of his death so near, at Babylon, he must fly over seas and mountains if he died at Rome. But howsoever, the Romists will have it so ; and rather than not domineer over all the world with the chair of Peter at Rome, they will sink down to hell with cursed Babylon. Albeit St. John Lateran challengeth Peter's head, Poitiers in France his nether jaw with the beard on it, Triers many of his bones, Geneva part of his brain, which was found to be a pumice stone ; yet still Rome must have his body, and boast of his sepulchre. Let them have it without our envy, so long as we keep the true and only Head, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now to speak to ourselves more usefully : howsoever our apostle had some special premonstrance of the nearness of his end, yet this is not common. So had Aaron : "Aaron shall be gathered to his people, and die in Mount Hor," Numb. xx. 26. Moses knew that he should die in Mount Nebo, Deut. xxxii. 50. Simeon had a revelation by "the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ," Luke ii. 26. Though old age and consumptions be certain signs and forewarners of approaching death, yet the condition, manner, and hour of our departure, is always kept secret from us.

Howsoever, it is observable that this apostle died in a good age, an old man : "When thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands," John xxi. 18. Long life is given as a blessing to such as preserve obedience : "Honour thy father and mother, that thy days may be long in the land." In the right hand of wisdom is length of days, Prov. iii. 16. but disobedience shortens our time. The wicked men shall not "live out half their days," Psal. lv. 23. "Let his days be few," Psal. cix. 8. The sinner shall die before his time, Eccl. vii. 17. It was threatened to Eli, that there should not be an old man of his house, 1 Sam. ii. 32. It is not evermore a curse to be barred of old age. Josiah, whose name is sweet as music at a banquet of wine, died young, that he might not see the evil to come. A son of wicked Jeroboam was promised this for a favour, because there was found in him some good thing toward the Lord, 1 Kings xiv. 13. It is a mercy, when the Lord takes away his children so young, that they be neither afflicted with the evil of action, nor afflicted with the evil of passion. A man lives too long, if until that nobody desires him to live any longer. The world is soon weary of an old man, especially of an old minister. Can he no longer answer their expectation ? turn him out of his place : this is their mercy. The Levite might not serve after fifty : what then, must he lose his maintenance ? no, he had the same provision still. A man will not cast away his dog being old, because he hath done him service.

Let not the young minister despise the old. When one said to his friend, while he was looking on an

oil man, You see not a man, but the shadow of a man: it was answered, that an old man's shadow was oftentimes better than a young man's whole body. Athanasius was very old; yet upon his shoulder our mother the church leaned, in her sharpest persecutions, to take her rest. Nor yet let the old despise the young. The Spirit of God is not bound to age, nor is wisdom tied to years. It is not with senses, as it is with wines, the older the better. There may be a young man of sixty, and an old man of twenty years. Young David may excel his teachers: Daniel was a young prophet, Solomon a young king, Samuel a young priest, John a young evangelist, Aquilinus a disciple; Timothy a young bishop. Timothy was so young, that Paul calls him son: yet Timothy was acquainted with Christ, before Paul was acquainted with Timothy; he knew the Scriptures from a child, which made him wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus, 2 Tim. iii. 15. Yet Paul is called his father: first, because he did instruct him more perfectly: so they were called the sons of the prophets, whom the prophets taught. And because he did minister to Paul, as to a father. Now though he was for age a son, yet for dignity a bishop. Some say he was chosen to such a place, *ob penuriam temporis*: but they manifest *penuriam ingenii*. No, saith Ambrose, that youth retained no youthful humours. A young man with his undowned chin, whose face hath not yet discovered to the world of what sex he is, may be old in the gifts of the Spirit. It is an old proverb, A well-shooted beard striving for length with the cassock, makes not a priest. Ministers must be young before they be old: proceeding orderly, not by jumps, but by degrees. First, they are tried with a less charge: for he that rules not well a small vessel in the river, trust him not with a ship in the sea. A young man may often say, My youthful affections are dead, and I live; when an old man shall have passed many years in the world, and yet is scarce a day old in Christ.

Now seeing I am fallen upon the point of old age, let me consider two things: the miseries by nature incident, and the comforts by grace accident to it.

The miseries are many, partly mental, partly corporal. Mental are the worst:

Sopiditas, ira, mummorum copia mira;

His natura senis tribus est infecto renenti.

They will covet, as if they were to begin a new race of fourscore years. The less journey they have to go, the greater provision they make. Plautus propheth it is as a wonder, to see an old man bountiful: *Bonitas lupus sicut adolescentuli est.*

Multa senem circumveniunt incommoda: vel quid

Quærit, et inventis miser abstinet, ac timet uti.

(Horat.)

Many miseries wait upon old men: first, they greedily seek, and then they miserably forbear what they have found. Ignorance and arrogance meet in unsanctified old age. For ignorance; "Gray hairs are here, and I thee upon him, yet he knoweth not," Hos. vi. 3. *Senesce*, being cut into two words, is as it were *senescit*, or *senescit se*; as if *senescere* were all one with *se ascerere*. For arrogance; it takes away wisdom from the young, and all true knowledge, as if they were wicks and strays, proper only to itself, as lord of the soil; and conjures all learning into the circle of its own night-reap. This is the first and the worst misery of old age; when a man is just come back again to a child. When he is only prising the ancient times so vehemently, as if he would sell them, and forgetting the present days to use them.

Corporal miseries are innumerable; even old age

itself is a disease. Sometimes it hath been without any great decay of senses. It is said of Moses, when he was a hundred years old, "his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated," Deut. xxxiv. 7. So Joshua said of himself, "As yet I am as strong this day, as I was in the day that Moses sent me," Josh. xiv. 11. "The Lord gave strength also unto Caleb, which remained with him unto his old age," Eccles. xli. 9. But the strength of old age is not a certain and infallible argument of God's favour: his grace is not to be sought in outward blessings. Most commonly it is a feeble estate; the very grasshopper is a burden to it, Eccles. xii. 5. Even the old man himself is a burden, to his wife, to his children, to himself. As Barzillai said to David, "I am fourscore years old, and can I discern between good and evil? can thy servant taste what I eat? can I hear any more the voice of singers?" 2 Sam. xix. 35. Old age, we say, is a good guest, and should be made welcome, but that he brings such a troop with him; blindness, aches, coughs, &c.; these are troublesome, how should they be welcome? "Their strength is labour and sorrow," Psal. xc. 10. If their very strength, which is their best, be labour and grief, what is their worst? Hast thou senses? use them to God's glory: hast thou ears? hear; eyes? read; tongue? pray; hands? work that which is good. Use thy members while thou hast them, because they will fail. Are they defective? be patient, and say with the prophet, "I am not better than my fathers." Art thou blind, and canst not behold something thou wouldst see? yet for amends, thou escapest something thou wouldst not see. When Julian upbraided a bishop being blind, "Why doth not the Galilean help thee?" he answers, I am glad that I am blind, and so cannot see thee the monster of men. All these infirmities bring us to the grave, but we shall leave them there. Thou sayest, This stich will bring me to my grave; yet shalt thou then bid it farewell; thou shalt rise without gout, or blindness, or any other imperfection. Dost thou feel a declining of thy senses by age? know that death cannot be far off. Death is as near to the young as to the old; here is all the difference; death stands behind the young man's back, before the old man's face. Young men may soon die, old men cannot long live. They must go speedily; that they may go comfortably, let them make sure to themselves the favour of Christ.

Thus much of the inconveniences, now of the comforts of old age; which are the true knowledge of Christ, and the comfortable remembrance of a good life spent in his service. Let us be sure to live well; no matter how long. Let us not be greedy of old age, but say, Here am I, let him do with me as seemeth him best. God will not judge us how long, but how well, we have lived. (Hieron.) But betwixt him that hath lived twenty years, and him that hath lived twenty-score years, what is the difference, unless that the old man goes away more laden with the burden of his sins? (Sen.) One man eateth more, another less; what matters it, when either is full? He drinks more, I less; but neither of us thirsts. That man hath lived many years, this man fewer; what is the difference, if the few years of the one hath made him as blessed as the many years of the other? Look rather to the goodness of thy life, than to the length: many live a long life, but few a happy life. (Sen.) While I was young, my care was to live well; now I am old, my care is to die well.

Old age may be good three ways. Naturally, when it is accompanied with sense, and not overtaken with decay of those necessary organs. Barzillai had an old age, but not a good old age. Mo-

rally, when it is led by the line of virtue; when justice hath balanced it, fortitude quickened it, temperance dieted it, and charity quieted it. Constitution and country may make it naturally good; but it is then morally good, when a man likes it so well, that he would not wish it to begin again. Spiritually good; and this is best when a man can look both ways; backward with comfort to his life past, forward with joy to his reward to come.

Will you know when old age is a blessing? principally, when a man hath sure handfast of Christ: as Simeon. He desired not to die sooner, he desired not to live longer: Now, Lord, send away thy servant in peace. It was promised Abraham, that he should go to his fathers in peace, and be buried in a good old age, Gen. xv. 15. Now there is no peace without Christ: whoever dies in peace, he dies in Christ the Prince of Peace. Abraham died many hundred years before Christ was born; yet, "Abraham rejoiced to see my day: he saw it, and was glad," John viii. 56: he saw him with the eyes of faith. "Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years," Gen. xxv. 8. He "gave up the ghost," willingly surrendered it; it was not rent from him: there is the easiness of death. "In a good old age," not tempest-beaten with troubles, and wearied out with vexations: there is the happiness of age. "An old man and full of years," like corn ripe and white for the barn of joy: there is the fulness of life. When a man is assured of peace in heaven, he is then full of days.

Again, when a man is old in knowledge and obedience, his age is blessed. "The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness," Prov. xvi. 31: if we may say of it, as Boaz of Ruth, that it is better in the latter end than at the beginning, Ruth iii. 10. The Israelite gathered every day a homer full of manna; but on the day before the sabbath, two homers full. Be gathering in youth every day a little: but in old age twice as much, because thy sabbath is near. Old men are busy to gather goods for their posterity, but their fittest employment should be to gather grace for themselves. It is thy last time of gathering, therefore ply it. As Sarah said, Shall I lust now I am old? Gen. xviii. 12: so, Shall I covet now I am old? shall I be drunk now I am old? shall I lie now I am old? Those courses are reprovable in youth, damnable in age. The grey head is a shame, if it be found in the way of wickedness. As our bodies decrease in strength, our souls must increase in grace: mending the unsoundness of our limbs with the soundness of our lives; recompensing a weak body with a strong faith. No marvel if thy age's reverend flood ebbs into air, when thou art old, not good; where thy moral corruption is greater than thy mortal corruption, and the conscience is more rotten than the carcass. It is a common saying, He that will be old long, must be old while he is young. Express the sobriety of age in thy youth, that the remembrance of thy youth may sweeten the bitterness of thy age. A young saint, an old angel. So then let us spend our life in the thriftiness of grace: that when youth hath ended infancy, age ended youth, and death ended all, we may be young again in heaven. Into which eternal doors old age shall never enter; but every body shall be made young for ever, strong for ever, healthful for ever, beautiful for ever: fashioned like to the glorious body of Christ, and in that glory be preserved for ever and ever.

"Even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me." I am still in the same text, and not out of the same subject, mortality: to teach you a comfortable depo-

sition of your tabernacle. Oh that you would hear me so well this once, that of the same matter you need not hear me again! Let me encourage your attention thus far, that in this very theme, as Seneca said in his travels, I shall be always new. Peter had a revelation concerning his death; somewhat was told him of the time of his death, somewhat of the manner, somewhat perhaps of the place. Yet by no collection it was found, that he knew for time the day; nor for manner, the direct quality and kind; nor for place, punctually such a space or plot of ground. He knew much: we are not allowed it; therefore ought we to have the more preparation, by how much we have the less revelation. For method's sake, that I may not lose your attention, nor your attention lose me, that we may draw all to a sum, consider somewhat for substance, somewhat for circumstance. For substance, that we must die; for circumstance, how, where, and when. To all these we resolve an answer like the grand jury: to the former we say, it is *billā vera*: for the other we give up an *ignoramus*. We know that we must depart; this is a true bill: we know not how, where, or when; this is our *ignoramus*.

For the resolution; men must die: and the apostle calls death the dissolution of life. For the marriage of the soul to the body is the bond of life, the dissolution of this bond is death. This divorce must be suffered, one husband must be lost: happy are we if we find another in heaven, Jesus Christ. Saith the philosopher, Then shalt die, not because thou art sick, but because thou art alive. He that comes into this world, must go out of this world. (Sen.) It is no new thing to die, for life itself is nothing else but a journey to death. Whatsoever hath aspired to the highest, must descend to the lowest. "It is appointed unto men once to die," Heb. ix. 27: it is a statute law decreed in the high parliament of heaven. God so threatened Adam, "In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die," Gen. ii. 17. But Adam lived above nine hundred years after. Yet was there no delay nor evasion of God's doom: for he presently became mortal, and fell into a consumption, that never left him till it had brought him to the grave. Whosoever complains that a man is dead, complains that he was a man. (Sen.) Thus for the certain substance; now for the uncertain circumstance.

We knew not the manner of our departure, or how we shall die. There is but one way to come into the world, a thousand ways to go out. What matters it, whether by an enemy's sword, or by the fit of an ague, seeing we must depart. Job compares man's life to a flower, Isaiah to grass, John Baptist to a tree, the Preacher to a passenger. Is it any matter, whether the flower be cropped, or the grass mown, or the tree hewn down, or where the passenger shall lie next night? We know whither our spirits shall go, we know not in what manner our soul shall be taken from us. This happens alike both to good and bad: wicked Ahab and good Josiah are both slain by war: the pestilence takes away the righteous as well as the sinner. Wise men may die the death of fools. Both travel together in this thoroughfare of life, both lodge in one inn of the grave; but in the morning their ways part: *Portes ubi se vidit in ambas*. (Virg. Æn. vi.)

We know not the place: Rachel dies in the highway, as Jezebel in the streets; Saul and Jonathan are slain in one battle, and their bodies hung up as trophies of a bloody victory. In the mathematics, the circle is equally distant in every point of it from the centre. Conceive earth to be this world's centre, heaven the circumference: now from all points of this centre there is an equally distant remoteness,

or nearness, to the circumference, heaven. Let a man die in England, in Spain, in Turkey, or in the Indies, his body is neither nearer nor farther off from heaven. Say the bodies of men are entombed in the entrails of beasts or maws of fowls, or their dust scattered on the waters; yet can no dust be concealed. What hurt was it to the Christians in the sack of Rome, whose bodies lay unburied on the earth, when their souls were received to heaven? The living committed no sin, in that they could not bury them; the dead felt no pain, though they were not buried. (August.) The cynic desired to have no other tomb over him but heaven; he admired that for the most glorious monument. Another replied, But then the fowls of the air will devour thee: he answered, Shall I feel them? No; then wheresoever I die, let earth be the pavement, and heaven the roof of my tomb. But only for the living's sake, there was no sepulchre like it. If there was a place which could hide from God, I would not die there. But on the earth, in the sea, in the dark, in hell, in heaven, the Lord is every where, Psal. cxxxix: all places are specified but purgatory; because none are found there. Be therefore always ready; thou art not sure in what place death looks for thee, therefore in all places do thou look for death. It watcheth us like an enemy: when it comes, we may say as Ahab to Elijah, "Hast thou found me, O thou mine enemy?" 1 Kings xxi. 20. Thou hast found me, and wilt conquer me; but "thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ," 1 Cor. xv. 57.

We know not the time. Christ says that the Son of man himself knows not the day of judgment. What, doth not Christ know it? Without question he knew it as he is God; though as man he might be ignorant of it. For he said, None knows, no not the Son of man; but the Son of God knew it. He knew it not, not because he could not, but because he would not; that we might contentedly bear that ignorance, which is common to us with Christ and the angels. (Bern.) But men sick of lingering consumptions do know their time. No, but still they languish in hope, and know not the hour of their dissolution. But Hezekiah was promised the addition of fifteen years; therefore he knew how long he should live. We answer, this was by special revelation; and who else was so ascertained? Yea, rather this was a conditional and limited promise, depending on the order of second causes. For Hezekiah's body was not impassible, nor incorruptible; but God did repair the defects of nature, and extend it to the possibility of fifteen years, upon the implicit condition of repentance. No man knows his appointed time. Inquire not after that which is concealed, lest thou lose that which is granted. A man may safely be ignorant of that, which he is not bound to know. They are wretched men, that run to soothsayers for such predictions; when God hath locked it up, to offer to pick it with a false key. Some depart in youth, others in age; some fruit is plucked violently from the tree, other drops down with mature ripeness; all must fall. The corn is sometimes bitten in the spring, often trod down in the blade, never fails to be cut up in the ear, when it is ripe. There is nothing more sure than death, nothing more unsure than the time of death. Moses and Aaron were certain to die, and never to enter into Canaan; but they were not certain when they should see Canaan from the mountains, and so die. It is a common fault, to run ill courses in health, and to allow themselves the time of a lingering sickness to make ready for death; as if God were bound to give them so long warning. But he often disappoints them; and death's prepara-

tion prevents their preparation. "They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave," Job xxi. 13. This was that cosmopolite's presumption, Luke xii. 19, "Soul, eat, drink, and be merry;" but he reckoned without his host. Korah was suddenly swallowed. Ishbosheth was slain asleep, 2 Sam. iv. 7. The house fell upon Job's children at a banquet. Ananias and Sapphira were put out like a candle new lighted, and that in stench. "They are exalted for a little while, and cut off as the tops of the ears of corn," Job xxiv. 24. When the thought of death is farthest, the stroke of death is nearest. Caesar desired a sudden death: as he desired, as he deserved, so he had it. Naturalists that love the avoidance of pain, and have no hope of future blessedness, desire a sudden dissolution. For my part, my prayer shall be with our church, "From battle, and murder, and from sudden death, Good Lord, deliver me."

Thus we see, the time is unknown to us, whether in youth or in age. Often in youth the bud is cropped. In birth we are green in the bud, in youth we are white in the flower, in death we wither in the dust. (Greg.) Death, like a fish-net, catcheth at one draught, not only the grown fishes, but even the little fry. The poets have a fable, that Death and Cupid lodging together at one inn, interchanged each other's arrows. From that day to this it comes to pass, that sometimes old men dote, and young men die. Therefore let me be bold with Christ's words, "Young man, I say unto thee, arise," Luke vii. 14: raise up thy soul to grace, thou knowest not how soon thy body shall fall down to dust. Perhaps thy imagined wisdom makes thee believe that thou art early ripe; and so like a blossom that prevents the spring, thou wilt dare to look forth upon February sun, but thou mayst soon be nipped with a frost. And if youth be but so weak a taper, quickly put out by death, how careful should parents be with what oil they supply those young lamps! Usually they provide fair estates for their children's bodies, nothing for the estate of their souls; to show that they are parents of their bodies, not of their souls. Zeuxis having artificially painted a boy, carrying grapes in a hand-basket; the birds came, as if they had been true grapes, and pecked at them. Hereupon he was wondrous angry with himself and his art; saying, If I had painted the boy, which was the chief part of my picture, so well as I have done the grapes, which were but a by-accident, the birds durst never have been so bold. Were parents as careful for their children's good nurture, as about their appendant tritles, those ravenous kites, evil companions, durst not venture upon them, could not so easily corrupt them.

For age, then death is looked for; young men know they may die, old men know they must die. The youngest is old enough to die, the oldest too old to live long. Death stands behind the young man's back, before the old man's face. There are three messengers of death; casualty, sickness, age. Hath not the first messenger spoke with thee? yet the second. Hast thou escaped the second? yet the third will not fail. "As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house, and a serpent bit him," Amos v. 19. While a man runs from the lion, the bear assaults him; if he escape them both, yet death (that serpent) will find him out. Childhood is our morning, middle age our high noon, old age our evening, death our sunset. One would have young men saluted with, Good morrow, or welcome into the world; men of middle age with, Good day; old men with, Good night, because they are going out of the world. It is miserable for an old

man not to be prepared for death: death shakes him by the hand in the palsy; yet no acquaintance? he hath one foot in the grave; and yet no thought of dissolution? he is come to the threshold of his long home; yet still worldly-minded? But the good old man thinks this life, like a throng in a narrow passage, the sooner out the sooner at ease.

Seeing our dissolution is so certain, the time so uncertain, the very mention of it bids us be prepared. Put not off your amendment, lest what you defer for a long time, God take away for ever. For it is just, that he who living forgot God, dying should forget himself. Many serve God, as they do their servants, with reversions, but he looks to be served with present obedience. We know not our last day, that we might watch every day; we cannot tell how far it is off, therefore let us believe it to be very near. (August.) God allows man a liberal time, a whole day: now a day consists of twelve hours; Are there not twelve hours in the day? saith Christ. What enemies are we to ourselves, that of those twelve hours, which God allows us, we allow ourselves not one! Many men post off their conversion; and at twenty send religion afore them to thirty; then put it off to forty; and yet not pleased to overtake it, they promise it entertainment at threescore. At last death comes, and he allows not one hour. In youth men resolve to afford themselves the time of age to serve God; in age they shuffle it off to sickness; when sickness comes, care to dispose their goods, lothness to die, hope to escape, martyrs that good thought, and their resolution still keeps before them. If we have but the lease of a farm for one and twenty years, we make use of the time, and gather profit. But in this precious farm of time we are so bad husbands, that our lease comes out before we are one penny-worth of grace the richer by it.

They that have lived ill, when the soul sits on their lips ready to take her flight, then they send for the minister, to teach them to die well. But as in such extremity the apothecary gives but some opiate physis, so the minister can give but some opiate divinity; a cordial that may benumb them, no solid comfort to secure them. Here is no time to ransack for sins, to search the depth of the ulcer: a little balm to supple, but the core is left within. Let men repent while they live, that they may rejoice when they die. You tell me that one malefactor went from the cross to paradise: but we must not hide from you, that God opened the mouth of one ass; yet every ass is not thereby privileged to speak. Let us be liberal on God's part. He that truly repents one day before he dies, shall surely be saved. With greediness you hear this; but abuse it not; trust it, but trust not yourselves. He that gives pardon to repentance, is not bound to give repentance to sinners. Be sure thou repentest that one day before thy death; but hereof thou canst not be sure, unless thou repent every day. The Lord hath made a promise to repentance, not of repentance. If thou convertest to-morrow, thou art sure of grace; but thou art not sure of to-morrow's conversion. For three reasons God conceals from us the time of our death. 1. Because in nature, the fear of death is more terrible than death itself. We know that we must die, to avoid all doubts; we know not when, to qualify our fears. 2. To preserve men from despair. That neither the ungodly should despair, as if they had no time allowed for repentance; neither the faithful be cast down, because the time was too long of exercising their patience. (Basil.) 3. That we might be evermore armed with expectation, to encounter death. Because we know not when we shall die, let us learn with St. Paul, to die daily. The

worldling would weep, if he knew that he had but a month to live; yet he leaps and sings, and securely rejoiceth, when perhaps he hath not one day.

*Fleres, si scires unum tua tempora mensem:
Rides cum non sis forsitan una dies.*

The sum of all, is the certainty of inevitable death. A mortal father cannot beget an immortal son. If they that brought us into the world have themselves gone out of the world, we may conclude our own following. He that may say in life, I have a man to my father, and a woman to my mother; shall say in death, "to corruption, Thou art my father: to the worm, Thou art my mother, and my sister," Job xvii. 14. There is not one in the cluster of mankind, but is liable to the common and equal law of death. Methuselah lived nine hundred threescore and nine years; yet he was the son of Enoch, who was the son of Jared, who was the son of Mahalaleel, who was the son of Cainan, who was the son of Enos, who was the son of Seth, who was the son of Adam, who was the son of dust. Ask the woman that hath conceived a child in her womb, Will it be a son? She answers, Peradventure so. Will it be fair? Peradventure so. Will it be witty? Peradventure so. Will it be rich? Peradventure so. Will it be long-lived? Peradventure so. Will it be mortal? Yes, this is without peradventure, it will die. As the philosopher, hearing that his son was dead, answered without astonishment, I know that I begot a mortal man. Man's body, as well as the ice, expounds that riddle, that the daughter begets the mother: dust beget the body, and the body begets dust. Our bodies were at first strong cities, but then by transgression we made them the forts of rebels; whereupon our offended Sovereign sent his scribe Death to arrest us of high treason. And though for his mercy's sake in Christ he pardon our sins; yet he suffers us no more to have such strong houses, but lets us dwell in thatched cottages, paper walls, mortal bodies. Therefore Paul calls the body *our house*; not such as God created. He may say of our bodies, as the poet spake of his verses,

*Quem recitas meus est, O Fidentius, libellus
Nec male dum recitas, incipit esse tuus.*

Thy body, O man, while it was holy and immortal, it was my work; but now it is sinful and mortal, it is thy work. An old man is said to give Alexander a little jewel, which he affirmed to be of this virtue: so long as it was kept bright, if it were put into the balance with the choicest gold or most precious stone, it would outpoise and outvalue them all; but if it once fell into the dust, and took rust, it would be lighter and slighter than a feather. What meant the sage, but to moralize to that great monarch his own life; which being kept bright and healthful, commanded the world; but once fallen to the dust, even grooms would despise it; for hares dare pluck dead lions by the beard. Lucian hath a fable, the moral is good: Menippus meeting Mercury in the Elysian fields, would needs know of him, which among all the ghosts was Philip that great king of Macedon. Mercury answers, He is Philip, that hath the hairless scalp. Menippus replies, Why they have all bald heads. Merc. Then he with the flat nose. Menip. They all have flat noses. Merc. Then he with the hollow eyes. Menip. They all have hollow eyes; all have naked ribs, disjointed members; all are carcases. Merc. Then, Menippus, in death there is no difference betwixt the king and the beggar.

*Mors dominos scribis, et scepra ligonibus æquat:
Dissimiles simili conditione ligans.*

Men upon earth, as in the game at chess, supply different places: one is a king, another a queen, another a bishop, another a knight, another a pawn: but when the game is done, and they are shuffled into one bag, all are alike.

What mean worldlings then to be so covetous? In our birth we had but swaddling bands and a cradle; in our death we shall have but a winding-sheet and a coffin. Alcibiades brags of his lands. Socrates reacheth him a map, bids him demonstrate where they lie; alas, he could not find them, nor scarce discern Athens itself, it was so small a point in respect of the world. The dust of mighty Hercules can scarce fill a pitcher. The philosopher said of Alexander, Yesterday the whole world did not content him, now ten cubits contain him. I will not deal so sparingly with you, ye landed men. You shall have some land in death, and you can have no more; even so much ground as will hold your carcases. Why do you covet? Were you owners of more land than ever the devil showed Christ, yet call no more yours but the grave. This is my land, and thy land. Purchase there where is true possession; or rather get that by faith which Jesus Christ hath purchased for you. Lay up your treasure in heaven. What folly is it to lay up our treasure there, whence we must depart; and not to send it afore thither, whither we must go, and where we shall live for ever!

What means the epicure so to pamper his body? A fat corpse is but a fat supper for the worms. "Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats; but God shall destroy both it and them," 1 Cor. vi. 13. Let us eat to live, not live to eat. When we have devoured the most delicate creatures, the worms shall devour us.

What mean the proud? The soles of their feet must not touch the ground: they fly betwixt heaven and earth on their four-wheeled wings. But they must have other porters; to the grave they must. After all their painting, the earth will spoil their colours. The fairest woman, that says, Touch me not, I am of purer mould, as if

*Præcordia Titan
De meliore luto furit,*

must lie blended in the forgotten dust with the poor bond-woman.

What mean we all so foolishly to forget our latter ends? Adam could call all the beasts by their names, but his own name he forgot: Adam, the son of earth. Such fools are we, to forget our own names: that we are the sons of Adam, the sons of dust. It is no wisdom to fear that we cannot avoid. I shall die neither the first, nor the last; they that go not before me, shall follow me. Upon this condition I came in, that I should go out. We must fall; and as the tree falls so it lies; and commonly it falls to that side which is most laden with branches and fruits. They that abound most with the fruits of obedience, shall fall to the right hand, life; eastward, to salvation; they that abound with wicked actions and affections, to the left hand, death; westward, to destruction.

What mean the faithful to be so much cast down in the apprehension of death? To them it is, though the punishment of the first birth, yet the glory of the second birth; not a dying, but a departing. Life is with some sorrow laid off, but with much joy laid up. Though every man that hath his Genesis, must have his Exodus; yet it is but a journey, which they call a death. Paul calls this life an earthly house, heaven a new building, 2 Cor. v. 1. Death is but the

pulling down of an old house, that a new one may be set up. Or as a clock that is grown rusty, is taken asunder by the maker's hand; disjoined wheel from wheel, and pin from pin; not to be lost, but to be repolished, and put together again, that it may go clearly: so death doth pull the clock of our life asunder, when it hath struck the last stroke of breath; wheel from wheel, limb from limb, joint from joint, member from member; all to dust and pieces. But then the omnipotent Maker takes it into his own hands, sets it together again at the resurrection, and it shall go well in glory for ever; bearing a part in those celestial chimes, which the blessed angels, the choristers of heaven, sing to the King of kings. For though the wages of sin be death, yet eternal life is the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen, Rom. vi. 23.

VERSE 15.

Moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance.

SEEING my life is so short, and with it my ministry must cease; therefore I will take advantage of the time, and yet again remember you of these things. This I have done hitherto with my living voice: but my care ends not with my life, I will strive that even after my death you may remember them. So often as you turn over the leaves of my Epistles, you shall (though not hear, yet) see me preaching to you these things. You shall hear me while I live, and read me when I am dead. I die that spake these words, but the words spoken shall not die in your memories. As it is said of Abel, being dead yet speaketh; so it pleaseth God that I should preach to his church even to the world's end.

This is the sense: for method of discourse, many things inherently natural to these words, have been pretrated on just occasion, verses 12 and 13. I am loth to fall into a coincidence of argument, and therefore willingly abridge myself of some necessary matter. But to rest content with what is behind, and to give you the gleanings of the former vintage; there are some scattering grapes, which well pressed may afford you a cup of good wine. First, the apostle moves them to embrace his doctrine, because he is old, and hath but a short time to tarry amongst them. Then he comforts them, that he will strive to leave an impression of his doctrine behind him in their hearts.

The grave exhortations of old age are to be ponderously received. There is somewhat in the person that procures attention to the doctrine. A reverend bishop is heard as a father of the church, saith Augustine; his speech may be short, but effectual, leaving a deep impression in the hearers. St. John's short sermon in his old age, "Little children, love one another," so warmed his disciples' hearts with the fire of charity, that their head was turned into a lime, and did distil down water at their eyes. The same weight of doctrine doth not feel so weighty in a young man's mouth, as in the gravity of reverend old age. Not that the truth of God depend on the regard of persons; but because men's affections sooner melt at his speech that is stuffed with experience, than at theirs who only aver the theoretical truth. But for us, whether he be a young Timothy, or an old Peter, that tells us the truth in Christ, the Spirit of God we seek in our hearts a faithful obedience.

Well, I am old, and must leave you; yet I will

leave that behind me, which shall remain with you. In the whole verse we find two generals; the content, and the intent; his practice, and his purpose; his labour, and the end of his labour; the thing he does, and the thing he seeks. "I will endeavour;" there is his labour, practice, and the thing he does. "That ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance;" there is his purpose, the end of his labour, and the thing he seeks. For the former:

"I will endeavour." I can do no more, I must do no less. Now a minister's endeavour consists in three especial things; he must endeavour by learning, endeavour by life, endeavour by labour; none of these must be wanting.

The first thing required to this endeavour is learning. The bishop of Trajectum in Germany, said that he would not admit asses to holy orders. One replied, that he must not now look for Ambroses and Cyprians. He answered, I do not expect Cyprians, but I will not admit asses. There are some that never knew, nor cared to know, the schools of the prophets; yet they send themselves into the harvest; they pen their own commission. But says the church, What make you in my work, that are none of my servants? They are sons without a father; their own creators, and own creatures too. "Friend, how earnest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment?" Matt. xxii. 12. How didst thou get into the priesthood, without having a ministerial garment? They are dangerous teachers, that never were learners. While they will not be scholars of truth, they become masters of error. For all Christ's "I will make you fishers of men," yet they went not presently out of the boat into the pulpit: he was three years instructing them. Christ commanded them to stay at Jerusalem till the Holy Ghost descended on them, Acts ii. They must not receive in and pour out at once. (Hieron.) Yesterday a catechumen, to-day a bishop. Like David's messengers, they must tarry till their beards be grown; not lapwing-breed, to run away with the shell on their head. They must know their winds, ebblings and flowings, creeks and sea-marks, that will be fishers.

Wherein consists this learning? Not in a theory of divers arts, but in the sober use and discreet application of divinity. "We will make thee borders of gold with studs of silver," Cant. i. 11. Divinity is that border of gold, human learning the studs of silver. A garment to have here and there a fringe, or button, or jewel, is comely; to be nothing but buttons is ridiculous. Give us lessons, not lectures. When Solomon made preparation for the building of the temple, he "had threescore and ten thousand that bare burdens, and fourscore thousand hewers in the mountains," 1 Kings v. 15: there was hewing and knocking in the mountains. But when the house was a building, "there was neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in it," 1 Kings vi. 7. The study of arts must go before, but not be too busy in the edification. That which moves the conscience, and saves the soul, is the word of God; yet attendant to this queen, are certain maids of honour, arts. I cannot say they are commanded; I dare not say they are forbidden. Indeed a flourishing and meretricious eloquence pulled up with these, is unprofitable. God affects not auleisims and courtly terms. It is like a great deal of painting in a church window, to keep out the light. What benefit is in a gilt armour? it is the armour that defends, not the gilt. Or to what purpose is a golden key, if it will not open the door? If a wooden key will open it, it is better for me. Neither would I have the truth stripped of her ornaments, and set barely forth; this is a kind of treason.

There is a learning, no man can be a good preacher without it. "Every scribe instructed unto the kingdom of heaven, bringeth out of his treasure things new and old," Matt. xiii. 52. The New Testament, and the Old: to the broken hearts evangelical comforts, to rebellious spirits legal menaces. "New and old," new before old; because the gospel was promised before the law was printed.

Some think a minister hath no great need of learning, because he is to speak to the unlearned. But, as Heb. v. 11, 12, "We have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing. For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and have need of milk, and not of strong meat." So 1 Cor. ii. 6, "We speak wisdom among them that are perfect." Such is our unhappily exigent: if we preach learnedly, they think us mad; as Festus told Paul, "Thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad," Acts xxvi. 24. We seem mad, but only to those that are mad. As David seemed a fool to King Achish, that was a fool. To common simplicity, divinity seems a kind of heresy, and ministers a kind of conjurers. It is with learning as it is with language; let it be strange, be sure it will be ridiculous. "I have written to them the great things of my law, but they were counted as a strange thing," Hos. viii. 12. Art hath no other enemy to speak of, but ignorance. Licinius can make a decree against learning, though he want so much learning as will serve to write his own name, and to subscribe to it. But not to torment him here, that is tormented enough elsewhere; we have too many ignorant censurers of learning; they cannot understand us, they can withstand us. No wonder: for who can distinguish right from wrong, that hath not either a rule in his hand, or some notion of a rule in his head? To judge who is a wise man is only the office of a wise man. (Tull.) But "Wisdom is justified of her children," Matt. xi. 19. If it were not for this justification at home, poor Wisdom would speed ill; either the temporal law would nonsuit her for want of evidence, or the ecclesiastical would excommunicate her for want of purgators. Such fortune hath Wisdom among barren and unblest understandings, that the common opinion of learning is no more but this, It is a pretty shift for a younger brother to live by. This entertainment gives the world to her and her handmaids, which hath most need of her and all her handmaids. But, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned," 1 Cor. ii. 14. He knows them not; there is a denial of the act: nor can he know them: there is an excluding of the habit. However you judge, yet this is the truth; a man may as well saw down a tree with his nails, as be a profitable minister without learning. You will not venture your estate with an unlearned lawyer, nor your body with an unlearned physician; and will you venture your soul with an unlearned pastor?

The next thing required to this endeavour, is an honest and religious life. If this have been had before thy calling, redeem it now. Æneas Sylvius having wrote wanton books, when he came to be bishop of Rome, accepted the name of Pius. Forget Æneas, and receive Pius. Though thou art not thy name, yet alter thy nature. The minister that spends himself like a taper to light others, must not himself go out with an ill savour. It is preposterous for a divine to trouble himself too much with secular things. For there is commonly illiness in holy matters, where is too much business in the world's employments. He that "shall break one of these

least commandments, and" (though but by his example) "shall teach men so, he shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven," Matt. v. 19: the least, that is, no one, saith Theophylact. All in a minister should be vocal; his very conversation must preach: as Noah was called a "Preacher of righteousness," because his life was an actual sermon. An innocent and unrebukable life is a silent testimony of a good minister. The testimony of the life is much better than of the tongue. (Cyprian.) A good work persuades much more than an unperformed speech. (Nazian.) This was the cause why the Indians refused the gospel brought by the Spaniards, because their lives were more savage than those savages. Heaven itself was despised, for fear of those men's company there that did promise it. Common auditors receive not a doctrine in the abstract, only minding what is taught; but in the concrete, with reference to the person that teacheth it. Therefore, if your credit be cracked, it is as bad as if your brains were crazed; you may preach of heaven and hell until doomsday; and truth will be truth in your mouths, not in their hearts.

*Tunc etiam factis aperit Cassandra futuris
Ora Dei jussu non unquam credita.*

I do not say that holiness is an essential grace of a minister; personal offences suspend not the power of the Holy Ghost. Suspend it not, I say, directly, yet may occasionally; through the infirmity of simple men, who were not then simple men if they did only adhere to the doctrine. His life is bad, therefore his doctrine is false. O this is a harsh *non sequitur*. Yet is it a thousand times better, that our good lives should prevent it, than our great learning be driven after to confute it. "Unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes?" Psal. l. 16. Though it be truth thou preachest, yet thou art not fit to preach it. Christ reproved the devil, even confessing truth: "I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God," Mark i. 24. This was truth, yet saith Jesus, "Hold thy peace," keep thy breath to cool thy torment. The true prophet is he, in whose mouth is the word of life, in whose behaviour is the life of the word.

Otherwise men seem to propound doctrines impossible to be kept. "Of all that Jesus began both to do and teach," Acts i. 1. It is said of Christ, that he did first do, and then teach. The question to the minister shall be at last, not how many books he hath read, but what life he hath led; not only how he hath preached, but how he hath lived. They must not be like scribbling school-boys, that write fair with the fore-finger, and blur it with the hind-finger. Indeed rank hypocrites often mask in sheep's clothing; and as physicians that would minister a draught of bitter potions to children, anoint the brim of the cup with honey, or some well-tasted liquor; so these paint the exterior appearance, that men may more easily swallow their drugs and dregs of heresy. But we may soon discern these wolves in lamb-skins; for shear them, and their wool will grow no more. Yet must not the lamb put off his fleece because the wolf hath worn it; lest he divert his office of gathering the flock together, into a scattering them asunder. Every shepherd hath a scrip, a staff, and a whistle; so a minister must have maintenance to live on, sanctimony to live by, doctrine to enliven others. Worldlings that mind the purse, and neither preach fervently nor live charitably, have lost the staff and the whistle, and only keep the scrip. Neither doth well asunder, all do very well together: yet whatever becomes of the scrip, keep we a good staff, and a good whistle; that we may outpreach sin, outlive

sin; and be our reward in the hands of Jesus Christ.

The last thing required to perfect this endeavour, is constant labour. There is nothing more wretched, than for a man to live without care when he hath gotten a cure. (Bern.) Pray the Lord to send forth labourers, not loiterers, into his harvest, Matt. ix. 38. But there is no need to follow this point: you in this city will look to it well enough, that your ministers shall labour; you have here the law in your own hands; if he will not labour, you will keep him fasting. Yet it is to be feared, that as curious as you are to set us on work, and watch us with continual labour, you relish none of our fruits, you will be never the better for it. You send us a hunting, as Isaac sent his son; but when with Jacob we say, Sit and eat of our venison, that your souls may bless us, you question, how we came by it so soon? We answer, The Lord brought it to our hands, Gen. xxvii. 19. You look upon it, and say, It is good venison, a good sermon; but still you go away fasting. Thus we are forced to labour in vain: We have laboured in vain, and spent our strength for nought, Isa. xlix. 4. That we may hereafter labour to purpose, the Lord knit your hearts unto our lips: Prosper thou the works of our hands upon us, O prosper thou our handy work, Psal. xc. 17.

Observe further, that all a minister can do, is but his endeavour: Paul can but plant, and Apollos water; it is God that gives the increase. It is our part to endeavour, the Lord's to bless it with success. Preachers are called saviours, "Saviours shall come upon Mount Zion," Obad. 21; yet is there but one Saviour of us all, Jesus Christ. They are called lights, yet there is but one Light; Christ is that "true Light, which lighteth every man," John i. 8. They are called reconcilers, yet Christ is the only Reconciler: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself;" and we have but the ministry of this reconciliation, 2 Cor. v. 19. It is one thing to teach, another thing to convert. Well may the minister move his tongue and his lips like organ-pipes; but if there be no breath of God's Spirit with them, it is to no purpose. Lift up your hearts to heaven: he hath a pulpit above the clouds, that preacheth to the conscience. It is the name of Jesus, through faith in that name, Acts iii. 16, which converts us; let none of his glory cleave to our earthen fingers. You think it enough to commend us; no, bless the Lord, whose power is magnified in our weakness. When we have done all, it is but our endeavour; we would have saved you. And be it to our comfort, our endeavour shall be accepted: "If there be a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, not according to that he hath not," 2 Cor. viii. 12. Not according to that *voluimus*, but that *voluimus*, shall our reward be. We endeavour to save you; do you endeavour to be saved; and the Spirit of God bless both our endeavours; that though the minister part with his people on earth, they may all meet together in heaven.

"That ye may be able." All is for your sakes; this preaching, this remembering, this writing, all for you: "Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, all are yours," 1 Cor. iii. 22. You may say to your ministers, as the poet of oxen, *Sic vos non vobis, fertis atrata bores*. They labour in the plough, not for themselves, but for your souls. "Ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sakes," 1 Thess. i. 5: *ἐν ᾧ καὶ ὑμεῖς*. "The bellows are burned, the lead is consumed of the fire;" yet "the founder melted in vain, for the wicked are not plucked away," Jer. vi. 29. He had burned a hole in his bellows, gotten the consumption of the lungs, exhausted his

spirits; and all for the people. "Nevertheless," though it were better for me to be dissolved, yet "to abide in the flesh is more needful for you," Phil. i. 24.

"After my decease." Some have read, instead of *dabo operam, ut post obitum meum; et post obitum meum*: I will endeavour even after my decease, that, &c. So they give to St. Peter, and other saints, a provident care over us still. If they would extend it no further than that the saints in heaven pray for us on earth, we would easily grant; or that their sermons once preached still do us good, we assent. What then? because we reverence their words, must we therefore worship their bodies, or relics? Yet such is the fond collection of Fevardentius on this place. He urgeth it from Rom. x. 15, "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel!" If their feet be beautiful, how beautiful then are their hands and joints, and tongues and lips! If the shadow of Peter, and the handkerchief of Paul, could cure the sick; why may not the body of that shadow, and the hand of that handkerchief, effect as much? why should not these be worshipped? We honour their writings, how much more their relics! This ridiculous stuff needs no other confutation but derision. There was read in the Nicene council, by the monk Stephanus, out of the book of Sophronius, this legend: A monk was continually troubled with a devil; at last being weary of his guest, he did pray the devil in fair and friendly terms, to let him alone. (And was not this religiously done, to pray to the devil?) Satan answered, that if he would promise and swear to satisfy him in one thing, he would forsake him. The monk swore a deep oath. Then quoth the devil, Thou shalt never hereafter pray any more to such an image of our lady, holding her child in her arms. But the monk was too crafty for the devil; for the next day he went and confessed himself to the abbot, and he dispensed with his oath, upon condition that he should continue praying to that image. And is not this an excellent proof of praying to saints, which is borrowed of the devil? But what is this to relics? Yes, they that speak so much for the image of St. Peter's head, what will they say for the head itself? Fevardentius adds, The dust, the rags, the shoe, the nail of a saint is venerable. This is the drunken doctrine of Rome, that adores the relics, but regards not the lives of saints. Neither Peter nor Paul shall teach them by their writings, they will be taught by their relics.

"To have these things always in remembrance." The apostles did not only preach to us vocally while they lived; but even now also exemplarily by their former conversation, and still doctrinally by their holy rules. The words of a preacher die not with him, but live in the hearers' hearts; and shall either convert them here, or convince them hereafter. "The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day," John xii. 48. Thou hast forgotten such a sermon; but this sermon shall not forget thee. The prophets are dead; but the words that I commanded them to speak, "did they not take hold of their fathers?" Zech. i. 6. If it take no hold in thee by due obedience, it shall take hold on thee by deserved vengeance. A prophet comes to Jeroboam, and says, "O altar, altar, thus saith the Lord; Josiah shall offer the priests of the high places upon thee, and upon thee shall men's bones be burnt," 1 Kings xiii. 2. That prophet died, yet his word came to pass; Josiah did accomplish this, and was showed the sepulchre of that man of God, which had proclaimed these things that he did, 2 Kings xxiii. 17. It is said of Samuel, that "the Lord did let none of his words fall to the ground," 1 Sam. iii. 19. Stephen foretold the Jews of their future desolation

by the contempt of Christ: they confute him with hard arguments, stop his mouth with stones; Stephen dies, but Stephen's sermon dies not. We tell the usurer, that the third generation shall rue all: we die, but our words come to pass. We tell the impropiator, that his robbing God of his due, shall make his posterity like Achan, accursed: we die, but this saying is fulfilled upon them. We tell the proud officer, that his suits are the suits of Gehazi, cut out of bribes, and will engender a leprosy in his issue: we die, but this event follows. Our sermons shall be thought on; even when we are dead you shall remember them: God grant you may remember them to your comfort.

To conclude, we have St. Peter still preaching among us; as it is said plainly Moses was preached, by being "read in the synagogues every sabbath day," Acts xv. 21. While the writing of Peter is read, the voice of Peter is heard. The apostles are dead, their holy sanctions live with us. But now what entertainment have they found in our hearts? You shall see that by our lives. If you have digested those excellent rules, what a great change they will work in you! you will be as men that dreamed, wondering at your former loves; your fair Herodias of this world will appear a stigmatic gypsy. All the toil and cost you have been at to get riches, will appear as ridiculous as if a countryman should anoint his axletree with ambergris, or a traveller should liquor his boots with balsamum. You that have run by the church as a pest-house, would now continually wait at her doors. Then if you know that finger, which but itched to be necessary to any corrupt dealing, you would cut it off; and bite off that lip which but lisped out any equivocation; and pluck out those eyes, that lusted after adulterous mixtures. Let religion be held a fable, and ministers false prophets, if you find not in yourselves a wonderful change. But alas, where is this change? where is the fruit of such plentiful preaching? There is a cursed devil that mars all, called covetousness. It was once said of this island, England is rich in light; alluding to the long days and short nights. It may truly be said of her in respect of the gospel, that she is rich in the best light; but the darkness of this worldliness hath almost overcast it. This land hath been four times conquered, say our chronicles; but by the chronicles' leave I will add a fifth conquest. First, it was possessed by the Britons; the Romans conquered the Britons, the Saxons conquered the Romans, the Danes conquered the Saxons, the Normans conquered the Danes; but now covetousness hath conquered all. I know you have ears judicious enough; I hear you extolling the learned, praising preachers, magnifying sermons; yea, and more, England gives preferment to her ministers. But beloved, there is one preferment behind, and that most proper to preachers, a preferment in the hearts of the hearers. Let the rest go, give us this. Though I have no hope to attain to any preferment in this world, yet I shall rest joyfully contented with this, if I may find preferment in your consciences.

That after my decease, you may have these things always in remembrance. There are two material points in this verse, which I durst not premit. The first is, what the proper intention of all preachers and sermons is: they are but remembrances. The other is a method, how we may remember the apostles' preaching after their departure; which is by a diligent and frequent reading of their writings.

That you may be able to remember. There are two offices of the Holy Spirit, to teach, and to call to remembrance. Both are expressed, John xiv. 26, "The Holy Ghost" when he comes, "shall teach

you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." Suppose that the fundamental articles of faith may be taught within less than the term of a preacher's life; which (curious speculations and idle digressions laid aside) I conceive not impossible. In the remainder what shall he do? Either he must preach the same over again, and so be a remembrancer; or else be silent, and so be no preacher. It is too true that; who hath not an Athenian ear? We long for novelties, and would have men preach not only after a new method, but new doctrines. But Christ's sheep love not only his name, but the echo of his name; they hearken to his voice, and to every reflection of his voice. Were your sanctification absolute, continual obedience to his word would no more trouble you, than the everlasting aspect of his countenance doth trouble the angels. Therefore answerable to the degree of your regeneration, must be the degrees of your attention. Likeness causeth liking; "We with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image," 2 Cor. iii. 18. If you be changed into that image, you will desire to behold in the gospel, as in a glass with open face, that image into which you are changed.

When we hear an excellent lesson on an instrument, we call for it again and again. If God's peace dwell in our hearts, we love the songs of Zion rehearsed; ten times repeated they please. All our sermons are but rehearsals of that old sermon, The Seed of the woman shall break the head of the serpent, Gen. iii. 15. All the sum of the New Testament must be the repetition of that one prophecy. What are the fathers' writings, but expositions of the apostles? the schoolmen, but abridgements of the fathers? It is a usual adage in the school, that the soul of Augustine was Pythagorically transfused into the body of Aquinas. The Jesuit is nothing else but an old schoolman bound up in a new cover. As one observed wittily, The schoolman is philosophical in his theology, the Jesuit theological in his philosophy. As Augustine wrote of his bastard Adeodatus, I had no share in that boy, but only sin; so the Jesuits may confess of their books, that there is nothing in them of their own, but that which is bad. The good stuff is the fathers', only the lace and pinking is their own. As it is said of a simnel, that it is but bread upon bread; so we may say of the Jesuit, it is but Aquinas, they copy him over, and let him go. "There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness," Prov. xxx. 12.

All is but remembrance; thrice in these four verses doth our apostle press it. Paul: It is not grievous to me to write the same things unto you, but for you it is safe, Phil. iii. 1: a most sure course. Unregenerate hearts are termed stony hearts: if they were brazen, they might be melted; if iron, they might be wrought; but hearts of stone must be broken with continual hammering. The blood of Christ must be often dropped upon these adamantine hearts to mollify them. *Gutta cavat lapidem, non vi, sed sæpe cadendo.* "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech distil as the dew," Deut. xxxii. 2. If all the world were Paradise, the sower might sow but once for all. Or if it were like the land of Albanos, he need to till it but once in three years. Or if it were so fertile, as some soil is said to be under the northern pole, he might sow in the morning, and reap in the evening. But sin hath made the ground full of thorns, and much seed falls among these thorns, Matt. xiii. Some is trampled under feet with the vulgar track; other washed away with the common stream of the time; the rest pecked up by

the fowls of the air: there is need therefore to sow even often the same seed, and always to put you in remembrance, not of other, but even of these things. We have brittle memories, weak retentions; therefore there is need of frequent and hearty incitations. "Precept must be upon precept; line upon line; here a little and there a little," Isa. xxviii. 10. The Scripture often ingeminates the same word, the same thing, to give strength to the declaration of it. "They have erred, they are out of the way, through wine," Isa. xxviii. 7: the phrase is repeated seven times in one verse, to vilify drunkenness. So ver. 21. "The Lord shall do his work, his strange work; and bring to pass his act, his strange act." So ver. 23. "Give ye ear, and hear my voice; hearken, and hear my speech;" that the ear might be thoroughly charmed. "God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this," Psal. lxvii. 11. "Enter not into the way of the wicked, go not in, avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away," Prov. iv. 14. 15. "My son, the son of my womb, the son of my vows," Prov. xxxi. 2. "O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord," Jer. xxii. 29. Our Saviour thrice questioned Peter's love, and thrice urged his duty. The Lord is thrice called holy, Isa. vi. 3. Vanity is thrice called vain, to show the vileness of it. In these and such like places, so fraught with repetitions; as it is with numeration in arithmetic; the figure in the first place stands for itself, in the second place for ten times itself, in the third for a hundred times itself; so when the Scripture condemns a sin, as it proceeds in iteration, it riseth in aggravation.

Oh the infallible power of the word! heaven and earth shall pass, it shall never fail. Time may fail, speech may fail, audience may fail; but the matter of that abundant treasure shall never fail. It may be, Samuel knows not God's first call, nor his second, nor his third; yet at last, "Speak, Lord: for thy servant heareth," 1 Sam. iii. It may be as Peter in his vision, Acts x. 11-16: "Rise; kill, and eat." He excuseth himself; "Not so, Lord, for I have never eaten any unclean thing." But when this was done thrice, he is resolved. So when the Lord's voice comes to us once, Arise and eat, it may be we excuse ourselves; Not so, Lord; but when it shall be spoken thrice, often, there is some hope that we will hear at last. It may be according to the sign that God gave Hezekiah: This year ye shall eat such as growth of itself; the second year, such as springeth of the same; but the third year ye shall sow and reap, Isa. xxxvii. 30. So the first time we hear the doctrine of salvation, it is without profit; and it breeds no meditations in us but such as grow of themselves. The next time, such as spring of the former, thoughts of flesh and blood. But yet the third time it may work us to a more industrious cogitation of heavenly things. Paul, in the 17th of the Acts, three sabbath days together handled one doctrine.

Good things are not wearisome in their continual use. Our daily bread, though daily received, is daily craved. The light of the sun would dispense none but some lover of darkness, though it never went down in our coasts. The perpetual use of necessary things can never offend us though they never forsake us. Shall then the doctrine of life, the restorative of our fainting spirits, through the often repeating discontent us? No, here the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear with hearing. Yet many use themselves in the hearing of beaten points, as they do in drinking of wines; the first draught is for necessity, the second for pleasure, the third for sleep. If they hear you once, that is enough; if a second time, that is too much; but if you come with

the same a third time, fare you well, they must go sleep. When Paul preached at Antioch, the Gentiles besought him that those words might be preached to them again the next sabbath, Acts xiii. 42; τὰ ῥήματα ταῦτα, the very same words. "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you," Gal. iv. 19. Now the ripening and perfecting of a child in the womb, requireth nine months at the least.

The time, then, is not idly spent that calls to mind fore-receited principles. If you ask us, How often shall we hear the same? we would to God there were no need of repetitions. But it is true what Elihu speaks in Job, "God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not," Job xxxiii. 14. Yea, God doth work it twice and thrice, oftentimes with man, ver. 29. Let us answer, as Augustine did the Donatists, being enforced to some iteration; Let those that know it already pardon me, lest I wrong them that are ignorant. It is better to give to him that hath, than to turn him back that hath not. If it were true of Homer, or may be true of any man formed of clay, One Homer never cloyed any man that read him; then certainly it must be true of truth itself. One Jesus Christ in his gospel never satiated any that read him. To conclude; for your part, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly," Col. iii. 16. The word of grace hath been often offered unto you; whether it hath gotten house room in you or no, I cannot tell. Perhaps it is but in the nature of a passenger to you; and your bosom the inn to give it only a bait and away. Perhaps as the Levite, that sat in the streets, and no man received him to house, Judg. xix. it hath sounded in your churches, but none bade it to dinner in their consciences. Perhaps it hath gotten admission by force, as they let down the sick man by the tiles of the house; the doors of your hearts being pestered with a throng and crowd of worldly business. But now let it be no stranger, but like a brother dwell with you, never to depart: not in a corner, as if it were pinched for want of room, but plentifully: not with inmates and chamber-fellows, as lusts and evil affections, but in your hearts, alone; yea, in the very heart of your heart. "The law is within my heart," in the midst of my bowels, Psal. xl. 8. Not unconceived or misconceived, unapplied or misapplied, but in all wisdom. And the God of all wisdom bring you by it to the end of your faith, even the dear salvation of your souls.

The other point is the method of our memory, the means how we may remember them; which is, indeed, frequently to read them. "Search the Scriptures," John v. 39. Honour and admire the depth and secrecy of God's word: yet fail not in thy diligence to search it. The Scripture is not like a calendar, to die with them for whom it is written; but serves for us in what climate soever we breathe. What Paul wrote to the Romans, Corinthians, &c. serves also for the meridian of England. What is written, is ever ready to be read, if men would be at leisure to read it. Christ repels all Satan's assaults with his own weapon, "It is written." From hence let us learn that all our weapons are the Holy Scriptures, saith Cajetan. It is "like the tower of David builded for an armoury, whereon there hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men," Cant. iv. 4. There are shields for defence, and swords for offence. As Laban deceived Jacob in the night, giving him instead of fair Rachel, blear-eyed Leah; so Satan in the darkness of our ignorance cozens us; only the Scripture's day-light can discover Leah from Rachel. "His eyes are as the eyes of doves by the rivers of waters," Cant. v. 12. The dove sitting by

the rivers, descrieth afar off the shadow of the hawk, her mortal enemy; so either escapes by flight, or by hiding herself under the banks. He that sits by the bank of these living waters, can discover the practices of Satan, by them he can sound him, and wound him. This is that sword of the Spirit: not the wooden dagger of fabulous stories, nor the rusty seabard of old traditions; these are blunt; but the two-edged sword of the Spirit. It is written; this is the voice of Christ. It is by tradition; this is the voice of anti-christ.

We appeal to your consciences, we feed not your eye with pictures and baubles, nor your ear with legends and fables; no holy water from the font; but, It is written. This is that sacred water which is cast in the devil's face, and stops his mouth. Whate'er things are written, are written for our instruction, Rom. xv. 4. Paul says the Scriptures are the people's instruction; the Romists say they are the people's destruction. Paul says it makes the man of God absolute, 1 Tim. iii. 17; the Romists say it makes him dissolute. Paul says they are written to admonish us, 1 Cor. x. 11; they say they are written so difficult that in a known language they rather seduce us. Christ bids us to search the Scriptures, for there is eternal life: Take heed, say they that forbid us, for therein is eternal death. "To the law and to the testimony," Isa. viii. 20. No, say they, *Id traditum, ad decretum, ad papam*. To traditions, to decretals, to the pope. Thy word is full of light, Psal. exix. 105. No, say they, it is full of darkness. Thus they cast a mist before men's eyes, that they cannot see their juggling. They blind the people, and buffet them; and then ask them, as the Jews asked Christ, who smote them? These are they that compare the Scriptures to a nose of wax, formable to what proportion the handler pleaseth. They make the fathers (their children, and the ancient doctors their puny scholars; that they shall only speak what they would have them. It is nothing with them to abuse the sacred writ. First they make their sermons, and then look for a text. Thus that vision, Acts x. 13. "Rise, Peter, kill, and eat," is made warrant enough for the pope to design the killing of any prince. Sometimes they cite the beginning without the end, as the devil served Christ: sometimes the end without the beginning; sometimes they take the words against the meaning; often they make a meaning against the words. So in sum, they do not keep the old Scripture, but coin a new. Either they suppress the word, or not express the sense: as if they would convey away the gold, and throw us the bag.

But we have the Scripture, let us read it; not the bare words only, but the sense. The Scripture is like Ezekiel's roll, written within and without; without in the outward sentence, within in the inward reference. It is the golden pot of manna; the words, that is the golden pot; the sense, that is the manna. It is not enough to take what offers itself at the first proposed; but to dig deep. God that is rich in the veins of nature, is not poor in the veins of Scripture; excellent in the history, more excellent in the mystery. The Scriptures are not in *superficie sed in medulla: non in verborum foliis, sed in radice rationis.* (Chrys.) It is not the letters and words, but the sense and heart of the Scriptures, whereupon our faith depends. "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear," Rev. i. 3. We must not only read, nor only hear, nor only meditate, but all. Reading without meditation is fruitless, meditation without reading subject to error. Meditate, to profit by reading; and read, to rectify meditation. Otherwise it may be said, as of the Delphic oracle, It is not sooner gotten, than forgotten. Let the word dwell plen-

teously in you, Col. iii. 16. The word must dwell in us, therefore the Bible must be in our house. It must dwell plentifully, therefore we must read it daily. The word doth dwell plentifully among us, God grant it may dwell plentifully in us. It is but a shift now, and will be no good answer at the last day; I am no divine, this is none of my profession, but be busy with the Scriptures. Yet you would be Christ's sheep; but his sheep know his voice, John x. 4. You would be thought honest men; but is there any thing except God's word can make you honest? Micah ii. 7. You would not be thought unclean; but wherewithal shall our way be cleansed, but by the word? Psal. cxix. 9. You would all be made blessed; but blessed is he that delighteth in the law of the Lord, and meditates in it day and night, Psal. i. 2. But oh the profaneness of this age! reading this book is thought a fit of melancholy; deductions out of this book, paradoxes; and the language of this book a Shibboleth, which all the world besides pronounceth not. Alcibiades coming into a school, and asking the schoolmaster for one of Homer's Works; when he answered that he had none, he knitting his fist, smote him on the ear. If God come to visit thy house, and find thee without a Bible, the book of thy fair profession, God shall smite thee, thou whited wall, thou shalt feel the weight of his hand. The barbarians showed Paul no little kindness, Acts xxviii. 2; God forbid we should use him as a barbarian. Other books, histories and poems, we read and remember; but let a text of Scripture be pressed, and we say not, Jesus we know, and Paul we know, Acts xix. 15; but *quis novus hic nostris successit sedibus hospes*? The Fairy Queen we know, the Arcadia we know, the book of statutes we know, the chronicles we know; but who are ye? The Lord of his infinite mercy lay not this neglect to our charge; but bind the Bible to our consciences, and our consciences to the Bible: that our faith may embrace the comforts there; and our eyes one day see the joys we have believed, in the blessed kingdom of Jesus Christ.

VERSE 16.

For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

THE apostle proceeds to another argument, why these things should be fixed in their hearts; because they know that their labour is spent upon a certain thing. What should more animate our constancy, than the infallibility of prosperous success in our calling? If the divinity we preach were built upon the fennish and hollow grounds of human fancies; wherein men show more wantonness than wit, more wit than learning, more learning than conscience; or if it were like some oracles of the heathen idols, which were true some way, certain no way; if the event did not answer the prediction, they would make the prediction answer the event. Or like the spurious, epicene, and bastardy equivocations of our Jesuits; who have a trick to swear and not to swear, to lie and not to lie; and so are saints and no saints, holy in appearance, devils in existence. But we preach that which is of undoubted authority, which the faithful do feel on earth, and the unfaithful shall feel in hell. The former find here the truth of God's mercies, the other shall find there the truth of his justice. We bring

no fables, but things known to us, and made known by us. That the Lord Jesus did come in the flesh, dwelt with us in the flesh, suffered for us on the cross, rose again from death. That he came not in weakness, but in power; with signs and great wonders; to the terror of the bad, to the comfort of the good, confirmation of the weak, conviction of the proud, admiration of all. Neither received we this by tradition or hearsay, but were eyewitnesses of it: "That which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you," 1 John i. 3. Therefore receive us, believe us; yea, receive the truth, believe the truth, the sound doctrine of Christ.

For method in tractation, consider three principal passages:

A disclaiming of all fabulous mixtures with the sacred truth, We followed not cunningly devised fables.

A proclaiming of the virtue and excellency of Christ, When we made known to you his power and coming.

A testifying of this, and that from the surest witnesses, We were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

These be the general and doctrinal roots; there are some sub-distinguished branches, which we refer to their own places.

"We have not followed cunningly devised fables."

This is the thing he removes and disclaims: *αἰσχρομύθοις μύθοις*, *Arte compositas fabules*, according to Erasmus. Calvin says, it intends *subtile artificium*. But because *μύθος* doth not only signify a fable, but also a rhetorical discourse; the apostle condemns both poetical fictions, and oratory eloquence; the sophistry of logic, the painting of rhetoric, and the meretricious figments of poetry; when they shall stand in competition with divinity, and presume of their own power to help a soul to Jesus Christ. The embroidered orations of the one, and the gaudy tinctures of the other, are all but fables. To omit those that regarded rather the cadence of language, than the substance of reason: the very best did but fabulize.

For the philosophers; "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit," Col. ii. 8. First, it taught devilish things, as magic, conjurings, a great part of judicial astrology among the pagans. This *κίνη ἀνάρη*, a fable. Secondly, it taught doctrines; of the eternity of the world, of the mortality of souls, of a purgatory fire out of Plato, of the stoical fate; all which diametrically oppose the truth: all were fables. Thirdly, it taught principles, which in themselves, and their own nature, are true, but in divinity false. Such were these maxims: Of nothing can be made nothing; this is true in second causes, but in respect of God's omnipotence in the creation, a fable. For God can constitute something of nothing, and reduce something to nothing, at his pleasure. So it is said, There is no returning from the privation to the habit. This is true naturally; but if it be referred to the resurrection, it is a lying fable. That a virgin, remaining still a virgin, cannot conceive, is true in the ordinary course of nature; but to deny this to be once done by the supernatural work of God, is a fable. Even the best of them, in their most serious disquisition of heavenly things, were but as hounds, swift of foot, but ill of scent. They hunted an object strongly, but took the wrong course; so spent their mouths and courses in vain. Like wandering empirics, which make great ostentation of cures drawn out in pictures and tables; but he that comes to try their skill, hath not a worse disease belonging to him than the physician. If Seneca had had grace to his wit, he had been the wonder of men. This praise he deservedly and hath, never any philosopher wrote more divinely: he hath not lost his commendation, but he lost his hopes.

Certainly, as a worthy divine said, If I had no other mistress than Nature, I would wish no other master than Seneca. But neither Athens nor Rome could teach this doctrine, but Jerusalem. In the end of his book *De Tranquillitate* he allows drunkenness; this was a fable, fit neither for philosopher to prescribe, nor honest man to practise.

For the poets, their writings were but fables. Innumerable such; whole books of metamorphoses; it is all one, whole books of fables. They did but fabulize an apish imitation of God's truth. Must Abraham sacrifice his son to the God of heaven? Agamemnon must sacrifice his daughter to the prince of darkness. A ram redeems Isaac; so a hind redeems Iphigenia; this was a cunningly devised fable. Noah's flood shall be quitted with Deucalion's deluge. For our Noah they have a Janus, for our Samson a Hercules; for our babel-builders, such as lay Pelion upon Ossa, giants. If Lot's wife be turned to a pillar, their Niobe is metamorphosed to a stone. Let God glorify his Jonah, Herodotus will say more of his Arion. But, saith St. Augustine, we may justly suspect, that the Greek tale of the one meant the Hebrew truth of the other. The devil strives to be God's ape. If the Lord thunders from heaven, hail-stones and coals of fire, Psal. lviii. 13; the red dragon also maketh fire to come down from heaven in the sight of men, Rev. xiii. 13. God delivered his truth; Satan had his imitating fables, to seduce and divert men's minds from the substantial truth, to enervate the credit of goodness, and to amaze men's hearts with the counterfeits. Their writings were fabulous; they held it as their patent with painters, an equal power to feign any thing. Some were scurrilous and obscene, most of them impious and profane. They durst make their gods murderers, whore-masters, malicious, contentious, unjust, cruel. And Ovid confesseth,

*Ignoscite fasso,
Solicitor nullo esse putare deos.*

But if all these were fables, and Peter disclaims them in delivering the truth of the gospel, why then do preachers make use of them in divinity? I answer, there is a difference betwixt the venom in a material, and the wholesome virtue. St. Paul that condemned the one, often used the other: there may be honey in a nettle. As in the law of a beautiful woman that was a captive, he that desired her for his wife, was first to shave her head and pare her nails, Deut. xxi. 11, 12: human learning is the Grecian's Helena, full of admirable beauty; but must not be admitted into the divinity schools, till her head be shaved and her nails pared. But from her take her abominable figments; shave and pare off what is dead, idolatrous, voluptuous, fabulous, those superfluous excretions of sin: of a Moabite make her an Israelite, and then accompany with her: she shall bring forth fair children to the Lord of hosts. As Hosea took Gomer the daughter of Diblaim, a wife of whoredoms, who yet bare him Jezreel, "The seed of God," Hos. i. 4. They were adversaries to the truth; their ingenuity was great, their industry greater, but against the truth. (August.) (Therefore cut off Goliath's head with his own sword. (Hieron.) The word of God is the bread of life: human inventions but for gloss and ornament; hanging gold and jewels upon our apparel, as the Israelites did on their garments. Those, like the Alipate, may put blood in our face, and mend our colour: this is the nourishment that maintains our life. Without this, all that grows in the green fields of philosophy is but toxicum, baneful; there is death in it: the word of God is that salt of Elisha, that sweetens the broth. The

wood of the cross is that wood of life, which relisheth the Marah of Gentile learning. Jerome was buffeted by an angel, for studying heathen authors too much; and St. John had a book of this given him to swallow down. Yet I would not have men to rail down arts, and use them as the king of Ammon did David's messengers; to grub their beards, yea, their very chins. As if the captive woman were to be slain, not shorn; as if Ilagar stood Abraham in no stead for procreation, and all learning were but cozenage. Though they happily can reach to the top of preferment, and never climb by the stairs; seem giants in divinity, while they profess war to philosophy; yet I would not have them teach their nurse to suck. It is blasphemous to preach fables for truth; but it is not honest to condemn all learning for fables. Moses' rod was a common rod, yet it wrought great miracles. It is the rod that does the miracle, yet Moses must be learned to handle it.

The sophistry of heretics is another disclaimed fable; for whatsoever contradicts the truth is a fable. The devil sped so successfully in disputing with our mother Eve in her estate of innocence, that he doubts not to prevail over her nocent children. I speak not here of the Jews' Talmud, a bundle of most fabulous and ridiculous lies, too vile for a Christian ear. Nor of the Turkish Alcoran, a fardel of foolish impossibilities: as the stories of the angel Adriel's death, Seraphuel's trumpet, Gabriel's bridge, Iloroth and Marroth's hanging, the moon's descending into Mahomet's sleeve, the litter wherein he saw God carried by eight angels, their swinish purgatory; fables fit for none but beasts or madmen. The papists have innumerable volumes of fables, legends which they equal to the sacred history. That St. Francis carried a thousand out of purgatory with him to heaven, when he went thither. That St. Dunstan held the devil by the nose with a pair of pincers. That St. Anthony, when a toad was served to his table, and a text cited by his host, Eat of every thing that is set before thee, he presently with the sign of the cross turned it into a capon ready roasted. That friar Andrew should make roasted birds fly away by the same conjuration. I speak not of their monstrous miracles, and shameless wonders; their very doctrine is fabulous. That Christ's body should be locally circumscribed in heaven, yet wholly present in ten thousand places at once on the earth: this is a fable against the fundamental truth of his humanity. That there is a purgatory is a fable (and that a cunning one) against the truth of Christ's sufficient satisfaction. Their schoolmen have invented a doctrine of fables, cunningly devised; and the friars had crotchets enough, but the Jesuits put down all. As the instruments of battery which the ancients used in the wars, were more able to ruin and demolish than our new inventions; but were not so maniable, and apt for transportation: so the arguments of the friars and schoolmen of the Romish church, had as much force against the truth, as the subtleties of the Jesuits; but these are apter for conveyance and insinuation than those cloisteral monks. For there are some poisons that will not work, except they be ejaculated from the live creature that possesseth them: his personal malignity must concur to it. For this purpose these ubiquitaries have the advantage. For otherwise, as rhetoric is like the hand open, and logic like the hand shut; so the friar is an open Jesuit, and the Jesuit a close friar. Or, as galloping is but a lofty amble, and ambling a soft gallop; so the friar flies out in larger fields, and the Jesuit, like a cunning waggoner, turns in a narrower compass. They are such as will distinguish of any truth, till they extinguish all truth. They say, there is an

idolatry which is bad, and an idolatry which is good. *Hoc* in grammar and logic demonstrates this thing; yet in Christ's word, *Hoc est corpus meum*, it demonstrates nothing. All their positions are like that swinish breakfast, many dishes made of a tame sow. No marvel, when a pope himself called all Christianity a fable.

Astrologers are other fabulists; who gather out of the conjunction of planets, and position of stars, the ruins of public weals, and misfortunes of private families. If Sol be in opposition to Mercury, then the lawyers shall have a bad term. If Mars meet with Venus, great custom is promised to iniquity. As if they were guides to the celestial bodies; doctors to east the signs of the heavens, and knew of what disease they were sick. In a common almanack, the prognosticator out of his deep judgment says, that such a day shall be something differing from indifferent. What weather is that? Be it hot or cold, wet or dry, fair or foul, it is still something differing from indifferent. Astrology at the best is but conjectural, at the worst cozening and diabolical. Basil calls it a most busy vanity. It provokes the creature against the Creator. (Nazianz.) Themselves laugh at those, who either go to them or hear them. They smile how they fill their ears with fables, their own purses with monies. Bion condemned them that professed to know the fishes in the zodiac; yet did not see the fishes that swim in the sea. The events have fooled them: Manfridus told Ordelaphus a prince, that he should have a long and happy life; yet he was both married and buried the same year. Henry VII. in derision of star-gazers, asked one who had prophesied of his death, What shall betide me this Christmas? The prophet answered, he could not tell. Then what shall become of thyself this Christmas? He still answered, I cannot tell. Then I know more than thou, saith the king; for I know thou shalt presently be sent to prison for a juggling companion. How they have been extremely troubled about this last comet! whether it threaten Spain or England; or the rising of new sects; whether it portend war, or plague, or famine; whether to princes, or to people; as if God had made them his secretaries. Particular conjectures are but fables; God knows what he hath to do. And if this did premonstrate a rod to scourge us, let us, like Nineveh, repent, and pacify the Lord's wrath before the blow comes. Let us beseech him to avert from us such a plague, and the star shall leave behind it, not a curse, but a blessing, to all those that sincerely love and obey the truth.

For use of this point to ourselves; let us turn our minds from fables to serve the living God. The world indeed is too much addicted to fables. "If a man walking in the spirit and falsehood do lie, he shall even be the prophet of this people," Micah ii. 11. If a man tell you that the keeping of the sabbath is but a ceremonial office, this is a fable; yet you embrace it. If another tell you, that all dues belonging to the church are arbitrary; that no tithes are requirable, but a benevolence; this is a cunningly devised fable; yet received with that impudent precipice of judgment, that it is given out bravely, there is not a minister in England can disprove it. Alas, what arguments should poor ministers give, when the plain text of that God who shall judge them is despised! Let God and man say what they will, they have extorted our means, and they will keep it. Let it be told you, that you shall never give account of your unjust and usurious gains, though you never make restitution; this is a monstrous fable, yet readily believed and admitted. For the stage fables, how lawful or unlawful they be, I will not

here determine: he that goes to see a play, intends not to see a truth, but a fable; a moral presented to his eye, that should convey some profitable document to his heart. But that some should say, they can learn more good at a play than at a sermon, this is a wretched blasphemy, able to rot out the tongue of a Christian. The true purpose of poems and fables, is both to refresh the mind with delight, and to better it with profit. When one accused the comical poet, that he brought a lewd and deboshed ruffian on the stage, and so gave bad example to young men. He answered, True, I brought such a man on, but I hanged him before he went off; and so gave good example to young men. St. Augustine doth exceedingly condemn the stage of the heathens; and upon good cause, for it was bloody, the actors slaying and butchering one another. So as Abner said to Joab, "Let the young men arise, and play before us," 2 Sam. ii. 14. He called it playing, when every one thrust his sword in his fellow's side. For them that seek to defend it thus: Because cities are populous, and where are many men are many lewd men; if their time were not spent so, it would be spent worse. As when the tyrant objected to the player his sauciness, that he durst personally tax men on the stage, he made him this answer; Be content, for while the people laugh at our foolery, they never mind your villany. But this is no good argument, to excuse sin by sin; to prevent an evil not allowable, by allowing an evil that is preventable. In a word, that which makes a man evil, is his own evil mind.

But to conclude, you will say, that we are here forbidden to use fables in the pulpit; and taught barely to preach Christ's power and coming in the evidence of the Spirit. Beloved, I would to God your hearts were so sanctified, that your ears need not be delighted; and that we could save your souls without pleasing your senses. But to what purpose do we interpose a fable? to make you believe that it is literally true? No, but to work an impression of the moral use into your hearts. If we tell you that Esop's dog lost the substance by catching at the shadow; you apprehend our meaning, that men lose God by catching at mammon. Or, that the fly on the chariot-wheels gave out that she made all that glorious dust; you know we mean, that a vain-glorious man brings more than does. When Jotham told the Shechemites, Judg. ix. of the confederacy of the trees to choose them a king, which the bramble accepted; they understood him of Abimelech, and their unkindness to Jerubbaal. These fables then have their use, by a near and familiar way to derive instruction to the heart. With the holy things they become holy. When God gave that great deliverance to Israel from Pharaoh and his host by dividing the Red Sea, he commanded a song to be made of it, Exod. xv.; knowing that when they had forgot both law and prophecy, yet they would still keep the song in memory. So when you forget the better doctrine, you are helped to recall it by the parable.

Receive not those, then, that would cast away all learning as a fable. Some there are that purely pretend themselves to preach nothing but Christ crucified; and these men have not stuck to boast, that all the flower of the land is of their bounting; we are so full of Latin, of fathers, of poets, that there is nothing in us but bran. What, is all theirs? New Palamons, to cry, *Nobiscum nata, nobiscum peritura litera*? Must all wisdom die with Job's friends? Hath Philip gotten so much, that he hath left nothing for Alexander to conquer? Have these mowers carried all into their barn, and not left us so much as the gleanings after their full carts? Can the Ammons of the people eat no cakes, but such as are of

Tamar's baking? It is the mad merchant that cries from the quay. All the ships are mine. They speak of us, as the people did of Saul. Is Saul among the prophets? Alas, we may then say with Peter, We have fished all night, and caught nothing. But certainly God hath abundance of Spirit, and gives not all to one man. But laying aside pride, prejudice, scorn, malice, let us all labour to turn men's souls to Christ; and do you with a good conscience hear us: that God's name may be honoured, our office discharged, your understandings enlightened, and all our souls everlastingly saved, in the day of our Lord Jesus.

"When we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." This is the proclaiming, wherein are considerable two things; the manifestation itself, We made known to you; and the things manifested. The power and the presence of Christ.

"We made known unto you." The apostles did not hide the mysteries of salvation revealed to them: "The revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, is now made manifest, and according to the commandment of the everlasting God, is made known to all nations for the obedience of faith," Rom. xvi. 25, 26. Not that it was utterly unknown before; for it were strange to think, that the prophets knew not of that Messiah they foretold; but the light of it was not so clear and manifest. Christ before his coming was known to many, but obscurely: after his coming he was known to more, and more clearly; after his ascension, to yet a far greater number, and more manifestly: he shall be known in heaven face to face. In other ages he was not made known to the sons of men, as he is now, in the same manner and measure as he is now revealed, Eph. iii. 5. They saw through a veil, to us the curtain is drawn. Then the Jews knew him, and the world was ignorant of him: now the Jews are ignorant of him, and the whole world acknowledgeth him. The clearness is greater *ex Christo missio*, than it was *ex Christo promissio*. The Sun of Righteousness did then cast up some beams; now it is more glorious, as riding in the midst of heaven; coming as a bridegroom out of his chamber, and rejoicing like a strong man to run his course. And nothing is hid from the heat thereof, Psal. xix. 5, 6. Nothing? Yes, uncharitableness, that lives under the frigid zone, ice that cannot be thawed; a hard heart, nothing but hell-fire can melt it. Affected ignorance wilfully hides itself from it. Light is come into the world, and men love darkness better, because their deeds are evil, John iii. 19. The world hates both the cross of him that suffereth, and the light of him that shineth; their minds being blinded by the god of this world, that the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should not shine unto them, 2 Cor. iv. 4. But if it be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, ver. 3. Such are the muffled papists, that love, like owls, only to keep a whooting in the dark. "The Holy Ghost was not yet given" to the apostles, "because Jesus was not yet glorified," John vii. 39. The apostles had the Spirit before; but not after the same manner, nor in the same measure. But He that winked at the former times of ignorance, "now commandeth all men every where to repent," Acts xvii. 30. This is the tenor of the new covenant, "I will write my laws in their hearts; and they shall not teach one another, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest," Heb. viii. 10, 11. As light, so the participation of God's light, is communicative: his will must be known on earth, that it may be done on earth, as it is known and done in heaven. Before, God was well known

in Jewry, and his name was great in Israel; but the heathen had not the knowledge of his laws; much less of his gospel, of his Christ. But now his way is known upon earth, and his saving health among all nations, Psal. lxxvii. 2.

This doctrine makes to the conviction of them, that conceal the way of the Lord. The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against them, that withhold the truth in unrighteousness, Rom. i. 18. Here the Romish priests have cause to tremble, that play at blindman's-buff with the people, smite them, and bid them prophesy who did it. Our Saviour denounceth a woe unto them that "shut up the kingdom of heaven against men," Matt. xxiii. 13. The Romists think it their best policy, that the blinded laity might not see their impostures. They resolve, Woe unto us if the people should know it! but indeed woe unto them because the people do not know it! Like jugglers, if they did not cast a mist before men's eyes, their tricks would be nothing worth.

This reproves them also, that content themselves with their ignorance, and never labour for knowledge. We dare take you to record, that we are pure from your blood; because we have not shunned to declare unto you the counsel of God, Acts xx. 26, 27. But we may say of you, as it is said of the miser, when he is moved to give alms, you cannot hear on that ear. We have told you the wickedness of professed usury, made known God's will in that point; we have told you the necessity of restitution; reproved the excess of drink, of apparel; we urge that holy duty, If any man calls on the name of Christ, let him depart from iniquity, 2 Tim. ii. 19; that if you do not amend your lives, Christ will not save your souls: yet these things you will not know. How often have you been told, Make you friends of your unrighteous mammon! you will not know it. You will make a friend of it, not make Christ your friend by it. You say, Christ is your friend, and the Christian is your friend, but the world is your best friend. As the evil spirit said, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?" Acts xix. 15: so your whole life speaks, Money we know, lands we know, security we know, commodity we know; but for Christ and his poor members, who are ye? The world is the god they worship. As the popish dolt boasted of his picture of St. Francis, curiously painted in his closet: they talk of the rood at Rome, and our Lady of Loretto, and Catharine of Sienna, and James at Compostella; but I have a picture at home worth ten of them. So the worldling hears us preach of Christ, his precious merits, grievous passion, gracious redemption, glorious reward; but still his closet picture he thinks better of than all these. Thus we can but preach it, and you hear it, only God must give you hearts to know it. Pray and beseech the God of knowledge, to give you the knowledge of God, in the ways of salvation.

"The power and coming of our Lord." This concerns the matter manifested: wherein the apostle intends the sum of the gospel, and the full salvation that is given us by Christ, in whom are all the treasures of blessedness. Of this he makes two distinct parts. First, that Christ came in the flesh, suffered for our sins, and rose again for our justification. Secondly, the virtue and efficacy of this in our hearts, when we manifest the fruit of it in our well living and well believing. He came to suffer for our offences: to deliver us from Satan, death, and hell; to reconcile us to God, to consecrate us holy temples to himself, and to give us everlasting life. Now when we feel these gracious effects wrought in us, killing lust, quickening goodness, conforming us to obedience, and confirming us in faithfulness: this is to be

benefited by the power and coming of our Lord Jesus. He that is righteous came to sinners, that he might make sinners righteous: he that was humble came to the proud, that of proud he might make them humble. (Ambros.) Here observe many things.

First, that the coming of Christ was in power: "Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence," Isa. lxiv. 1. Alas, how could this be whenas he came in such baseness! "He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him," Isa. liii. 2. Therefore when "he came unto his own, his own received him not," John i. 11. His palace was a stable, his courtiers beasts, his chair of state a manger, his royal robes a few rags. No bells ring; no bonfires proclaim his birth through the popular streets; no great ladies came to visit his mother. Instead of thundering in the clouds, he lies crying in the manger; forbeating down his enemies, he is glad to flee from their faces into Egypt. Where was then his glorious power, or how appeared his majesty? Yes, his coming was in great power; for if all the devils in hell could have hindered it, he had been stayed. Yea, for this he came, to dissolve the works of the devil. If our sins could have letted it; yea, they rather brought him. It was not our merits, but our sins, that drew him from heaven. (August.) The tyranny of Herod, and that butcherly inquisition bloodied in the deaths of so many infant martyrs, could not cross it. The kings of the earth conspire, and take counsel together, Psal. ii.; but *nee artes nec mortes*, neither their power nor policy could withstand it. Neither was the glory of Christ wanting, though it conveyed itself in a less public form. He had a famous harbinger to go before him, and to prepare his way, John the Baptist, than whom there rose not a greater among them that were born of women. His bonfire was in heaven, a star directing the wise men to him. The bells that rung for joy, were armies of angels; a "heavenly host praising God," Luke ii. 13. His palace heaven, his regal throne man's conscience, his robes his own merits, richly adorning us; there was majesty in his humility. Thus came the Lord of life to the children of death. Mankind had not been redeemed, unless the Word of God had been hominified. (August.) If we say that he hath humanity in him, that receives a man into his house: how full of humanity is he, that receives manhood unto himself! His coming was like a lamb in meekness, yet he triumphed like a lion in powerfulness; leading captivity captive, and freeing all his children from eternal bondage.

Secondly, observe that the gospel is no weak thing, but comes in power: for Christ's coming hath yet a further latitude. He came once unto men, he comes still unto men: that was in the flesh, this is in the Spirit. The law indeed did more amaze the conscience, and was delivered with greater terror, that it made Moses himself quake and fear. (Now if there was such thundering at the law-giving, what would have been at the law-breaking!) The law came with more terror, but the gospel comes with more power. For that could not turn his heart that bare it in his hand; but the gospel is able to change the man: "It is the power of God unto salvation," Rom. i. 16. The law may set before us our wretched estate by sin, but there leaves us desperate; it discovers our disease, prescribes no cure; it doth express sin, but cannot suppress sin. It is the glory and bleeding spectacle of Jesus crucified in the gospel, that leads the soul. "The preaching of the cross unto us which are saved is the power of God," 1 Cor. i. 18. If there be no feeling of that power, there are

no sparks of salvation yet kindled. Peter's sermon took little effect, till he came to this point, "God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ," Acts ii. 36. "When they heard this, they were pricked in their hearts: What shall we do?" ver. 37. Paul and Silas might have given the jailer good words, fair entreaties, and the most valid argument of all, monies; yet all this could not keep them from the dungeon. But when the power of God had shaken the foundations of the prison, and Paul began to preach Jesus; then he was baptized, rejoiced, and believed in God with all his house, Acts xvi. Let men come with oratory and the "enticing words of man's wisdom," those floods do but beat upon surd rocks; but if "in the power of God," 1 Cor. ii. 5, this shall turn those rocks into soft and fleshy hearts. Let the naturalist, with all his eloquence, dissuade the covetous worshipping from his greediness; alas, one ounce of gold weighs down all his reasons. Offer to stay a furious man from anger with arguments, he hath not the patience to hear them. Could the poet detain the lascivious from his harlot, though he tell him that she is a quicksand to swallow him alive? Alas, one smile from her is stronger with him than all reason. But now come with the gospel, and urge them with the heart-blood of Jesus Christ, shed to save their souls from hell, and to satisfy for their sins. This is that powerful pleading which makes good men confess their hearts to burn within them; and bad men, even an Agrippa, to say, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian," Acts xxvi. 28.

Thirdly, collect we hence, that the word of God hath more power than all men's edicts. Men in their writings are at much cost in adorning their style, and reducing their words to number, weight, and measure; interlacing many rhetorical figures to begget attention. But on the contrary, the Scripture, in a plain simplicity, accommodates itself to the capacity of the weakest. Yet under this simplicity is included a strange majesty, and gravity of speech. As great princes in their edicts use no figures to their subjects, but plainly and briefly set down their commands; so God absolutely imposeth his will without debating the matter. Yet in persuading, moving affection, and posing the deepest apprehension, they have a power beyond all writings. Read the 1st chapter of Isaiah's prophecy, and compare it with the best oration of Tully. Read the history of Joseph, and confer it with any tale of Æneas. Read the acts of David, and weigh them with the wonders of Tamerlane. Read the gospel, which is the history of the life and death of Christ; and you will think the saddest stories of any human pens mere counterfeits to it. Let the Scriptural psalms and hymns be balanced with the most accurate and pathetical poems; alas, when these vanish with their air, those shall ravish the ear, and withal take the conscience. Josephus was a man admired for eloquence, yet how he holds in his imitation! Concerning Abraham's sacrificing of his son Isaac, he makes a large rhetorical discourse; the Scripture is brief and plain. "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest." He took him, and the wood of the burnt-offering, and laid on his son, as Christ bore his own cross. "Behold," saith the child, "the fire and the wood; but where is the lamb for a burnt-offering." The father answers, "My son, God will provide himself a lamb," Gen. xxii. There be two lines able to wring tears from the reader, whereas Josephus with his ample illustration moves nothing. It is recorded of one Theodectes, who would have brought some of the Bible into a pagan tragedy, that he was stricken blind, till falling to repentance he was restored.

Lastly, the invincible power of the gospel is manifested in throwing down those bulwarks raised against it. When the waters of life began first to flow, what strong floodgates, ramparts, and dams, were set to stop their course! All the learning, power, and policy of men, with the help of infernal spirits, were bent against them; Demosthenes and Tertullus for eloquence, Solon against Solomon, Plato against Moses, Aristotle against Paul, Alexander and Caesar against Christ; but whatsoever contenders opposed the truth, they discovered the invalidity of their arguments, with the confusion of their own persons. Christ sent a few fishermen to the sea of this world, with the nets of faith; and they enclosed multitudes of fishes, of all sorts and sizes, the most wonderful and rare, even kings and philosophers themselves. (August.) He sent not kings and philosophers to persuade fishermen, but fishermen to convert philosophers and kings. They that had no authority to countenance them, no friends to side them, no oratory to second them, no riches to maintain them; yet went abroad preaching the disdained gospel of the crucified Jesus. And even when the kings of the earth did set themselves against the Lord, and against his Christ, yet even then God did give him the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession, Psal. ii. 2, 8. Emperors and monarchs have thrown down their sceptres at the feet of the Lamb, as the elders cast down their crowns before the throne, Rev. iv. 10; embracing the faith, and yielding to the sovereign supremacy of Jesus Christ. Then was that prophecy fulfilled, The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, the kid with the lion, and a little child shall lead them, Isa. xi. 6. Nero and Domitian study strange deaths, to afflict the saints, and to suppress the gospel; yet the church groans and grows, bleeds and batters; every drop of blood that ends one Christian, begets a thousand. Those men who at the first trembled at threatening words, afterwards embraced killing swords, for the testimony of Jesus. You had once ten apostles flying, one denying, yet afterwards all rejoicing to suffer for Him that suffered for them. "When the Spirit is come, he will convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment," John xvi. 8. How shall he convince it? Not immediately by himself, but mediately by his apostles and ministers: who otherwise durst never have been so bold. Neither was this a personal promise, but real to the church, unto the end of the world. Now if this had been a cunning fable, some tale of Jupiter or Apollo, it could never have effected such a content of conscience, in forsaking of lands, liberties, wives, lives; in exposing us to calumnies, calamities, torments. Tell a Turk, the worshipper of a Mahomet, concerning riches, honours, and carnal satisfactions that come to him by his prophet: this pleases his flesh and blood. But tell him of persecution, anguish, contempt, and death, which his profession must call him to; he will none of that for any idol's sake. Yet preach Christ to the conscience, the value of the price he paid to redeem us; and then let a thousand dangers stand in our way: prison, hunger, tyrants, torments, deaths, devils; we run through them all with patience, and overcome them with confidence. In these latter times, when the deluge of popery overflowed, all piety was drowned, pity and mercy lost, the woman fled into the wilderness, antichrist in his highest ruff, kings kissing his feet: when it was death to think of restoring the light. Yet against all clamours of friars, excommunications of popes, execrations of his priests, oppositions of princes by sword and fire: the truth was delivered from the jaws of error, set in a white chair

of crystal sincerity, and most powerfully lodged in a bed of peace; where she reacheth forth to us her milken hand, guiding us to those everlasting doors, whereto heresy and darkness shall never enter. Oh may this sun shine to us, and our children after us, so long as the sun and moon in heaven endure! Amen.

To apply all to ourselves. The power and coming of Christ, is the kingdom of Christ: let us all pray that this power may come in our hearts; Lord, let thy kingdom come. Now what we pray with our lips, we must endeavour with our lives. Shall we desire the removal of all hinderances to this kingdom, and most of all hinder it ourselves? If we obscure that glory which we appreciate, our own tongues and hearts, and the tongues and hearts of all under heaven, shall rise up in witness against us. He that makes such a seeming prayer, and retains such a sinning desire, doth beg consuming vengeance on himself. Tremble at this, ye wicked; you may as well spit upon Christ, as come to church and say, "Thy kingdom come," and yet actually uphold the kingdom of the devil. Let us take heed of withstanding the coming of this power. Christ preached to the Jews; they would not receive him. Behold, their house is left unto them desolate. Noah preached to the old world: Lot to Sodom; Gildas to the Britons; they despised it; their land was destroyed, and given to others. John Wickliffe was raised up to this office; himself was burned, and his books. What followed? They slew the next king, set up three usurpers, the nobility were butchered, the land havocted. The contempt of this power hath brought on infallible desolation.

What this sin may work upon us, only the Lord knows, and knows to prevent. Comets may threaten, and rumours of wars sound in our ears: none of these destroy us, but our own sins. Let us not hurt ourselves, none shall hurt us. If we be false to God, let us not blame others for being false to us. It was Christ's complaint over that apostate city, "O Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee!" Matt. xxiii. 37. If we retain their sins, there remain for us their plagues. We use to arraign and judge our prophets, whose ministry is to arraign and judge us, that we may not be judged of the Lord. The Jews killed their teachers; do not we so when we withhold their life-blood from them, and stand to justify it? Is it not all one, to cut a man's throat, and to take away the sustenance whereby he lives, and without which he must needs famish? Certainly, of both it is the greater mercy, or (at least) the less cruelty, to despatch him quickly. It is their work to mortify and kill our sins; and shall we kill them, that our sins may live? Oh there is a cursed devil that bewitcheth us! God that suffers this, means thereby to suffer this land's destruction. There were not (let not envy hear me) so flourishing a church under heaven, if this sin of sacrifice were taken from it. But this effect hath followed it, that the profession of the gospel in many places comes upon the stage, to help to make up the play, and to minister matter of mirth. And the law doth domineer over the gospel, as Pilate sat to judge Jesus. If this land should ever come to the danger of destroying, (which God avert,) those deriders of the poor ministry will run into holes, that have already buried their talents from ever doing good. And then the poor clergy's prayers will prevail more for mercies, than all their proud, arrogated glories. But alas, how should Christ come in power to help us, whom we have rejected coming in power to convert us! Doth he come now, and we will not know him; and can we hope he will come then when we call him? Open

your hearts, all ye that fear the Lord, and let him in. As it is his own promise, Behold, I come quickly: so it is the church's prayer, Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Wickedness is powerful, the devil is powerful, covetousness is powerful, lust is powerful; and hath the gospel of Christ lost its powerfulness? No; if it have not power to convert us, it will have power to confound us. If Christ be not suffered to come unto us, he will not be hindered from coming against us. O let us come unto him, that he may come unto us: subject we our hearts and lives to the obedience of his gospel, that we may be found holy and blameless at the second coming of the Lord Jesus. It shall be powerful then, when the heavens shall pass away with a noise, and the elements shall melt with heat, and the earth with her works shall be burned up. Let us now honour him when he comes in grace, that he may honour us when he comes in glory.

"But were eye-witnesses of his majesty." This is the testification. Our Saviour intending that the apostles should lay the foundation of his church, upon that Corner-stone whereupon themselves and we all are built, he furnished them with all fit provision for it. He declared his will to their ears, presented his works to their eyes, fixed his truth in their hearts; and sent them not to publish riddles, and paradoxes, and fabulous reports, but real and actual things which they had seen and heard. So might they from infallible experience give a well-grounded testimony. The sum is this; Christ made himself manifest to them, that they might manifest him to us. He let them see, that they might teach us to believe. The things which I have received of my Father, I have made known unto you, John xv. 15. They must needs be scriptures well fitted for the kingdom of heaven, when such a Master read unto them the oracles of truth. He that is the life of the gospel, taught them the gospel of life. It did not hold, that he must needs be a good scholar that had Socrates to his master. But he must be a good disciple that hath Jesus Christ for his tutor. We are not reporters, but witnesses: not ear-witnesses, but eye-witnesses, not only of his humility, but of his majesty.

We were witnesses. But, "I receive not testimony from man," John v. 34. He is the way, the truth, and the life; the way to the truth, the truth of the way, the life of both, of all; therefore a sufficient testimony to himself. Yet he saith, "If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true," John v. 31. And of the contrary, "Though I bear record of myself, my record is true," John viii. 14. These two places seem at the first view contradictory, but are easily reconciled. In the former, Christ did accommodate himself to the capacity of the hearers, who acknowledged nothing more in him than humanity: in the other, he sets forth his Divinity, and discovers another nature in his own person; that howsoever they might vilipend the testimony of the one, yet were convinced by the testimony of the other. But this answer seems not to satisfy: for Christ, as he was man, was without error, and could not give a false testimony; how then could he say, "My witness is not true?" I answer, "My witness is not true," that is, it is not effectual, nor would be accepted as true by the Jews, though it was most certainly true. Though it be true according to the matter testified, yet not true according to their acceptance. To the other it is objected, "My witness is true," that according to the law no man's witness is accepted for himself.

And, "Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth," Prov. xxvii. 2. But Christ is the light of the world: now the light doth not only help us to see other things, but also to discern itself. But fur-

ther, if Christ receives not testimony for man, why doth he admit of John's witness? "Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth," John v. 33. John did not intrude himself into this office, but the Jews required him to it; "Ye sent unto John." This appears, John i. 19, "This is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou?" Now Christ admitted of John's testimony for their sakes, as he declares himself: "That ye might be saved," John v. 34. I receive not man's witness, for any need that I have of it; but I suffer it for your salvation, that you might be induced through a witness of your own choosing to believe on me. I receive not the witness of man, as it is merely man's, and of no further authority than flesh and blood; but as it is inspired by God, I entertain it.

Our blessed Saviour accepted of many witnesses, which I will but touch, as being not in the centre, but not out of the circumference, of this argument.

1. God the Father. "The Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me," John v. 37. The substance of his testimony was delivered in an audible voice; "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

2. John the Baptist. "He was not that Light, but he was sent to bear witness of that Light," John i. 8. The testimony of John was persuading; but the testimony of the Father prevailing.

3. The works of Christ. "The works that I do, bear witness of me," John v. 36. This is a greater witness than John's. Against this witness there is an exception: If Christ might be known sufficiently by his works to be the Messiah, the same testimony might be given to the apostles, who wrought as great miracles. It is answered, that Christ, when he wrought these works, declared himself to be the Messiah; the apostles, when they wrought them, declared themselves not to be Christ, but the servants of Christ; and that they effected all only through his name and virtue. When the disciples of John came to Christ to be satisfied whether he were he that should come or no, he refers them to no other testimony but his works. "Go, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; that the blind see, the lame walk," &c. Luke vii. 22. He proves his goodness by his good works. It was this that preferred Chorazin and Bethsaida before Tyre and Sidon in torments; because mighty works were done among them, and they repented not, Matt. xi. 21. Mighty works. He is called a Prophet mighty, not only in words, but in deeds, Luke xxiv. 19. Neither were the Jews only convinced with a "Never man spake like this man," John vii. 46; but also with a Never man did like this man: we never saw it on this fashion. "When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than this man hath done?" John vii. 31. Since the world began the like was never heard before, John ix. 32. What is inferred on it? "If this man were not of God, he could do nothing," ver. 33.

4. The Scriptures. "Search the Scriptures; and they are they which testify of me," John v. 39. All of them, like so many mathematical lines, meeting at that one centre. Every page, like a John Baptist, pointing us to the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world. The word of the Lord contains almost nothing else, but the Lord that is the Word. "To him give all the prophets witness," Acts x. 43. They by predictions and figures, the apostles by demonstration and truth. The first of these testimonies was pronounced, the second inspired, the third exhibited, the last written.

5. Angels; they witnessed his conception, Luke i. 31; his nativity, Luke ii. 10; his majesty, "Angels

came and ministered unto him," Matt. iv. 11; his resurrection, Luke xxiv. 4; his ascension, Acts i. 10.

6. The creatures. In his nativity a star, a burning lamp set in the heavens; a day-star before the sun. In his life, the winds and the seas answer his commands; "What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!" Matt. viii. 27. The sun was darkened at his death, the veil of the temple rent, the earth did quake, the stones clave, and the graves were opened. At his birth the heavens did witness that he was come down to earth; at his resurrection, the earth did witness that he was ready to go up to heaven. The sea was his path to walk on, the clouds his chariot to ride on.

7. His very enemies: neither Pilate nor Herod could find fault in him; Ye have brought this man to me, I have examined him, but can find no fault in him; no, nor yet Herod, Luke xxiii. 14, 15. Pilate's wife justifies him to her husband, "Have thou nothing to do with that just man," Matt. xxvii. 19. They that came to ensnare him, depart commending him. You have, Matt. xxii., Pharisees, Sadducees, lawyers, all apposing him, all convinced, and astonished at his doctrine. The centurion at his death acknowledgeth, "Truly this was the Son of God." The very devils acknowledge him; "I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God," Mark i. 24. "Jesus I know," Acts xix. 15. O powerful Christ, that couldst out of the mouth of thy professed enemies derive thy praise! How should thy friends, bought with thy precious blood, glorify thee, when thy very enemies thus honour thee! "Their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges," Deut. xxxii. 31. Even the Jews that crucified him, and "all bare him witness, and wondered at his gracious words," Luke iv. 22.

8. Lastly, the apostles were especially designed for this testimony; "Ye shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning," John xv. 27. There are twelve apostles, a whole jury of these witnesses; and when one of them apostatized by transgression, and the room was void, they cast lots to supply the place with a new witness; "One must be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection," Acts i. 22. There were twelve patriarchs in the Old Testament, twelve apostles in the New. Solomon's twelve officers, 1 Kings iv. 7. Moses' twelve pillars, Exod. xxiv. 4. The twelve cakes of shewbread, Lev. xxiv. 5. The twelve stones in Aaron's pectoral. The twelve stones that Joshua took out of Jordan. The twelve spies. The twelve tribes. The twelve stars, Rev. xii. 1. The twelve foundations, twelve gates, twelve angels; "The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles," Rev. xxi. 14. These twelve were to lay the foundation of the church; "We are built upon the foundation of the prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone," Eph. ii. 20. We are built on them, they and we all on Jesus Christ. But were there no more than twelve of these especial witnesses? What say you to Paul and Barnabas; were not they apostles? were not they witnesses? Yes, they are both called apostles and witnesses: "Part held with the apostles," Acts xiv. 4: now at that time in Iconium were no apostles, but Paul and Barnabas; therefore they were. God gave testimony to the word of his grace by them in signs and wonders, ver. 3; therefore they were witnesses. "Am I not an apostle?" saith Paul, 1 Cor. ix. 1. Yea, are they apostles? "I am more," 2 Cor. xi. 23. He is called, The apostle; when we speak of an apostle, and distinguish him not by name, we commonly mean St. Paul. But he calls himself abortive, "One born out of due

time," 1 Cor. xv. 8. One is said to be abortive three ways. First, when he comes not in the due and expected time. Secondly, when he is forced from the womb of the mother. Thirdly, when he comes not to full perfection. Paul may be said to be abortive two ways, not the latter: for he "laboured more abundantly than they all," 1 Cor. xv. 10. Ingeniously he confesseth, that he "was not a whit behind the very chiefest of the apostles," 2 Cor. xi. 5. There is a threefold difference betwixt the rest of the apostles and St. Paul. 1. The twelve for twelve years preached only to the twelve tribes of Israel; Paul went presently after his calling to the Gentiles. 2. The twelve divided the world amongst them; Paul took the whole world for his parish. 3. The rest were called (all but Matthias) by Christ in his mortality; Paul by Christ in his immortality. The rest, by Christ humbled; Paul, by Christ glorified. Though this difference be in their apostleship, there is no difference in their testimony; they all witnessed the same Lord Jesus.

This witnessing was one of the apostles' prime excellences and privileges above others. The first privilege was their mission, which was immediately from Christ himself, "I send you;" whereas we are sent from him mediately by others. The second, was their commission, "Preach and baptize," &c. They were sent to plant the church, whereas we build upon their foundation. The third, was their authority; Christ "breathed on them, and said, Receive ye the Holy Ghost," John xx. 22. There was a number of ceremonies to make up a Levitical priest, anointings, washings, &c.; but to make up an evangelical priest, Christ only breathed on them: thus in a great measure they received the Holy Ghost; "There sat upon them cloven tongues, like as of fire," Acts ii. 3. Such a fire was kindled on that day of Pentecost, that the whole world hath been the warmer for it ever since. Therefore Chrysostom calls the apostleship, a spiritual consulship, which was the greatest office in the Roman government. The last privilege is their testimony, and election to this testimony. God raised up Christ, and showed him openly; not to all the people, but to us witnesses, chosen before of God, Acts x. 41. The Lord sent them forth to bear witness of Christ.

In witnesses there are three things especially required: 1. That they be of good report and repute; for a bad and vicious life enervates their testimony. But these were holy men; he that sent them to give testimony, did not deny them sanctimony; "Sanctify them through thy truth," John xvii. 17. No witness is surer than a child's, (Isidor.) when he is come to those years to understand, and not to those years to dissemble. Thus doth God out of children's mouths magnify his own praise. The witnesses were not children in understanding, but in simplicity and innocence of heart. They might be reproved, they could never be disproved. 2. That they be eye-witnesses; so were these, as we shall hear. 3. That they be *συνμαρτυροι*, to agree in their testimony. False witnesses are easily found out by being examined suddenly; unless they have cunningly digested their tale, and then their mischief is more pernicious. But these witnesses, when they were dispersed over the face of the earth, did mind one thing, and speak one thing: they delivered the same, wrote the same, wrought the same, witnessed the same truth even with their bloods; therefore were in all points sufficient witnesses.

This apostolical testimony was not without some opposition, for there were others that came in the name of Christ, who had nothing to do with him. Simon Magus bewitched not only the Samaritans,

but also the Romans. Claudius set up a brazen image on Tiber bridge, with this blasphemous inscription, To Simon the great god. But while he sailed in the air upon the wings of demons, he fell down to the earth, and burst his neck. One Manes, admired of the Persians, took twelve men, whom he called his apostles, and styled himself The Comforter of Israel. But undertaking to recover the king's son, who was dangerously sick, and failing in the cure, he had his skin pulled over his ears. A Romish doctor, called The Oracle of India, gave out that he was more holy than the apostles, yea, than the angels; yea, that God made him a proffer of hypostatical union, and assumption into the fellowship of the Deity; but the modest man refused it: that he was the world's redeemer in respect of efficacy, as Christ performed it in respect of sufficiency. Horrid and unpardonable blasphemy! So one Postill, a Jesuit, under the name of Mother Jane, printed a book called The Victory of Women: maintaining, that as Christ redeemed the superior world, man; so Mother Jane saved the inferior world, woman. Here St. Paul's prophecy was fulfilled, "For this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness," 2 Thess. ii. 11, 12. They would none of Christ, let them welcome antichrist. "I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not; if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive," John v. 43. He that will not believe these witnesses, shall everlastingly perish.

For as, seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us believe, "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one," 1 John v. 7. The Father bare witness to Christ, at his baptism, Matt. iii. 17; at his transfiguration, Matt. xvii. 5; at a manifest and glorious revelation, John xii. 28. "Then came there a voice from heaven," &c. The Holy Ghost bare witness to Christ, in descending first upon himself, John i. 32; then upon his apostles, Acts ii. 4, making them also to bear witness; Both he shall testify of me, and make you testify of me, John xv. 26, 27. The Word bare record of himself. When the Jews put him to it, "If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly;" he answered, "I told you," John x. 25. When John's disciples asked him, "Art thou he that should come?" He witnessed, I am he. When the high priest questioned him, "Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" Jesus said, I am," Mark xiv. 62. Thus he witnessed to the blind man whom they had excommunicated: "Who is the Son of God? It is he that talketh with thee," John ix. 37: I am he. This he testified to Paul, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest," Acts ix. 5. And these three are one; not only in their witness, but in their essence, (Ardens.) "There be three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood; and these three agree in one," 1 John v. 8. The Spirit of God, or of man inspired with that Spirit, applying to his comfort the water and blood that came out of Christ's side; water being a sign of our sanctification, blood of our justification. These three are one, saith Augustine, not in nature, but in mystery: they agree in one testimony. The virtue that is in the water, is not of the water, but of the Spirit. Thus if in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word be established, how strong should be our faith, that is confirmed with so many and so great witnesses! The intent of all is that we should believe; "He that saw it bare record, and his record is true; that ye might believe," John ix. 35. Not to give credit to all these witnesses, is (so far as in us lieth)

to make God lose his purpose. Therefore these shall either witness to us, or one day witness against us.

"Eye-witnesses." One eye-witness is better than many ear-witnesses. They spake not by tradition, or what curious relates have buzzed in credulous ears; but opposed their own knowledge against all fabulous reports: we have seen. "That which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life," 1 John i. 1. "That which was from the beginning;" not of late days, no new sprung up novelty. "Which we have heard," immediately speaking in the world, as well as mediately speaking in his word. He spake to our fathers by the mouth of all his prophets from the beginning; but in our days, by his own mouth; our ears have heard his sermons. "Which we have seen with our eyes;" beheld him working miracles, raising the dead, casting out devils. "Which we have looked upon;" not having only a glimpse of him, but intently looked upon him: as John pointed to him with the finger, "Behold the Lamb of God." "Our hands have handled" his precious body, both before his death, and after his resurrection. Doubtful Thomas would not believe, and that avowedly, till he saw the prints of his nails, and thrust his hand into his side; and then he cries, "My Lord, and my God." "Handled of the word of life." How can this be? Though this being very God of very God, is neither visible nor palpable; yet in respect of the personal union of the two natures in him, we say again, That which we have heard, seen, and handled. The apostle St. John doth especially of all the rest press this point, 1 John v. 10; John xx. 31; xxi. 24. This is that beloved apostle, evangelist, martyr, all. St. Peter was an apostle, not an evangelist; St. Mark an evangelist, not an apostle; St. Matthew both an apostle and an evangelist, not a prophet; St. Augustine a doctor, not a martyr; St. Lawrence a martyr, not a doctor; but St. John was all these, (Dyce, Pontan.) In his Epistles an apostle, in his Revelation a prophet, in his Gospel an evangelist, in his faith a confessor, in his preaching a doctor, in his chastity a virgin, in his readiness to die for Christ a martyr; suffering for him under the cross, whom he saw suffering for him on the cross. "This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and we know that his testimony is true." St. Paul doth also earnestly urge it; "He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve; he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; he was seen of James; then of all the apostles; and last of all seen of me," 1 Cor. xv. 5-8. And St. Peter here confirms it; "We were eye-witnesses of his majesty." Now as Aristotle said, If Timotheus had not been, we had not had so much sweet music; but if Phrynis (Timotheus's master) had not been, we had not had Timotheus; so, if these apostles, John, Peter, and Paul, had not been, we might have wanted such witnesses; but if Jesus their Master had not been, we had wanted such apostles. They saw with their eyes, we hear with our ears; Lord, grant us all to believe with our hearts, the majesty of Jesus Christ. So it follows,

"Of his majesty." The apostle saw not with such eyes as the world. The world saw neither form nor comeliness, nor any thing desirable in him, Isa. liii. 2. The apostles saw his majesty. The world saw him as a rejected, rejected man; "Behold the man!" John xix. 5; the man laden with sorrows, and overwhelmed with miseries. The apostles saw him "white and ruddy," of the purest complexion, "the chiefest among ten thousand," Cant. v. 10; whiter than the lilies of the valleys, redder than the roses of Sharon. Were our eyes opened, to behold the in-

comparable virtues of our blessed Saviour, as Plato said of virtue, he would ravish our souls with an unexpressible love. He is a spiritual, intellectual sphere, whose circumference is every where, his centre no where. His majesty is infinitely puissant, the chiefest of ten thousand. The Jews have a tradition, that the Messiah appeared to them at the Red Sea, like a man of war, delivering them from the Egyptians. For this they had a song, "The Lord is a man of war," Exod. xv. 3. It is prophesied of him, that "he shall divide the spoil with the strong," Isa. lili. 12. His majesty is infinitely great, his mercy is infinitely sweet. His looks dispel all darkness, his power delivers our souls. Come now, and behold him "with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart," Cant. iii. 11. There is no peace but from him, no life but by him, no bliss but through him, no comfort but for him, no joy but in him: O blessed eyes, that see the Lord Jesus!

How, when, where, and wherein, the apostles were eye-witnesses of his majesty, the ensuing verses challenge to instance. Only learn we now, to make Christ the object of all our eyes. Our carnal eyes cannot now see him: we must wait for that day, when with these our eyes in our very flesh we shall behold him, Job xix. 26. Our spiritual, intellectual, faithful eyes may now see him. As the Israelites, when they were stung with those fiery serpents, looked upon the brazen serpent, and were healed: so we that are stung with our sins, must look upon the Son of man lifted up to his cross, that we may not perish, but have life everlasting, John iii. 14, 15. No contemplation of him, no benediction from him. As Peter said to the cripple, "Look on us: and he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them," Acts iii. 4, 5; so we must look steadfastly on Christ, or shall receive no alms of comfort. Behold him in faith, that God may behold thee in him. When Elijah was to be taken up, Elisha begged of him, that a double portion of his spirit might be upon him: he answered, "Thou hast asked a hard thing: nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so," 2 Kings ii. 10. A sinner doth desire of Christ to be made a saint, and to have his Holy Spirit put upon him: Christ answers, Thou hast asked a hard thing: nevertheless, if thou canst see me with the eye of faith, thou shalt have thy request, thou shalt be saved.

But before we come to behold his majesty let us first look upon his misery. Let our meditations follow him, from his agony in the garden, all the way of his passion, by the track of his blood, till we find him dead on the cross. Behold the scourge fetching blood from his sides, the thorns harrowing his sacred head, his life-blood issuing out by the wounds of the nails. And as if all that were too little, a soldier opening his side with a spear after his death, and broaching out blood and water. "It is nothing to you, all ye that pass by? behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow," Jam. i. 12. Sorrow is a thing of that nature, it calls for beholding, and humanity cannot choose but yield an ocular pity. Every good eye will turn itself, and look upon them that are in distress. Those two merciless men, Luke x., that went by the wounded man, though they helped him not, yet before they passed they looked upon him as he lay. Our Saviour being advanced on the chariot of his cross, unless we purposely turn away our eyes, we must needs be eye-witnesses of his sorrow. Look upon Jesus, the founder and finisher of our faith, Heb. xii. 2: think of the torments he suffered, of the mercies he proffered, of the sacrifice he offered. And

then, as there was never grief like his grief, so there was never love like his love. When the Jews beheld Christ weeping for Lazarus, they said, "Behold how he loved him!" John xi. 36. When we see Christ bleeding, weeping streams of blood for us, we may well say, Behold how he loved us!

We cannot now, with Zaccheus, see his face; yet we may behold his mercy. We cannot, with the sick woman, touch his hem; yet we may touch him. We cannot hear the Word, God; we may still hear the word of God. We cannot behold him dying on the cross; yet we may contemplate the efficacy of his cross, and the price of his sacrifice. His blood is like the widow's oil, 2 Kings iv.; enough to pay all our debts, and to spare, for ourselves to live upon, besides. "Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see," Luke x. 23. Blessed eyes, that with faith and love see the Lord Jesus! "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: he saw it, and was glad," John viii. 56. He saw it in hope, we see it in faith. He saw it and rejoiced: who can behold the day of Christ, that is, the day of salvation, and not rejoice? Indeed we are naturally born blind, how then shall we come to see? John ix. 19. Only Jesus must open our eyes, that we may see himself. "Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed," John xx. 29. Our faith shall have so much the more commendation, as our eyes have been permitted the less vision. It is held by divines a principal part of our glory in heaven, to see Jesus Christ. They that are in the courts of princes, behold gorgeous apparel; at rich men's tables we see costly delicacies; on the sea men see strange wonders; on the land, glorious palaces: yet the eyes shall be stopped with dust, and the objects burned with fire. The most blessed sight, is to see God in peace, though we lose all the spectacles on earth; Lord Jesus, let us see thee to our eternal comfort. Bless us, O Father of lights, with that everlasting vision, where no clouds nor darkness shall hinder our speculation. O may we spend that eternity never to be spent, in the joyful sight and peaceful enjoying of thee our Maker, thy Son our Saviour, and that Holy Spirit our Comforter; to whom be glory for ever. Amen.

VERSE 17.

For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

THE apostle might seem to have delivered a wonder, a paradox, an incredible mystery: he must now stand to it, and declare the wonder, explain the paradox, unfold the mystery. What was it? that they had seen the majesty of Christ. His majesty? This is that wonder, that paradox, that mystery. The world had seen his pain, his contempt, his poverty: but his majesty? It had seen him come thirsty to the fountain, hungry to another's table, weary to his repose, desiring entertainment where he found it not: but his majesty? It had seen him crowned with thorns, bleeding with scourges, forsaken on the cross: but his majesty? It had seen him in the form of a servant, full of ignominy, full of misery: but full of majesty? It never saw that. Well then, this majesty doth our apostle declare: he hath said it, he will prove it. "For he received from the Father honour and glory." We say, that honour conferred by the king, is died in grain, and will hold

colour; yet it hath the change, for though the colour hold, the garment itself will wear out. Now when the garment is tattered to rags, farewell colour: so when the body is consumed to dust, farewell honour. But when the King of heaven gives honour, it will hold indeed:

*hunc nec Jovis ira, nec ignis,
Non ferrum poterit, nec idæa abolere velustas.*

As Isaac said of Jacob, I have blessed him, and he shall be blessed; so God saith of that man, I have honoured him, and he shall be honoured.

"He received from God the Father," &c. You see, the form of the words is receptory, He received. The parcels are five:

Who, Christ; He received.

Of whom, God; Of God the Father.

What, Honour and glory.

When, When the voice came from the excellent glory.

How, This is my beloved Son, &c.

There could be no testimony more perspicuous or more glorious. Honour requires reverence: God hath honoured his Son, let us honour the Father, and give the devout reverence of humble hearts to the whole Trinity.

"He received." This is the first circumstance, the Person to whom this honour is given. "He received." But receiving implies want; now is there any want in Christ? "It pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell," Col. i. 19. The oil of gladness did so fill him, that it ran over the brinks of his humanity, and fills us his members. "Of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace," John i. 16. The plenitude of Christ was not only a sufficient fulness, enough to serve his turn; but an overflowing fulness, a sea of grace, able to fill all our channels. Not a passing or vanishing fulness; as a cistern may be full, and emptied again by cocks; but a permanent and inexhaustible fulness; it dwells in him. How then is he said to receive? Could there be addition where is no defect? Can a thing be more than full? This receipt doth in nothing prejudice the immenseness of the Deity; for Christ must be considered two ways, as he is God, and as he is man. He that mediates between both, must be both. Here then the answer is easy: It is God that gives, and it is man that receives. The Father hath not more glory, omnipotence, or perfection, than the Son, as he is God; but as this Son of God is made the Son of man, he receives grace and glory. God gives to man, and receives nothing of him; man receives of God, and gives nothing to him. Hear him speak as God: All thine are mine, John xvii. 10. Hear him as man: They whom thou hast given me, are thine, ver. 9. As man he receives of the Spirit, Luke iv. 18. As God he communicates to the Spirit: "He shall receive of mine," John xvi. 14. The Son takes of the Father, and the Spirit takes of the Son, ver. 15; yet so that what is of one Person, is of the whole Deity: excepting only those personal and individual proprieties; as the Father to be the Father, and to beget; the Son to be the Son, and begotten, not to beget; the Spirit neither to beget, nor to be begotten, but to proceed. So the Son only to be man, not the Father, nor the Spirit. As God he had no beginning, as man he received a beginning in time, Gal. iv. 4. As man, he was made of his mother; as God, his mother was made by him; so he is both the Father of Mary, and the Son of Mary. As God, he chargeth us to continue in his own word, John viii. 31; and, "If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death," ver. 51. As man, he confesseth, "My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me" John vii.

16. As he honours the Father, John viii. 49, so he receives honour of the Father, John xiii. 32; God doth glorify him, and is glorified in him. As God, he says, I have of mine own; as man, All things are delivered unto me of the Father. As God, he doth what he will in heaven, and earth, and all places; as man, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth," Matt. xxviii. 18. Thus is this doctrine clear; that Christ, who as God gives all things, as he is man receives something; here, "honour and glory."

Now for whom doth Christ come to be a receiver? For whose sake did eternally admit an estate to receive in time? Perfection itself to grow in stature? Wisdom itself to increase in knowledge? Not for himself, but for us. He would take of God, that we might take of him. Abraham was wealthy, exceeding rich in cattle, silver, and gold, Gen. xiii. 2; yet when he recovered the spoil of Sodom, and it was re-offered him by the king, he took somewhat: but how much? no more than he meant to give away: I will not take away any thing from thee for myself, lest thou shouldst say, I have made Abram rich: but I will accept a portion for the young men that went with me, Gen. xiv. 23, 24. Christ was so rich, that he need not receive honour and glory; yet was he content to receive it of his Father, that he might give it to us his children.

"From God the Father." This is the second circumstance, of whom he received it. Here observe the manifest distinction of persons in the Deity. The Father gives honour, the Son receives it. The Father speaks from heaven, the Son hears it. There must be no confusion of the Persons, but a distinction of their proprieties. (August.) We believe there is a Father, because he hath a Son; we believe there is a Son, because he hath a Father: we believe there is a Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son, coequal and coeval with the Father and the Son; because he is a Divine Person, and neither the Father nor the Son. The Trinity is not confused in one Person, against Sabellius; nor is the Divinity divided in its nature, against Arius. The Father is not greater than the Son, nor the Son than the Spirit; the same equality, the same eternity. But the Father is said to send the Son, and the Son to send the Spirit: this seems to imply some superiority of the sender to the person sent? The Father sends, and is not sent; the Son sends, and is sent; the Holy Ghost is sent, and sendeth not; yet is there no inequality. There are three ways of sending. 1. By authority: so a superior sends an inferior. 2. By advice and counsel: so the less may send the greater; as the privy council may send the king to take the air, or to lead an army. So an equal may send his equal; as the elders sent Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem, Acts xv. 3. By necessity: as the fountain naturally sends forth the spring; so the Father sends the Son, the Son sends the Spirit. The Father as the fountain begets, the Son is begotten, the Holy Ghost proceeds. Christ is said to be sent in respect of his acceptance of another nature. "When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son made of a woman," Gal. iv. 4. The man confesseth, "My Father is greater than I;" yet in regard of his Person, "I and my Father are one," John x. 30. And St. John adds to them the Holy Ghost, and concludes, "These three are one."

The word Trinity, say our papiclists, is not found in the Scriptures; yet the substance of the word is apparent, Matt. iii. At the baptism of Christ, there was a manifestation of the three Persons; the voice of the Father is heard, the humanity of the Son is felt, the visible sign of the Holy Ghost is perceived. Who spake of his Son, but the Father? Who was

baptized and spoken to, but the Son? Neither of these appeared in the form of a dove, but the Holy Ghost. A Trinity did begin both the world and the word, that is, the Scripture. *Creavit Elohim eorum et terram*, Gen. i. The verb is singular, *creavit*, noting the most simple essence of God. The substantive plural, not *El*, but *Elohim*, to show the plurality of persons. It is observed on Deut. vi. 4, "The Lord our God is one Lord;" why doth Moses thrice mention the name of God, but to show the distinction of three Persons? Why doth he apply the word "one" to all of them, but to show the unity of essence? Why is "our" put in the second place; not in the first, nor in the last, but in the middle or second place; but to show that the Second Person should take our nature upon him? (August.) "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory," Isa. vi. 3. Thrice is God called holy, to note unto us the three Persons. The Lord not Lords, God not Gods; once Lord, once God; and the earth is full of his glory, not their glory: here is the unity of the essence. "Let us make man in our image," Gen. i. 26. Let us make; there is a plurality of persons: in our image, not images; there is the unity of the essence. "Baptizing them in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," Matt. xxviii. 19. The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; there are three distinct persons: in the name, not names: there is one essence. The Holy Ghost is called the finger of God, Christ the hand of the Father; now as the finger is in the hand, and the hand in the body; so of one and the same most pure and simple essence is the Father, Son, and Spirit. But as it was reported of Alanus, when he promised his auditory to discourse the next Sunday more clearly of the Trinity, and to make plain that mystery; while he was studying the point by the sea-side, he spied a boy very busy with a little spoon, trudging often between the sea and a small hole he had digged in the ground. Alanus asked him what he meant. The boy answers, I intend to bring all the sea into this pit. Alanus replies, Why dost thou attempt such impossibilities, and misspend thy time? The boy answers, So dost thou, Alanus: I shall as soon bring all the sea into this hole, as thou bring all the knowledge of the Trinity into thy head. All is equally possible: we have begun together, we shall finish together; saving of the two my labour hath more hope and possibility of taking effect. I conclude with, It is rashness to search, godliness to believe, sadness to preach, and eternal blessedness to know the Trinity: (Bern.) yet let us know to praise the Trinity in the words of our church: "Glory be to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost." And let all answer, "As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen."

"Honour and glory." This is the third circumstance, the matter what he received. Observe we here three collections.

1. Christ would receive honour of his Father. The devil would have given him glory, when upon a high mountain he showed him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them: "All these will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me," Matt. iv. 8, 9. Where was his promise and his covenant: his promise, "All these will I give thee;" his covenant, bargain, or condition, "If thou wilt fall down and worship me." This seems to be a fair match; for one crouch of his knee, to have so many crowns for his head; for a little prostration, so great promotion. If the devil had proffered this to Alexander, or to Cæsar, it had been a bargain. When he made this offer to the hierarchy of Rome, they presently took him at his word. But our Saviour would none of it:

he knew that Satan could give no honour to another, that had none himself; that this glory would dishonour him, and his Father also. Therefore he requited him with, "Get thee hence, Satan." Men would have given him honour: they purposed to have crowned him king, John vi. 15, but he refused it. "I receive not honour from men," John v. 41. Divine and religious honour he refused not: they worshipped him, this he suffered. "He that honours me, honours my Father;" this he preached. But human and temporary honour he rejected; and would none of their hasty coronation with carnal hands. "My kingdom is not of this world," John xviii. 36. Yea more, he sought not to honour himself. "I seek not mine own glory," John viii. 50. "If I honour myself, my honour is nothing," ver. 54. Teaching us to accept praises from others' lips, not to be our own trumpets. But when the Father gives him honour, this he receives, this only is worth acceptance: "For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth," 2 Cor. x. 18. For this he prays, "Father, glorify thy name," John xii. 28. The Father in honouring the Son, honoured himself. As Christ said, He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father; he that believes in me, believes in my Father; he that receives me, receives my Father: so he that honoureth me, honoureth my Father. But honour is in the person giving it, not in him that receives it; but Christ that received it was also God the giver of it. It is he that gives honour and glory, and it is he that takes honour and glory, and to him be honour and glory for ever.

2. All honour and glory is Christ's, as being delivered to him by the Father, Luke x. 22. He is the first-begotten, the only-begotten of God; only worthy of the kingdom. "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and honour, and glory," Rev. v. 12. Worthy: when he takes it, he doth not arrogate that to himself which is not his own right; but he is worthy. It is his own propriety; yet he is content to communicate and impart it: "The glory which thou gavest me I have given them," John xvii. 22. The same glory, not the same degree of glory: the same in nature, not so much in measure. Let the privilege of primogeniture be reserved to himself. "There is one glory of the sun, another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars," 1 Cor. xv. 41. Christ is that Sun which gives glory to us the stars. Of his fulness we have all received grace for grace here, glory for glory hereafter. On earth the glory that is divided seems to be diminished; and one thinks that so much honour is taken from himself as is added to another. But in heaven the glory of Christ shall not be abated to himself, though it be communicated to millions. Nor shall one's glory eclipse another's; such shall be to every one, as is to any one. We see to whom we are beholden for our honour. David grazed Mephibosheth, set him at his own table, restored him all the land of his grandfather Saul; and all for the love that he bare to his father Jonathan, 2 Sam. ix. 7. So God honoureth us, sets us at his own table, yea, with his Son in his throne, Rev. iii. 21; restoreth to us all the inheritance which our grandfather Adam lost, yea, more than ever he possessed; and all this for his Son, and our Father, Jesus Christ's sake. King Pharaoh honoured the eleven patriarchs for Joseph's sake; gave them the fat of the land of Egypt, and highly enriched them. So God honoureth us with his grace in this life, and with his glory in the life to come; and all for Jesus' sake.

3. All true and blessed honour comes from God, and is to be sought there. Job says, it is he that girds on the king's girdle. Promotion cometh neither

from the east, nor from the west, from north nor south, but only from the Lord, saith the psalmist. It is true that worldly honour is often arrogated, and honour given to an unworthy person: the honour is of God, not the unworthy person that hath it. He always gives the dominion; not always the governor; for he may come to it by intrusion, and hold it by usurpation.

The honour of this world is merely titular. Either incofited to the blood; and what glory is it to the degenerate son, that such a noble father begot him? All greatness had a beginning, and the beginning of that greatness was desert. Am I noble? let me know, this nobleness is the least part of mine; my fathers won it by their virtue; they had the glory, I enjoy but the titles. This privilege of blood, without respondent virtues, is but an empty conduit pipe; it is a pipe still, but it hath no water in it. Another by his just merit hath gotten honour: it is derided, because it is not derived; yet is that man more truly honourable. For the other wears but the shadow of his predecessor's triumphs: this man wears the substance of his own. It was a witty answer, that a young gentleman gave to Arnobius, one who disgraced his honour because it was of the first head: My genealogy is a shame to me, but thou art a shame to thy genealogy. Or, as a prelate's son said to a noble heir, who twitted his upstart gentry: I am the east or rising of my house; thou art the west and falling of thine. It is a shame for a man to think, that the book of his pedigree, and his father's seal-ring, are sufficient emblems of honour; that he is glorious enough, because he is flattered. Or, it may be, there is an honour entailed to riches: as in the city, credit grows just as fast as money; and in the country, reputation is measured by the acre. Then honour must be overtaken, when it cannot be met. And now some honourable progenitor must be found out, that either was dead many hundred years since, or never was noble, or perhaps never was at all. Moses condemned it for a heinous sin to steal children; but we have those that think it no sin to steal parents. This is a popular, titular, ridiculous honour. If thou wouldst know such a one, look upon him naked, saith Seneca. Let him put off his patrimony, let him put off the vain acclamations of the multitude, let him put off his popularity, let him put off his opulence, and all the other counterfeits of fortune; let him put off his very body, look thou into his soul. Then thou shalt see how noble he is, by observing how good he is; whether he swell with another man's substance, or stand upon his own worth. A good man will not follow honour, but it is well if he let it overtake him. It was not for Cato to beg honour of the city, but for the city to give him honour for his virtue, (August.)

Quintus Curtius writes of a gardener, a very poor man, rich in all plenty except plenty of riches. Alexander of Macedon proffered him the kingdom of Sidon; but he refused it with this answer, That shall never trouble me with care to lose, which did never trouble me with care to get. Memorable and worthy, and such a precedent as may cast a blush on the cheeks of Christians; for we are all too greedy of honour.

Well, if we would be honoured, let us honour Christ; for in him is, and from him comes, all honour. The most noble deriving of ourselves, is from Christ: the best nobility is the nobility of faith, and the best genealogy the genealogy of good works. Man's earthly glories are like their shadows in the sun; the body's shadow is at morning before us, at noon beside us, at night behind us. So their honour is at morning before them, in a goodly lustre; at noon in the full beside them, with a viol of heat; at evening in the wane behind them, with a neglect-

ed pity. Only some differ in their noon or meridian of greatness; for instead of having their honour beside them, they are beside their honour. "Then that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed," saith the Lord, I Sam. ii. 30. He that shall seek the Lord's honour, and neglect his own, shall find his own honour in the Lord's. A man while he hunts after his own shadow, flies from the sun, and his shadow is still unovertaken before him; but when he turns his face to the sun, and follows that, his shadow will follow him. He that seeks honour, and turns his back upon Christ, cannot reach it; it is too swift of foot for him; let him turn his face to Christ, and follow him: behold, honour waits at his back, and will never fail to attend him. Now seeing we look for all honour and glory from Christ, let us ascribe all honour and glory to Christ, singing that heavenly hymn, "Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen." Rev. vii. 12.

"When there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory." This is the fourth circumstance, the time when the apostles beheld, and their Master received, this glory and majesty. For to this we must restore the last clause of the former verse, "they were eye-witnesses of his majesty." When? At this time, "when there came such a voice from the excellent glory." Considering therefore together their ocular testimony, with this audible assurance from the supreme glory, we may justly conceive here three things:

A spectacle, with the time of it. When they saw it.

An oracle, Such a voice from heaven.

A miracle, That a voice should be heard on earth, which came from the excellent glory.

So there is in the words, When it was; at the time of this glorious testification. How; by a voice, such a voice. From whence; from the excellent glory.

"When there came." The precise denomination of the time and place of this glorious revelation hath been questionable; but without all doubt it was at his transfiguration on the mount, for so the apostle declares himself in the next verse. Albeit his majesty might appear also at other times and in other matters, yet here most conspicuously.

For they speak not here of Christ's riding in triumph to Jerusalem, Matt. xxi. When the people gave the acclamations of "Hosanna," and "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord," they then saw his majesty. "Tell ye the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy King cometh," ver. 5; though meekly, sitting upon an ass, yet thy King. The veil of his humility was so far lifted up, that they might see his majesty. But the apostle speaks of a sight, not common to the people, but peculiar to themselves.

They speak not here of his miracles, wherein also appeared his majesty. When he quieted the winds and seas, walked on the waters, raised the dead, cast out devils: here was majesty. When he went into the temple, cast out all them that bought and sold in it, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, Matt. xxi. Jerome conceives this to be the greatest of all his miracles. His wonders did evidently prove his majesty. Now these were of two sorts: such as he wrought upon the bodies of men, which we most admire because they are most visible, and subject to sense. And other that he wrought upon the minds of men, to the change of the inward power; and these were the greater miracles; but because they were not so visible, therefore not so remarkable. The Jews hearing the words, and seeing the wonders, wrought by Peter and John, and perceiving that they were unlearned men, they thought

it a miracle, and conclude "that they had been with Jesus," Acts iv. 13. If this miracle be wrought upon a man, that his conscience be sanctified, sure he hath been with Jesus, or Jesus hath been with him. Christ finds Matthew at the receipt of custom, and says but, "Follow me, and he arose and followed him," Matt. ix. 9. Though he sat at the custom-house, like a usurer in his broking-house, yet upon his call he followed him. Some strange lightning of majesty appeared in his looks, and miraculously drew a worldling unto him. They brought him to the brow of a steep hill, purposing to cast him down headlong; "but he passing through the midst of them went his way," Luke iv. 29, 30. To stand in the midst of his enemies, and no man able to lay hands upon him, here was a great majesty. (Chrys.) The blind rabble came with torches, the cowards with swords, a traitor with a band of men; and as if multitudes were not sufficient, there must be officers among them: but what was the issue? "As soon as he said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground," John xviii. 6. With the breath of two short words, sweetly and kindly spoken, "I am he," they were repelled. What can he do when he shall judge, that did thus when he was to be judged! What shall be his power reigning, when such was his power even dying! (August.) Here was majesty. But of all, that Matt. xxi. 12, did far transcend in expressing his majesty. That one man unarmed, without guard of soldiers, without a commission from Herod or Cæsar, in despite of the scribes that hated him, of the people that contemned him, should cast forth men, tradesmen, covetous tradesmen! How Demetrius would have stormed to see his occupation of silver shrines endangered, endangered; and cried out two hours together, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" Yea, that he should cast forth abundance of them; such a multitude of men and cattle, that a petty army could hardly have performed it. And that with a little whip, without noise, contradiction, or tumult! Oh here was majesty! Something more bright than the fire or stars did certainly shine in his eyes. (Hieron.) Such a majesty of Divinity appeared in his looks, that none durst resist him. (Origen.) This was a greater miracle than turning water into wine: there a matter without life doth yield unto him; but in this, the refractory and perverse hearts of many thousands of obstinate men are convinced. Here they might manifestly see his majesty: but of this our apostle discourseth not.

Nor yet of that visible scissure of heaven, Matt. iii. 16; where was manifest the heaven's apertion, the Spirit's descension, the Father's testification, "This is my beloved Son." There was a voice, and a voice from heaven, and witnessing the same thing that here; even there they were eye-witnesses of his majesty; but neither is that place meant here.

Nor is it understood of that testimony, John xii. 28. There was also a voice, and a voice from heaven and from the Father in heaven; and a voice that honoured Christ, "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." The people said it thundered, others that an angel spake; Christ says plainly, that the voice came for their sakes, ver. 30. Here also were they witnesses of his majesty: but neither to that testimony hath our apostle here a reference.

Nor is it meant of his resurrection from death, worthy of all admiration. When out of a sepulchre, a sepulchre not of earth, but of stone, one entire stone, without any seam or fissure in it; another stone rolled to it, that stone sealed, that seal guarded; the Lord arose, bursting the bands of death, and triumphing over the grave: manifesting himself to

one, to two, to ten, to more than five hundred brethren at once, and thus dwelling on the earth forty days! Here was a clear demonstration of his powerful majesty.

Lastly, it is not referred to his triumphant ascension, when he led captivity captive, and went up gloriously to the place whence he came. At this the apostles were present, beholding while he was taken up, Acts i. 9. He was received out of their sight, therefore till that moment they had the sight of him. They saw the angels that testified it; Why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus shall come from heaven, in the like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven, ver. 11. They saw him, and they worshipped him, Luke xxiv. 52. Here was also an apparent manifestation of his majesty: "Ye shall be witnesses unto me," Acts i. 8. Himself told them immediately before, that they should be witnesses of this; and here was a sufficient majesty for their testimony, and they gave a sufficient testimony of that majesty.

But yet St. Peter intends another, and that a more especial instance: not seen to the people, as were some of the former glories; nor to all the apostles, as were the rest; but particularly to three, whom the Lord Jesus chose out. "Jesus taketh Peter, and James, and John, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them," Matt. xvii. 1, 2. Why this revelation was given to those three only, not he that reads it, but he that chose them knows. So far as we may soberly and with due reverence search, the next verse will fitly call on us to consider.

But why did the apostle single out that time and place, more than any other, to exemplify Christ's majesty, and the honour conferred on him by the Father? 1. Because Moses and Elias appeared to him there: in all the rest of his miracles he had no company but men on earth, now he had a testimony from two glorious saints in heaven. His command was known to be great over the creatures below, this was every day conspicuous; but that now it should extend to heaven, here was an ample show of majesty. 2. But especially because he was adorned with celestial glory; his face shining as the sun, and his raiment white as the light. Nothing of earth was seen, but a Divine and heavenly majesty appeared. For this was a little map of heaven, a glimpse or abridgement of that infinite glory. Before his power might appear, but under the veil of his mortal flesh; now the manhood is become glorious. As the fire makes every thing that is cast into it like itself; so the glory circling him, and inherent upon his body, made his humanity glorious like itself.

This was then the most magnificent demonstration of his majesty, where heaven was brought down to earth to illustrate it. He rose from the grave to the earth of the living; there was majesty; for in this he declared himself to be "the Son of God with power, by the resurrection from the dead," Rom. i. 4. He ascended from the earth to heaven; there was majesty. But here he commanded heaven to come down to him; this was the greatest declaration of his majesty. Now he sits in heaven with majesty, "On the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens," Heb. viii. 1. He shall one day come to judge the world with majesty. The Lord hath given him this honour and majesty: "a name which is above every name," Phil. ii. 9. Let us ascribe glory to that majesty, and blessed be his Majesty for ever! Here now it is plain what the apostles saw: the world was eye-witness of his misery, they of his majesty. The world beheld him in the form of a servant, they as their Master and Maker. The world, as a worm, not

a man; they, as the King, of glory. The world, as a thing not desirable: they, as "fairer than the children of men." Psal. xlv. 2. Blessed eyes admitted to this vision! It was St. Augustine's wish to have seen three things: Rome in her glory, Paul in the pulpit, Christ in the flesh. That is now past hope here on earth, our labour must be to see him hereafter in heaven: "Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty," Isa. xxxiii. 17. Lord, give us this vision, this fruition, and we are then blessed for ever.

"Such a voice." This is the second point, the manner how God testified concerning the honour of his Son: by a voice, his own voice. The logicians distinguish between a sound, a voice, and a word. Sound is of insensible things, as lute, organ, &c.; voice, of sensible, but irrational, as beasts; a word, of that which hath both sense and reason, man. Here is a voice, but a word with it. A word is first conceived in the heart, and then uttered by the voice; yet we hear the voice before we know the word. John calls himself, The voice of a crier. Christ the eternal Word, was before John, and all other voices. For, "In the beginning was the Word," John i. 1; and that beginning was before all beginnings, without beginning; yet the world knew not the Word, till it was preached by the voice of men and angels. The Word in itself is before the voice, yet to us the voice goes before the Word: "He that cometh after me, was before me," John i. 15. Tully commends, Socrates' for sweetness, Lysias' for subtilty, Hyperides' for sharpness, Eschines' for shrillness, Demosthenes' for powerfulness; gravity in Africanus, smoothness in Lælius: rare voices! In holy writ we admire a sanctified boldness in Peter, profoundness in Paul, loftiness in John, vehemency in him and his brother James, those two sons of thunder, fervency in Simon the zealous. Among ecclesiastical writers, we admire weight in Tertullian, a gracious composure of well-mattered words in Lactantius, a flowing speech in Cyprian, a familiar stateliness in Chrysostom, a conscionable delight in Bernard, and all these graces in good St. Augustine. Some construed the Scriptures allegorically, as Origen: some literally, as Hierome; some morally, as Gregory; others pathetically, as Chrysostom; others dogmatically, as Augustine. The new writers have their several voices: Peter Martyr copiously judicial; Zanchius judiciously copious. Luther wrote with a coal on the walls of his chamber, *Res et verba Philippus, res sine verbis Lutherus, verba sine re Erasmus, nec res nec verba Carolostadius*. Calvin was behind none, not the best of them, for a sweet dilucidation of the Scriptures, and urging of solid arguments against the antichristians. One is happy in expounding the words, another in delivering the matter, a third for cases of conscience, a fourth to determine the school doubts. But now put all these together; a hundred Peters and Pauls, a thousand Bernards and Augustines, a million of Calvins and Melanctons; let not their voices be once named with this voice. They all spake as children, this is the voice of the Ancient of days. Never spake man as God himself speaketh, John vii. 46. Herod, it seems, had a pleasing voice, when he drew to himself such an acclamation, "It is the voice of a god, and not of a man," Acts xii. 22. But the angel proved, to Herod's confusion, that acclamation to be the voices of men, not of God. But this voice that came from heaven concerning this God and man, was the voice of God, not of man. The angel that talked with Zeebariah spake "good words, and comfortable words," Zech. i. 13. But this voice is the voice of power, the voice of authority, the voice of love, the voice of life. Man hath *verbum potestatis*, power to speak; but God reserves to himself *verbum auctoritatis*, to

speak in power: "Lo, he doth send out his voice, and that a mighty voice," Psal. lxxviii. 33. St. Paul had a powerful voice, when he said to the cripple "with a loud voice, Stand upright on thy feet. And he leaped and walked," Acts xiv. 10. Inasmuch that when the people saw it, they cried, "The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men." St. Peter had a powerful voice, when he persuaded three thousand souls at one sermon. But this voice of power gave power to all their voices. Herodotus tells us of an Egyptian, that had so shrill a voice, that from the promontory of Hister he was heard by Histrans, admiral of Darius, being then at Miletum. But this is the voice that shall one day be heard from one end of the world to the other. Christ here heard the voice of his Father, we shall all hear the voice of Christ: "The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice," John v. 28. This shall be a wonderful voice, terrible to the wicked. When Joseph revealed himself to his brethren, "I am Joseph: they could not answer him, for they were troubled at his presenee," Gen. xlv. 3. But when he added, "I am Joseph your brother," ver. 4; they were then comforted. When Christ shall say to the reprobates, I am Jesus; Jesus whom ye contemned, scorned, persecuted, sacrilegiously robbed, whose servants ye have hated; they shall be confounded. But when he adds to the faithful, I am Jesus your Brother, they shall be with heavenly peace rejoiced. Will you consider the power of the Lord's voice? look at Psal. xxix. "The voice of the Lord divideth the flames of fire." The nightingale hath a sweet voice, but a lean carcass; a voice, and nothing else but a voice; and so have all hypocrites. But the Lord's voice will be against them with a woe: "To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts," Heb. iii. 15. Let us now hear his voice with obedience, lest we one day hear it with a vengeance. *Non vox hominem sonat, O Deus certe*. It is not an ordinary voice, but "such a voice." Saul said to his subject, "Is this thy voice, my son David?" 1 Sam. xxiv. 16. Well may we say, Is this thy voice, O Lord our King? We will then obey it: "I will hear what the Lord will speak; for he will speak peace to his people," Psal. lxxxv. 8. The Lord apply this voice to our hearts, and our hearts to this voice.

"From the excellent glory." This is the last circumstance, the place whence it came. There is a great distance between Mount Tabor and heaven; yet was a voice heard in the hill, which came from that excellent glory. There he glories in the world, but they are not excellent. Israel ascribes glory to Reuben, but he adds an instability to it: "Reuben, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power; unstable as water, thou shalt not excel," Gen. xlix. 3, 4. "Unstable as water," that is, a fluid glory; "thou shalt not excel," there is a bar in the arms. Such is the condition of all worldly glory; but the glory that shall be revealed in us, is an exceeding and eternal weight, 2 Cor. iv. 17. This glory is admirable in four excellencies: for the dignity, for the clarity, for the verity, and for the eternity for it.

I. For dignity, it is a glory; and this hath been the scope of most men's endeavours and reaches. There is not the silliest artisan, manuary, or mechanic, but would be glorious for something. Mutius Scevola burnt his own hand for striking amiss, Curtius in glittering armour, mounted on his horse, cast himself headlong into a gulf, to deliver his country from the plague: *Vicit amor patriæ, laudumque immensa cupido*. If they did thus for a puff, what should we do for this excellent glory! The citizens of Tyre are said to have been companions

unto princes, Isa. xxiii. 8: but in this glory, every citizen is a crowned king: none but kings are free-men of that incorporation; where a man shall see what he liketh, have what he delighteth, and enjoy it without envy, without end. *Non est timor in finibus tuis, quia Dominus posuit fines tuos pacem.* There is no fear in the borders of it, for the Lord hath compassed it with peace for ever.

2. For clarity; it is not a hidden, but, as St. Paul saith, a revealed glory. It is now indeed hidden; but "when Christ our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory," Col. iii. 4. Clear, both for condition, it shall be excellent; for cognition and apprehension, it shall be seen in the full excellency of it. It is an everlasting solstice: the length is interminable, the brightness unchangeable, the fulness unwearable. (Bern.) Our very bodies shall be made glorious; The righteous shall shine as the sun, Matt. xiii. 43. What shall be the glory of our souls, when the sun itself shall not equal the glory of our bodies! (Bern.) If the glory of the body be but the body of glory, then the soul of glory is the glory of the soul. Yea, then the sun shall septuple his own glory, and we shall entuple the glory of the sun. It is a glory to the firmament, that it is stuck full of such shining lamps, a thousand times excelling the lustre of precious stones. O then think what it will be, to walk in the courts of heaven, and to behold so many millions of stars; spiritual and intellectual stars; a sight able to ravish us! If they that dwell in the courts of kings make such a glorious show with their garments, borrowed from worms, or from the earth's excremental bowels; what a delightful sight will it be to behold the splendour of God's own immortal courtiers!

3. For verity; it shall be indeed, not in show only, but upon us. The worldling is all glorious without, but "the King's daughter is all glorious within," Psal. xlv. 13. That is a shadow, this a substance. Civil honour, says the philosopher, is not in the person honoured, but honouring. The worldling's glory depends on the possession of vain matters, and the breath of vain men, therefore hath no true being; but this is a true and substantial glory, because affixed to Him whose glory is immutable. "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us an exceeding and eternal weight of glory," 2 Cor. iv. 17. The cross is light, the crown weighty. The cross but for a moment, the crown for ever. The pleasures of sin are but for a season; therefore nothing, being compared with that infinite weight of eternal wrath. But as the seven years of famine in Egypt did quite eat up the seven years of plenty, so the reprobates' endless pains shall eat up their short pleasures. On the contrary, there is a time to weep, and a time to laugh: the good man "shall not much remember the days of his life; because God answereth him in the joy of his heart," Eccl. v. 20: not much remember it, not at all. Therefore let us not seek for that in our journey, which is only to be found in our country. (August.) Let the world take these shadows; it is a portion my soul desireth not, only may she be sped of this substantial glory through Jesus Christ.

4. For the eternity; if it had an end, it were not excellent. We see commonly, that high glories here waste themselves, and go out in stench, like great candles in windy houses: that can be no excellent glory. If we love this life, which we feel to be miserable, and know will end; how should we love that life, where is no fear, either to die, or to live in trouble! nothing but happy eternity, and eternal felicity. "In my Father's house are many mansions," John xiv. 2: here we have no abiding city, but dwell

in tabernacles, set up to-day, and pulled down to-morrow. Our best houses on earth, let them be never so glorious; if it were possible, let their walls be of gold, and their windows of sapphire; yet they are no better than inns for strangers. But our mansions in heaven abide for ever. "I go to prepare a place for you," saith Christ: but it is said, "Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world," Matt. xxv. 34. These were prepared before; how then did Christ go to prepare them? St. Augustine answers, They were prepared from everlasting, but the men that should inhabit them were unprepared. *Parat quodammodo mansiones, mansionibus parando menses.* He went first to take possession of this kingdom, and there sets open the doors of those prepared mansions for us.

Here is then the figure of heaven: it is glory, therefore excellent; yea, substantial glory, more excellent; yea, a crown of glory, most excellent. It is a kingdom, and a kingdom that cannot be moved. It is an inheritance, and an immortal inheritance; all excellent. It is excellent, and a glory; yea, "the excellent glory." What wouldst thou have? Is any thing better than life? Is any life better than a life of glory? Is any glory better than a kingdom of glory? Is any kingdom surer than the kingdom of heaven? Yet this kingdom, this life, this glory, this excellent glory, is prepared for us. The Lord hath prepared this excellent glory for us; the Lord prepare us for this excellent glory.

"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." This is the last general circumstance of the verse; the matter and substance of the testimony from the Father. "This;" the word shows him to be that Messiah, long before prophesied, presently after the fall promised, ere the world was purposed, and now manifested. This, singularly; not another, but this is he. "My Son," consubstantially, because begotten of mine own substance. Originally mine, by union of nature; though in him others be made mine also, by adoption of grace. "Beloved," eternally; not in time accepted, but before all beginning begotten. "In whom I am well pleased," and never was offended: all other men were the children of wrath, I could not be pleased with them; but in this Son I rest. He pleaseth the Father by himself, all other only by him. Here is *proprietas personæ, unitas naturæ, dignitas gratiæ, felicitas meriti*. "This is," there is the propriety of person; "my Son," there is the unity of nature; "beloved" Son, there is the dignity of grace; "in whom I am well pleased," there is the felicity of merit; in him well pleased; in all with him, in none without him: in himself without all, before all, above all. Here is the testimony, "This is my beloved Son," &c. For method's sake we observe in this heavenly voice three notes:

Distinctionem personæ. This is my Son.

Dilectionem distincti. My beloved Son.

Sufficientiam dilecti. In whom I am well pleased.

"This is my Son." Son; this distinguisheth his person: father and son are relatives, one depending necessarily on the other. "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest," Luke i. 32. With this Christ opposed the Jews, that questioned him concerning the Son of David. If David called him Lord, he must needs be the Son of God. Now he is the Son of God two ways: first, by nature, of the eternal substance of his Father: not after a carnal manner, for he parted with no substance, nor suffered any change, loss, or diminution. Secondly, as he was the son of Mary: and this other sonship in regard of God, was not by nature, nor by adoption, for then there had been a time when he was not the Son of God, but by personal union. The man Christ

never was a person of itself, but was at the first personally united to the Son of God. The son of Mary was ever the Son of God, but the Son of God was not ever or always the son of Mary. This was necessary, saith Augustine, that the Mediator between God and man should be of the natures both of God and man; lest being in every respect God, he had been too great to suffer for man; or being in every respect man, he had been too weak to satisfy God. God of God, God the Son of God the Father. (Full-gent.) If he were the same person, how is he here called a Son? if he were not the same nature, how is he called my Son? *Son*, thou art therefore another person: *my Son*, thou art therefore the same God.

This filiality doth not challenge him of inferiority to God. But he is said to be "in the form of God;" yet it is added, he "thought it not robbery to be equal with God," Phil. ii. 6. So it is said, that he "took upon him the form of a servant," ver. 7. If the form of a servant be the nature of man, then the form of God is the very nature of God. This the Jews could easily interpret: "He said that God was his Father, making himself equal with God," John v. 18. When he called God his Father, they could presently infer, that he made himself equal with God; and that is no other thing, than to be true God in nature and subsistence. Always with the Father, always of the Father, always in the Father, always the same God that the Father. (Lomb.) So also very man, of man's flesh, according to man's nature, for man's sake, above man's condition. "The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son: this day have I begotten thee," Psal. ii. 7. This might be said by God to David in type, but only agrees to Christ in truth. David indeed was God's son, as he was a man, as he was a king, as he was a saint. 1. As man; so are all men: "We are also his offspring," Acts xvii. 28. "He made us, and not we ourselves," Psal. c. 3; therefore we are his sons. "Is not thy Father that made thee?" Deut. xxxii. 6. 2. As king; for all princes are the "children of the Most High," Psal. lxxxii. 6. 3. Lastly, as a sanctified man; for he that is new-born is the son of God; "He cannot sin, because he is born of God," 1 John iii. 9. But this title most properly belongs to Christ, and that in respect of his generation temporal and eternal. Some construe it of his temporary birth, because to-day in the Scripture signifies this present life: "While it is called to-day," Heb. iii. 13. "Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee," Heb. v. 5; that is, to-day I have brought my begotten Son into the world. So Heb. i. 6, "When he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world." Begotten before all beginning, but made flesh in time; proposed to the world in human flesh, at the decreed fulness of time. Others understand it of Christ's eternal generation: "My Son;" others are my sons improperly, but thou art properly my Son; my natural, singular, substantial Son. A Son, not by creation, as the whole world is; not through adoption, as the whole church is; but by nature and incommunicable generation, as himself only is; the first-begotten, the only-begotten, the express character of his person, and brightness of his glory. But there is then exception against the word to-day: why to-day my Son, whereas for ever his Son? (August.) With God it never is yesterday, nor to-morrow, but always to-day: all times are present with him. Where never was nor can be night, must needs be eternal day.

"My Son." This flesh that stuns before you, is the natural Son of God; which gives us to understand, the infinite honour that belongs to Jesus Christ. Though our nature was once poor and wretched through our degeneration, yet now it is made

noble and blessed through this personal union. And the Lord Jesus did habitually honour it, even above the nature of angels, Heb. ii. 16. For Christ in his very birth was the most excellent and noble man that ever was; and that both by Father's side and mother's side. By Father, being the Son of Almighty God; by mother, descending of the patriarchs and renowned kings of Judah; a truly great Prince! Wherein consists a kingdom? In authority? He doth whatsoever he will, "in heaven, in earth, in the sea, and all deep places," Psal. cxxxv. 6. In power? "The winds and the sea obey him," Matt. viii. 27. In multitude of subjects? Angels, saints, and all kings are his subjects; either voluntary, or against their wills: He "standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods," Psal. lxxxii. 1. In abundance? "In thy presence is fulness of joy," Psal. xvi. 11. In continuance? "He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end," Luke i. 33. In amplitude and largeness? The heaven is his, and the earth is his, and the fulness of them both, Psal. xxxix. 11. In subduing enemies? Bring those mine enemies, that would not have me reign over them, and slay them before me, Luke xix. 27.

The faithful do not hold Christ in small account, because of his poor estate in this world; but prefer him to nobles and kings. They had no such herald to blazon their arms as he; even John the Baptist, not a greater born of women, Matt. xi. 11. Yea, here even God himself with a voice from heaven proclaims it. They have no such memorial of their antiquity as he, whom St. Luke lines from Adam. St. Matthew derives from David and Abraham. It is impossible for them; for there is no such instructor of antiquity, or recorder of genealogy, as the Holy Ghost. Great monarchs have long and tedious titles; Christ is short in sound, but eternal in sense; "This is my beloved Son."

This gives comfort to us; for Christ being so royal, and taking our flesh, conveys part of his nobleness to us. Men stand much on their blood, and the pedigree of their ancestors; as if nobleness consisted in that which descends from man to man. All true and weighty honour is fetched from Christ. Not my birth, but my Christianity, makes me noble, said that noble martyr, Romanus. To as many as received Christ, he gave power to be the sons of God, John i. 12. This ingrafting to Jesus, is the dignity, true blood royal of God himself. Not generation, but regeneration, is truly noble. Sanctification is the best ornament of blood, the worthiest part of the honourable scutcheon, the fairest flower in the gentleman's garland. It is no discredit to men's honours, to honour Him. We love to peruse the genealogy of princes, and succession of states; but what are these to us? we are not heirs to those honours. But if Christ's title be good, ours is good in him. Thus we are enriched with the whole world. "Whether the world, things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's," 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23. But because the wicked have this world, that have no right unto it; therefore "Fear not, little flock; it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom," Luke xii. 32. Be we never so poor, even the contempt of this world, rich men scorn our acquaintance; yet he that is the only Son of God is not ashamed to call us brethren, Heb. ii. 11. An earthly prince may honour much, by ennobling a subject with princely apparel, investing his head with the crown royal, and mounting his person in the king's own chariot, Esth. vi. 8. But Christ doth honour infinitely more, by adorning us with white garments, palms in our hands, and crowns on

our heads, and that before the angels in heaven. Such honour have all his saints, Psal. cxlix. 9.

"This is my Son." This is he, which the prophets prefigured, the types prefigured, the Lord himself promised, the gospel presented, and is now universally preached; this is He. Elias was a great prophet, but not He: John Baptist was more than a prophet, but not He: he was not that Light, but a witness of it, John i. 8. This is He. He that fulfilled all the prophecies, performed all the promises, ended all the ceremonies; this is He. Hagar and Ishmael were kept in Abraham's house till Isaac was born and weaned; so were ceremonies reserved in the church till Christ was dead and risen. They were like a mould, wherinto we cast a bell: when the metal is run, and the bell made, we throw away the mould. He that was crucified himself, crucified all these. The Philistines ask for Samson: Who is he that hath given us so many overthrows, triumphed in our ruins? This is he. So, who is that strong God, that could say to the gates of death and hell, Ephphata, be ye opened? This is He. Who is he that conquered the devil, foiled death in his own throne, led captivity captive, overcame sin that overcame the whole world, that pacified an infinite wrath, that made way to an infinite glory; who? This is He; this is my beloved Son.

"Beloved Son." God's love to his Son is eternal, infinite, inexpressible. "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand," John iii. 35. "Thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world," John xvii. 24. He "translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son," Col. i. 13. "His dear Son;" the Son of his love: 1. Because he is most worthy of all to be loved: as Judas is called the son of perdition, because he was most worthy to be destroyed. 2. Because he was begotten of his Father's love from everlasting. 3. Because he is infinitely filled with this love. So they are said to be children of the bride-chamber, that are full of joy in respect of the wedding. 4. Because he makes other sons to be beloved. *Filius dilectus, qui facit dilectos*. 5. In respect of his human nature; for God poured his love upon him with gifts beyond measure, wherewith that nature is admirably qualified. "Beloved;" here are two scandals taken away by this word. First, that we may not think Christ to be sent in the flesh from God the Father being angry; for he is his beloved Son. Next, that when we are afflicted, we should not think ourselves to be the less beloved of God; for he loves the son whom he scourges.

But how appears this love, when God did so cast him down that he seemed even to hate him? "The Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger," Lam. i. 12. God afflicts some in mercy, but this was in wrath. In his wrath God is not alike to all; some he afflicts more mildly; but this was in his fierce wrath. His sufferings, his sweat, and cup, import so much: they could not come but from a wrath whereof never was the like. Two things especially may seem to abate the Father's love to his Son. First, his sweat in the garden; which "was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground," Luke xxii. 44. When no manner of violence was offered him in body, none touching him; in a cold night, for they were glad of a fire within-doors; lying abroad in the air, and upon the cold earth; to be all of a sweat, and that sweat to be blood, and that not a thin, faint one, but of great drops, and those so many as went through his apparel, and streamed to the ground in abundance! never was the like sweat. But, secondly, to be in this distress, and then to want comfort! This was his most sorrowful complaint: not that his friends on earth, but that his Father from heaven, had for-

saken him. So that between the passioned powers of his soul, and whatsoever might refresh him, there was a traverse drawn: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Martyrs in their most exquisite pains had some cheerfulness. Augustine answers, God did not deliver them, but did he forsake them? He freed not their bodies, he left not their souls. But here, Thou hast forsaken me. How then was he beloved? The influence was for the time restrained, the power of darkness let loose to afflict him, and the vision of comfort not permitted to relieve him; yet still the Lord loved him. But this shows how immensely God loved us, when he seemed to forsake his Son for a time, that he might embrace his servants for ever. Yea, how much Christ loved us, that would be content to suffer a sense of this desertion for awhile, that we might not be eternally lost. Thou wast forsaken for us; let not us forsake thee, neither do thou forsake us, O blessed Jesus!

"In whom I am well pleased." This was a voice never heard since the fall of man till that instant. That God was justly angry with the world, it was manifest; but to have him now pleased with the world, or any man in it, this was rare and sweet. Never was man born before of woman that had this grace. Though it were said to Mary, Hail, thou art highly honoured, or much graced; yet this was for her Son's sake: the honour done to the mother, was for the merit of the Son. The Father took all delight in the Son; "Behold mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth," Isa. xlii. 1; and in him only he is delighted with us. Cursed is that religion, that makes him but a chief Saviour, and requires other concurring helps: we must have only Christ, and wholly Christ. Our prayers are heard only through him, our wounds healed only by him, our souls saved only in him. To what end should we join others with him, seeing all are beloved only for him? Let this make all sin abhorred of us, for if we displease the Son, how shall we please the Father? The Father will be pleased with none, but for the Son's sake. O then let us always seek to please the Son. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and so ye perish, Psal. ii. 12. O dear Saviour, give us hearts to love thee, and faith to trust thee, and grace to please thee, that God may be pleased with us in thee.

This Son of God hath made us also sons: God hath right to us *jure proprietatis*, so hath the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; and *jure propinquitatis*, so hath Christ only, for he was akin to us. Christ is both our Brother and our Father. Our Father as he is God; our Brother as he is man: "He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren," Heb. ii. 11. This is the Son, that makes us sons: To as many as receive him, he gives power to become the sons of God, John i. 12. Christ is the Son of God, but not of the Trinity; we are the sons of God, and of the whole Trinity; he by nature, we by grace. It was the ambition of the heathens, to forget their own parents, and to derive themselves from the parentage of some god; as Alexander from Jupiter, &c. Behold, as Christ hath honour naturally, so we graciously in him, to be called the sons of God. How great is this happiness, to be the Almighty's sons! But perhaps there are divers younger brothers, landless. No, they are all heirs; there is not a child of God's, but shall inherit the kingdom. *Quid Pater negabit filiis, qui hoc dignatus est ut sit Pater?* What will the Father deny to his children, who hath already thus far honoured them, to be their Father? "He that spared not his own Son for us, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Rom. viii. 32. *Nonne dabit suo, qui non detinuit se?* Will he deny us

his goods, that hath given us himself? *Qui dabit se in meritum, dabit et sua in premium*, He that parted with himself to merit for us, will not withhold his mercies to crown us. As Abraham's servant said of Isaac to Rebekah, He is my master's only son, and to him he gives all that he hath, Gen. xxiv. 36; so if God give us his only Son, he will give us all things with him. Therefore was the Son of God made the Son of man, that the sons of men might be made the sons of God.

All love that comes from God to us, is through his Son: "That the world may know, that thou hast loved them, as thou hast loved me," John xvii. 23. Christ desireth it, the Father will not deny it. Christ is God's Beloved, and we are Christ's beloved. All things are ours, because we are Christ's, and Christ is God's. When we consider how infinitely God loves Christ, and how infinitely Christ loveth us, we cannot despair. The Father and the Son are two in person, but one in desire. It is not possible for he should be hated for whom Christ suffered. Hence it follows, that God will not fail to lift us up to the place where his own Beloved is. "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am," John xvii. 24. We shall also be glorified together with him, Rom. viii. 17. It had been a great favour to be admitted for door-keepers in his house; great satisfaction to have our sins pardoned, and that the Lord would be friends with us, considering our rebellion. But to be restored to that Paradise which Adam lost; this had been more; but to be advanced further and higher than ever Adam was, even to the Lord's own throne; this is most of all. If all men's hearts were one heart, it could not comprehend the measure of this love. God hath life, for he is the sole fountain of it; but how shall we come at it? Who shall approach "the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" Isa. xxxiii. 14. Yes, the blood of the Son hath qualified this fire, and quenched the wrath of the Father: thus that life is made ours. "God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son," 1 John v. 11. Excellent favour, not only to give us place and grace with the angels, but even with his own Son! We are made lords of all creatures but the angels; and our Head, Jesus, is also Head of the angels. For his sake they are all ministering spirits, for the good of all those that are the heirs of salvation, Heb. i. 14. If we be thus loved in the Beloved, we may be sure of all necessary things. For how-soever God hath distinguished the things of this world in a property, yet we have such interest in them, that the sun should not shine, nor the world stand, but for the elect's sake. The wicked are excluded from the tree of life, and therefore from all things that should prolong life; and though they be fit on earth, yet they shall have double torment for their single meritment: for they are never in their own house till they be in hell, Acts i. 25. For us, they shall be as well able to save themselves without God, as to hurt us having God; and the worst they can do, is but to send us to God; and our desire is to be with God for ever.

To conclude, Christ was God's Son, his only beloved Son; we servants, hateful servants; yet was this Son born and slain for these servants. This is the point we are bound to consider: how far God suspended his love to his Son, and extended his love to his servants; even so far, that this Son of Love died for those sons of wrath. Here methinks we should even stay and wonder. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God," 1 John iii. 1. This is a depth that cannot be sounded; cold language may utter it, and regard us attention here it; but

men and angels stand amazed at it. That the Creator should die for the creature; that the Son of God, and the servant of man, should meet in one person! That the same who is the Lord of all, should be made our sacrifice; that the Son of love should die for the sons of wrath! There have been many demonstrations of love in the world. Reuben yielded much to his father; "Slay my two sons, if I bring him not to thee," Gen. xlii. 37: it was in the behalf of Benjamin. Here were two sons to be lost, if their uncle was lost. His own sons were dear to him, as the objects of a descending love; but intrusted to their grandfather, whose love commonly transcends an immediate father's. Judah tenders more for Benjamin; "I will be surety for him; of my hand shalt thou require him," Gen. xliii. 9; he engaged himself, but it was a son ventured upon the mercy of his father. He goes further when Joseph offered to detain Benjamin, for whom Judah had thus interposed himself; he tenders his own person for redemption; "I pray thee, let thy servant abide instead of the lad a bond-man to my lord; and let the lad go up with his brethren," Gen. xlv. 33. Yet he would be but a bond-man, and that for his brother, and that in respect of his father; and all to save all from the destruction of famine. Therefore this is a poor pattern to match with the love of God, that did not deliver up a son for the father's sake, or compelled by any exigent; but for his enemies, and that with a voluntary donation. The poet speaks of a great love betwixt Nisus and Euryalus; *Me, me, adsum qui feci, in me convertite ferrum: mea fraus omnis, nihil isle nec ausus, nec potuit*.

Two friends are said to come into Vulcan's shop, and to beg a boon of him: it was granted. What was it? that he would either beat them on his anvil, or melt them in his furnace, both into one. But without fiction, here is a far greater love in Christ; for he would be melted in the furnace of wrath, and beaten on the anvil of death, to be made one with us. And to declare the exceeding love, here were not both to be beaten on the anvil, or melted in the furnace; but without us, he alone would be beaten on the anvil, he alone melted, that we might be spared. "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all," Isa. liii. 6. They talk of an Athenian king, that offered his own life to save his people. And no doubt the zeal of Moses and Paul was great, when they desired to perish themselves for the redemption of others. Jonathan's love was great to David, hazarding his own life for him; "Thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women," 2 Sam. i. 26. David's love was great to an evil son, "Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!" 2 Sam. xviii. 33. Alas, all these copies are short of this original. Come we yet nearer: Abraham had but one son, the son of his old age, likely to have no more; the heir of his estate, the pledge of the promise of his salvation: yet in love to his Commander, he suffered him, not to be banished, but killed; not behind his back, but before his own face; not by another, but by his own hand. This was much; yet it was but to lose a son for a Father, a mortal son for an immortal Father, that could give him more sons, or raise up that son again to life. But here God did give a Son, not for an immortal father, but for mortal enemies. He loved him ten thousand degrees better than Abraham could love Isaac; yet he gave this Son, not by command, as Abraham, but willingly; not into the hands of them that sorrowed to kill him, but to butchers that delighted to torment him; not for his friends, as Abraham did, but for traitors that would have pulled him out of his throne; not to a death that only parts

body and soul, and instantly directs to heaven, as Isaac's should, but to a death cursed and detestable: this not to be done in a secret place, as Abraham's was appointed, but before all his scornful enemies; not to die as an innocent, like Isaac, but to hang as a notorious sinner; his accusation being no less than blasphemy; to have a murderer preferred before him in the people's opinion; to be scorned of the basest, whose fathers he might disdain to set with the dogs of his flock, Job xxx. 1. Yea, and which is yet most: while all this is doing on earth, that even then his Father should arraign him above; that he should take off the burden of vengeance from the head of his adversaries, and lay it all on his Son. The comfort of all comforts is from above: Let all forsake me, but let not my Father leave me: but the Lord afflicted him. The high priest took him to be an offender in his own person, but God took him to be an offender in our person. He that deserved no sorrow, felt much; that we who deserved much, might feel none: by his wounds we are healed.

Now take the Person upon whom as one centre all these sorrows met: my text says, it "is my beloved Son." Son; this is enough: man loves his own son, the walking image of himself. Mine; that is more, the Son of God; as is the person, so is the passion. Beloved; if possible, yet more; for the love of God far transcends all love of man. If he had been but as Pilate said, "Behold the man," it was much; we pity a dumb creature suffering this, much more a man. Yea, but he was a righteous man, says the judge's wife: now we pity malefactors, much more the innocent. Yea, besides his integrity, he was a noble person, a royal Prince; for whom men might justly complain, Alas, that noble Prince. All these are short: this, Behold the Man, behold the Lamb, behold the Prince, are true, but not enough. Here, Behold my Son, as the centurion acknowledged, Truly this is the Son of God, is above all gradation. If he had not been the Son of God, it had been impossible for him to sustain it; and yet being thus, he was brought so low that an angel was despatched from heaven to comfort him. Here all words forsake us, we bless the Lord, and hold our peace.

Take the sum of this application. We have heard much of God's Son, and of his dearness to the Father. Now join with it another text; "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son," John iii. 16. Here meditate, wonder, and weigh the sentence; who, what, how, to what end. Who loved? God; that made us his friends by creation; whose enemies we made ourselves by prevarication. What did he love? The world: a bad world, a mad world, a blind world, a bloody world; that hated him and all his, John xv. 19. It was no wonder that he should love the angels, for they serve him; or the very reasonless creatures, for they obey him; but that he should love the rebellious and hateful world, this is boundless mercy! How did he love it? So that he gave his only begotten Son. If, like Gideon, he had had threescore and ten sons, Judg. viii. 30, it had been much to part with one of them; but his only Son! Jacob rent his clothes, and went mourning in sackcloth many days, for losing one son of twelve, Gen. xxxvii. 34. Even a harlot pitied the fruit of her womb, and her bowels yearned upon her son: "O my lord, give her the living child, and in nowise slay it," 1 Kings iii. 26: but God gave the only Son of his love. To what end? "That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Where observe two things; the felicity that is gotten, and the facility to get it. The felicity consists of two things; a deliverance, and an inheritance. He shall not perish; there is the de-

liverance. He shall have everlasting life; there is the inheritance. For the facility; it is not to keep the law, but only to believe. Lord, what is man, that thou shouldst so regard him? Psal. viii. 4. Yea, that to regard him, thou didst not regard thyself? It is reported of a great soldier, that the very jingling of his spur was a terror to his enemies. So the very sound of this text makes all the devils in hell roar, all the foes of man's salvation to quake. This is the Christian's armoury, that "tower of David, whereon there hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men," Cant. iv. 4. If thy conscience be assaulted with guiltiness of thy sins, remember first that this Christ was the Son of God, and then that this Son was given for the world. God gave not a servant, but a Son; not another's, but his own Son; not one of many, but his only Son. If Satan now object, Yes, but he gave him only for the holy and just; answer, Nay, he so loved the world; *mundum immundum*: *mundum*, therefore *mundum*; he gave him not for the righteous, but for sinners. I am of that number, therefore I have my part in that favour. Paul says, "Put on the whole armour of God," Eph. vi. 11; and, "Put on the Lord Jesus Christ," Rom. xiii. 14. In the one place, all those pieces of armour is but the Lord Jesus taken asunder; in the other, the whole armour is but the Lord Jesus put together. "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry," Psal. ii. 12. To make peace with the Father, kiss the Son. "Let him kiss me," was the church's prayer, Cant. i. 2: let us kiss him, that be our endeavour. Indeed, the Son must first kiss us by his mercy, before we can kiss him by our piety. Lord, grant us these mutual kisses and interchangeable embraces now, that we may come to the plenary wedding supper hereafter; when the choir of heaven, even the voices of angels, shall sing epithalamiums, nuptial songs, at the bridal of the spouse to the Lamb.

VERSE 18.

And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.

This is a clear description of the place where they had that heavenly vision, "the holy mount." Before he professed them eye-witnesses, now also ear-witnesses. This voice came not in secret, it was no whispering voice; not in terror, it was no thundering voice; not in a strange language, it was no unintelligible voice. It was not like the voice at Babel, confused. At the building of Babel there were strange tongues, that one could not understand another; at the building of Zion were also strange tongues, but readily understood, Acts ii. This voice they heard, this they understood, this they declared.

The body of this verse reflects upon the transfiguration of Christ, whereof we shall find many considerable members. But first let us look upon the outside of the text, and the garments it wears. There is,

Something vocal, a voice, This voice which came, &c.

Something local, a place, In the holy mount.

There are two annexions to these two circumstances.

To the voice, audience, This voice we heard.

To the place, presence, We were with him.

"This voice which came from heaven." First for the vocal part. We have already considered, what this voice was, and from whence it came. Here is

only some variation of the latter phrase; there it was "from the excellent glory;" here it is "from heaven." Now, as when Paul, speaking of his rapture and revelation, says in one place that he was caught up to the third heaven, and in another, into paradise, 2 Cor. xii. 2, 4; we may safely infer, that paradise is heaven, a place of infinite joy: so finding that here called heaven, which was before called glory, we conclude that it is a place of infinite glory. The earth had many cities, only Jerusalem was the holy city: many mountains, but Zion was the mount of joy; "The joy of the whole earth is Mount Zion," Psal. xlviii. 2. The courts of princes have glorious shows, only the court of God hath "the excellent glory." The Athenians thought all the world, as barbarous in knowledge, so infamous in honour, in respect of Athens; therefore they would go heavily forth, but make haste home. We know that to be true of our country, what they dreamed of Athens: the pride of the world is vanity of vanities, the meanness of heaven is glory of glories.

Good things are known by their contraries, where they cannot be seen in their own perfections. To contemplate this glory, let us look lower than heaven, upon earth; lower than earth, upon hell; and so learn to judge of heaven.

Look upon this world, what is found in it but vanity, which is evil? misery, which is worse? iniquity, which is worst of all? For vanity; there have you some building houses, as the ostriches lay eggs, or as children make ovens, to bake no bread in: there is vanity. Another wastes his time, brains, means, to find out ridiculous projects; only studies tricks; as if his soul could be made happy by a trick: there is vanity. Another sweats, not for riches, which is also vain; but for the barren air of empty commendation, which is most vain. The world itself is vanity, and a mistress that makes her idolaters most vain; if you look upon her, she will beguile you; if you kiss her, she will bewitch you. For miseries: one shakes a pained head, another roars for the torment of his reins, a third complains the racking of his gouty joints; another is half dead with a palsy, that it may be said of him, more truly than of seafarers, he is neither amongst the living nor amongst the dead. Which of this whole multitude can say he is so well, that he feels no distemper? Show me the man that says he ails nothing, and I will answer, that he is in most danger: the proximity to death is the insensibility of sickness. *Ingressus debilis, progressus labilis, egressus flebilis*, (Bern.) Our entrance is full of weakness, our proceeding full of wickedness, our departure full of wretchedness. If thy body be healthful, doth nothing about thy estate, thy friends, thy neighbours, thy children, trouble thee? Lastly, for iniquity; this is a moral corruption, worse than that mortal corruption. There fly a crew of oaths, like night-ravens. There stalks pride, blustering through the streets; the language of whose pace is, Who makes me? Drunkenness is reeling to the ground, and uncleanness strives to hold it up. Hypocrites dare lie God in the face, as if he had no window into the heart; or He that hath eyes like a flame of fire, could see men no otherwise from heaven, than the half-cured man in the gospel, that saw them walking like trees. Profane persons swear, as dogs bark, not ever for earnestness, but for custom. If these external offences did not vex thee, yet thou hast enough at home; ever sinning, before, after, yea, even while thou repentest. None of these conveniences are in heaven. No misery, but habitation with God, near whom sorrow can never come. No vanity, for the former things are passed away. No iniquity, for God shall make all things new, Rev. xxi. 3—5.

"Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb," Rev. xix. 9. Feasts have more than ordinary diet; marriage feasts more than common abundance. This exceeds all; new wine, pure manna, great cheer, and an answerable welcome. "Eat, O friends, drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved," Cant. v. 1.

Look yet lower, and consider the infernal pit, full of horror and amazement; where is no remission of sin, no dismissal of pain, no intermission of sense, no permission of comfort, (Bern.) Where friend shall cry to friend; *Percute, dilacera; infer prius, et bullantibus impone lebetibus*. That Parisian massacre was but a fence school to this bloody field: yet think of that dismal cry there; of enemies insulting and butchering. Kill, kill; of innocents suffering and dying. Save, save. But, "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth," Matt. viii. 12. Weeping, for the fire that never shall be quenched; gnashing of teeth, for the gnawing worm that shall never be satisfied, (Bern.) Weeping of eyes, the effect of a passive agony; gnashing of teeth, the effect of an impatient fury, (Gregor.) If the rod of affliction which scourgeth the dear ones of God be so smart, what are their plagues, in whose righteous confusion God insulteth: "I will avenge me of mine enemies!" Isa. i. 24. Bernard observes on the 25th of St. Matthew, That the blessed are first called to the kingdom, before the cursed be cast into thralldom; that the ungodly may be the more vexed, seeing what joys they have missed; and the faithful the more solaced, seeing what sorrows they have escaped. If our mortal eyes were suffered to view the horrors of that lake, how would we loathe sin which only can endanger us thither!

Thus because I cannot tell you what heaven is, I have showed you what it is not. For the pleasures of that place, let us not so much stand to examine what they be, as whether they belong to us. Inquire not too curiously of them, as Manoah did for the angel's name, lest thou receive such a snib: "Why askest thou this after my name, seeing it is secret?" Judge. xiii. 17, 18. It is secret, or wonderful; the original signifies both. So this excellent glory of heaven is both wonderful and secret. When a servant was carrying a covered mess, another was inquisitive what might be in it: the bearer answered, To what end then was it covered? The covering of this mystery, as it denies intelligence, so it forbids inquisition. There is now no window to look into it; there is a door for our foot to enter into it: let us take it at a venture, it is the best match we can make; and the Lord bring us to it through the merits of Jesus Christ.

"We heard this voice." The circumstance annexed to this vocal part, is audience; "we heard." Formerly there was provision for the eye, now God supplies the ear also. There we have seen his majesty, here we have heard his testimony. The object to the eye was the glory of the person exhibited; the object to the ear was the voice of the person witnessing. These are the two principal organs of sense; and the wise love of God by the exercise of them both, brings us to a certain persuasion of these holy mysteries. It is a philosophical question, whether of these senses be better in itself. To answer according to nature, certainly the sight is most excellent; both for celerity and perspicacity, quickness and sharpness. *Segnius irritant animos defixa per aures*. But according to grace, for the benefit of the soul, hearing far excelleth; and that both for amplitude and altitude. 1. For amplitude. We see not many things in comparison of them we hear. Few can say, "I have seen all the works that are done

under the sun," Eccl. i. 14. Unless he mean by all works, all kind of works; or by vision, consideration; as there certainly Solomon doth. But we have heard what Solomon saw; a large inventory of worldly things, the total sum whereof is vanity. The actions and events of former times are brought home to us by hearing, whose authors and agents went to darkness before we came to light: we have heard far more than seen. 2. For altitude. We have heard higher things than we have seen. The eye may reach almost to the ceiling of this lower world, but it cannot pierce the pavement of heaven. The ear hears what is done within those everlasting doors: that God beholds our thoughts, and accepts his Son's intercession and merits for us. "As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of our God," Psal. xlviii. 8: first heard, then afterwards come to see. "Lo, we heard of it at Ephratah," Psal. cxxxii. 6, a strange land; but we only shall see it in Mount Zion, in the glorious kingdom above. Let a deaf man see some new and strange object, the husk, colour, and visible part is only apprehended by him: let his ear be open to discourse, and relation shall give him the intelligible sense.

The queen of Sheba's eye was pleased with Solomon's royalty, but her ear was more ravished with his wisdom: I believed not the report of thy glory, until mine eyes had seen it, 1 Kings x. 7: there she saw. But the thing she most admired and blessed, was his wisdom, let into her soul by her ear; Happy are they that hear thy wisdom, ver. 8. "Blessed are your eyes, for they see," Matt. xiii. 16; that was proper to the disciples: "Blessed are your ears, for they hear;" that blessing is left to us. But blessed are the hearts that understand and embrace, this is the height of blessedness: "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed," John xx. 29. We may believe without seeing, but how shall we believe without hearing? For "faith cometh by hearing," Rom. x. 17. But saith Augustine, Seeing is applied to all the senses. To tasting; "Taste and see that the Lord is good," Psal. xxxiv. 8. To touching or feeling; "Thou wilt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption," Psal. xvi. 10; that is, to feel corruption. He that keeps my sayings, "shall never see death," John viii. 51; that is, feel destruction. To suffer is sensibly to feel, yet called, to see, John xx. 27, "Reach hither thy finger, and see my hands." Had Thomas his eyes in his fingers? if not, then seeing is touching. To smelling: Smell and see how sweet the flower is. Taste and see how well the fruit relisheth. Touch and see how I am wounded. So, Hear and see how pleasant the music is. The phrase is not unknown to the Scriptures; "I turned to see the voice that spake with me," Rev. i. 12. To see the voice, for the person that utter it. Or else, *video* is put for *intelligo*: I see mentally, not elementally. "The man of wisdom shall see thy name," Micah vi. 9, that is, understand it.

The eye as a mere organ of sense, must give place to the ear. Therefore it is wittily observed, that our Saviour commanding the abscision of the offending hand, foot, and eye, Mark ix. 43—47, yet never spake of the ear: If thy hand, thy foot, or thine eye, cause thee to offend, deprive thyself of them; but part not with thine ear, for that is an organ to derive unto thy soul salvation. As Christ says there, a man may enter into heaven, lamed in his feet, as Mephibosheth, blind in his sight, as Barzillai, maimed in his hand, as the dry-handed man in the Gospel; but if there be not an ear to hear of the way, there will be no foot to enter into heaven. If God be not first in the ear, he is neither sanctified in the mouth, nor comfortably in the heart. The Jews had eyes

to see Christ's miracles, but because they had no ears to hear his wisdom, therefore they had no feet to enter into his kingdom. The way into the house is by the door, not by the window: the eye is but the window of the heart, the ear is the door. Now Christ stands knocking at the door, not at the window, Rev. iii. 20. And he will not come in at the window, but at the door; "He that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep," John x. 2. He comes now in by his oracles, not by his miracles; "To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice," ver. 3. The way to open and let him in, is by the ear; to hear his voice. There was a man in the Gospel blind and deaf: blind eyes is ill; but deaf ears, worse. It is bad to have the eyes sealed, but worse to have the ears sealed up.

Open your ears therefore to this heavenly voice. Bernard hath this description of a good ear: Which willingly hears what is taught, wisely understands what it heareth, and obediently practises what it understandeth. O give me such an ear, and I will hang on it jewels of gold, ornaments of praises. "I will hear what God the Lord will speak," Psal. lxxxv. 8. We have those will hear what a tempting harlot can say for luxury, what a false prophet can say in the behalf of usury, what a lawyer can say in the behalf of sacrilege, what a fictitious schismatic can say for separation, what a Jesuit seminary can say for treason. Christ promised his presence to all those that are assembled in his name: these meet not in the name of Christ, but of antichrist. Where instead of the flowers of God's garden, they gather the poisonous weeds of the forest; and the devil gets in at the Lord's door. I may say of these convents, confederating to mischiefs, what Chrysostom said of the virgin possessed by the devil at a theatre. When God rebuked him, How durst thou be so bold as to enter into my house? Satan answers, Because I found her in my house. In the congregation of saints, the Holy Ghost enters in, and the devil is cast out; but in these houses of sedition, and places of malicious error, the company of sinners and seducers, the Holy Ghost is shut out, and the devil is let in. I know that the common streets are not free from offences to honest ears; but it is one thing to hear things that are to be hated, and another thing to listen after things that are not to be heard. Between finding evil against our wills, and seeking evil with our delights, there is great difference: "Woe is me, that I sojourn in Mesech; that I dwell in the tents of Kedar!" Psal. cxx. 5. Bless yourselves from Mesech, but love Mount Zion: there are the songs of peace. Thus after hearing the voice of God from heaven, you shall come to hear the voice of God in heaven. You have heard hosannas, you shall hear hallelujahs: here, God praised by his ministers; there, praised by his angels. There we shall both hear others, and bear a part ourselves, in the everlasting praises of God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

"When we were with him in the holy mount." We are come to the local part: what this mount was, and how holy, we shall hear presently. First, consider the adjacent circumstance, "we were with him." The voice had their audience, the mount their presence: *σὺν αὐτῷ*, with him. Oh blessedness to be with Christ! What meant Peter to be ashamed of this, when the damsel said, This man was with Jesus? Matt. xxvi. 71. What! deny to be with Jesus? Alas, it was his weakness then: afterward he was so glad to be with him, that he was content to die for him; he refused not the sharp and bloody way of martyrdom, to be with Jesus. What meant Nicodemus to be with him only by night, as if he feared to be seen in his company by day? Shall a

man fear his joy, his comfort, his salvation? Mary Magdalene so longed to be with him, that she was not where she was, for her whole heart was with him. I had rather at all not be, than to be without Christ. It is impossible to be with him, and to be without comfort. When they saw their boldness, and miraculous working, they marvelled, and took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus. Acts iv. 13. If there be courage of zeal and peace of conscience in men, we may well conclude they have been with Jesus. When Gehazi went from Elisha, he presently fell into sin: so do all they that keep not with Christ. With him is comfort and peace: Lord, whither shall we go from thee? thou hast the words of eternal life, John vi. 68.

"When we were with him in the holy mount." Our Saviour had foretold the great glory and power of his second coming, to the comfort of his servants, to the terror and conviction of his enemies; "The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then shall he reward every man according to his works," Matt. xvi. 27. There is his justice, and the distribution of his justice. "He shall reward every man," there is his justice: *κατά τὴν ἔργον*, "according to his works," there is the distribution of his justice. It is distinguished plainly, Matt. xxv. 46; to them that have done ill, everlasting punishment; to them that have done well, life eternal. Now lest his disciples should doubt of that glory, which he hath ascribed to himself at his second appearing, and stagger at the ignominy of his present estate; immediately upon it he makes them a promise, that they should see it, or at least a glimpse and abridgement of it; that so enjoying this vision, they might more confidently and authoritatively give their testimony to it. "There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom." And this promise is prefixed by the three evangelists, that record this story, immediately before Christ's transfiguration on the mount, Matt. xvi. 28; Mark ix. 1; Luke ix. 27. Which words of Christ have divers expositions. Some take it meant of his glorious resurrection, as if the sense were thus: There be some standing here, that shall not die till they see the Son of man in his glory, and conquest of sin and death. Some, not all, for this must exclude Judas: all the rest of the apostles, but only Judas, did live to see it. Bede and some others take it, for the enlargement of his church. As if this were the sense: There be some standing here, that shall live to see my kingdom flourish, and spread powerfully over the face of the earth; and the despised name of Jesus to command the sceptres of kings and reign over the dominations of the earth. Some understand by it the last coming to judgment; as if there were some apostles yet living, and that should live unto the latter day; because he says, Some stand here that shall not die, till they see this glory. But that opinion as frivolous, hath always been exploded, excluded. The last, best, and most agreeable to the history, and context of the Scripture, is to understand it concerning his transfiguration, which immediately follows. This was clearly promised, manifestly performed, and the concealment of it for a time commanded, Matt. xvii. 9. This Christ promised under the form of an oath, Amen, verily I say unto you. There are certain circumstances of this transfiguration inherent in the text; other adherent to it, which we will borrow from the evangelists, and so make up the discourse. The points are,

The time, when this was done.

The place, where this was done.

The manner, how this was done.

The witnesses, before whom this was done.

The event, that followed this being done.

The time, to expound our apostle's when, is expressed, Matt. xvii. 1, and Mark ix. 2, "After six days." Only St. Luke, chap. ix. 28, seems to differ from them; for he says "eight days after." Now between six days and eight days there seems to be some difference of the time. St. Hierome easily reconciles them thus: Matthew and Mark speak only of the intervening days, that went between the promise and the performance. Luke adds both the first day, in which he promised it, and the last day, in which he performed it. Eight days exclusively; six days inclusively. Some, mystically, by these six days understand the six ages of the world, as they call them; which being past, we shall come to that glorious vision of our Lord Jesus in heaven. But why did not Christ presently vouchsafe to his disciples this sight, but defer the performance of it till six days after the promise? Chrysostom answers; He deferred it to increase their desires before it came, their joys when it came. To inflame their desires, for things easily come by are little set by. To increase their joys, for that which hath been long detained is at last more sweetly obtained. Moreover, if Christ after the promise of this vision, had immediately singled out some to the participation of it, this would have bred envy and grudging in the rest, who were apt enough to quarrel about such businesses. That extraordinary gracing of some, would have been held a disparagement to all the rest. Therefore as Christ concealed their names in the promise, Some of these, not naming who they were; so for six days he deferred the performance, that without emulation of the rest, he might give satisfaction to them he had chosen.

The place is delivered in the text, "the holy mount." St. Matthew says it was a high mountain; St. Peter, a holy mountain. By common consent this mountain was Tabor, though it be not nominatively expressed in Scripture; a fair hill in the territory of Galilee, of so wonderful a roundness, that you would think rather art than nature had fashioned it. The ascent of it was thirty furlongs; it was a sea-mark to mariners. It was full of herbs, fruits, flowers, fountains. Thus it was high and conspicuous for situation, fertile by condition, and lastly, holy, by this most holy apparition. (Hieron.) True it is, that all places are of their own nature equal; nor is one more worthy or more holy than another, but by the accession of some special blessings and privileges. Whithersoever the Lord comes, that is the fountain of holiness, such is the odour and perfume of his gracious presence, that he sanctifies the place. It was his presence which caused Jacob to turn Luz into Bethel; "This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven," Gen. xxviii. 17. So God himself testified to Moses in Horeb, "The place whereon thou standest is holy ground," Exod. iii. 5. And the captain of the Lord's host to Joshua, "Loose thy shoe from off thy foot: for the place where thou standest is holy," Josh. v. 15. Thus became this mount holy; there being God, the Father of holiness, heard speaking; Christ, that Holy of holies, by his body for that time glorified; Moses and Elias, those holy saints; Peter James, and John, those holy apostles; needs must this mount be holy. Nicephorus writeth, that Helena built upon that hill a cathedral church, and dedicated it to St. Peter. And in process of time, others also added two monasteries, endowed with fair revenues; in allusion or answer to Peter's desire, "Let us build here three tabernacles." But now there is not left any (so much as) ruin, to tell the passenger, Here

stood such monuments; and that holy mountain is become a habitation for wolves and foxes. Jerome upon Hosca, writes liberally of this mount, and calls it Thabor. "Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in thy name," Psal. lxxxix. 12. It had cause to rejoice, when it bore the glorious person of Jesus Christ. He interprets it to signify, "Light coming." Not unfitly, that Christ, who is the Light of the world, upon a mountain of light, should give remonstrance of that glorious light of his majesty. But why did our Saviour choose a mountain for this apparition, why not rather a valley? True glory is not to be sought in the low bottoms of this world; but on high: "Set your affections on things above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God," Col. iii. 1, 2. All that come to God's glory, must ascend on high: "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord?" Psal. xxiv. 3. The devil took Christ into a mountain, when he showed him the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them. So our Saviour took his apostles up into a mountain, when he showed them the kingdom of heaven, and glory of the world to come. Moses went up to a mountain to speak with the Lord; now the Lord goes up to a mountain to speak with Moses.

The manner is set down; he "was transfigured before them; and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light," Matt. xvii. 2. Some are of opinion, that this clarity was in the air about him, not in the body of Christ; but that is false, for himself was transfigured, not the air about him. Some have said that his very substance was changed from mortality to immortality for the time; but that is false, for transfiguration is properly from one figure to another, not from one nature to another. Some say, this transition was not by any change into that which was not before, but by a manifestation of that which was (not revealed) before. These affirm, that Christ took from his mother an immortal and impassible body: but this is a most impossible opinion. How then could this be? If Christ reserved mortality, how was he capable of glory? If he took immortality, then was there a change of his substance. Neither, but only a change of his form. And why is this impossible to his miraculous hand? He that could show his scars in a body immortal, why not also his glory in a body mortal? "The fashion of his countenance was altered," Luke ix. 29. There is a change, not of his person, but of his look: not yet is it said, his countenance, but the fashion of his countenance; not *alia*, sed *altera*, that is *alterata*. This was done by the clarity that was in his body, as in the very subject. This splendour was after one manner in his body, after another in his garment. In his body intrinsically and inherently; in his garment by an external whiteness poured upon it. "His face did shine as the sun." The sun is the cause of shining; ascribing to Christ the greatest degree of splendour that our understandings can apprehend. Not as the brightness of the sun, but as the sun itself. "His garments were white as the light." The light is the cause of whiteness, and whiteness is received and perceived by the benefit of light. St. Mark says, they were "white as snow;" and what can be whiter? Thus our Lord Jesus put off his despicable form, wherein he was condemned of the world; and the veil of his humble mortality, wherewith his glory was shadowed: yet as he retained the same garments, so he put not off the same substance. Only he put majesty upon his countenance, his habit, his whole body; that he might give his apostles a show of their future glory. So shall the faithful one day shine; as the stars, Dan. xii. 3; as the sun, Matt. xiii. 43. For Christ "shall change our vile body, that it may

be fashioned like unto his glorious body," Phil. iii. 21.

The witnesses before whom this was done were of two sorts: some that Christ took with him, others that met him. The disciples he took with him were three, Peter, James, and John; a number able to give a sound and sufficient testimony. Here two questions are moved: first, why Christ chose but three? secondly, why only these three? Why three and no more? why these three and no other? First, why but three? To show unto us, that few are chosen. God doth not reveal his glorious mysteries to all, but to some whom his own good pleasure calleth and culleth out: God did show him openly, "not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God," Acts x. 41. Besides, three can give a sufficient testimony: In the mouth of two or three witnesses every matter shall be established, Deut. xix. 15; Matt. xviii. 16. Next, why these three, and none of the rest? 1. I do not answer with Fevarentius, because these three were the flower and prime of all Christ's apostles, and the princes of the New Testament. I never read that Christ gave unto them any such prerogative or superexcellency above the rest. 2. Nor do I fetch an answer from the mystery of their names, with Gorham. He that will see the glory of God, must be a Peter, to acknowledge Christ by faith; a James, to supplant sin; a John, to work good by the grace of God. For in these three, to believe that is true, to root out that is evil, and to practise that is good, he placeth all perfection. 3. Nor yet do I answer, because these three were more eminent in virtue and graces than the rest. Three sorts of men are qualified to see God: such as love him: If a man love me, I will love him, and I will manifest myself to him, John xiv. 21. Such as are humble: "Thou hast hid these things from the prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes," Matt. xi. 25. Such as are of a pure heart and clean life: "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God," Matt. v. 8. "To him that ordereth his conversation aright, will I show the salvation of God," Psal. i. 23. These are all gracious qualities; and with them were the rest of the apostles as truly sanctified, that were not here admitted. 4. What, was it then because Christ did love these three above the rest? Indeed his love was great to John; and therefore among all his honourable titles, he mentioneth that ever in the first place, "The disciple whom Jesus loved." But his love to John was greater by way of extension, not by way of intention. He showed more signs of familiarity to him than to the rest of the company, but he equally loved and prized them all. 5. Because the wisdom and unquestionable goodness of God chose them out, and accepted them to the participation of his secrets. Thrice he called out those three, and made them witnesses to three great works. The first was to the raising of Jairus's daughter. "He suffered no man to follow him, save Peter, and James, and John," Mark v. 37. He did put forth the mourners, the musicians, the people, and left behind the rest of the apostles; only these three he admitted. The next election was to this glorious transfiguration; singularly the same three again. The last was to his agony in the garden; he charging his disciples to stay, "taketh with him Peter and James and John, and began to be sore amazed," Mark xiv. 33. He made them three particularly witnesses, in the first work, of his power; in the second, of his majesty; in the last, of his agony. 6. Lastly, if men may give any reason of the Lord's actions, whose wisdom is unsearchable, I do not think that Christ chose them because they were more excellent than the rest, but rather because they were more weak

than the rest. It was to help their infirmity, and to strengthen them in the assurance of their Master and Saviour's glory.

The company that came from heaven, were Moses and Elias. Some have thought that these did not appear truly and personally, but angels in their likeness; but that is a manifest error, for themselves appeared, not angels in their similitude. Some are of another opinion, that they did not only appear personally, but that in their very bodies with their souls. Because it is said that Elias was taken up, and no man knew what became of Moses' body, which occasioned that disputation betwixt the archangel and the devil, Jude 9. But it is most plain that the body of Moses was buried "in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor; "though "no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day," Deut. xxxiv. 6. Neither are all of that opinion, that the very body of Elias was taken up into heaven; some be persuaded there is no human body in heaven, but the body of our Lord Jesus only: "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven," John iii. 13. But here it is questioned, why did Moses and Elias appear, rather than David and Abraham, from whose loins Christ Jesus came, and who were so famous among the people? Reasons.

To omit, that those three great fasters met together, Moses, Elias, and Christ: each of them having fasted forty days and forty nights;

1. To manifest a difference between the Lord and the servants. Moses and Elias were of high esteem with the Jews, Christ not regarded, a man of no repute among them; therefore he would now show that he was the Lord, and they but the servants to wait upon him: that he was not Elias, but the God of Elias; not Jeremiah, but he that sanctified Jeremiah; not one of the prophets, but the Lord of the prophets, that sent them.

2. If it be granted that Moses was dead, and that Elias died not; this declareth that Christ is the Saviour of both quick and dead, whether of men living with Elias, or dead as Moses. To manifest that he hath the power both of life and death; both living Elias and dead Moses are brought, both saved by this Jesus Christ.

3. To come nearer home: Moses was called the lawgiver, and Elias was (after a sort) the law-restorer; now the Jews traduced Christ for a law-breaker. Their common imputation against him was, that he transgressed the law, and was contrary to the prophets. Therefore he was content to be put to his purgation and to justify himself: "Think not that I am come to destroy the Law, or the Prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil," Matt. v. 17. And for a further testimony of this, Moses that brought the law, and Elias that revived the law, witness that he was obedient to the law. "God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law," Gal. iv. 4.

4. They meet that brought the law, with Christ that brought the gospel: to show that law and gospel must be joined together. But we are freed by Christ from the law? I answer, there is a double obligation of the law: the obligation of penalty, and the obligation of duty. We are freed from the obligation of penalty, but not from the obligation of duty. "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity," 2 Tim. ii. 19. He hath taken from the law all power to condemn us, but not all power to rule us. We must still serve God according to his law, or he will not save us according to his gospel. Our faith in the Lord Jesus, and our obedience to the law, must be joined together, as Moses and Christ met upon the mountain.

"The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ," John i. 17.

5. To show that this was the true Messias, to whom both law and prophets bare witness. Moses in the law, as it is cited by St. Peter; "A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you among your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things," Acts iii. 22. And Elias instead of all the prophets, who was the clearest of all the prophets. Now that truth is suspected, which barely testifieth of itself. (Ambros.) Therefore as Christ had three witnesses from the earth, Peter, James, and John; so he had three from heaven, the voice of the Father, Moses, and Elias; that now he which fulfilled both the Testaments, might enjoy both the testimonies.

6. Lastly, Christ proposed two such famous men as Moses and Elias to his apostles for patterns, that their spirits might be well tempted in them. Moses, a man most meek on the earth; Elias, a man exceeding zealous. Twice he doubles this testimony of himself, "I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts," 1 Kings xix. 10, 14. He had such a sacred fire of zeal in his heart upon earth, that God advanced him in a chariot of fire into heaven. Therefore are these two brought hither, that the apostles might learn to mix Moses' meekness with Elias' ferventness. Yet this rare and excellent composition they forgot; when they could not be entertained in a Samaritan village, say James and John, (and that, as it seems, not long after their descending from the mount.) "Lord, wilt thou that we command fire from heaven to consume them, as Elias did?" Luke ix. 54. There they thought of Elias, but forgot Moses; they had too much of the one's fire, but too little of the other's water: zeal enough, but without the mercy of meekness. Again, at the apprehension of Christ, when Peter denied him, and all the rest fled from him, there they had too much of Moses, but forgot the spirit of Elias; they had meekness enough, but wanted zeal; both together make a good temper.

The events or consequents of this transfiguration, are these. First, the testimony of the Father from heaven, which came out of a bright cloud overshadowing them. It was from a cloud, saith Chrysostom, that they might the more confidently receive it for the voice of God, who was wont to speak to their fathers in a cloud: "This is my beloved Son," &c. They could formerly see his mother poor, his supposed father labouring for his living, Christ himself hungry, thirsty, weary, despised. Therefore now they hear a voice from heaven to make amends for all; recompensing his supposed baseness with attributes of great glory. God speaking that to him, which he never spake to any, "This is my Son." Not to the angels; "Unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son?" Heb. i. 5. Christ was shortly to die, and to suffer hard and unjust usage of his enemies; and all this in humility to bear. Therefore now he shows his power before his passion, his glory before his injury, his honour before he come to feel his horror; that when they should afterwards see him taken, bound, scourged, scorned, crucified, buried, they might then know and say, that this was effected not by reason of their power over him, but by reason of his patience under them; not because they could inflict it, but because he would suffer it; not by a miserable necessity, but by his own gracious mercy. (August.)

Another event was St. Peter's counsel. The point whereof Moses and Elias conferred with Christ, was concerning "his decease, which he should accomplish at Jerusalem;" Peter hearing this news of his Master's death, and that by the testimony of two such famous prophets, he thinks it good to provide

betimes for his safety. Such a course he had formerly attempted; "Be it far from thee, Lord; this shall not be unto thee," Matt. xvi. 22. But Christ's rebuke was then so sharp, "Get thee behind me, Satan," that Peter durst no more in plain terms advise him again to that favouring of himself. Therefore now he doth it covertly, and by involved insinuation. "Lord, it is good for us to be here: we are now in a safe place; a mountain high, sure, solitary, pleasant; guarded by the company of two such potent men; a cloud to compass us, glory to sustain us, delight to content us. Let us tarry here, where no harm can find us out. Were it not madness to leave a place of such security, and expose thyself to the fury of thine adversaries? It is good to be here. But alas, it was his error; for if this were to have been a permanent and durable glory, Peter should not have called for tabernacles, but for mansions. "Let us build here three tabernacles," movable tilts? No; fundamental and constant habitations. What sayest thou, Peter? doth the whole world perish, and must fire burn it all, and callest thou only for a mountain? (August.) His error was both ways culpable; either to seek his country in the way, or a tabernacle in his country. If he knew this to be but the earth, why doth he seek for heaven upon it? if he took this to be heaven, why doth he call for an earthen tabernacle? "One for thee, and one for Moses," &c. Why not, one for me, another also for James, and John? No, he mentions none for them, for he hoped that Christ himself would be their tabernacle. Thou seekest three; make three, one for the Father, another for the Son, another for the Holy Ghost; none for Moses, none for Elias; do not join the servants with the Creator. Mystically there be still three tabernacles: one outward, which is the church; another inward, which is the conscience; the last upward, which is the kingdom of heaven. Let us dwell faithfully in the former, let God dwell spiritually in the other, that we may all dwell together comfortably in the latter, that is, for ever in the peace of glory.

Lastly, this glorious vision and voice from heaven amazed the disciples; that "they fell on their face, and were sore afraid." Christ with the touch of his hand recovered them; "And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only," Matt. xvii. 8. Because indeed he was that person only, to whom both law and prophets bare witness. They have done their office, and then they vanish, that Christ may be all in all. There is only one Mediator, Christ; it is he only that satisfies the law, and sanctifies the conscience; he only, that reconciles us to God. Let Moses and Elias, and all others, disappear to the work of our salvation; only give us Jesus Christ. This testimony they heard, but might not presently utter, for Christ forbid them; "Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead," Matt. xvii. 9. The reasons of this interdiction may be, 1. Because the Jews were to have no sign, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: they had seen enough to leave their unbelief without excuse. 2. Because among the rude, after the publication of such a glory, the following cross would have bred scandal. If he were invested with such glory, why could he not keep himself in it? 3. Because till his resurrection had made way for it, the world would never have given credit to this wonder. But perceiving his power in raising himself from the dead, they might easily embrace the faith of that clarification. Lastly, according to that, Eccles. xi. 28. Judge no man blessed before his death. Then they witnessed it, then they preached it, then they wrote it: we hear it, let us all believe it, that we may one

day enjoy it, in the everlasting kingdom of Jesus Christ.

I conclude: Peter and the rest knew Moses and Elias on the mount, whom they never saw before; they being departed many hundred years before the other were born. Yet they could distinguish Moses from Elias, Elias from Moses, and both from Christ: and say, This is Moses, this is Elias, and that is Christ. This is a lively type and shadow of that glory in heaven, where every saint shall perfectly know all. Not Abraham nor any of the patriarchs, not David nor any of the kings, not Elias nor any of the prophets, not Peter nor any of the apostles, not Stephen nor any of the martyrs, not any of our friends, kindred, acquaintance, none of the now unknown believers scattered on the face of the broad earth, shall in that place be strangers to us. Our knowledge shall extend to every individual person; all shall know every one, and every one shall know all. Now let us love one another, pray for one another, do good one to another; then and there we shall know one another, and all be eternally known and loved of our blessed God.

VERSE 19.

We have also a more sure word of prophecy: whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts.

THE apostle had formerly delivered a certain truth, such as both their ears had heard and their eyes seen, and by many strong arguments confirmed it. Yet because the Jews to whom he wrote did much adhere to the prophets, he refers them thither, to compare the events manifested with their predictions. As if he did answer a challenge, with Paul to his Corinthians: Since ye seek a proof of Christ, 2 Cor. xiii. 3, you shall have one more; in itself profitable, and to you plausible; a word of prophecy. That as Festus said to Paul, "Hast thou appealed unto Cæsar? unto Cæsar shalt thou go," Acts xxv. 12; so, have you appealed to the prophets? to the prophets you shall go. They also shall witness to you the same Christ.

You see the apostle comes to a new manner of testifying the former truth. We have a word. A word, what is this? so we had before. Nay, but a word of prophecy. Why, what strength hath this above the other? Yes, it is more sure. Well, say it be more sure, what is this to us? we heard it not. Yes, we have it visible to our eyes. But men may have it, and not regard it; as the Indians that were owners of all the gold, yet were the poorest beggars. Nay, but we take heed to it, attend it. Say we should, is this a thing so commendable? may we not rest satisfied with your word and assertion, that saw these things? Nay, but ye do well in taking heed to it. Well, say we should observe it, what shall we find it to be? Not an obscure and involved matter, as it was before the completion; but a light. What need have we of a light, that live in the broad day of knowledge? Nay, but the world is full of darkness; and in a dark place a light is comfortable. But this may be some dim candle, that can cast us no rays or beams of illumination. No, it is a shining light; like John Baptist, a burning and a shining light. A light that shineth in a dark place. How long shall this light continue? Until the day dawn, till the glorious presence of our Lord Jesus Christ

be fully manifested to us, and that we see no longer through a window or spectacles of faith, but behold with clear eyes the Sun himself. We shall then say of this light of knowledge here compared with that, as John Baptist said of himself compared with Christ: "He must increase, but I must decrease." John iii. 30. Or as Paul, "When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." 1 Cor. xiii. 10. Then that same day-star of blessedness shall arise, and tell us that the night is quite past, the day is come, the Sun of righteousness appears, and that we shall appear with him in glory. Let us all therefore first walk faithfully in the light of grace, that we may walk joyfully in the light of glory for ever.

"We have also a more sure word," &c. The whole verse may be distinguished into four general parts:

A conference: wherein he compares the prophetic prediction with the evangelical predication, ascribing it to some greater certainty, We have a more sure word of prophecy.

A reference; whereto he refers their scrutation, and commends their attention. Whereunto ye do well that ye take heed.

A preference; wherein he prefers that excellent light to the common darkness of the world. For the comparison is not between the prophetic and evangelical light, but between the light of the Scripture and the darkness of nature. As unto a light that shineth in a dark place.

A difference; wherein he gives that future daylight a transcendancy to the former candlelight: that being but like a lamp in a dark night, this like a star that brings in the day. Until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts.

The word of prophecy. There are four sorts of prophets. 1. Some write of things past, as Moses: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth;" penning an hexameron many years after the world was made. The Samaritan woman hearing Christ relate unto her the things which she had done, concluded, "Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet," John iv. 19. 2. Some prophesy of things to come: "As God foretold by the mouth of his holy prophets." Those did tell of things done, these did predict of things to be done: the one was a relation, the other a prediction. 3. Some prophesy of things present: such a prophet was old Simon, whose eyes saw that present salvation. Thus John the Baptist was a prophet, and more than a prophet. A prophet, because he did point him out with the finger that was all the prophets' aim; "Behold the Lamb of God." More than a prophet, because he baptized the Lord of the prophets. (Jer.) 4. Those that expound the prophets. An evangelical preacher is called a prophet: "Desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy," 1 Cor. xiv. 1. "We know in part, and we prophesy in part," 1 Cor. xiii. 9. He that interprets the prophets, is called a prophet. (Aquin.) But here the apostle intends principally that sort which foretold future things. Some of their words were more dark, some more plain. Daniel and John wrote darkly: the reason is given, because they wrote in times of persecution; so that if they had done otherwise, themselves and their books had been burned. The events were the clearest explications of them. It is the property of a prophecy, to be fulfilled before it be understood. (August.)

A prophet is called of the Hebrews, *Nabi*, a prophet; and of the Greeks, *προφήτης*; such as did foresee and foretell the purposes of God. Of the Latins, *Fates*, that is, *fates*; for *ratiocinatio* is *fateinatio*, *fatum canere*, to premeditate an inevitable event. The words they spake, came to them by a

divine instinct. "I cannot go beyond the commandment of the Lord; but what he saith, that will I speak," Num. xxiv. 13. So soon as ever the Lord had appeared to Samuel, presently the people took notice of him for a prophet: "All Israel knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lord," 1 Sam. iii. 20. They cannot know God's will in future things, but by his relation or revelation: "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me: it is high, I cannot attain unto it," Psal. cxxxix. 6. A vision of their own heads, a fiction of their own brains, were accursed. He that coins money out of base metal, though he stamp upon it the image of the prince, is a traitor. So is he, that to his own invention shall put a The Lord spake it. The prediction that comes not by Divine instruction, is but a delusion: for none can foreknow, but he that did fore-purpose.

Devils and men may guess by observation, and collection of causes probable to beget such events; only God knows: "Ask me of things to come," Isa. xlv. 11. If men could tell as much, they would be even with God. How wise were God, if he should write the secrets of his will on the top of his gate, the doors of heaven! yet your astrologer presumes to know all things by the heavens; as if the stars were so many letters, the planets syllables, and the constellations express sentences. So they make the whole heaven a Syntaxis, or discourse of God's purposes. Will any king engross the secrets of his council on the door of his palace? That late character which was set on the brow of heaven, did certainly mean the world some news. But who could undertake to translate the letters of it, or expound the meaning? To break into God's council chamber, will be dangerous treason: only the hand that wrote it, can interpret it. If men could by their own wisdom prophesy, they were not only "wiser than the children of light," Luke xvi. 8, but as wise as even light itself. The very devils that hover in the air, (like Adam, who being cast out of Eden, dwelt as near it as he could,) and by reason of their vicinity to the stars, can read them better than mortal men, sundered from us so far as earth; yet are they all dunces in respect of prophecy. They can tell you what may happen, never what will happen. Therefore they delivered their oracles in a doubtful and bastard language; that if the event did not answer the prediction, they might then expound the prediction according to the event. Only God can make prophets, and put into their mouths the foretelling of future things. "Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me," Ezek. iii. 17. It is God that speaks by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been ever since the world began. He speaks by the prophets for the good of our souls, let us hear his prophets for the honour of his holy name.

"A more sure word of prophecy." *Βεβαιώτερον τὸν προφητικὸν λόγον*. Why, was not the apostolical testimony sure enough? could there be more than ocular and auricular witness? The prophets foretold what they never saw, the apostles saw what they told. Besides, did not one and the same God speak by them both? Heb. i. 1, conferred with Matt. x. 20, plainly demonstrates, that the same God who "spoke unto the fathers by the prophets," speaks also by the apostles: "For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you." How then can this be a more sure word, seeing the prophets be a dark lantern, which himself here confesseth hard to be understood? This point hath troubled many expositors: it was some trouble to me to find it, let it be no trouble to you to read it.

1. Some answer, that here a comparative is put for

a positive, more sure, for sure; or for a superlative, *βεβαιότερον*, for *βεβαιότατον*, more sure, for surest. A place is instanced, Acts xxv. 10. Paul cleared himself to Festus; "To the Jews have I done no wrong, as then very well knowest." The word is not *καλῶς*, but *καλλίον*; not well, but better; the comparative for the positive, as thou better knowest. This same challenge of degrees is not rare among the Greeks and Latins. The French write *Tresnoble* for *Noble*; we, *Most Honourable*, for *Honourable*; and some, To my worthier friend, for worthy. But this answer satisfies not; for, first, I do not see but that speech of Paul might very well be translated, as thou better knowest. For Festus being a Roman judge, did better know that Paul had done nothing against the Roman laws, than could the Jews. But it is objected, that Paul appeals to Festus's knowledge, that to the Jews he had done no wrong. True, and why might not the judge better discern of the cause than the plaintiff? Every man is well affected to his own cause, and the Jews were blinded with malice, charging Paul with many things, but proving nothing. Festus therefore seeing their malice, and Paul's innocency, did better know that he had done them no wrong, than themselves. Besides, the context manifestly intends a comparison: it must be admitted to be a more sure word.

2. Beda, with some others, answer, that this may be a surer word, not simply and absolutely, but in respect of the Gentiles; who might haply calumniate the vision of the apostles, but durst not the oracles of the prophets. As if Peter should say, You may perhaps doubt that particular sight we had in secret, but none will contradict the prophecies manifested in public. Infidels being so well acquainted with necromancy, might ascribe this voice to magic. As Psaphon was accepted of the Libyans for a great god, because certain birds had been first taught to sing this lesson, and afterwards being let loose into the air, did sing it; *Magnus deus Psaphon*. Or as Mahomet got the reputation of a great saving prophet, by a pigeon trained to come to his ear, and there pick out corn, which his credulous followers believed to be the conference of the Holy Ghost; and by a bull taught and tamed to carry the Alcoran on his horns. To prevent any such suspicion here, the prophets are brought in, who did foretell all these things long before Christ came himself. Could Christ be a magician before he was born? Thus there was a celestial word, whereby believers are confirmed; and a prophetic word, whereby unbelievers are convinced. But this answer falls also short of satisfaction; for St. Peter wrote not to infidels, but to believers, such as had already embraced the truth of the gospel.

3. There is another solution. (Aquin. Lyran. Hugo. Catharinus, Calv.) The apostle speaks this in respect of the Jews unto whom he wrote. Here the truth of the gospel is proved by a double testimony; by the assertion of God, and by the prediction of the prophets. Now this were an absurd thing to imagine, that the prophetic witness should be surer than the Divine and paternal. First, because their word did merely depend upon the authority of the same God. Secondly, because Christ's coming had performed what they promised. Now if either of the two can challenge the greater firmness, it is the latter; for let a promise be never so sure, yet the performance is surer. Words yield to deeds; it could not be more sure in their prophecy that Christ should come, than in the apostles' sight that he was come. "He came unto his own," he dwelt among us; there could be nothing surer: then he only promised, now he hath paid the debt. Well,

yet, albeit God's testimony were most sure with the apostles, yet the prophets' word was more sure with the Jews. They knew them to be the lawful ministers of God; they were brought up in their schools; of their words there was no suspicion. Antiquity itself challengeth reverence. God here said, "This is my beloved Son;" this they had read before in the prophets: "I will declare the decree; the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee," Psal. ii. 7. Thus was it a surer word, not in its own nature, nor to the apostles, but to the Jews. To this consents Augustine: It is not said to be better, nor truer, but only surer. This testimony was as good as that, as true, as useful; but in this respect that is surer, because it makes more strongly to confirm such hearers. If you will not believe me, have recourse to your prophets: "Search the Scriptures," they all testify of Jesus Christ, John v. 39.

4. Some by this word of prophecy would understand only the preaching and writing of the gospel; and extend it all no further than evangelical prophecy. But the context will not bear such an exposition, for the apostle speaks of forewritten prophecies, "prophecy of the Scripture," ver. 20.

5. Some would have this word of prophecy to be the very testimony of the Father concerning his Son. But there is no such trajection of phrases in the Scripture. We find Christ to be called the Prophet of God, not God to be the prophet of Christ.

6. Some read it thus, More sure than the prophets', in the genitive case plural; but no copy so hath it.

7. Bradford resolved it thus, in his answer to this, among other questions put to him by the papists: That the apostles in this did humble themselves; as if men not giving credit to their private testimony, would yet with all reverence receive the prophets. But if they should thus disable themselves, who would believe them? whereas, they were to write *jure apostolico*.

8. Lastly, the answer that seems to me most probable and profitable; and wherein I have few or none before me, doubtless many will follow me; is this: The foundation is ever more sure than the building; that being sound, though the edifice itself should fall, will firmly stand. Now the New Testament was not yet written, I mean, the Gospel of the four evangelists; nor was it collected into a volume till eight and twenty years after. But the prophets were extant, and their writings miraculously preserved; these the Jews readily had, and might peruse at their pleasure. Therefore the mere and naked report of Christ's glory on the mountain, was not so sure as the prophecy inspired by God, and engraven in the tables of their hearts. And this authentic proof was the surest, until the day did fully dawn, and the Divine hand had made the gospel known and visible. Thus, were the things related never so true in themselves, the question here is not concerning the truthness, but the sureness; and certainly, thus far, the Scriptures of the prophets were surer to the Jews, than the unwritten doctrines of the apostles, or the naked delivery of their particular visions.

Now whatsoever may be said for exception; That the prophets had only involved promises, not understood till they were fulfilled: in a promise there are many doubts; men's minds may change, occasions divert, their power be defective; but in a performance there is nothing wanting. Now the gospel was established by the ministry of the senses. It is true that in the Scripture there is no difference concerning the truth and certainty of all places and parts of it; but there may be some difference in the material and formal parts; for things may be more plainly, more comfortably set down in one place than in

another. Therefore Augustine gives this praise to the gospel, in allusion to that miracle of turning the water into wine, John ii., that Christ did turn the prophetic water into evangelical wine. There have been some, that through disability to clear this doubt in my text, have thrust the whole Epistle out of the canon; and it was four hundred years almost before it was received, as Eusebius testifies. This was like Alexander, when he could not undo the Gordian knot, to cut it. That was to make quick, but sacrilegious despatch. There is no such need to put out the light, because we are blind and cannot see it.

But to conclude plainly: Christ had not yet gotten so much credit with the Jews, as had their prophets; for their common opinion was, that all Jesus did was by magic. This they expressly objected, when he had cast out a devil, "This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils," Matt. xii. 24. And when the voice of such a glorious testimony came from heaven, "the people that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered," John xii. 29. They would not believe it to be the voice of the Father. Do you speak of a voice from heaven? who heard it? Do you tell us of his rising from the dead? who saw him? Therefore the apostle refers them to the prophets, those ancients, whose word was (as it were) the foundation of the gospel: We are built upon the foundation of the prophets, as well as of the apostles; the same Jesus Christ, the centre of them both, being the chief corner-stone, Eph. ii. 20. Now the foundation is surer than the house; antiquity, the foundation, is more surely received. Thus the Scriptures of the prophets stop the mouth of the Jews, who referred all the actions of Christ to a bad spirit. We call that most sure, that can give best satisfaction to the scholar: we are late reporters, but the prophets are ancient. Therefore their word is surer in your judgment, though not in itself. (August.) Christ is an infinite mass of gold, but they were so tired with expectation, that when it came they were not able to finger the money; therefore he refers them to the prophets, that comparing both these together, they might be more assured.

To conclude. All this doth serve to manifest that usual government, whereby God will guide his church: this is not by visions, but by the word. He hath appointed us to be sons and daughters of faith, not of sense. He that will not believe without a miracle, is himself a miracle: yea, and it will be a miracle if ever he be saved. When that rich man in hell requested a sign for his brethren, he was answered, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead," Luke xvi. 31. Thus the prophets had the more sure word, until the gospel was written. But now it being written, let us ask for no shadows, that have the substance; demand we no signs, that have Jesus Christ.

"A more sure word of prophecy." This may seem to ascribe some more credit to the prophets, than to the gospel. No, they were all written by divers men, in divers ages, at divers places, on divers occasions; yet they all have the same truth, the same authority. Though the Jews acknowledge the Old Testament, abhor the New; though Turks disclaim both, atheists despise both, sinners neglect both; yet as the disciples had but one Master, and were all brothers, so the books have but one Father, and they are all sisters. One Lord is original and subject of them, one Spirit indited them, one blood of the Lamb sealed them, one truth is maintained in them, one spouse of Christ hath within impartial respect equally

received them and miraculously preserved them; and rather than any rent or maim should be made in their sacred body, she hath sent her members dismembered, and bereft of their dearest blood, into heaven. These are the gages of our Saviour's love, God's royal covenants, the oracles of his sanctuary, the key of his revealed counsels, milk from his sacred breast, the light of our eyes, the joy of our hearts, the pillars of our faith, the anchor of our hope, the evidences and deeds of our eternal blessedness. It is true that one star differs from another in glory, and the rule of the day is given to the sun, of the night to the moon. The captains of the sons of God may hear an unequal report, the least could resist an hundred, the greatest, a thousand, 1 Chron. xii. 14; and no wrong was done in that anthem, "Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands," 1 Sam. xviii. 7. One Plato may be of more value than a thousand vulgar men; and our Saviour prefers the old wine to the new, "The old is better," Luke v. 39. But the whole Scripture, as it came by the inspiration of one Author, so it preserves the equality of one honour. Moses is no better than Samuel, Samuel than David, David than Solomon, the father than the son; David a king, than Amos a herd-man; Peter first chosen, than Paul born out of due time. Some portions of it sometimes lend more useful application to our souls; but all of it is like manna, which reliseth to every faithful conscience, as his heart desireth. Oil is best at the bottom, wine at the midst, milk at the top; but the fountain-water is all alike. This is the spring-water of life; clear, cooling, healthful, helpful in every part. One part is not surer than another, but all is so sure, that it is sealed by him that is Yea and Amen. These words are true and faithful; they are sure in God's promise, sure in Christ's performance, may they be sure in our believing hearts for ever.

"We have a more sure word." I come to the third circumstance, the persons to whom these prophecies were committed: the apostle joining himself with the Jews, "We have." The Jews might well attend to the word of prophecy, for they had it. They had many privileges, but this was the chiefest: "What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God," Rom. iii. 2, 3. They had the patriarchs, the sacraments, the sacrifices, the promise of the Messiah; but chiefly the oracles, as comprehending all the rest. Moses "received the lively oracles to give unto us," Acts vii. 38. He received the lively oracles: to what purpose? To give unto us; we have them. They were not *alienæ rei deposita*, but their own proper treasure. And indeed they were faithful keepers of them, preserving them from falsity and corruption: and to this day *servant, etsi non observant*; they keep them in custody, though they keep them not in obedience. Therefore in our Saviour's days, when many corruptions both of life and doctrine were objected against them, yet they were not charged to be falsifiers of the Scripture. Therefore well might the apostle say, We have them: for to them pertain the covenants, Rom. ix. 4. To them it was credited, to them it pertained, they had it, they kept it, and from them we receive it. "Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem," Isa. ii. 3. So Christ himself testified; "Salvation is of the Jews," John iv. 22. This was Paul's farewell to them, able to have melted their hearts, who had been keepers of that sacred word for so many hundred years: "It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you; but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves

unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles," Acts xiii. 46.

Thus they had, but now they have lost, not the letter, but the spirit and life of this prophetic word. *Deus misit, Judæus amisit*, God gave it, and they lost it. And as it is fit he that condemns the sun should not have a star to light him; so they that refused that Sun of righteousness, should not retain the light of prophecy. Esau hath sold his birth-right to Jacob: the Jews are to us Christians, *imprecatores in cordibus, suffragatores in codicibus*, enemies in their hearts, but friends in their books. They have only the word prophesying, we have the word prophesied; they the prophetic shadow, we the evangelical truth, Jesus Christ. This word is now devolved to us, we have it. "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning; that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope," Rom. xv. 4: the letter for our eyes, the history for our tongues, the mystery for our heads, the comfort of all for our hearts. God grant we never inherit the sins of the Jews with the Scriptures of the Jews. Like Gelazi, that could not take Naaman's money, but must also take his leprosy. Or Nadab, that succeeded Jeroboam, both in his crown and in his sin. Or as Satan offered Christ glory, but idolatry withal. No; the Lord that hath given us their light, keep us for ever from their darkness. We will be content with Esau's birth-right and his blessing, we will none of his profaneness. While these oracles were with them, they were like jewels in an infected house, or the precious stone in the toad's forehead; we might say of them, as it was proverb of Galba's wit, The Romans loved his policy, but not his company. The prophets foretold things they could not see, the Jews beheld things they would not see. Our Saviour made distinction between the Pharisees' doctrines and doings; "Whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works," Matt. xxiii. 3. So we say to them still, Give us your doctrines, we will none of your deeds; you rejected that Jesus Christ, whom your prophecies teach us to embrace. When a deboshed dinner had drawn an exquisite piece, many desired the picture, but all disdained the painter. The Jews had the word of prophecy, not the faith of prophecy. They were the most miserable men, for whose sake there was so much cost and pains to make them happy. God in his good time turn their hearts: that *sanguis effusionis*, which was to them *sanguis confusionis*; the blood of Christ which they shed, may be to their seed *sanguis perfusionis*, the blood of redemption. That they be saved by him, whom their fathers condemned, Jesus Christ.

And for us, let us remember St. Paul's caution. "Because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not high-minded, but fear," Rom. xi. 20. We have the same means to be saved, yet we see it is no impossible thing to go to hell. Micah thought himself so sure, when he had got a Levite to his priest, that God must needs bless him, Judg. xvii. 13. So we think it enough to have the Bible in our house; yet we may come to complain, as Micah to the Danites, "Ye have taken away all that I have." Or, as Christ threatened the Jews, The kingdom of heaven shall be taken from you, and given to nations that will bring forth answerable fruits. Or you shall call the fruit of your sin, as Phineas' wife called the fruit of her womb, Ichabod, because the glory is departed from you, 1 Sam. iv. 22. If the naked habit of the truth in our understanding, or approbation, *vel sensu, vel assensu*, could save men, who would go to hell? We see it, we know it, we confess it, we profess it; we do it not. Those are wretched

and perverse men, and show that the sacramental water was spilt on their faces, that curse the Scriptures, and bless their sins; that had rather cast the law behind their backs, than not foster their lusts in their bosoms. I hope there are few so bad; but, oh that men were so good, as truly to expound the prophets by their lives! A Christian's good conversation is the Scripture's best comment and exposition. We do expound them in our words, do you expound them in your works. Be you a counterpart to that blessed original. Oh that their lines, and our lives, did consort and match together! God hath given the word of life to us, oh let him find the life of the word in us!

But, alas! this is our fault; we have the Scripture in our houses, we have it in our churches, we have it in our hands; we have it not in our hearts. What shall we answer to the Lord for all his means to make us good? Our God is good, our time is good, our health is good, our peace is good, our truth is good, our preaching good, all good; we are not good. We have this word, we have it to show; so that evil servant had his talent, and he could show his talent. We call it our evidence of God's favour toward us; and we dare say, By this we know that thou favourest us, Psal. xli. 11. It is an evidence that God doth love us, let it not be an evidence whereby he shall judge us. All is made ours, saith Paul; the prophets ours, the evangelists ours, the apostles ours, the fathers ours, the promises ours, the sacraments ours, things present ours, things to come ours; oh let us be Christ's, for Christ is God's. They were written for our learning, they are preached for our living; let us believe them with resolution, and obey them to our salvation, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

"Whereunto ye do well that ye take heed," 1 come to the second general, which we called the reference. Seeing this word of prophecy is so sure and authentic, that no exception can be taken to the truth of it, I refer you to it. Try and peruse it; you shall find it speaking the same that you have heard from us. There is no disparity in their prediction and our predication; in their So it shall be, and our So it is. The apostle's argument is strongly persuasive: all men will give alliance to a sure thing; but the word of prophecy is sure; therefore let us adhere to it. What he propounds, is by demonstration: what he assumes, is by concession; what he concludes, is by just illation. Give heed to a thing that is sure. There is no worldly thing sure, yet we give heed to such things.

Not riches. God so hedged Job in on every side, and made such a fence about him, that the devil himself knew not where to break in upon him, Job i. 10; yet the Lord again took down the pale, and Job became poor to a proverb. Yet to wealth we take heed: our eyes are still open to watch it, our hands open to catch it; and when we have it, we house it with as great affection as the spouse did her Beloved: "I held him, and would not let him go, until I had brought him unto my mother's house, and into the chamber of her that conceived me," Cant. iii. 4. Men hold it, and will not let it go, but rather bury it in the earth, that house of their mother. The covetous, as if they would revenge Korah's death, seek to swallow up the earth, that swallowed up him. But alas, they take heed to a thing most unsure. Before the covetous man can gain any thing, he loseth himself. (August.) Therefore Paul charged Timothy to charge us, that we put not our trust in uncertain or unsure riches, 1 Tim. vi. 17. If we do, we are sure to be deceived.

Pleasure is not sure; alas, nothing is more unsure, not only in respect of continuation, but even of present fruition. It is a question whether the carnal

man doth truly joy when he smiles; or whether a merry heart be declared by a jesting language. For there is a joy like Romney Marsh; in summer of prosperity had, in winter of affliction mad, never good. "Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful; and the end of that mirth is heaviness," Prov. xiv. 13; gone, ere you can say it is here.

Honour is not sure; it comes with a breath, and goes with a breath; as a boy that can blow up a bubble unto air, and presently blow it into air. Cæsar goes an emperor to the senate, is brought a corpse home. Pompey was great, yet he begged. Opinionative honours are like curious peals on the bells, rung with changes: there may be sweet music in the change, but they are presently out of it. The devil taking Christ up into a high mountain, showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. Luke iv. 5. In a moment? How all the kingdoms of the earth should be shown in a moment, is a question and wonder, though one stood in the body of the sun. Therefore this must be done by representation; which is indeed more capable of admiration, than of demonstration. But why in a moment? To teach us that all the glory of this world is but for a moment. In a moment of time there is neither before nor after; and this is the term of all worldly glory. In the midst of their lifting up, thou didst cast them down, saith the Psalm: not afterward, but even then; in the moment of exaltation. These things are only showed, not possessed; and while they please us they pass away from us. (Sen.)

Not friends; alas, even they are unsure: our Saviour found his Hosanna turned to a Crucify him. Doth any ask him how he came by his wounds? he answers, Thus was I wounded in the house of my friends, Zeel. xiii. 6. Yea, my own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, conspired against me, Psal. xli. 9. Thus were Paul and Barnabas served, Acts xiv.; the same people become ready to kill them, that were a little before ready to kill sacrifice to them. There are still innumerable such Lystrians, that are always in extremes; either they will defy, or deify. "A man's foes shall be they of his own household," Matt. x. 36. Whom to-day thou leftest *fidum*, a counsellor, to-morrow thou shalt find *perfidum*, a traitor. Be not too bold in trusting thy secrets to another; he that now loves thee dearly, may come to hate thee deadly.

Not life; alas, nothing is more uncertain. Belshazzar is sitting at a feast, on a sudden comes death like a volder to take him away. Hereupon his face, so coloured with the wine, begins to look pale and ghastly with fear. His hands, that lifted up the massy goblets in defiance of their Owner, tremble like a leaf in a storm. His knees, that never stooped to his Creator, are loosened with a sudden palsy of terror. All, because death hath written him a challenge on the wall, and he dares not answer it. As Noah's dove went out of the ark and came into the ark, went out again and came in again, at last went out and came in no more: so it is with our breath; it goes out and comes in, comes in and goes out, at last goes out and comes in no more.

There is no sureness in all these things, yet is our affection too strongly set upon them. They are all "lying vanities," Jonah ii. 8. If they promise you any certainty, they lie unto you. All is unsure, only the word of God is sure. The heavens are a lasting piece, and "the earth abideth for ever," Eccl. i. 4; yet they are all unsure in respect of the Lord's word. We may say of all that wrote his will, as of Samuel. None of their words ever fell to the ground, 1 Sam. iii. 19. Riches are inconstant, friends inconstant; pleasures, honours, life, the whole world inconstant;

only "I the Lord change not," Mal. iii. 6. "The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple," Psal. xix. His word is both pure and sure, and so shall be for ever.

"Whereunto ye do well that ye take heed." In this branch there are two things considerable.

The attention, Ye take heed, intend, observe.

The commendation, Ye do well in this attention.

"Ye take heed." It is a special means to settle our faith, by conferring the prophets with the evangelists. Take heed to the word of prophecy. This is a sure and convertible rule. Nothing was done by Christ, which was not foretold by the prophets; nothing was foretold by the prophets, which was not done by Christ. It would take up a life to observe all the analogies and exact cadences of the events to the predictions, and to compare the prophecy with the history; the sum whereof is, "That it might be fulfilled." This is the music of that sweet harmony, the term wherein they meet: "All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet," Matt. xxi. 4. One said, that Plato was nothing else but Moses translated out of Hebrew into Greek; and Virgil nothing but Homer versed out of Greek into Latin: so the New Testament is but an exposition of the Old. Divines make the same difference between the law and the gospel, that philosophers did between logic and rhetoric; the law like the fist shut, the gospel like the hand open. The law is a concealed gospel, the gospel a revealed law. The New Testament lies hidden in the Old; the Old Testament lies open in the New. (August.) They go arm in arm, like inseparable friends; the two daughters of the great King; with their faces, like the cherubims, one toward another, and both toward the mercy-seat. Though the Jews deny the Scriptures of the Christians, yet the Christians will hold the Scriptures of the Jews to the death.

Now that we know how to take heed to the prophets, we will consider this reference in some particular instances. *Prophet.* That Christ should come in the flesh, Gen. iii. 15. *Completion.* "God sent his Son made of a woman," Gal. iv. 4; and, "The Word was made flesh," John i. 14. *Prophet.* That he should be born of a virgin, Isa. vii. 14. *Compl.* "A virgin espoused to a man," Luke i. 27; that rod of Aaron, which, without the common generation of plants, flourished and fructified. *Prophet.* That he should be God and man, expressed in his name, Immanuel, Isa. vii. 14. *Compl.* That Person came in the flesh, "who is over all, God blessed for ever," Rom. ix. 5. The prophet describes the time of his coming, upon the departure of the sceptre from Judah, Gen. xlix. 10. The completion answers, Augustus Cæsar had set Herod, an alien, upon the throne of David, Luke ii. 1. Prophet points to the place of his birth; Thou, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, Micah v. 2. The Gospel verifies it; "Jesus was born in Bethlehem," and without all evasion, that same Bethlehem of Judah, Matt. ii. 1. The prophets foretold his miracles and wonders: The eyes of the blind shall be opened, the deaf shall be made to hear, the lame man shall leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing, Isa. xxxv. 5, 6. This was fulfilled, Matt. xi. 5, in the presence of John's disciples, that they might know him the very Christ. His precursor was specified in the prophet, Isa. xl. 3. "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness." It is fulfilled, Matt. iii. 3. He must be apprehended; it was prophesied by Jeremiah, "The Lord's anointed was taken in their pits," Lam. iv. 20. But how? He must be sold. For what? Thirty pieces of silver. What must those do? Buy a potter's field, Zeel. xi. 12,

13. By whom must he be taken? By that child of perdition. What was he? His familiar friend, whom he trusted, his steward, his almoner? It was prophesied, Psal. xli. 9. What shall his disciples do? Run away: so it was prophesied, Zech. xiii. 7, I will "smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered." What must now be done to him? He must be scourged, spit upon. It was prophesied, Isa. l. 6, "I hid not my face from shame and spitting." Those filthy excrements of his enemies fell not upon his face without a prophecy. What then? He must be led to death: it was prophesied, Dan. ix. 26, The Messiah shall be cut off. What death must he suffer? Crucifying, prefigured by the lifting up of the brazen serpent. Whither must he be lifted up? To the cross; hanging on a tree, saith Moses. How? He must be nailed to it: it was the prophecy, Psal. xx. 16, "They pierced my hands and my feet." With what company? Two malefactors: it was the prophecy, Isa. liii. 12. "He was numbered with the transgressors." What becomes of his garments? The prophet tells, Psal. xxii. 18, "They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture." They cannot so much as throw the dice for his coat, but it is prophesied. There was not a bone broken of him: it was plainly presignified in his type, the paschal lamb, Exod. xii. 46. Not a bone broken! what hinders? Lo, there he hangs neglected, at their mercy; yet not all the raging Jews, nor roaring devils, could break one bone of him. What then follows? He must be pierced in the side: the spear could not do this, but directed by a prophecy; "They shall look upon me whom they have pierced," Zech. xii. 10. His very words were not unforgotten: the resignation of his spirit into the hands of his Father, Psal. xxxi. 5. His prayer for pardon to them that killed him; that same, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do," Luke xxiii. 34. It was prophesied by Isaiah, chap. liii. 12. He prayed for the transgressors. There is one yet behind, John xix. 28, "I thirst." Thirst! this is strange, that a dying man should complain of thirst. Could he endure those tortures of body, horrors of soul, the curse of our sins, the unsupportable wrath of God, and yet shrink at thirst? It was surely not the necessity of nature, but the necessity of his Father's decree, which drew from him that "I thirst." He could have borne his draught unsatisfied, he could not bear his Scripture unfulfilled. They offered him drink before, he refused it; now he calls for it, now he receives it: "In my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink," Psal. lxix. 21: the very quality and kind of his drink is prophesied. His triiduan sepulture was prefigured in Jonas, Matt. xii. 40. His glorious resurrection, and conquest over death, Psal. xvi. 10, "Thou wilt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." So Paul derives it from Hosea, chap. xiii. 14, "O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction." His ascension was prophesied, Psal. lxxviii. 18, "Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive." The vocation of the Gentiles was prophesied, Hos. ii. 23, "I will say to them which were not my people, 'Thou art my people.'" His coming to judgment prophesied, Isa. xlii. His first coming was as a lamb, without crying, or having his voice heard in the street, ver. 2. His second coming as a lion, "The Lord shall go forth as a mighty man," ver. 13. Thus in reading the Scriptures, let us still have an eye to Christ. They are a field, and the precious jewel hid in it is Jesus Christ.

Can there be now any Jew that will move that question, "Art thou he that should come? or do we look for another?" Matt. xi. 3; or that will keep

in the old tune of that tempting devil, "If thou be the Son of God?" Matt. iv. 3. If. Certainly he hath upon him the brand of that old stiff-neckedness, that will not relent with the yoke of sixteen hundred years' conviction. Let them show one prophecy unfulfilled; one other in whom they can be fulfilled. It was the great question of the world, Who is that Christ? It is the great question of the church, Who is that antichrist? In both these are the Jews ignorant. Let them beware their doom: Bring those my enemies that would not have me reign over them, and slay them before me, Luke xix. 27. But I would to God there were no vipers of this monstrous generation among us: no compounded gallimaufry of religions; a Christian's face, Jew's heart, a worldling's foot, an atheist's hand. That confess a God, and know him not: profess a Christ, and believe him not. The worst kind of fools, Psal. xiv. 1. In this worse than the devils; for they could say, "Jesus I know," Acts xix. 15. O God, that after so many miraculous confirmations, thousands of martyrdoms, glorious victories of truth, confessions of angels, of men, of devils, universal contestation of all ages; that there should be any spark of this damned infidelity left! Whom have the prophets fore-shown, what have they fore-shown that he hath not fulfilled? Who could foretell them but the Spirit of God? who could fulfil them but the Son of God? He hath prophesied, he hath accomplished; one true God in both. No other wisdom could say, this shall be done; no other power could make manifest, this is done. The law was a word prophesied; the gospel a word pronounced. Christ is the Alpha of the prophets, the Omega of the evangelists; All in all. Therefore, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha," 1 Cor. xvi. 22.

For ourselves, let us be confirmed by this reference, and persuaded in conscience, that the Scripture is the book of God. If Ptolemy was amazed at the seventy interpreters, because they, being placed in sundry rooms, never conferring, nor seeing one another, did yet upon the same text write the same thing, not only for sense of matter, but even for sound of words, as Augustine reports; how should we be moved with the Divine concordance between the prophets and the apostles, who wrote in divers ages and places, yet so agreeing in one, that they seem not divers penmen, but divers pens of one writer. The devil raged, the Pharisees stormed, Herod and Pilate vexed, Caiaphas prophesied; all intended against the Lord's Anointed. Yet they all did against their wills, as no more than God determined, so no less than was prophesied. For the determination, read Acts iv. 28; they did what "thy counsel determined before to be done." For the prediction, read Acts xiii. 27; they not knowing the prophets, "fulfilled them in condemning him." Even by this also we know him to be the right promised Jesus Christ.

"Ye do well." I proceed to their commendation; the apostle praiseth them. Goodness deserveth praise, and let it have the merit: let no man be afraid to bless, where God hath blessed. If Mary be blessed of God, all generations shall call her blessed, "Now I praise you, brethren," 1 Cor. xi. 2. Our Saviour praiseth John the Baptist; "Among them that are born of women, there hath not risen a greater," Matt. xi. 11. If Alexander so envied the happiness of Achilles, that found such a trumpet of his honour as Homer; what glory was it for John, to be commended by Christ, who neither would flatter, nor could flatter! Indeed adulation is dangerous; The word of a flatterer is worse than the sword of a persecutor. (Greg.) A malicious enemy often doth

us good, by telling our vices : but a fawning friend doth us hurt, in telling our virtues. This is verbal simony ; to commend what we have not, or to extol too much what we have. "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt," Col. iv. 6. There must be salt in our language, as well as honey. (Plaut.) The parasite hath bread in one hand, and a stone in the other ; using a man as the Jews did Christ, carry him up to the top of a hill, and then strive to throw him down headlong, Luke iv. 29. But withal, as even beasts will draw better or run faster by being encouraged ; so just praises upon due deserts are spurs to virtue. When God had given such an approval of Job, that he was a perfect and upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil, who but a devil would pick quarrels against him ? It is a breach of that justice, which is due from man to man : "Render to all their dues ; honour to whom honour," Rom. xiii. 7. The whole time is not to be spent in reproof of evil, there is some to commend what is done well. That you do attend to sermons, in this you do well ; I fear not to praise you. But then be sure you are such hearers. Sophocles ever made women good in his plays ; Euripides ever made them bad. Sophocles being asked the reason of this disparity, answered, I make them such as they should be, Euripides makes them such as they are. When I tell you of attentive auditors, I speak of such as you should be ; when I mention negligent and forgetful hearers, I speak of such as you are. First come better minded, then depart commended.

But what is the virtue here praised in them ? Attention to the Scripture. This is the mirror and rule of life. When the lawyer asked Christ what he should do to inherit eternal life ? he answered, "What is written in the law ? how readest thou ?" Luke x. 25, 26. This was Abraham's answer, "They have Moses and the prophets ; let them hear them," Luke xvi. 29. "To the law and to the testimony," Isa. viii. 20. *De rebus fidei sudeamur ex literis fidei.* (Tertul.) It is an old proverb, The letters of princes are to be read thrice : but the epistles of the King of kings would be read over seventy times. *Nocturna versate manu, versate diurna.* (Horat.) Meditate in this law day and night, Psal. i. 2. And in this let us apply ourselves more to the sense of the matter, than sound of the letter. "The letter killeth, the spirit giveth life," 2 Cor. iii. 6. The letter not understood kills, but being understood helps. One sharply reprehended an ignorant priest : Thou hast taken heed, *Ne te ulla occidere possit litera, non ulla est literata tibi.* The nobles of Berea were praised for searching the Scriptures daily, Acts xvii. 11. I would to God this just praise would be inherited with the gospel : we have the same happiness to hear, but not to consider.

Give me a man that takes heed to the word. They that settle themselves to their cups, as if they meant so much love to the wine that they are content to make themselves sick with it, do not take heed to the word, "Be not drunk with wine," Eph. v. 18. The fury of the law, I do not say the lawyer, that sits in his study like a fox in his burrow, glad to spy a goose that hath feathers on the back, (such a one as will be content to part with a wing, so his adversary may lose a quill,) and will sell truth and conscience for a fee, takes not heed to the word, "Buy the truth and sell it not," Prov. xxiii. 23. The miserable trader, that did shut up the fear of God the same day he first opened his shop ; that married his wife and the world at once, to save the charges of a double wedding ; that bids a good conscience farewell for thirty years, and chargeth it to meet him again when he is alderman ; that took one and the

same oath, to be the city's free-man, and money's bond-slave : this man takes no heed to the word, "That no man go beyond and defraud his brother, because that the Lord is the avenger of all such," 1 Thess. iv. 6. The gripping usurer, who proclaims with a *Noerint universi*, that he hath money to let, and a soul to sell, which interest shall buy ; who though the husbandman cry for rain, or the merchant for fair weather ; though the shepherd complains of the rot, the grazier the drought, and every man that depends upon God's blessing sustains loss ; yet he hath a trick beyond God, and beside heaven's leave to be rich ; he takes no heed to the 15th Psalm, which denies his soul any room in heaven. The proud, painted woman, whom the devil hath dressed up for temptation ; that gives occasion to others of lust, albeit she intends it not ; yet is like a man that shoots an arrow at a venture ; a fool comes in at the moment of omission, and it kills him : he did it not by his will, yet the sting of conscience doth not so leave him ; he could wish that he had not shot. Though the alluring woman do not perish herself, yet she destroys another. Into the church every one should come with preparation to die : painting is no sign of preparing for death, but filling up the wrinkles of age. These take no heed to the word, Give no occasion of evil. The oppressor, that undoes many hundreds, and helps two or three : like a tyrant, that hath robbed and killed the father and mother, and then gives the child a coat : that, like Socrates, wills his executors to offer a cock to Esculapius, perhaps lest he should die in the devil's debt, and be impleaded in hell : he takes no heed to the word, "Owe no man any thing," Rom. xiii. 8. Do thou restore according to equity, or the Lord will not restore thee according to mercy. We are not heedful, but heady ; we do not tarry for the direction of the word.

But as the architect without his rule will never build a good house ; nor the traveller come to the end of his journey, that neither knows nor asks a step of the way ; so there is no hope of salvation without submission to the rule of eternal truth. As it is in the fable of the golden chain ; men and gods were not able to draw Jupiter down to the earth, but Jupiter was able to draw them up into heaven. As we must submit our reason unto faith, not faith to reason ; so we must subject our affections to God's word, not God's word to our affections. The word of God is that herb of life, able to cure all diseases of the conscience. A sage observing that many passing by an unseen cockatrice, fell down dead ; only a shepherd with a garland of herbs and flowers went by unharmed ; he called the shepherd to him, and begged his garland, then sent him back to the place from whence he came. But by the way the serpent struck him dead, infecting his visory spirits with her unprepared poison. The old man hastened to him, and began to rub his eyes with one herb of the garland ; that failing, with another ; and so continued, till he lighted upon that herb which effected his recovery. Thus he came to know the herb, preserved it, prescribed it, and defended all that had such. Such a saving herb is the word of God ; when that old serpent the devil hath killed men, and laid them dead in sins and trespasses, yet if their hearts be rubbed with this flower, it shall revive them : "The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God ; and they that hear shall live," John v. 25. Now the Spirit of God fill the gardens of all our consciences with it ; that the poison of this world, the venom of Satan, may not hurt us : but that obedience and faith may bring us to the paradise where it grows ; even that eternal Word of God himself, who sits at the right hand of his Father in heaven.

"As unto a light that shineth in a dark place." This is the third general, the prelation. We have heard how the word of prophecy is said to be the surer; because that was written, visible, legible, the known will and word of God, wherunto they gave a universal consent and attestation; whereas the gospel was not then committed to writing. Now further, we must not think here is any comparison made between the law and the gospel: but, as formerly, between the written Scripture and their particular revelation; so here, between the said extant and manifest light, and the darkness of this world. For all men that are not acquainted with the word of Christ, wander in darkness; their foolish heart is darkened, Rom. i. 21. And no otherwise doth he shine unto us, than as we look on the light of his blessed truth. Now to a man shut up in a dark prison, and cooped about with a black night, nothing is more comfortable than a light. So from the caliginous shades of error and ignorance we cannot be extricated, but by this manuduction, the lamp of truth, maintained by the oil of love, which is the blood of Jesus Christ.

Metinks the parcels of this point may be distinguished into Egypt and Goshen; in the same state they stood. In Egypt "they saw not one another, neither rose any from his place for three days: but all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings," Exod. x. 23. The world is great and spacious, in respect of the church; so was Egypt a large country, Goshen but a corner of it. Yet it was day in Goshen, when it was night in Egypt; so the church seeth clearly in the broad day, when the world gropes in the dark night. Darkness is an orbity and privative thing, that necessarily follows the absence of light. Man hath seen light; who could ever see darkness? Yes, let us take this light in our hands, and by it we shall discern this dark place. First, let us consider this Egyptian darkness, and then come to the light of Goshen. There is a sixfold darkness, all expelled by this blessed light.

1. Natural darkness; caused by no positive thing, but necessarily following upon the secession or absence of the sun, and again dispersed by the succession of the next light. "Over them was spread a heavy night, an image of that darkness which should afterward receive them," Wisd. xvii. 21. Such was the judgment upon Elymas the sorcerer: Thou shalt not see the sun; and then necessarily and immediately there fell upon him a mist of darkness, Acts xiii. 11. We all know this darkness, God bless us from ever knowing a worse. If that darkness be tedious to our unsleeping eyes, which we know after few hours will have a morning, and to which God hath promised a rising sun; how intolerable is that darkness which shall never be enlightened, where men shall wish in vain for the morning star to rise! Therefore said the wise man, every night is an image of that swallowing darkness. Metinks, then, we should not dare to put out the light, till we had made our peace with the God of mercy; lest his justice throw us from this short to an eternal darkness. Consider the horror of Egypt in that thick and sick night. As the grasshoppers had lately taken from them the sight of earth, so now this gross darkness takes away the sight of heaven. Other darknesses were but privative, this real and sensible. They thought this a long night: alas, how should they choose, when it was the space of six nights in one? Joshua and Hezekiah had the longest days, but Egypt had the longest night. God enlargeth the day to his friends, the night to his enemies. No man could rise to talk with another, but was necessarily confined to his own bed and thoughts. One thinks

the fault in his own eyes, which he often rubs in vain. Another, that the firmament hath quite lost the sun, and that it is set for ever. Another, that all things are returning to their first confusion. All think themselves past remedy miserable; and wish, whatsoever had befallen them, they might have had but light enough to see themselves die. How joyfully do we look up to heaven after a tedious darkness! "Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun," Eccl. xi. 7. Yet how forgetfully do we omit praise to Him, that hath both placed the light there, and given us eyes to see it! We look on it, yet we do not duly prize it; or if we prize it, we live not worthily of it, by neglecting to bless him that gives it.

2. The darkness of calamity and trouble: for so the Hebrews took it; and by light, the deliverance from it, the comfort that doth follow it. Sorrow lasts for a night; that is, misery; the effect is put for the cause, the daughter for the mother; "but joy cometh in the morning," Psal. xxx. 5. Though a man rejoice many years, yet "let him remember the days of darkness; for they shall be many," Eccl. xi. 8; that is, the days of sorrow. So many days of trouble, so many days of darkness. "Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night," Psal. xci. 5. This same terror by night is of all fears most terrible. Pray that your light be not in the night; it was Christ's warning to the Jews. Nothing is more without comfort than darkness, nothing more without joy than calamity. Hence it is that comforts in holy writ are set down under the name of light. "Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness," Psal. cxli. 4; that is, comfort in trouble. "The light of the wicked shall be put out, and the spark of his fire shall not shine," Job xvii. 5; all his joy, comfort, hope shall be extinguished. So miseries are called darkness: David in his afflictions complains, that the darkness had covered him. Hereupon some have derived *lugere*, quasi *lucere egere*. The godly are called "the children of light," Luke xvi. 8. Now can the children of light mourn, while the Sun of comfort is with them? No more than the children of the bridechamber, in the presence of the bridegroom, Matt. ix. 15. He is mad that can be merry in darkness; he is worse than mad that can laugh and sing in wretchedness. "There is a time to laugh, and a time to weep," Eccl. iii. 4; there is a time of light, and a time of darkness. There is a time to laugh, and that is the time of light; there is a time to weep, and that is the time of darkness. Do you require of us a song in our heaviness? "How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" Psal. cxxxvii. 4. The captivity in Babylon might well mar the mirth of Jerusalem. When God troubles the state of our peace, he would trouble the eyes of our heads: as when the thunder shakes the air, the clouds weep to still it. Shall we compassionate others' miseries, and not our own? As August. Confess. l. cap. 13; What is more wretched than he that pities not himself? that can lament the death of Dido, which came by over-loving Eneas, and not lament his own death, which comes by not loving the Lord? "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil," Psal. xciii. 4. Calamity is this shadow; there is no comfort in it, but only the light and presence of Christ.

3. The darkness of ignorance, the worst kind of ecceity. The seeing man says in the night, I have eyes, but here is no light. The blind man says in the day, There is light, but I have no eyes. The blind papist among Christians may say, Here is light, but I have no eyes. The believing Christian among papists must say, I have eyes, but here is no light.

The infidel fails in both; he hath neither an eye for the light, nor light for the eye; neither the truth visible, nor an understanding capable: this is a wretched darkness. Pagans have a darkful night; papists have a doubtful light, we call it twilight; we have the broad day. Our "eyes have seen thy salvation," Luke ii. 30. When I considered well that same popish doctrine, how they extol and olamde ignorance to their people; yea, justify it to the world, and commend it as the special means to hold them to the line of obedience, and within the lists of God's service; methought I did wonder, which of Satan's transformations had brought Rome to this inextricable darkness. First, he came like a lion, roaring out persecution and blood; there he tried the patience of the church; "Here is the patience of the saints," Rev. xiii. 10. Then he came like a serpent, winding himself in by heresy; there he exercised the wisdom of the church; "Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding," &c. Rev. xiii. 18. Then he came transformed like an angel of light; for he could work nothing upon us if he should profess himself to be the very same that he is; there he exercised the faith of the church; whether, renouncing all aberrations, we would adhere to the manifested will of God. Try the spirits; and then this spirit of borrowed light will prove a spirit of very darkness. But what shape or semblance took he, what kind of devil was he, when he came to persuade men to ignorance? Oh impudence! he durst then profess himself to be what he is, a spirit of darkness. Ask him, What art thou? he answers plainly, I am the devil, and come to put out thine eyes. Oh who but a bewitched Romist will thus entertain him? "Therefore night shall be unto you, and it shall be dark, that ye shall not have a vision; the sun shall go down over the prophets, and the day shall be dark over them," Micah iii. 6. Oh fearful! The centinel perceives a passenger: Who goes there? A friend. Give the word. I am for the light of the gospel. Though he be a false friend, yet the word admits him. But the centinel asking, Who goes there? it is answered, A friend. Give the word. I am for darkness and ignorance. Shall he pass? he is a friend to the pope. As Demosthenes got more by silence than other advocates by pleading, so the pope hath got more by darkness than any bishop of the Christian world by light. Others get only heaven, but he hath got heaven, and earth, and purgatory (and perhaps hell) to boot.

Simplicity, sometimes a sin personal in the lay people, is now become a sin cathedral in the teachers. But though the people may not read the Scripture, yet they preach Scripture. But alas, how should the people know whether they preach Scripture or not? who can discern a wolf from a sheep, without some light? They tell you the miracles of such a block, the wonders of a crucifix, what prayers you must number to saints. They make sermons, as they did their church windows; so much painting in them, that they quite keep out the light. And in conclusion, they persuade the people to love darkness; for this will bring them to devotion, just as sure as the devil would bring them to salvation. Consider and pity their estate: exterior darkness hath caused interior darkness. When the heavens are shadowed with thick clouds, the glorious sun retired to his descent, the moon afraid to put forth her silver horns, the stars not able to twinkle in their spheres; not a little candle, not a spark of fire to be gotten; oh uncomfortable confusion! Ten thousand times more wretched is the soul's estate in this spiritual darkness; what are the companions of it, but error and terror? First, as in the night all things have

lost their colours, in respect of our apprehension; who could know the blue friars from the grey, or the white from the black, or Nicholas Clarke's from either? so the darkened soul thinks blessing and cursing all one; to worship our lady as good as to worship our Lord; to sacrifice, and not to sacrifice; to swear, as to fear an oath. Eccl. ix. 2. Again, as in the night a man is often amazed and affrighted, his hair staring, and his thoughts distracted with fear; so there is nothing but dread and perturbation of conscience in this inward darkness. They know not whether they shall be saved or damned, till they come to heaven or hell. Oh fearful death, when souls depart to know whether there be a heaven or hell, or no. Suppose they do slumber in this darkness, yet it is not without starting. All the glimpse of their hope consists in some perfunctory prayers to our lady; this is the main popish light. Whereof a hermit tells us in good earnest; that he saw a great light descending from heaven, like unto fire, and lighting upon her church at Loretta. It was, saith he, twelve feet high, and six feet broad; and this was concluded by the loving divines at Louvaine, to be our lady, who came down in her own person to see her feast solemnized. For this, you must note, happened on the 8th of September, the very day of her birth; in those days when beasts spake, and houses did fly; and then the cock crew, and it waxed day. This story for demonstration is written in the church of Loretta; let us there leave it. And for those poor souls, led in blindness, let us pray, that the Lord would translate them out of darkness into the kingdom of his dear Son, Col. i. 13.

4. The darkness of iniquity. Sins are called "the works of darkness," Rom. xiii. 12. "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness," Eph. v. 11. When that great sin was a committing, the murder of the innocent Lamb Jesus, there was a darkness over all the earth, Luke xxiii. 44; to show that this was a great work of darkness, the hour of darkness, and power of darkness, consented and consented to assist it. The black night-raven will foster her own bird; the mother darkness makes much of the daughter. There was a hellish dance led by five, the men of darkness, a deed of darkness, hour of darkness, power of darkness, and the prince of darkness, to make up number and measure. The sun was darkened, as if shame would not suffer it to behold so black a deed. A heathen observing it, concluded, either that God suffered or the world perished. There was no interposition of the moon betwixt sun and earth, to make a natural eclipse; but the invention, intervention of a foul and cloudy sin. Men could endure to do it; the sun could not endure to behold it. Men's eyes have dazzled to behold the sun; but now the sun's eyes dazzled to look upon men. The sun is called the eye of the world; that eye winked and was shut, lest beholding their dark and dismal work, it should have dropped from heaven, set the world on fire, and burned it up to ashes. The whole canopy of air was drawn, and all the face of the sky hung with black, to witness their compassion, like mourners at the funeral of their Maker. This malicious darkness is terrible; the other is a blind and passive, this an active, operative darkness.

Now "what communion hath light with darkness?" 2 Cor. vi. 14. Let a child of light be brought into the ring or circle of these darklings, who are indeed the epitome and abridgement of that greater world which lies in wickedness; and they conspire to afflict his eyes with unchaste and horrid visions, his ears with fearful oaths, his unwilling appetite with drunken salutations. And if they can, like that Babylonish harlot, make him taste poison in a golden

cup, wrap him in a mist of darkness, they presently sing, *Vicinus*; and rejoice, as in the division of a spoil, that they have drenched sobriety, and blinded the light. He may be a good taper, but they will ever after become his snuffers. But let such an error be thy mirror; see thy weakness in that glass, and trust no more the company of sinners. Let this antipræstis recover the more zeal: *Nec tu eade malis, sed te melioribus offer*; think not that counsel available, *noctem peccatis, et fraudibus objice nubem*: the mantle of night shall cover them. For an ill companion is like a promoter, that in Lent eats flesh at thy table, and yet is the first that accuseth thee to the magistrate: so he will drink at thy cost, and then whisper thee abroad for a drunkard.

Beware these night-works: "They that be drunken are drunken in the night," 1 Thess. v. 7. Noctivagants are negligent in their habits: an ill gown will serve the turn; neither decency, nor hardly modesty, is respected. But in the day men desire to go handsome, according to their quality. So let us put off our night-clothes, and put on apparel fit for the day. The drunkard is in his night-gown, as if God could not then see his luxury. The adulterer is in his night-gown, he presumes that the dark shall cover him. The hypocrite is in his night-gown, he looks like day, but he lives like night. The fraudulent trader is in his night-gown, he loves either no light, or a false light. The profane ruffian is in his night-gown, not dressed like a spouse for Christ. The schismatic in his night-gown, he cannot abide that comeliness and order which the day requireth. The thief is in his night-gown; "In the dark they dig through houses, which they had marked for themselves in the day-time," Job xxiv. 16. All these night-walkers are night-attired; and unless timely repentance help them, they will be benighted ere they come to heaven.

5. The darkness of death. Death is a putting out of light, and a committing to darkness. "Shall thy wonders be known in the dark? shall thy loving-kindness be declared in the grave?" Psal. lxxxviii. 11, 12. Job calls it, "A land of darkness, without any order, where the light is as darkness," Job x. 22. "Remember the days of darkness," Eccl. xi. 8. Heaven is the place of light, the bowels of the earth the place of darkness. Man's life is in the mid-way between them; he sees whither his soul may go, whither his body must go. There is an old apologue: A man going out of his beaten and directed way, to gather unlawful fruits, fell into a deep pit. In his fall, he caught hold on the arm of a tree growing in it. Thus he hung in the mid-way, betwixt the upper light from which he fell, and the lower darkness to which he was falling. He looks downward, and sees two worms gnawing at the root of this tree: he looks upward, and spies on a branch a hive of honey: he climbs up to it, and sits feeding on it. But in the mean time the worms did bite in sunder the root, and down falls man, and tree, and all into the bottom of the dark pit. Man himself is this wretch, who straying from the way of God's commandments, fell to eat of the forbidden fruit: instantly he fell. The pit over which he hangeth is the grave; the tree whereby he holdeth is this mortal life; the two worms are day and night; the hive of honey is the pleasures and lusts of this world. Hereupon he greedily feeds; until the two consumers, day and night in their vicissitudes, have eaten asunder the root of life; then down drops earth to earth, *corpus putidum in locum putridum*. There it must lodge in the silent grave, neither seeing nor seen, blended in the forgotten dust and undistinguished mould, till it be awakened by the archangel's trumpet in the great day of Christ.

6. The last is the darkness of hell. The lost an-

gels are "reserved in everlasting chains under darkness," Jude 6. "They shall be cast into outer darkness," Matt. viii. 12. Whereby a man may conjecture, that hell is not the air: for in the air shall be light, the splendour of the sun being septuaged; but hell is called "outer darkness," Matt. xxv. 30. This is the place where sin began, where it shall end; it came from hell, and to hell it goes. It began from Satan who is the prince of darkness; it ends in hell, which is the place of darkness. There is a natural propensity of heavy things downwards: sin is heavy, therefore it sinks downward; "The way of life is above to the wise, that he may depart from hell beneath," Prov. xv. 24. Oh that is a place of intolerable darkness: here we are allowed a candle, though the sun be set, and the moon not risen; there is not a spark of light in hell. Those upon earth that are said to have half a year night; yet are not without some trajection of light, and diffusion of the sun's reflective rays, though he be not risen above their hemisphere. Yet if this be tedious, what is that everlasting darkness, which will continue so long as God is just! This is that common sewer whither the sink of all darkness runs: darkness external, darkness internal, both run to darkness infernal, and there make up a darkness eternal. But there shall be unquenchable fire; shall not that that fire give some light? No; The revenging flame can burn, but not illuminate. (Greg.) There shall be no vision, but all division: the sense must feel what doth torment it, the sight must not behold what may refresh it. That horror hath in it two things, "weeping, and gnashing of teeth," Matt. viii. 12. Weeping proceeds from heat, gnashing of teeth from coldness. (Greg.) This is a strange compound; unquenchable fire, unlightable darkness! But how then shall they know one another in hell? If there be any light, it shall be a glimpse to aggravate torment; as the sight of their partners in sin, to be partakers in punishment. But though their bodies see not, their understandings may discern; their ears shall hear their shrieks, and reprobates may be distinguished by their cries. But let us not be curious to know what we so abhor to feel. It is a dark, desolate, disconsolate, torturing place; where is no hope of light, nor light of hope. Now the blood of our blessed Saviour deliver us all from it for ever.

Thus you have the description of many darkneses, and haply have thought yourselves in the mist of darkness all this while. Egypt hath been too tedious to you, you ask for Goshen: indeed you have been all this time in the light, that you have looked upon darkness. For darkness could never be seen by itself, but by the light: "All things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest, is light," Eph. v. 13. But now, would you see all these black clouds dispersed in a moment? Behold the light that doth it, the true knowledge of Jesus Christ. The sun doth no sooner show his face, but the darkness vanisheth. Cæsar did no sooner look upon his enemies, but they were gone; *Vidi, vici*. Egypt swarmed with locusts till the west wind came, that left not one. Sennacherib's army was innumerable, yet the angel arose and struck them; and behold, they were all dead corpses. "Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered;" he shall drive them away like smoke, Psal. lxxviii. 1, 2. It is the light of the gospel that dispels all these shadows. Our air is full of this light: our air, I say; if our heart be full also, we are blessed for ever.

For the darkness of nature, it must indeed have the due course by creation; "While the earth remaineth, day and night shall not cease," Gen. viii. 22. So the Maker's hand hath disposed it;

and by the vicissitude of time, and alternation of the wheeling heavens, it continues : until all men arrive, either at that eternal day in heaven, or eternal night in hell. As that Spanish bishop, staggering in the question whether Solomon was saved or lost, caused him to be pictured in his chapel, the one half in hell, the other in heaven ; or as Proserpina was censured by her father Jupiter, to live half the year in heaven, and the rest in hell : so we spend half our time upon earth in light, and half in darkness. But if this light be in us, our night shall be turned to day ; The night shall be light above us, and shall shine as the day. Psal. cxxxix. 11, 12. What darkness can offend, where the Father of lights shineth ? or what clouds can keep off that Sun of Righteousness ? "The Lord will lighten my darkness," 2 Sam. xxii. 29. No darkness shall afflict thy body, while there is this saving light in thy soul.

For the darkness of affliction, true it is, that the brightest day hath a cloud, the most quiet mind her disturbance. Our best estate hath aque fits ; but he that is Father of light beholds us ; "Thou hast known my soul in adversities," Psal. cxxi. 7. This comforts us in misery, as the suffering child that knows his father seeth : "Make thy face to shine upon thy servant ; save me for thy mercies' sake," ver. 16. We cannot be so broken, but the light of his countenance will make us whole. Peter was in hard bondage by Herod, "sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains ;" yet even then "a light shined in the prison," Acts xii. 6, 7. Say that thou liest between usury and oppression, as Peter between two soldiers ; bound with two chains of debt and penury ; yet if the comfort of this light shine in thy heart, thy prison shall be a heaven, thy keepers angels, thy chains thy glory, and thy deliverance salvation.

For the darkness of ignorance, indeed it is tetrical and dangerous ; whether it be intrinsic by an indisposition in the instrument, natural, or accidental ; or through want of medium, which may transmit the object to the sense. Knowledge is to these as the sun to the blind, or a crack of thunder to the deaf. But now there is no darkness so invincible, but the Lord can enlighten it : "To them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up," Matt. iv. 16. Thou wastest knowledge, despair not ; he hath none that says he hath enough : "The Lord will show them his covenant," Psal. cxxv. 14. If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God that will give him, Jam. i. 5. For direction, two words are as good as twenty. Pray for it, and use the means to get it. Love the light, and have the light. It is more true of God's truth, than it was of that Greekish beauty : No man loved her that never saw her ; no man ever saw her, but he loved her. Hear attentively, pray intently ; and doubt not but God will send thee light enough on earth to bring thee to the light of heaven.

For the darkness of sin, indeed it is fearful for the wicked ; but this shining light shall expel it out of thy heart : that light which shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not, John i. 5. The wicked shall fret themselves, and curse their king and their god ; and when they look upon the earth, behold trouble and darkness, Isa. viii. 21, 22. When others curse their darkness, thou shalt bless this light. As the wicked have a prohibition of that darkness they shall go unto hereafter : so have the faithful an earnest of that light which is prepared for them. The light of heaven must first enter into a man's soul, before his soul can enter into the light of heaven.

For the darkness of death, know it is but dust and ashes that suffers it, which is insensible of the pri-

vation. It is but like the laying up of thy garment in a trunk : what matters it, so long as thy soul hath the light of blessedness ? Lord, lighten mine eyes, the eyes of my soul, that they sleep not in death, it is sufficient.

For that infernal and eternal darkness, it shall not come nigh thee. Keep thy face of faith still toward the sun, and thou shalt leave that darkness behind thee. "There is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus," Rom. viii. 1. He shall deliver us from the error of darkness and from the terror of darkness ; from the valley of the shadow of death ; and advance us to that light wherein himself dwelleth : and that Lord send us all the light of heaven.

"Until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts." Some refer darkness here to that shadowy, misty, or at best mystical time, which was under the law ; when they saw their redemption only in figure, the blood of Christ in the blood of lambs, the performance in the promise. And during that darkness the word of prophecy was of singular use. Thus by faith they beheld the Messiah that was to come, as if he already was come. "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and saw it," John viii. 56. Christ was come when Peter wrote this ; but because he was yet a stranger to their minds, and had not gotten sufficient credit in their hearts, he commends their attention to the prophets. For they spake concerning Christ's birth and passion, as himself spake concerning his rising and ascension : "These things I have told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember" the prediction, John xvi. 4. When we know the way the King will come, and have his idea imprinted in our minds, whereby we may discern him when he is come, we shall with more readiness welcome him, with less doubt. Thus Zacharias sung, "The day-spring from on high hath visited us," Luke i. 78. This was that day-dawning, and morning-star, when that great Sun of Righteousness had newly risen from the womb of the virgin, and began to cast abroad his saving beams. For he was not sooner made, than made manifest. The wise men saw the star that waited on the Sun, and worshipped that Sun that made the star. The angels proclaimed it to the shepherds, the shepherds divulged it to others, and made it known all abroad, Luke ii. Herod hears and fears : he suspected that this day would be his night ; therefore would have put out the Light in the morning of it ; but he could with more ease have plucked a fixed star from heaven. Clouds may hide the sun, nothing can hinder the Lord of glory, when he purposeth to shine in his majesty.

But they that thus understand it ; by darkness, that time which preceded the clear knowledge of Christ ; and by day, a free and liberal apprehension of him ; come too short. For this were a very cold commendation of the prophets, to be regarded no longer than until Christ be manifested to us in the flesh. But it is objected, "All the prophets prophesied until John," Matt. xi. 13. True, for what need they further prophesy Him to come that was present ? But doth the use of their prophecy last no longer to us ? Yes, certainly, the benefit of the prophets died not with the prophets. There is no end of the use of their sayings, till there be an end of the world's being. This is then the sense we settle upon ; that this full day here spoken of, is the plenary and perfect light which shall be given us in the kingdom of heaven. For as the former darkness is to be extended to the whole course of our life ; so this day-dawning, and day-star arising, is our entrance into the celestial glory. For in the other acceptance there would follow absurdities ; as that the prophets should

be idle and superfluous to those that knew Christ, which are necessary to the world's end. But how can that glory be called a day-dawning, or day-star? Not that that clarity hath any morning in itself, but in regard of us that newly arrive to it. The world is five thousand years old, in the very evening; yet to the child new born it is but a morning. Certainly, so long as we are pilgrims here, we see through a glass, darkly; there our hearts shall be filled with that glorious light of perfection; and we that were dwarfs below, shall be made tall men in Jesus Christ: when "we all come in the unity of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ," Eph. iv. 13.

They that object against this exposition, say that the word until, is not always taken limiting, bounding, or confining a set time. So that the word of prophecy may shine like a light in a dark place, until the promulgation of the glorious gospel; and yet not then be rejected as useless, but remain still, though a dim light in respect, yet a light. So Matt. xxviii. 20, I am with you unto the world's end. What, will he leave us then? No, but as spiritually he is with us here, so locally and personally we shall be with him hereafter. The heavens must receive Christ until the restitution of all things, Acts iii. 21. Shall heaven lose him then? No, he sits on the right hand of Eternity for ever. The faithful man "shall not be afraid, until he see his desire upon his enemies," Psal. cxii. 8: and I hope he hath less cause to be afraid afterwards. God saith to Jacob, "I will not leave thee until I have done what I have spoken to thee," Gen. xxviii. 15: when this was performed, God did not forsake the seed of Jacob. The word of God shall not pass until heaven and earth pass, Matt. v. 18: no, nor then neither. "In the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge until these calamities be overpast," Psal. lvi. 1. Did he mean to leave that refuge after his deliverance? No; Thou art my rest for ever. "I held my Beloved, and would not let him go, until I had brought him into my mother's house," Cant. iii. 4. Did she let him go then? No, she held him fast in her nuptial bed of faith for ever. Waken not my Love till he please, Cant. ii. 7. Disquiet not my Saviour, nor grieve his Spirit, nor dishonour his name, nor by any provocation of sin interrupt his peace, till he please; but he will never be pleased with such a disturbance. The reprobate shall not come out of the prison, till he hath paid the uttermost farthing, Matt. v. 26; and that will be never. But again, sometimes until excludes the time past, doth not infer the time future: Joseph knew not Mary "until she had brought forth her first-born son," Matt. i. 25; it doth not follow that he knew her afterward. So Christ is called her first-born; yet this insinuates no probability of consequence that she had more sons. Who durst touch that sacred vessel, which God had hallowed to bear his own Son? "Michal had no child until the day of her death," 2 Sam. vi. 23; and it is certain she had none afterwards. But now, when until is used by way of precept, it always defines and determines. Walk until thou hast performed thy journey, then thou shalt rest. Fight till thou overcome, then have peace. "That ye have already hold fast till I come," Rev. ii. 25. The Lord sends preachers to edify the church, until we all meet to a perfect man, Eph. iv. 13; then shall that office cease. So here, attend to the light of prophecy, until the day dawn, until you come to that full day of glory in heaven. So that the point of doctrine intends the difference between that measure of knowledge which God's grace affords us in our pilgrimage, and that measure which

his glory shall endue us with in the kingdom of heaven. For method of tractation, first let us consider the light in general; and then pass through the degrees of it, till we ascend to the perfection.

The light was made three days before the sun. Junius thinks that light was the element of fire. Nazianz, and Theodor, a light without a subject, afterwards dispersed and fastened to divers bodies, of sun, moon, and stars. So Mercier, Those lightsome bodies were made the receptacles of the former created lights. But if God created the light, it seems that he was before in darkness. No, he needs not a temporal and created light, that is himself a spiritual uncreated light. But if God made the light, who made darkness? Darkness is nothing, it need no creation, being but the absence of light, and nakedness is the want of clothing. But God saw that the light was good, therefore he knew it not before. It follows not; his approval of it being brought forth in action, doth not prejudice his foresight in intention. Christ marvelled, and wondered at the centurion's faith, Matt. viii. 10, which indeed himself wrought in him. Thus did God begin with the light, to show that he is that Father of lights, in whom is *omnis præstantia et compositus ordo*, Jam. i. 17. The Persian magi used to call their god, Oromasten. "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all," 1 John i. 5. "None, not actively to deceive, not passively to be deceived. Christ is called that "true Light, which lighteth every man," John i. 9. But as he calls himself, so also his apostles, the light of the world: but with a difference. Christ is the fountain of lights, that greater Light. The apostles shine with the borrowed light of the sun, are a less light. *Λαὸς ἀπὸ τῆς λύχνης διέτα*: *λύχνη* the ancient Greeks understood for the first light, or early morning. So the apostles were *aurora solis*, being sent to preach the Light; as John Baptist was the forerunner of the Light. Indeed in respect of their successors they were great lights. First, by a transcendency; as light of the republic, &c.; we call an eminent man the light of the state; the light of religion; the light of poets. So David was called "the light of Israel," 2 Sam. xxi. 17. In respect of their life and doctrine they were more famous lights than any that followed them. Then, because, like blessed lights, they did not only instruct us by their doctrines, but direct us by their doings; but now, in respect of God, they were dim: we say of them, as John Baptist said of himself, they were "not that Light, but sent to bear witness of that Light," John i. 8. There is one glory of the sun, another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars," 1 Cor. xv. 41. There is a light that doth enlighten, is not enlightened; as the sun, that carries about with him the light of the world. The heathens say of the sun, that he doth put light out to usury. There is a light that doth not enlighten, but is enlightened, as the firmament. There is a light that is enlightened, and doth enlighten; as the moon and stars. The faithful are such lights, they "shine as lights in the world," Phil. ii. 15. In the absence of the sun, the moon is a great light. A torch cannot light itself, yet being kindled is able to give light to others; so no man can illuminate himself, yet being illuminated by that Sun of justice, he can give a light of direction to others. Therefore the church is compared to heaven, Rev. xii.: the church shines with teachers as the heaven with stars. They are lights, both with the ministry of conversion, and the example of conversation. In the one is the word of life; in the other the life of the word. The light in the window doth not only give light to them that are in the house, but also passengers in the street. The other ships guide their course, not only by the star

in heaven, but also by the light in the admiral. So there is the light of life in doctrine, the life of light in exemplary conversation. John "was a burning and a shining light," John v. 35. Lights burning and not shining, are like hell-fire: lights shining and not burning, like glow-worms. Our God is not only a consuming fire, but also a shining light; both formally and effectively. "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined," Psal. l. 2. Such a light is his sacred truth, able to illuminate all the dark corners of the world. There is a fourfold light.

1. The light of nature; this was goodly in Adam. "They are of those that rebel against the light," Job xxiv. 13: that is, against the light of nature. Plato was of opinion, that every soul had this light till it came into the body; and by that mixture it was only muffled and blinded. Hence was that his maxim, that to know, was nothing else but to remember. But this opinion presupposeth a seminary or promptuary of souls, from whence they are derived to their bodies; which is false. The Scripture saith, God "formeth the spirit of man within him," Zech. xii. 1: it is created with infusion, and infused with creation. Yet when the spirit and flesh meet, and man is made, this light is defaced; for the soul, even when it is infused, is infected.

2. The light of the gospel. "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life," John viii. 12. This was the intent of our Saviour's coming, "to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace," Luke i. 79. It is true, that the law was a light, *le est lux*: but like a lamp, far short of that day which comes by the rising of the glorious Sun, Jesus Christ. Thy word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my paths, Psal. cxix. 105: but thy Christ is a Sun, that hath saving health under his wings, Mal. iv. 2. In the night a man is glad of the light of a candle; so was the word of prophecy a great help during the darkness which oppressed the whole world. But now the day is broken, and the splendour of the Sun shines in our faces. There is in the world, Psal. xci. 5, 6, "terror by night," the trouble of a vexed conscience; "the arrow that flieth by day," the temptations of Satan in prosperity and peace; "the pestilence that walketh in darkness," heresy to pervert the mind; "the destruction that wasteth at noon-day," profaneness to corrupt the affections; none of these shall destroy us, because we have the light of the gospel to avoid them. This light shall defend us from all dangers, open or hidden, external or internal, corporal or spiritual. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, there is no light in them," Isa. viii. 20. He that doth not direct us by that rule, we can see there is no morning in him. Some have God, and know him not, as infants. Some know God, and have him not, as baptized reprobates. Some neither have him nor know him, as pagans. Others have him and know him, as all faithful Christians.

3. The light of grace. Thus we are made "partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light," Col. i. 12. This is wrought in us by the light of the gospel, the Holy Spirit opening the window of our heart, that this day might shine into it. For men may be in the light, and yet the light not be in them; and it is one thing to have the light in a man's head, another to have it in his heart. The light of knowledge may illuminate the brain, and yet leave a man unblinded; but they are saints in whose hearts the day-star is risen. That man knows the good he hath not done; this man doth the good he hath known. They say, he plays best that wins; but I am sure he

knows best that does. When the apostles prayed for that decision, Acts i. 24, that God would be pleased to show whether of the two, Barsabas or Matthias, he had chosen into Judas' episcopal room; they said, "Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men:" not the heads, but the hearts. Many have lightened heads, but dark hearts: "Their foolish heart was darkened," Rom. i. 21. The apostle there saith "they knew God," there was light in their heads; but darkness was in their hearts. Never had age more light in their understandings than ours; I fear never less light in their hearts. "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather," John iii. 19. The Day-star is risen, and shineth, and we see his glory; "the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth," John i. 14: God grant withal, that he be risen in our hearts.

4. The light of glory. "In thy light shall we see light," saith the prophet, Psal. xxxvi. 9. When they shall need no candle, nor the light of the sun, for the Lord God giveth them light, they shall reign for ever and ever, Rev. xxii. 5. The light of nature is like a spark, the light of the gospel a lamp, the light of grace a star, but the light of glory the sun itself. The higher our ascent, the greater our light. God dwelleth "in the light which no man can approach unto," 1 Tim. vi. 16: no man, while he carries mortality and sin about him; but when those two corrupt and uncapable qualities shall be put off, then shall we be brought to that light. We are now glad of the sun and stars over our heads, to give us light, what light and delight shall that be, when these shall be under our feet! That light must needs go as far beyond their light, as they now go beyond us. But, alas! they are only able to discourse of that light, that do enjoy it, to whom that eternal day is risen; not we that live in the humble shade of mortality, and natural dimness. I leave it therefore to your meditations; it is a glorious light, which we do well often to consider, considering to admire, admiring to love, loving to desire, desiring to seek, and finding to enjoy for ever.

"Until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts." The kingdom of grace is both an entrance to and a resemblance of the kingdom of glory. This evangelical day on earth, is a glimpse of that angelical day in heaven. And Christ is our day-star here, in respect of his gracious light, as he will be hereafter, in respect of his glorious light. Christ hath been often called a star, and that without disparagement to him, that is the Sun himself. It was given him both by prophetic prediction, "There shall come a star out of Jacob," Numb. xxiv. 17: and by evangelical ascription, "I am the root and off-spring of David, and the bright and morning-star," Rev. xxii. 16. Christ hath in the Scripture divers names of light given him, according to the different degrees of his emanation. Sometimes he casteth forth a scantly beam, and then he is called the day-dawning. Sometimes he gives so much light, as only signifies a bright day at hand; then he is called Lucifer, the morning-star. Other times he diffuseth his knowledge, then he is the light and the day; then he shines out in his glory, and is the sun himself. This is the star we sail by, over the sea of this world: other stars are under us in service, though they be above us in situation. The heavens, moon, and stars: "thou hast put all things under his feet," Psal. viii. 6. If it be true that the stars govern men, yet it is more true that God governs the stars: this star commands all. Here the trouble and philosophical query concerning the morning-star is decided. (Plin. Natur. Hist. lib. 2. cap. 8.) Some take this star to

be Venus, some Isis, some Juno, some the mother of the gods. We need not trouble our heads about it; our morning-star is Jesus Christ. That Babylonian monarch was called, "Lucifer, son of the morning," Isa. xiv. 12; a morning-star, but a falling-star: he rose against this day-star, and therefore was turned out of his high orb, wherein he had advanced himself above the kings of the earth. So tread down all thine enemies, O Lord; but to thy church give this day-star, Christ, for ever.

This gracious day hath dawned unto us, and shineth upon us; but it will not last ever, it must have an evening. "Are there not twelve hours in the day?" saith Christ, John xi. 9. If no more, certainly the last hour will come. "While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light," John xii. 36. We all say we are the children of light; but we make not the light our guide. So the Jews said, We have Abraham to our father, yet showed themselves degenerate bastards. "If we say we have fellowship with God, and walk in darkness, we lie," 1 John i. 6. It is as if a clod of squalid earth should boast itself to be the daughter of fire. "He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is still in darkness," 1 John ii. 9. But no man will be thought to hate his brother. He will scorn his brother, strike his brother, belie his brother, oppress his brother, undo his brother; yet, forsooth, he will not hate his brother. Palpable darkness, if he knows not this, in his head; if he knows it, then in his heart. "Woe to them that put light for darkness, and darkness for light!" Isa. v. 20. If such a man persist, he shall go to bed at noon, and drop down to hell like a meteor, when all the stars remain in their glory. For it is just with God to take the light from thine eyes, when thou hast taken thine eyes from the light.

This day is ours, let us be the day's. Let us not be noctivagants, straying abroad with Dinah, lest our chaste soul come home deflowered. Or, as the poets say of Proserpine, that while she was gadding abroad with her mother Ceres, Pluto rapt her to hell; so if men wilfully run from the light, they may be violently ravished by the prince of darkness. A virgin being tempted by a dissembling lover, followed him: in this pursuit of her vain desires, she escapes many unsuspected dangers, and found expected deliverance. For though her lover led her over deep pits and deadly snares, purposing to ravish her and destroy her, yet still an angel was present to defend her. A glorious show had attracted her eyes, she thought him a person of all delights; and still as she went, she found scattered gold, which she gathering minded not whither she strayed. When he had brought her to his cave, and was even ready to deflower her with violence, and to wound her to death, the angel steps in, and puts him to flight. He discovers himself to be an angel of light, and the other an impostor and traitor to her. He brings her to the gulfs side, and shows her the bottomless depth of the pit which she escaped, and the serpent that was ready to devour her. He bids her examine the gold; lo it was base metal, counterfeit and venomous dross. Tells her what loss of a faithful betrothed lover she hath hazarded. Hereupon the virgin breaks forth into lamentations and bitter tears; begins to swoon with despair, and dares not look up to that light she hath so offended. The angel lifts her up, revives her spirits, promiseth to bring her to a fountain that shall wash off all her defilements. Being thus washed, he shows her true husband coming towards her with a gracious aspect. He takes her in his arms, wipes her eyes, dries her tears, and seals on her cheeks millions of kisses. Lo now she begins to recover, on her bended knees she entreats his constant love

to her, and promiseth chaste adherence to him for ever. This virgin is man's soul, her false lover the devil, her betrothed husband Christ, the angel is the gospel; the night wherein she wanders is ignorance, the gold profit or pleasure, the sea is this world, the pit hell, the bridge whereby she escapes is God's mercy. Satan transformed like a friend woos her, gets her good-will to follow him. If she will admit of this or that sin, at every step she shall take up gold, have her desires satisfied. This golden temptation so strongly takes her, that she runs from vice to vice, from error to error; thinks all is safe, and that she is in the company of one who dearly loves her. At last she is brought to some foul and capital offence, to the very doors of hell, ready to be turned in. But behold then, he that never forsakes his, sendeth an angelical, evangelical light, opens her eyes, unhands the devil, and sets her at liberty. The day dawns, and the day-star arises in her heart; and now observe, the course is taken to bring this poor soul to salvation. First, the gospel shows her that the lover she so doted upon was an adversary, Satan; not the spirit of light, but the prince of darkness. Oh how ugly does this monster appear in her eye! how doth she hate herself for loving him! Next, it discovers the counterfeit gold, that all the vanity of this world is but slip-coin; so far from making man rich or blessed, that it is the devil's poison to make him cursed. Then it brings her to the deep gulf of perdition, which she passed over without fear because without knowledge: wherein she had been drowned for ever, but for the saving bridge of God's mercy; who was good to her, even while she was so bad to him. Lastly, it describes to her the beauty and perfections of that Husband she had forsaken, the Son of glory, fairer than all the children of men; white and ruddy, of the purest complexion, the chiefest among ten thousand. Hereupon she breaks into amazed complaints: Wretch that I am, what shall become of me? there is nothing but death and damnation due unto me. I dare not look up to that heaven I have so offended, nor speak to that Father I have so provoked, nor hope for that Husband I have so wronged. Did my redemption cost him the dear blood of his heart, and do I sell myself to Satan for gold, for vanity, for nothing? O look not upon me, ye daughters of Jerusalem, for I am black, swarthy, and polluted. Time was that the King did greatly desire my beauty, Psal. xlv. 11. But now I lie defiled in my own blood, my shame is upon me, and my confusion hath covered me. I am sick, my heart-strings burst; let me groan and die. Now steps in this blessed light of the gospel, takes the swooning soul by the hand, lifts her up from the dust of despair, and puts into her mouth that song, "I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living," Psal. xxvii. 13. This brings her to a fountain, yea, brings a fountain out of her: her heart bleeds the tears of compunction, and they run not by drops, but by floods from her eyes. She weeps like David, until she can weep no more, 1 Sam. xxx. 4. But lest this shower should melt her to nothing, the Sun of mercy comes to stay it: and now this light directs her in the voice of John, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world," John i. 29. She lifts up her eyes of faith, and sees him come "leaping upon the mountains, and skipping upon the hills," Cant. ii. 8. She runneth to him, throws herself in the dust at his feet, bathes them with her tears like Mary; and with a humble heart and suppliant voice beseecheth him, Lord, be merciful to me a sinner. She takes hold of him, as Jacob, I will not let thee go till thou hast blessed me. The Lord takes her in his arms of mercy,

puts his left hand under her head, and with his right hand embraceth her, Cant. ii. 6. He speaks peace and comfort to her conscience, heals all her wounds with his own blood, promiseth to mediate for her to his Father, and to make her peace in heaven. She kisseth his hand with faith, he kisseth her cheeks with blessings. There is a betrothing of fidelity, and constant love of either to other. She prays, Lord, forsake not the soul which thou hast redeemed: he promises, I was thy redemption, I will be thy salvation; nothing shall separate thee and me. O blessed light, whereby that darkness is expelled! O blessed soul, by this light delivered! O blessed Saviour, that sent this light! O blessed Father, that sent this Saviour! O blessed Trinity, that blestest all unto us: mayst thou be blessed of us and in us for ever and ever! Amen.

VERSE 20, 21.

Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time (or, at any time) by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

The apostle had formerly commended reading of the prophets by the benefit of them; now in reading them he gives warning from the difficulty of understanding them. There are things in them hard to be understood: the history is not without the mystery; and there often lies a deep and hidden sense under a familiar and easy sentence. Let not men rush into their exposition, like hasty soldiers into a thicket, without seeking direction from the captain. When we come to read them, we must throw away the sense of flesh and blood, and subject ourselves to the government of the Spirit. Some copies have read, *ἐν λόγῳ*, which signifies some kind of motion: then the sense were thus, No Scripture is of any private motion. But the most and best read, *ἐκ λόγου*, interpretation. Now let him that gave the proposition give also the exposition: the Spirit which inspired the prophets, can only declare the prophecies. We grant this to men, giving every one leave to be his own interpreter, and to expound his own meaning. Deny not this to the Holy Ghost: that which God's Spirit hath indited must be by the same Spirit interpreted.

This impossibility of true and sound interpretation without God's Spirit, occurs not to some scriptures, but to all. *Ὅτι πάντα προφητεία οὐ γίνεται*: to the letter, all prophecy is not of any private interpretation. A Hebraism, for "no prophecy is of any," &c. Such a phrase there is, Rom. iii. 20, *οὐ δικαιοσύνηται πάντα σαφὲς*, &c. all flesh shall not be justified, for "no flesh shall be justified." As the prophets durst not *profere dictamina sua*, broach their own inventions, so we must not *ingerere acumina nostra*, crowd in our own constructions, but beseech Him that decreed them to tell us the meaning of them. Samson's riddle could not be dissolved but by Samson's own mouth. The Jews came to the prophet: "Wilt thou not tell us what these things are?" Ezek. xxiv. 19. This was the angel's proclamation, "Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?" Rev. v. 2. Who? "No man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon," ver. 3. None in heaven, not the angels: none in earth, not living men; none under the earth. This could not be meant of devils or

damned spirits; for they of all have no worthiness to open this book. Therefore most probably it is meant of the saints, who as touching their bodies sleep in the graves; whom he speaks of in respect of that part which comes nearest to our sense. Jacob says, "I will go down into the grave unto my son," Gen. xxxvii. 35. 1; yet was it but his body that could go down thither. So that the place is too cold to kindle the fire of purgatory. Who then? "The Root of David hath prevailed to open the book," ver. 5: none but the Lamb can do it. All doth exceed our capacity, we can say nothing but what the Lord doth tell us. By his help and instigation only, we preach and expound the prophets. He did write by all the prophets and apostles. By him did the fathers interpret them to us; by him we do interpret them to you; only the Holy Ghost himself interpret them to us all.

For method's sake, I desire to lead your attention through these three principal passages; the suggestion, conscription, and exposition of Holy Scriptures. There be certain adjacent circumstances which shall find their due places.

The inspiration from God; it was not a vision of their own heads, but they spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

The conscription; which albeit it were not by the will of man, yet was it done by the hand of man: they were men, holy men, holy men of God.

The exposition; which is by no private spirit, but by the Holy Spirit's illumination of man's mind, and directing the church: for as the invention of them came not by the will of man, so neither doth the exposition of them come by the wit of man.

"The prophecy came not by the will of man, but men spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." This is the first point, their inditation, inspiration, suggestion. St. Augustine from this place condemns their damnable heresy, that esteemed the Holy Ghost less and inferior to the Father and Son; or, which is worse, rather a servant to God. But, saith he, shall we call him a creature, who created the humanity of Christ? Whose sent the Son of God: "The Spirit of the Lord hath sent me to heal," &c. Luke iv. 18. *Qui plane Deus*, Who is plainly called God: Thou hast led to the Holy Ghost. What is he? the apostle directly explains it, Thou hast led unto God, Acts v. 4. "Ye are the temple of God, and the Holy Spirit (who is that God) dwelleth in you," 1 Cor. iii. 16. Here that Spirit speaketh in the prophets: Matt. x. 20, he speaketh in the apostles: "It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you." Who is he that doth all this? "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God," 2 Tim. iii. 16: it is God himself. Will you consider with me some reasons, arguments, and demonstrative proofs, whereby our faith may be confirmed, that all Scripture cometh by the inspiration of God.

1. Consider the infallible completion of things long before prophesied, in their due seasons. "Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name," &c. 1 Kings xiii. 2. A man was named five hundred years before he was born. A right famous man may in that space be easily forgotten upon earth; but to tell now who shall live, or what such a one shall do, a thousand years hence: this can be done by none, but only by Him who with one look beholds all things; with whom nothing is past or to come, but all present.

2. Consider that their being hath continued from Moses unto this day. This is miraculous, that in so great hurly-burles and alterations they should not be lost! We must yield, that the devil would fain have extinguished their light for ever; and his in-

struments were not backward to attempt it: the same Almighty hand that made it, preserved it, and will not let it perish.

3. That the scope of it should be to build up no worldly thing, but only the kingdom of heaven, and to direct us to Jesus Christ: "The Scripture hath concluded all under sin," to make way for the promise by faith of Christ, Gal. iii. 22. It condemns sin in all, and all for sin; that only such might be saved as trust in him that died for their sins.

4. That it should pass with credit through the whole world, and find approbation of all languages, nations, and places; and where it meets with oppositions, should make way through them, as thunder through the clouds.

5. That the Hebrew tongue, wherein the Old Testament was written, doth so excel all tongues, in antiquity, sanctity, majesty. Full of meaning, and modest in expression, (Ambros.) He "knew her," or "went in to her," or "slept with her." Such is the gracious modesty of the sacred Scriptures.

6. The majesty of the style, which yet is not only powerful in words, but effectual in working; rending the heart, "piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow," Heb. iv. 12. When I read them, methinks they are not words, but thunders. (Hieron.) Other authors, sweet like mermaids, had enchanted my intellect; Virgil is sweet; but now the son of Jesse is more pleasant than all. (Bern.) We have heard the writings of poets ancient and new so commended, as if wisdom itself had lived and died with them. And it may be, this is the sin of our Samaria, to commit idolatry with such books. The Turkish History, Herodotus' lies, poetical fictions, scurrilous pamphlets, have thrust the Bible out of our windows: as Angelus Politianus preferred Pindarus' Odes, before David's Psalms. But Hierome otherwise to Paulinus; They may talk of Simonides, Pindarus, Flaccus, and the rest; yet a David, that sweet singer of Israel, is to us more worth than all those. "I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified," 1 Cor. ii. 2. Methinks there is no text but Christ's cross, no theme but the hole in his side, no ink but our Saviour's blood, no conference but his merits, no object but his obedience, no oratory but Love the Lord Jesus, no music but Bless our God for evermore. We should choose music, as he chose his friend; not him that would be plausible to his humour for a day, but him that should be profitable to his mind during life: so not that music which to flesh is sweetest, but that which lasteth longest. This is the song of Hallelujah, praising the Lord; this music shall continue for ever.

7. From the very baseness of falsehood, we learn to admire the lustre of truth. Consider Satan's ambition, though he be the father of lies, to imitate the Scriptural truth. He had his sorcerers in Egypt, to follow Moses in his wonders; albeit they came far short of him. To disgrace and weaken the credit of the Scriptures, he had his poets and fabulists, whose mythologies were obtained for true reports. But there are three main differences between them: First, there dross was mingled with the gold, water with the wine: haply it was truth, but wronged in the reporting, as a good tale is marred in the telling. That the great army of Sennacherib was destroyed, both Isaiah and Herodotus agree. But Isaiah says, it was by the angel of God; Herodotus says, it was by an infinite number of mice, which in the night-time did eat up the leathers of their armours, targets, and bridles, and herupon they fled. Secondly, that it is said to be derived from the Gentiles to the Jews, which indeed came

from the Jews to the Gentiles. Plutarch says that some of the Jews' feasts, yea, their sabbath day, and the word *sabbos*, was derived from the feasts of Bacchus. But indeed the solemnities of Bacchus came from them, being nothing so ancient as Moses. Thirdly, there have been like reports, but under borrowed names, as Augustine observes. In allusion to the true history of Jonah, his swallowing and egestion by the whale; Herodotus writes of one Arion, who for his money being thrown over ship-board, a dolphin took him on his back, and being delighted with his music, carried him to Tanarus, from whence he went to Penander at Corinth, informing him of his received injury, and strange deliverance. But we may justly suspect, that the Greek tale of the one meant the Hebrew truth of the other. Satan knowing that it was prophesied of Christ, that he should open the blind eyes, unstop the ears of the deaf, make the lame leap like harts, and the tongues of the dumb to sing, Isa. xxxv. 5, 6; xlii. 7; he feigned an Æsculapius, and gave out as strange wonders of him; and for better facilitating his purpose, he called him the son of God. Now to wound the devil with his own weapon, even this argument proves the Divine and indubitate verity of the Scripture; for counterfeits do ever presuppose that there is ever some such thing as they attempt to resemble. Perkin Warbeck in England, that pretended himself to be Edward the Fifth, did manifestly declare that there had been one of that name. Coiners of false metal, imply by their art that there is some of that stamp good and current. Alchemists that labour to make gold by projection, intend that there is natural gold. Painters, though they have the liberty of attempting any thing, yet account their art to be a resemblance of that which is or hath been. So the affected imitation of holy stories is a clear remonstrance, that the subject which they take for pattern is of justifiable truth, and without exception.

8. Lastly, this is an argument of the finger of God, and supernatural power in holy writ, that the penners of it renounced all affection, and delivered the true message even against their own reputations. So did this Holy Spirit overrule their pens, that they depress and disgrace themselves, and remain exposed as wonderments to all succeeding ages; that all glory may be the Lord's. If they did amiss, their errors are recorded either by themselves or their friends. The faults of Noah and Lot are not concealed by him that honoured the memory of Noah and Lot. Luke loved Paul and Barnabas, yet writing their Acts, he speaks of an unbecoming strife between them; which grew so sharp and hot, that they parted, Acts xv. 39. Moses in his Five Books, as he spared not his brother, nor his sister, nor his wife, neither Aaron, Miriam, nor Zipporah, when they came in his way; so he least of all spared himself. That God had almost slain him for neglect of circumcision; that when the people murmured, he was one; that he was only permitted to see, not to enter into Canaan: all this he writes of himself. Jeremiah records his own impatience, Jer. xv.; David his own blood-guiltiness; Jonah his own uncharitableness, frowardness, and repining at God's mercy. He was the writer that was the offender; yet he reports the fault as if it had been of a stranger. He sets aside affection to his own credit; runs not into a bush with Adam, but writes his fault on his brow, points the finger at the transgressor under his own proper and individual name. He tells such a tale of himself, that if all his enemies had studied to lash him, they could not have matched it. Men are naturally ambitious, desirous either to blaze their own virtues, or to blanch their own errors. Look

upon human pens, how they are dipped in the oil of ostentation! They profess to chronicle the truth; but this friend, or that faction, shall have a partial favour. They will not detect the evil that is, but insert the good that is not. But that one should in sobriety write a treatise to declare his own faults, this is not found in any heathen. Truly will not have it buried, that Rome was beholden to him in the cause of Catiline. Plutarch, Aristotle, Plato, Socrates, may write much in their own praise: I never read in them one line of their wickedness. Dion will have the world know, that he was a man employed in matters of state. Josephus is abundant in relating his own stratagems. Horace says of his Poems, that he had set up *monumentum aere perennius, regale sibi pyramidum altius*. Ovid of his Transmutations; *Janque opus exegi, quod nec Jovis ira, nec ignis, &c.* And *Ille ego sum nulli ingratum laude secundus*. Mahomet's writings extol him for an only prophet: that he received oracles from heaven; that he shall rise from the dead, but eight hundred years after, a pretty time to try a conclusion in; but there is not a syllable of all his damnable vices. Thus men will be men, humorous, ambitious, self-loving. This cannot be refrained, nor restrained, but that directly or indirectly it will break out. But those whom God employs, cast dung on their own faces, publish their own errors to the ends of the world; that every eye may see, and every tongue confess, All men are sinners: God is only good, and wise, and holy; who is blessed for ever. Amen.

"Holy men of God spake." This is the second general, the conscription of God's word. God would have his word written: though it be here said, they spake; yet that they spake is called Scripture, a thing written: "Whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning." Rom. xv. 4. Wherein observe the authority, antiquity, utility of the Scriptures. It is written, there is the authority. Aforetime, there is the antiquity. For our learning, there is the utility. The voice is vanishing; ask for the voice, and find it in the ear; ask for the Scripture, find it written for the eye to look upon. Therefore would God have it written in books, that the syllables might be always in our eyes, as well as the sound in our ears. Hereby we may come to exercise ourselves in it day and night. Psal. i. 2. By this means no man shall add to it, or detract from it, Dent. iv. 2. Though the sound of the thundering apostles "went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world," Rom. x. 18; yet the Holy Ghost would have a treatise written of all that Jesus did and taught, Acts i. 1. And this shall be entitled "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ," Matt. i. 1. The Scripture is a Bible, because it is written; and the Bible, because it exceeds all other books, both for the matter and the Maker. God would not have his instruments only Naphthalis, to give goodly words, Gen. xlix. 21; but that his will be committed to Zebulun, the handler of the pen. Judg. v. 14. "Oh that my words were written! oh that they were printed in a book!" Job xix. 23. What would he have written? the words of his passion? No, but the words of his faith, even the truth of God; "I know that my Redeemer liveth," ver. 25. Schismatics are all for a speaking Scripture; anabaptists all for an infused Scripture; papists are all for a painted Scripture: they love *testes fenestras*; with them no leaf of the Bible is so authentical as the painter's work in the window. But all true catholics are only for the written Scripture; and the Lord make this our light and delight to the end.

The persons that are the amanuenses, directed by God, as a schoolmaster guides the hand of a young

writer, have here a threefold description. They are men, men of God, holy men of God. Men, there is their condition: men of God, there is their dispensation: holy men of God, there is their qualification.

Men. Why did not God choose some other nature of greater authority and credit? 1. That no glory might be ascribed to the means: "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us," 2 Cor. iv. 7. When Samson with the jaw of an ass slew so many; the weaker the weapon, the stronger the man. The infirmity of the instrument makes for the glory of the agent. 2. In commiseration of man's weakness: "They said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die," Exod. xx. 19. The voice of the Lord is like thunder, it will shake in pieces the timorous heart of flesh. 3. For the security of our souls. If our preacher were an angel, Satan could transform himself into that show. If one from the dead, the devil can appear in the shape of Samuel. If by miracles, Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, and anti-christ shall do wonders. If by visions, the pagans had their apparitions. 4. In fit response to the work of our redemption: a man died for us, therefore is a man fit to preach this to us, Acts iii. 22.

Men of God. This is an ancient attribute: Men of God, holy men of God, messengers of God, prophets of the Lord, prophets of the Most High, 1 Kings xvii. 18; 1 Tim. vi. 11; 2 Tim. iii. 17. Men of God. Men not only in request living, but even dead; princes over princes; these reign but during life, those even after death. But especially they are called men of God, because their dispensation comes from God: "We speak not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth," 1 Cor. ii. 13. So the prophets came: "The mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." I received of the Lord what I delivered unto you, 1 Cor. xi. 23. David in spirit called him Lord, Matt. xxii. 43. "My tongue is the pen of a ready writer," Psal. xlv. 1; that is, the pen of the Holy Ghost. The vulgar reads, Psal. lxxxv. 8, I will hear what the Lord will speak in me. Hence was it that the Lord did not manifest all things to them, together; but as Paul said to the church, so God to Paul, "I have kept back nothing that was profitable to you," Acts xx. 20. Elisha knew the king of Syria's stratagems and plots, which he consulted in his bed-chamber, 2 Kings vi. 12; yet he did not know at first the purpose of the army to Dothan, until his servant told him. He could foretell the Shunammite that she should have a son, yet the death of that child was hidden from him; "The Lord hath hid it from me, and hath not told me," 2 Kings iv. 27. He did not presently resolve the three kings concerning the event of the war; but called for a minstrel, "and when the minstrel played, the hand of the Lord came upon him," 2 Kings iii. 15.

Holy men; the Lord that sent them qualified them. But was this a necessary and inseparable annexion to all the secretaries of God, holiness? was not prophecy (without this) incident to some reprobrates? Indeed some transient revelations might pass through them, themselves meantime remaining as wise as trunks. Balaam is called a great prophet; God opened his mouth; yet did he not in this more favour him than his ass; he made them both to speak his glory and Balaam's shame. Saul does prophesy; yet he was as far from the grace of God, as he was from the God of grace, when he had cast him off. Caiaphas could prophesy the expediency, that one should die for the people: "This spake he not of himself; but being high priest that year, he prophesied

sied that Jesus should die for that nation," John xi. 51. His office prophesied, rather than himself. They shall say in the latter day, We have prophesied in thy name; yet be rejected with a Depart from me, I know you not, Matt. vii. 22, 23. But it is on all sides consented, that God's public notaries, the canonical writers, were all regenerate and holy, the children of light and life; once gracious saints on earth, now glorious saints in heaven.

Thus are they qualified: one may be a man, yet not a man of God; a man of God, yet not holy. To be a man is noble, an emphatical word. "Men of Galilee," Acts i. 11. "Men of Judea," Acts ii. 14. "Men of Athens," Acts xvii. 22. "Men of Ephesus," Acts xix. 35. "Show thyself a man," 1 Kings ii. 2. One may be Adam, not Ish; *homo*, not *vir*: as David said to Abner, "Art not thou a valiant man?" 1 Sam. xxvi. 15. But to be a man of God, this is more noble; to be intrusted with the secrets of heaven, the mysteries of salvation. The ambassador of a king is of no small account; but these are the Lord's legates; whosoever harmed them, found God himself their avenger; "He that despiseth you despiseth me," Luke x. 16. Yet there be some that dare, and that in extremity do it, though they are sure to be condemned for it. But lastly, to be holy, this is most noble. Prophecy shall cease, preaching cease, ministration of sacraments cease, holiness shall never cease. There are divers gifts, to be an apostle, to prophesy, to teach, to work miracles, to speak with tongues; but let us "covet earnestly the best gifts," 1 Cor. xii. 31, even our sanctification. The rest are needful for you, this for ourselves: they bring you to heaven, this must bring us to heaven. That blessed Spirit which hath made us men, and men of God, make us also holy men; that our Nazarites may be whiter than the snow, and our priests purer than the sapphires, Lam. iv. 7.

"No prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation." These holy men were the sacrararies and secretaries of God, the registers of his royal covenant. Now as they could not speak or write, but by the Spirit's inspiration; so neither can we expound what they have written, but by the same Spirit's interpretation: interpretation is given by the Spirit, 1 Cor. xii. 10. He that expounds the Scripture upon the warrant of his own spirit only, doth lay the brands of the fire together without the tongs, and is sure at least to burn his own fingers. Solomon confessed that he studied for his doctrines; "The preacher sought to find out acceptable words," Eccl. xii. 10; yet was he the wisest man. Daniel was a famous prophet, yet he desired respite to expound Nebuchadnezzar's dream, Dan. ii. 16. Is the Scripture lighter than a dream? or art thou wiser than Daniel? It is true that all right and sober exposition is of God; it is "God in heaven that revealeth

secrets," Dan. ii. 28. But the Lord doth not now reveal this to us in visions and dreams; but sets us to ordinary means; conferring with orthodox writers, turning over many books, zealous invocation to the Father of lights, studious observing the context of Scriptures. You think our preaching and expounding the word to be very easy; indeed so it might be, if we should do with our sermons as you do with your monies. They are not sermons, that come forth like untimely births, from uncircumcised lips and unwashed hands. I know there are some, that think scorn to bring a premeditated sermon: That were to tie the Holy Ghost to an ink-horn. No, turn the cock, and let it run. They say, they bring sermons of God's own making, because they took no pains in the composing. As if this were to preach in the evidence of the Spirit, and demonstration of power. But as every sound is not music, so every sermon is not preaching. Speaking is from custom, but saying from art. "My heart is inditing a good matter," Psal. xlv. 1: it was a speech first conceived and born in his heart. John Baptist went before Christ to prepare his ways; so our heart must go before our tongue to prepare our words. We must hew the stones before we bring them to the building, or they will never couch in order. He that cometh wildly to this holy work, shall be driven to beat the air, and to seek up and down for matter, as Saul sought for his father's asses. As we study for your good, so do you pray we may study to your good; that we may bring you to the Scripture, and the Scriptures bring you to salvation.

I conclude. The sum of this whole chapter hath been a sweet garden of grace and mercy. The first flower was a salutation, and that is a wish of mercy. The second, a promise, and that is a word of mercy. The third, a consolation, and that is a work of mercy. The fourth an exhortation, and that is the way to mercy. The fifth, a witness of our election, and that is an assurance of mercy. The sixth, an induction to heaven upon earth, and that is a high degree of mercy. The seventh, a testimony from heaven, and that was the voice of mercy. The eighth, a word of performed prophecy, and that was an argument of mercy. The ninth, an illumination of the gospel, and that is a light of mercy. The last, is the glory of heaven, and that is the full day and perfection of mercy. Through these blessed degrees my discourse hath brought you: first we begun with peace, then dwelt long with grace, and lastly are come to glory. This peace possess your consciences, this grace beautify your hearts, and this glory crown all your souls. "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen," Jude 24.

EXPOSITION

UPON

THE SECOND EPISTLE GENERAL OF THE HOLY APOSTLE

SAINT PETER.

CHAPTER II.

VERSE 1. BUT THERE WERE FALSE PROPHETS ALSO AMONG THE PEOPLE, EVEN AS THERE SHALL BE FALSE TEACHERS AMONG YOU, WHO PRIVILY SHALL BRING IN DAMNABLE HERESIES, EVEN DENYING THE LORD THAT BOUGHT THEM, AND BRING UPON THEMSELVES SWIFT DESTRUCTION.

THE conclusion of the former chapter was in a sweet closure of truth, the induction of this begins with a discovery of error: damnable doctrine bound up in a fair cover; resembling that Romish practice, of poisoning an emperor in the sacrament. Here is a true prophecy of a false prophecy; I tell you truly, that some shall come to teach you falsely. The church of God cannot escape this danger, so long as there is a sheep-skin to be gotten for a wolf to mask in; or a sorcerer Elymas can put on the name of Bar-jesus. Acts xiii. 6. These have been; these will be; as it was then, so is it now, Gal. iv. 29: and so it will continue, until time hath housed all God's friends, and imprisoned all his enemies; till it hath melted the world in a furnace, and cast it in a new mould. You have a sure word, sit fast in your adherence: there will come furious champions to thrust you from your handfast; beware that they do not weaken your faith in Jesus Christ.

There were prophets indeed, but durst there be false prophets? *Yes, false prophets.* But it may be they were among uncircumcised pagans, not in Israel. *Yes, ἐν τῷ λαῷ, among the people,* that people, emphatically; chosen for the Lord's own peculiar. Well, but that danger is past, they are condemned and gone. Nay, be not too secure, there will be still *false teachers.* The devil loves no vacancy; if he can help it with supply, the chair of antichrist shall never be empty. Indeed these may be admitted amongst the heretics of their own tribe, in that land of darkness where the truth is forgotten; but they will not presume into the light. *Yes, ἐν ἡμῖν, among you,* that know the truth, and to whom the glorious Sun shineth. They will venture to vent the devil's commodities even among you. What are those wares? *Heresies.* Alas, that is but their own election or opinion, and can do little hurt. *Yes, they are damnable heresies, ἀπίστες ἀνομίαι, exitial of destruction.* If they do, I hope we shall easily distinguish them. Howsoever, they will *bring them in,* speed as they can. But the church discerning it, will shut her doors against them. Nay, but they will do it

privily, cunningly, steal them in. Oh what pernicious malice are those impostors? So impudent, that they dare *deny the Lord* their Maker; the Lord *that bought them,* their Saviour. What shall be their end? *Destruction.* How long shall it be deferred? Not a jot, it shall be *swift* and sudden. How shall it come? It shall be *brought.* Who shall bring it? *Themselves* upon themselves: they bring upon themselves swift destruction. This is the exposition, now for the disposition of these words. Three generals:

A narration, There were false prophets, &c.

A caution, There shall be false teachers.

A description how to know them, They shall *privily, &c.*

In the narration consider these particulars:

The connexion of the words. Also.

The corruption of the persons. False prophets.

The intrusion of their mischief, Among the people of God.

In the caution we observe three other branches, by which we perceive and find.

Who they be that assault us, False teachers.

Whither they press, Among you, even Christians.

The unavoidable necessity of them, They will be with you, you cannot help it.

In the description, they were declared to us by three mischiefs or evils:

One that issues from them, *seminale malum,* noxious to others; They bring in damnable heresies.

One that abides in them, *criminale malum,* making themselves guilty; Denying the Lord that bought them.

One that falls upon them, *poenale malum,* their own plague; They bring on themselves swift destruction.

In the former mischief or evil, consider two things; both

What they bring in, Damnable heresies.

How they bring them in, Privily.

The second evil is aggravated by a threefold gradation:

That they do not only neglect, but deny him.

That not a man, not a king, not an angel, but the Lord.

That not only their Creator, but Saviour, that bought them.

The last evil is described by

The measure, it is no less than destruction.

The manner, it is swift, sudden, unprovoked.

The author, even themselves; They bring on themselves.

"There were false prophets also among the people." I begin with the narration, which hath recurrence to those past times, the state of the church under the law; who being the beloved people of God, yet were not exempted from that exercise of their faith, by the seducements of false prophets. To proceed in order.

"There were also," This is the connexion; *καί*, also, implies that there were always true prophets, such as he formerly had specified; otherwise he could not say here, also false prophets. Where behold God's careful indulgence to his children, that never leaves them without tutors. The prophets do not live for ever, Zech. i. 5; there is no everlasting priest but Jesus Christ. Moses and Samuel are dead; Paul and John have laid down their tabernacles. Yet still the Lord raiseth up ministers to stand before his altar, and to keep the holy fire of the sanctuary from going out. Some have observed that Jonah began his prophecy with And, or Also. Which intends a conjunction, either of Jonah with other prophets, or Nineveh with other cities, or of the business related with other affairs; as if it began a book without a beginning, and continued a course of some precedent dealings. When one lamp is spent, God will also send another; when one star sets, another rises. The church shall be no more destitute of ministers than the firmament can be without stars. God will not leave his house without builders, till the edifice be perfectly finished. He placeth pastors and teachers, to the edifying of his body, until we all meet unto a perfect man, Eph. iv. 11—13. This comforts us, that if our sins cause not God to remove our candlestick from us, we shall have shining lamps in our church, until we be all lighted to the kingdom of heaven. The Greeks of Constantinople had store of wealth; but because they would spare none of it to the reparation and defence of the city, they lost all to the Turks, which afterwards no money could recover. The foolish virgins, to spare a shilling, bought no oil; but when their lamps were out, and the bridegroom came, what would they have given, what would they not have given, for a little oil! I pray God this prove not the unfortunate case of this land: we have store of lamps to light us to heaven, but we are so niggardly of oil to feed them, that they must needs at last go out, and leave us darkling. It is no wonder, if God take from us *altaria*, our altars; who have taken from him *altargia*, his tithes and offerings. "They have burned up all the synagogues in the land," Psal. lxxix. 8; if men do so, no marvel though they complain, as it is in the next verse, "We see not our signs, there is no more any prophet" among us. We have done our best, or rather our worst, to make our souls one day complain; there is not a prophet left among us.

"There were false prophets." Falseness is an aberration from the truth; they are false prophets that teach false things. "Beware of false prophets," Matt. vii. 15. The Master there, as the servant here, having first showed the right way, cautioneth us of things hurtful in the way. Beware of heresy, which corrupteth the pure fountains of holy faith. False prophets may be taken in a threefold sense; literally, mystically, or as they are taken here.

Literally; so are tell-tale astrologers, who have learned in the devil's academy to cozen the world with false alarms. They enrich others' ears with words that they may enrich themselves with goods. Alas, how can they tell another's end or infelicity, that are ignorant of their own? What can he know, that does not know himself? Christ bids us beware of false prophets; what will he judge of those that run to them? A thief hath stolen thy beast, and thou, in going to the wizard, runnest after him with thy soul. Thus when one takes away the child's apple, he throws the bread after him. Will not the devil laugh to see two such thieves meet together in his kingdom? "Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards, to be defiled by them," Lev. xix. 31. Regard them not; if you do, the Lord will not regard you.

Mystically. The devil is a false prophet; he calls evil good, and promiseth to bad attempts good events. Either he conceals the end from the way, or the way from the end. Thou mayst travel the way of lust, yet not come to the end of it, damnation. Or thou mayst come to the end of thy hope, salvation; yet never limit thyself to the way of grace. These are all false prophecies, and this is that false prophet which cozens the world. He sped so unhappily with our first parents: You may eat of the forbidden tree, yet be like gods. It was false, for he knew that so eating would make them like devils. The world is such a false prophet, like those lying spirits to Ahab: "Go up to Ramoth-gilead and prosper," 1 Kings xxii. 12. It promiseth like a lord, as the lord of it did to the Lord of all: "All these will I give," Matt. iv. 9. It was false, for all this glory is but a shadow; the shadow passes away, and leaves the substance of bitterness behind it. The world says, Your houses shall continue for ever: it is a false prophecy; for man abides not in honour, Psal. xlix. 11, 12. The world says, Your gold shall make you blessed: it is a false prophecy, it rather makes men cursed.

The flesh is a false prophet. "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God," Psal. xiv. 1; false, for he shall find a God to judge the earth. Every affected sin is a false prophet to the soul. Falseness, if it cannot deceive another, will deceive itself: as Chrysostom observes on the Psalm, Wickedness lied to itself. Worldliness flattered the rich man with immortality in his barns, Luke xii. 19; false, for his passing-bell went that night. Presumption of health whispers that thou art at a league with death: false, for death is at no league with thee. Be not beguiled, as Alexander's flatterers would have gulled him with the title of Jupiter's son: lest being wounded, thou cry to thy flesh, as he did to his friends, This is the blood of a man, not such as issueth from the gods. Love of wine prophesies to the drunkard, "To-morrow shall be as to-day, and much more abundant," Isa. lvi. 12. False; for, Awake and howl, ye drunkards, for the wine is cut off from your mouth, Joel i. 5. Ambition flatters the haughty: "I will exalt my throne above the stars of God," I will arise out of the dust to sit with princes: false, for thou shalt be brought down to the grave, and to the sides of the pit: thou shalt fall from the throne to the dust, Isa. xiv. 13, 14. Infidelity persuades there shall be no reckoning, Epicurism dreams of no future life: false, for the Lord "shall take them away as with a whirlwind;" so that a man shall say, "Verily there is a God that judgeth in the earth," Psal. lviii. 9, 11. Pleasure says like Babylon, I am a queen, I shall see no mourning, Rev. xviii. 7; false, for the day of lamentation comes, worse than the wailing of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon, Zech. xii. 11. Pride whispers the beautiful, Nature's colours will last; if not,

artificial ones shall help; false, for art itself shall make a fool of nature, time make a fool of art, death make a fool of all. But presumption says, God will have mercy upon all; false, for a small number is saved. But Christ's blood paid for all men's sins; false, for some tread that sacred blood under their feet. But if the worst come, says carnal hope, I will be sure to repent; false prophecy, for thousands are in hell that promised themselves this evasion; then hast no patent of repentance.

Thus Satan is a false prophet, in making sour to seem sweet; this is deception of taste. The world a false prophet, in making shadows appear substances; this is deception of the sight. The flesh a false prophet, in calling frail things durable; this is deception of hearing. In a word, every man is naturally a false prophet to himself, lying to his own soul. Wouldst thou punish a liar? punish thyself. Do not kill thy life, but kill thy lust: mortify thy false-hearted affections, that thyself mayst live. Let the sin be mortified, that the sinner may be saved. Thou needest no falsar a prophet than thou art to thyself. "Deliver me, O Lord, from the evil man," Psal. cxl. 1. Augustine studiously considers who this evil man should be: he knew that he had many enemies, perhaps Satan might be that evil man; at last he lights upon the evil man, and that was himself. Lord, deliver me from myself; deliver Augustine from Augustine. Let me ask my soul this question, Who did hinder me, that I should not obey the truth? Gal. v. 7. Who? I have been false to myself. Hence there is so little fidelity of man to man, because there is so little faith of man to himself. He that is not true to his own soul, will never be good to me. An oppressor gaping for a young gentleman's estate lately mortgaged to him, sent him in pretence of love a loose fellow to accompany him, and increase his luxury: he smelt it, and wittily returned this answer; I thank him for his care to set me forward; but tell him, I can spend my estate fast enough myself, I need no help. So what need Satan send false prophets to them that are false prophets to themselves? If we desire to prevent all instruments of error from working upon us, let us be faithful to ourselves, in being faithful to Christ.

The last sort of false prophets, are these meant here, which are of two sorts. 1. They that came in the name of God, but were never sent from God. "I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran: I have not spoken to them, yet they have prophesied," Jer. xxiii. 21. Therefore it is said, "The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah," came to all the true prophets; it was of the Lord's sending, not of their own fetching. "Who hath known the mind of the Lord?" at any time? Rom. xi. 34. Surely none but they to whom he taught it. "I have received of the Lord," saith Paul, 1 Cor. xi. 23. God must infuse, before we effuse: the springs of our hearts must be filled from that ocean, before we can derive drink to the thirsty. Christ must give us this bread, and then we cause the people to sit down, and we break it unto them. Moses would not go to Pharaoh, till he had learned his lesson of God. "The voice said, Cry?" the prophet replied, "What shall I cry?" He will not trust his own invention, but take his text at the mouth of the Lord: what was it? "All flesh is grass," Isa. xl. 6. They that preach the visions of their own head, have their woes shadowed out, and yet but shadowed, with wormwood and gall: "I will feed them with wormwood, and make them drink the water of gall," Jer. xxiii. 15. Their cup is so tempered by Ezekiel, the head and foot of their curse being full of unhappiness; their welcome a woe, their farewell an anathema: "Woe unto the foolish

prophets, that follow their own spirit! They shall not be written in the writing of the house of Israel," Ezek. xiii. 3, 9.

Secondly, they that come in God's name, and are sent, but deliver a false message when they are come. They are called false, because they be falsifiers of God's holy word; like the cunning lapidary, that sells a byral for a diamond. No messenger of the Lord must go beyond the bounds of his commission, by adding his own devices: nor come too short of it, by keeping back his Master's counsels. It is a fearful protestation in the end of the Bible, summing and sealing up all the curses and woes that went before. "If any man shall take away from the words of this book, God shall take away his part out of the book of life. If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book," Rev. xxii. 18, 19. It hath terror enough to amaze all those that dare set their sacrilegious hands to these nice and religious mysteries. He that ventures to breach the dregs for wine, traditions of men for the constitutions of God; unwritten truths, untrue writings, for those sacred sanctions; to father lies on the Father of truth, and teach the bastards of his own brain to call the Wisdom of heaven Father; He hath said it, when he said it not; this is the false prophet. This was St. Paul's earnest charge to Timothy: "I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession," 1 Tim. vi. 13. "Keep that which is committed to thy trust," ver. 20; doubling his charge with intensive adoration. Keep it, for enemies watch to purloin it: a thing intrusted to thee, not invented of thee; a matter not of thy wit, but of thy learning; whereof thou art a scholar, not a master. How keep it; as the miser keeps in his corn? No; feed the poor with it, divide it in right order and matter: thou hast received gold, return gold; be sure to impart the same, neither more nor less, but just weight; though thou speak in a new method, let it be old substance. Some have too many fingers on their hand, like the giant of Gath; some too few, like those whom Adonibezek maimed: some offend in excess, some in defect. But keep thou a steady flight: so did a bad prophet against his will, when his fingers itched for the gold, Numb. xxiv. 13; so did a good prophet resolutely; "What the Lord saith unto me, that will I speak," 1 Kings xxii. 14. If men add to that word, he that hath power to add plagues while everlastingness can add years, shall increase them to a thousandfold. If they diminish, he that can diminish blessings so low, that not the least dram shall remain, will retail their doings into their own bosoms.

"Among the people." This is the intrusion of these false prophets, even among the people of God. But durst these black impostors press into so famous a light, and not fear discerning? Yes; examine 1 Kings xviii. 19, and xxii. 6; they come by the hundreds. Korah had his confederates, who would with violence have snatched the priests' office out of their hands. Nadab and Abihu had their strange fires. Let us go after other gods, Deut. xiii. 2. Was this charge in vain? were there never any such? These unblest tares have ever sprung up in God's field; and no man can doubt of such prophets on earth, that knows there is a devil in hell. It hath been his impudent malice, thus ever to oppose himself against God's omnipotence. God had his true prophets to instruct the people; Satan had his false prophets to seduce the people. As the Lord had angels of his majesty; so had Satan angels of his cruelty. God had his laws written in two tables,

Satan had his counterfeit laws in twelve tables. God had *pontifices suos*, Satan had *flamines suos*. He had his temples, sacrifices, altars, oracles, in a bravery, as well as God. If God's people sing, "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised;" the devil hath his people that can cry loud enough two hours together, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." God had his Levites to keep the fire perpetually alive on his altar; Satan had his vestal virgins, perpetual guardians of the sacred fire. Neither had he these false instruments abroad only in the wild forest of the world; but he brought them into God's own garden. He that durst presume to be proud in heaven, and to play the devil in Paradise, trust him not in his own walk and regiment. Well, we may do our best to bar them out, and beseech Him that keeps Israel to shut them out; but in they will come, into our doors; the Holy Ghost keep them out of our hearts for ever.

I conclude. It was thus with them; in it we may see our own case. *Cernimus in prisca jam nostra pericula mundo*. They say, it is half a protection to foreknow a danger: behold the apostle's fidelity, and therein God's mercy; we are forewarned. Precedents give light to succeeding times: we see farther than the fathers, because, like dwarfs, we get up on their shoulders; we see with their eyes and our own also. So Diogenes might brag that he had more wit than his mother, because he had his mother-wit and his own too. There is no treasure so much enricheth our mind as learning; no learning so applicable to our life as history; no history so directing as example; no example so worthy our observing as that which is written by God's own finger. It was an old saying, To get knowledge by another's expense and experience, is as it were to feed fat on another man's cost. Israel was God's people as well as we; yea, in respect of their faith, our fathers: therefore if they were tempted by false prophets and sinned, if they sinned and were punished, let not us, having the same danger, and erring in the same manner, think to escape the same punishment. "All these things happened unto them for ensamples, and are written for our admonition," 1 Cor. x. 11. God hath set up these sins as crocodiles to terrify us, and we entertain them as sirens to seduce us. "Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them," ver. 7. Paul, like a good scribe, brings out of his treasure things both old and new: there is both an historical narration, and a theological application. Now, read the history of others, lest thou be made a history to others. If the errors of former ages cannot teach us for the time present, our delinquencies wherein we perish shall teach the succeeding ages for the time to come. Cannot the example of Judas teach thee to be no traitor? of Elymas, to be no sorcerer? of Gehazi, to be no bribe-taker? of Achan, to abhor sacrilege? of Nabal, to be no churl? Then the wretched exorbitances coupled with God's fearful judgments shall teach others hereafter. The third captain seeing the two former misarrying in the business, could learn to humble himself; "Let my life be precious in thy sight," 2 Kings i. 14. They were miserable, that thou mightest be happy: if thou wilt not repent, others shall be made happy by thy being miserable. This a very Jezebel could oppose to Jehu, "Had Zimri peace, who slew his master?" 2 Kings ix. 31. As if she had concluded, Seeing thou wilt not take example by Zimri, thou shalt be an example to others. The Lord left not Israel without true prophets: "Yet he sent prophets to them, to bring them again to the Lord; but they would not give ear," 2 Chron. xxiv. 19; therefore he suffered false prophets, and to them they hearkened. Behold now

their example exposed unto us: God sends us preachers that declare the right way of salvation, delivering their message from his own word; for *Scriptum, præscriptum*, the Scripture is their theme. They say, Give obedience to kings. "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers," Rom. xiii. 1: there be others that say, An heretical king (and he must be so that an heretical pope so pronounces) can challenge no faithful allegiance: are not these false prophets? The true prophets say, Of all that thou hast thou shalt give me the tenth; this is a *dictum Dominus*, the Lord's reservation. Some say, thou art bound neither to give tenth nor twentieth, but what thou list; is not this a *dictum sacrilegus*? Is not this a false prophet? As the former absolve subjects of their duties to kings; so these latter absolve men of their duties to the church. The true prophets say, Thou shalt not take usury of thy brother: some say, thou mayst, if not above ten in the hundred; are not these false prophets? Observe how Israel sped: "In the time of his distress did he trespass yet more against the Lord: this is that King Ahaz," 2 Chron. xxviii. 22. That, emphatically, that infamous, that impious king; branded with a note in the margin, a dash of the Holy Ghost's pen; like a sea-mark to point out a shelf, that no vessel be split by such a wickedness. What did he? "He sacrificed unto the gods of Damascus, which smote him," ver. 23. Frantic idolatry, to do service to idols that smote him! Then he turned to the gods of Syria: he would take no warning: they kill him; "they were the ruin of him, and of all Israel." When you follow other gods, is it a wonder if God destroy you? Deut. viii. 20. Did he not for this cause cast out the nations before you? were not they your precedents? So saith Christ, "Remember Lot's wife," Luke xvii. 32. These things are recorded in holy writ, not for imitation, but for prevention. When the comical poet was accused, because he brought a profane fellow upon the stage, and so gave bad example to young men: True, replies he, but I hanged him before he went off, and so gave good warning to young men. Having such a caution, if we fall into the same transgression, we shall be rewarded with a double affliction: "Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold," Gen. iv. 15. Therefore, because Cain's example of murder went before, so Lamech concludes to his wives, "If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, then truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold," ver. 24. Now the Lord give us wary hearts, that being warned of sin, we may be armed against sin: that the dangers of others may make us circumspect, the troubles of others strengthen our patience, the sinfulness of others quicken our penitence; that the pride of others may make us humble, and the miseries of others occasion our eternal blessedness.

"Even as there shall be false teachers among you." Do not you think to speed better than God's beloved church of Israel; for this is that kind of temptation wherewith he is wont to exercise his children. There is no other condition of the church under the gospel, than was under the law. When this trial comes, let not the novelty of it molest you; what was common with them, let it not seem strange to you. But the prophets did promise solid peace, clear light, and the perfection of all good things at the coming of Christ: The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the child shall play at the hole of the asp. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, Isa. xi. 6, 8, 9. To him was reserved that honour, that though the law was given by Moses, grace and truth came by Jesus Christ," John i. 17. Therefore there is no disquietness expected in the state of the Christian

church. But there was no promise of such a peace, as should utterly acquit the faithful from combats and conflicts. There is peace from the dominion of sin, damnation of the law, and terror of conscience. But there is still a devil, and a serpentine brood : who finding that the gospel hath given a wound to the peace of hell, are the more busy to give a wound to the peace of the gospel. Let us quiet our hearts in the remembrance of this, which the Spirit of God hath pronounced : there must be expected on earth no immunity from this intestine evil. The same trial abides the children, which set upon the fathers : I am not better than my fathers. There shall be, an indefinite word, comprehending all future times ; so that no age hath had a vacation from these turbulent falsehoods. He speaks of them generally, and doth not paint them out in their particular kinds and colours : but, they will be ; and among you, among us ; God grant they be not of us. Now because these evil spirits threaten to haunt the house of Christ, and to run like familiars up and down the earth, to do the devil's errands, that their purpose may be infatuated, let us unmask their faces. For I called this second general point, the caution or premonition : and I desire to method my discourse into these three circumstances : 1. Who they be that assault us. 2. Whither they press. 3. Their unavoidable necessity. The use of all which is, in conclusion, how they may be discerned and eschewed.

"False teachers." What this falsehood is, you have formerly perceived ; observe now how it insinuates itself ; this is always in the semblance of truth. For error is so foul a bag, that if it should come in its own shape, all men would loathe it. If Jezebel had not painted herself, she had not gotten so many doting adulterers. Those wolves come evermore in sheep's clothing, Matt. vii. 15. As the fowler by the benefit of his stalking-horse murders the fowls ; who but for their familiar knowledge of the beast their friend, would mistrust the man their enemy. "Many," saith Christ, "shall come in my name," Matt. xxiv. 5 : not in their own name, for then their words would not be taken. The sects of former ages came in other names : as the name of Stoics, of Peripatetics ; and in the church, the name of Pharisees, the name of Sadducees ; but since Christ all come in his name. They would the truth in her own coat : as Jacob put on the garments of Esau his brother, to deceive Isaac his father ; so these in the apparel of their elder Brother Christ, seek to beguile the church their mother. It is no wonder if there be false teachers, when there shall be false Christs, Matt. xxiv. 24. Strong impudence of men, that they dare call themselves by his name on earth, that sits on the right hand of Majesty in heaven. Now that this prophecy of our Saviour was true, experience hath justified. Among the Persians, one Manes, with his twelve apostles, called himself the Comforter of Israel. Ben-cosen was received of the very rabbis for thirty years together, as their Messiah. Stella in Luc. reports that in Setuval, in the kingdom of Portugal, in our time, arose one that called himself the Messiah. Youself have heard of David George, and of ungracious Haequet, with his two prophets of mercy and justice, who impudently usurped that incommunicable name of the Messiah.

But what say you to our pope-holy catholics ? dare not they obtrude a thing that shall say, I am Christ ? Yes, if it could speak ; but because it cannot, they will speak for it. Every Easter day early in the morning the priest fetcheth his wooden crucifix out of the sepulchre : and after walking about the church yard in solemn procession, goes to the church door, where he knocketh, and saith, Open, O

ye gates, and be ye set open, ye everlasting doors, that the King of glory may come in. The sexton knows his cue, attends within, and replies, Who is the King of glory ? The priest holding up his crucifix, answers, This is the King of glory ; the Lord strong and mighty in battle ; this is the Lord of glory, Psal. xxiv. Is not this just according to our Saviour's prediction, Some shall say, Lo, here is Christ ? Matt. xxiv. 23. Alas, that is not a glorious king, but an inglorious idol, unable to wipe the dust from its own face. Among them, who can make the well-favouredst god, is the best catholic. The baker and the painter contended who should make the best Christ : the one well skilled in the use of his colours, the other in the use of his oven. *Painter*. I can make a fair god with my colours. *Baker*. No, thou makest but the shadow ; it is I that make the substance. *Painter*. Thy god is torn with men's teeth. *Baker*. And thine is gnawed with worms. *Painter*. My god lasteth many years, whereas one hour swallows a hundred of thine. *Baker*. Thou canst scarce make one god in a month ; I can make a thousand in half an hour. Hereupon the mass-priest came in as moderator, fretting : I am sorry, sirs, you are no wiser ; who can make god ? none but the sacrificer. But we say of such gods, as Clemens Alexandrinus, I have learned to tread upon the earth, not to worship it.

Thus doth false teachers come in the counterfeit of truth. Indeed the Jews were apt to embrace any that came in their own name ; If one come in his own name, him will ye receive, John v. 43. It is not so now ; the world is wiser, therefore the devil must double his subtlety. And if he would bring men to the kingdom of hell, he must make them believe that he is altogether for the kingdom of heaven. If Hushai had not said, I am for Absalom, and whom Israel chooseth, his will I be, 2 Sam. xvi. 18 ; he had not disappointed the counsel of Abithophel, which was then like the oracle of God, nor re-established David in his kingdom. So if these false doctors should not say, We are for Christ ; they could not withstand the true ministers that deliver the words of God, nor enthrone antichrist in the seat of Christ. Thus in our time, the Romish heretics cry, The church, the church ; and the schismatics in their invective pamphlets usually make bold with the prophet's words, For Zion's sake I will not hold my peace. But the one seek to bring upon God's Israel a tyranny, the other an anarchy ; both meet in one third term, corruption of doctrine, and destruction of conscience. They both cry for the church, yet fight against the church. (Cyprian.) Their pretences are friendly, their intentions malicious. (Bern.) You see how they come, and but for so coming their powder would not take ; if the cup of their poison was not rubbed with honey, it would not down. There be two defects which make a man either an unfit teacher, or a false teacher : when either they have not learned their lesson before they come, and so lack ability ; or do not deliver it faithfully when they are come, and so lack honesty.

1. They that want aptitude and requisite graces. God touched Isaiah's tongue with a live coal from his altar ; gave Ezekiel a roll to eat : shut up that sacred fire in Jeremiah's bones ; teacheth the lips to preserve knowledge, to minister a word in due season to him that is weary, Isa. l. 4 ; so ordering the words, that they shall be "like apples of gold in pictures of silver." Prov. xxv. 11. There is no ability to preach without God ; "They shall all cover their lips ; for there is no answer of God," Micah iii. 7. We look now for no enthusiasms, nor venture our sermons upon extemporal rhapsodies, with a *dabitur*

in hora; no more but turn the cock, and let it run. It may run indeed, but still we complain as they did of the waters of Jericho, "The water is naught, and the ground still barren," 2 Kings ii. 19. It may run, and run apace, because, like Ahimaz, it runs by the way of the plain. For this cause are schools and universities erected, to be the nurseries of learning; being like that Persian tree, which at the same time doth bud, and blossom, and bear fruit. Some are in the bud of hope, others in the flower of knowledge, others ripe for practice. "Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians," Acts vii. 22. Paul was brought up at the feet of a great doctor, Acts xxii. 3. Timothy knew the Scriptures of a child, 2 Tim. iii. 15. Augustine was beautified with variety of gifts. Hierome excellent at the three most famous languages. The apostles themselves were not immediately out of the ship-boat into the pulpit: they were first Christ's scholars, before they became the world's teachers. "Wisdom is justified of her children," Matt. xi. 19. If they come without this qualifying, they are the world's own changelings, wrongfully laid at Wisdom's doors. They enter in at a *non licet* gate; and they that admit them, suffer wise men's rights to be entailed to fools. While barbarous ignorants steal into the church, the same way that Totilas entered Rome; *porta asinaria*. As Pope Adrian inscribed his college, The bishop of Trajectum planted, of Louvaine watered, but Cæsar gave the increase: no more. Another therefore in scorn subscribed, Here God did nothing. So simony planted, ambition watered, and covetousness gives the increase; but let them take heed lest they find this under-written, Here the Lord had no hand, here he will give no blessing.

2. They that have gotten knowledge, but want honesty; and these are the most dangerous seducers: "Such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ," 2 Cor. xi. 13. When Athiophel's head stands upon Simon Magus's shoulders, there is a world of mischief towards. A will bent to do harm, and a wit able to prosecute it, like cannon-shot, makes a lane where it goes. Such a prophet was Balaam, he could not make Israel cursed by his prophecy, therefore he tries to effect it by his policy. He sends a troop of Moabitish harlots among them; that so they might be tempted to offend God, and God might cease to defend them. He had confessed before, that there could be no enchantment nor witchcraft against Israel, Numb. xxiii. 23. No devils but those she-devils could do it. A harlot is that damnable witch that often brings a saint in danger of a curse. In this rank is that rank rabble of Jesuits: they have fired their brains at Machiavel's forge, and cast their hearts in the mould of antichrist; and now they are fitted to steal away souls from Jesus. These are Satan's emissaries, the pope's seminaries, the land's incendiaries, the world's voluptuaries, the bane of a kingdom that harbours them. The cruellest murderers! He that lets out the blood, the body kills; but he that breaks heart's peace, the dear soul spills. Oh that these foxes were unearthened from their thievish burrows, and our land preserved from that kind of false teachers! Their very merces are cruel; we know their bloody purposes both to souls and bodies. The Lord of his mercy cast them for ever far from us; and let all people that have, or desire to have, in themselves and their posterity the heads of good subjects, and the hearts of good Christians, say Amen.

"Among you." This is the second point, the place whither these false teachers come; unto you, to the church. So Matt. vii. 15. "Beware of false prophets which come to you." Not to the Turks, or

Gentiles, or other heretics only; but to you, that have the gospel. They seem to come unto you, but indeed they come against you; they promise your good, but they perform your hurt. Here may be demanded, why God doth suffer such in the church? For Paul saith, "There must be heresies among you," 1 Cor. xi. 19. Now there is a must of necessity, and of duty; in respect of the latter, There must not be heresies, saith Augustine. This is a must of consequence: the apostle concludes it necessarily, upon the presupposition of Satan's malice and man's wickedness. Neither is this prediction any cause of it: a man sees some loose companions set close to drinking; hereupon he says, These men will be drunk: the necessity is not because he said so, but because they will do so. Another sees men quarrelling, and multiplying incensive terms; he says, These men will fight: he doth not cause their combat; they would have done it though he had never said it. So we perceive the air cloudy, the weather muddy; we say, It must needs rain: it doth; yet never the sooner because we spake it. So Peter's will be, and Paul's must, do not cause this false teaching, but premonish it.

First, God suffers these for the trial of our faith: There must be heresies, that the approved among you may be made manifest, 1 Cor. xi. 19. When a prophet or dreamer shall say to us, Come, let us go and serve other gods; hearken not to him, for now the Lord proveth you, Deut. xiii. 1—3. Many pass for gold, whom this touchstone often proves counterfeit. A man is what he is when he is tried: *accedit tentatio, quasi interrogatio*, a temptation is like a question, that examines what is in a man. Joseph's chastity never shone out so fairly, as when he fled from the arms of his tempting mistress. He that hears the siren's song, and with a holy scorn comes off fairly, God seals him up with a *Probatas est*. Thus was Balaam lost, when Balak told him, "Am not I able indeed to promote thee to honour?" Numb. xxii. 37. But not so Moses, who chose rather "affliction with the people of God, than the pleasures of sin for a season," Heb. xi. 25. Yet he well enough knew the delights of the court, being the place where he had his education.

Secondly, God suffers them, that the true pastors might more painfully and patiently exercise their knowledge. If Arius and Sabellius had not vexed the church, the deep mysteries of the Trinity had not been so accurately cleared by the catholic doctors. Heresy makes men sharpen their wits, the better to confute it; as wormwood is bitter to the taste, but good to clear the eyes. Paul foretelling this danger, gave an earnest charge, "Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers," Acts xx. 28. Why? "For after my departing grievous wolves shall enter in among you," ver. 29. For this cause we root up the weeds of Rome in our sermons as we go, because we fear that their pestilent seedmen have cast them in. As Absalom said to Tamar, "Hath Amnon been with thee?" 2 Sam. xxiii. 20; so, hath the false teacher met with thee? beware a ravished soul.

Thirdly, God permits them for men's ingratitude. Because Ahab will not believe Micah, therefore a lying spirit shall deceive his prophets, to deceive him, 1 Kings xxii. 22. "They shall build up Zion with blood," Micah iii. 10. Because the true prophets might not be suffered to build up Zion with good, therefore the false ones shall build it up with blood. They had forbidden the sober prophets to prophesy, Micah ii. 6; therefore they shall have drunken prophets, that shall prophesy of wine and strong drink, and walk in the spirit of falsehood, ver. 11. This is

a sure, but a sore judgment: "Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved: for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, to believe a lie," 2 Thess. ii. 10, 11. They will not adhere to the God of truth? they shall be turned over to the father of lies. Tremble at this judgment, lest God deliver you up to erroneous teachers, who have despised his true ministers.

Lastly, these false teachers intrude themselves: as sometimes a gamester, being flushed with his luck; and they meet with three encouragements: 1. The numbers and applaudings of their auditors: "The prophets prophesy falsely, and my people love to have it so," Jer. v. 31. They tell you lies, and you thank them for it. They set their mouth against the heavens, therefore the people turn in thither, Psal. lxxiii. 9, 10. And commonly, the more crowd, the worse men. 2. The honour and respect that is done them. Baal had four hundred and fifty prophets, while God had but one apparent; they were fed at the queen's table, while Elijah was glad to be served by the ravens. These are in favour with Ahab, while he says of good Micaiah, "I hate him," 2 Chron. xviii. 7. True prophets are not for evil princes' courts; they have chaplains in ordinary to forbid them: Prophecy not at Bethel, for that is the king's court, said Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, Amos. ix. 13. 3. Large gifts and riches: "Every one for his gain from his quarter," Isa. lvi. 11. Like soldiers in a camp, or like cheaters in a city, they know their quarters. Rather than fail, they will be such as are spoken of, Micah iii. 5; mouth prophets, trencher chaplains, held in by the teeth: and out they will not go, so long as their teeth can hold them in.

"There shall be false teachers among you." The last point is, their unavoidable necessity; they will press in, and we cannot easily stave them off. Therefore let me reflect this point upon ourselves, by way of use. Seeing we know there shall be such, be it our principal care to prevent them. To foreknow evil and to prevent it, is wisdom; not to foreknow it when God hath foretold it, is foolishness; to foreknow it and not to prevent it, is slothfulness; to foreknow it and cannot prevent it, is desperateness. Here is no such extremity; for God that doth foretell the signs, doth also prescribe the remedies. The particular notes I refer a little further: only now in sum; it is Jesus Christ that must enlighten our hearts, to decline these false teachers. All wisdom cometh from him, that is called the Wisdom of the Father. In him is the fountain of all spiritual knowledge, as all the senses are in the head. There were two olive branches, which through two golden pipes did empty the golden oil out of themselves, Zech. iv. 12. The oil that was in the gold, came from the two golden pipes; that which passed through the two golden pipes, came from the two olive trees; these two olive branches were the two anointed ones; and they stood before the Lord of the whole earth. What knowledge soever, through what instruments soever, we receive, it proceeds originally from Christ: "In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge," Col. ii. 3. As at the creation, the light which lay diffused abroad throughout the rude mass of the world, was afterwards aggregated into the body of the sun, that from thence it might be communicated to the creatures; so that wisdom which spake in the prophets and other holy men of God, may seem to concentrate all in Christ. Now the means whereby Christ teacheth us, is the scripture, which is able to make us wise unto salvation, 2 Tim. iii. 15. Here is the sun and the beam, the spring and the stream, Christ and his gospel; the one the matter and end, the other

the manner and means, of all saving revelation. O then, pray earnestly for the Spirit of Christ. But what success if we do? Yes, we have it already promised, "Your heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him," Luke xi. 13. Christ's Spirit will more surely teach you to confute Christ's enemies, than learning and gold could teach Tertullus to plead for his own friends.

This shall instruct us to destroy and defy impostors: and though heresy hath crept in like a serpent through secret holes, and by subtle insinuations, scarce leaving a print behind it; yet if we find not the entrance by some slime or track, wheresoever we do find it, we shall abhor it. Our knowledge so abounds, that scarce ever had nation more means to avoid false apostles. That as Paul said, "If I be not apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you," 1 Cor. ix. 2; so Christ may say to us, If I be not knowledge unto others, yet doubtless I am so unto you. Mention is made of Kirjath-sepher, Josh. xv. 15, which signifies a city of books: sure this our country may be called Kirjath-sepher; for "we speak wisdom among them that are perfect," 1 Cor. ii. 6. If not perfect in all degrees of knowledge, like the gospel's champions; yet perfect in all parts of knowledge, like the gospel's children. Our eyes be good, we know: our hands be good, we can; God grant our hearts be good, that we will, defend Christ's cause. But as it is reported of a Roman senator, a man somewhat over-matched by his wife; after he had discharged Catiline his house, and forbidden her to entertain him, which she obeyed not, he said of her, Her wit is in health, her purse is in health, her tongue is in health, her courage is in health; only her will is sick. And that is one reason why women are not suffered to make their will when they die, because they had their will so much while they lived. So God hath charged our souls, his spouse, not to admit his enemies, spiritual adulterers, false teachers; but to keep them out of his house, the church. We have hands able to do it, stomachs able to do it, wits able to do it, wealth and means able to do it: only our hearts are sick, we want will to do it. What fools are we, when God hath shut our foe out at the gate, to let him in again at the postern! He that entertains a seminary of heresy into his house, whereas God, by his command, and the municipal laws of the prince, hath excluded him, will speed at last as he that betrayed a city to a tyrant; which when he had conquered, he first hanged up him that helped him to it. They that let in the Romish enchanters, contrary to their express bond of allegiance, meet with the first bane themselves; the poison working to the very rupture of their heart-strings, and without extraordinary mercy, to the perdition of their souls. God tells them such shall come, and they rejoice that they are come. Now the Spirit of grace open our eyes, and fortify our hearts, that neither principalities nor powers, neither height nor depth, neither false prophet, nor false apostle, nor false angel, may ever separate us from the love of God, nor from the truth of God, that is in Christ Jesus.

And let not this trial discourage us, nor discomfort us. The devil is let loose for a season, Rev. xx. For a season, to try the patience of the church; and but for a season, to fortify the courage of the church. "The devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days," Rev. ii. 10. Into prison; why not unto death? no thanks to Satan; he would fain kill them. Some of you; why not all? no thanks to Satan; he would destroy all. And for ten days; why not longer? no thanks to Satan, he would enthrall them for ever.

There are three limitations to his power and malice: for time, but ten days, not ten months; for number, some, not all; for extremity, into prison, not to death: they shall feel tribulation, not destruction; that they might be tried, not overwhelmed. These false teachers may prevail for a time; but we shall say truly by inversion, what the Aramites spake by supposition, Upon the hills they are stronger than we; but let us fight against them in the plain, and surely we shall be stronger than they, 1 Kings xx. 23. On the contrary, they are too hard for us in the plains, but we shall be too hard for them on the hills: they prevail against us in this valley of tears, we shall triumph over them in the mountain of blessedness. Let falsity vomit her poison, we shall find saving health in the truth of Christ.

"Who privily shall bring in damnable heresies," &c. We come now to the description of these pernicious liars, concerning whom we find a threefold mischief; one that issues from them, another that abides in them, a third that is inflicted on them. Here first we are to consider their seminary mischief, offensive and noxious to others. They "shall privily bring in damnable heresies." Here observe two circumstances, the matter and the manner. The matter, what they bring in, damnable heresies; the manner, how they bring them in, privily. In the matter conceive four things: the notion of the word, heresy; the number of them, which is plural, indefinite, multitudinous, many heresies; the necessity of their being, they shall be brought in; lastly, the effect and malignancy of them, they are damnable.

Heresy was at first taken in a good sense; it signifies election, and was referred both to good and bad sects. It seems to be taken from the schools of philosophy, wherein every one chose a faction to which he sided. Among the Latins, it was called *secta*, a *secta*; because that part did single out itself, and was cut off and separate from the rest. Tertullian used the word for true religion, and a confession of the Christian verity. (Lib. de Fuga.) And Cyprian, (Eph. 23.) *Celerinus confessor, timore nostræ sectæ verecundus*, &c. St. Paul is not afraid to use it; "After the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers," Acts xxiv. 14: yet he does not altogether justify it, because Tertullus had put a scandal upon it; "A ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes," ver. 5. "After the most straitest sect of our religion, I lived a Pharisee," Acts xxvi. 5. In like manner, magi at the first were but sages; but time adulterated the word, and made it magic. So that heresy is now taken for that, which doth diametrically oppose the truth, and sets up an opinion against it.

There is difference betwixt error, schism, and heresy. Error is when one holds a wrong opinion alone; schism, when many consent in their opinion; heresy runs further, and contends to root out the truth. Error offends, but separates not; schism offends and separates; heresy offends, separates, and rageth, making the party good *et à armis*, if not with arguments of reason, yet with arguments of steel and iron. Error is weak, schism strong, heresy obstinate. Error goes out, and often comes in again; schism comes not in, but makes a new church; heresy makes not a new church, but no church. Error untiles the house, schism pulls down the walls, but heresy overturns the foundation. Error is as a child, schism a wild stripling, heresy an old dotard. Error will hear reason, schism will wrangle against it, heresy will defy it. Error is a member blistered, schism a member festered, heresy a member cut off. He that returns quickly from error, is not a schismatic; he that returns from schism, is not a heretic. Error

is reprov'd and pitied, schism is reprov'd and punished, heresy is reprov'd and excommunicated. Schism is in the same faith, heresy makes another faith. Though they may be thus distinguished, yet without God's preventing grace, one will run into another; error will prove a schism, and schismatical follies will prove stigmatical furies. When Augustine said, I may err, I cannot be a heretic; it proceeded from the confident persuasion of God's mercy, and the resolution of his own heart, to adhere constantly to the truth. The heretic exceeds the schismatic; the one hates only peace, the other hates truth. "My soul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace," Psal. cxx. 6. But, "Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee?" Psal. cxxxix. 21. He may dwell with them that hate peace; he will not endure them that hate the truth. All faults are not of the same degree; there is a mote and a beam, there is stubble and lead. "If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to the words of Christ," 1 Tim. vi. 3. If he consent not, that is schismatical; if he teach otherwise, that is heretical. "Whosoever shall break one of these least commandments, and teach men so," &c. Matt. v. 19. If he break the law, that is a personal sin; but if he teach so, that is a pestilent sin. To teach, is commendable; to teach that which is incongruent, is dangerous; to teach that which directly contradicts the truth, is heretical. If a man be opinioned against the truth, this is not answerable; if a man teach such a doctrine, this is abominable. Let them teach, but not otherwise; for otherwise they had better hold their peace. We may say of doctrines, as Jeremiah said of his figs, Jer. xxiv. 3, Than the the good and true, nothing can be spoken better; than the bad and false, nothing is more perilously worse. None sing more sweetly than the true musicians of Israel. None howl more tetrically than the dogs of Baal, of Babel, of Belial; that often the devil himself cannot roar out a more detestable cry above-ground, whatsoever he doth in hell: as the doctrine of murdering princes, &c. Satan is then the most dangerous tempter, when he comes as he came to Christ, with an It is written: and heretics, while with this sound they tickle the people's ears, often for want of true discerning suck the blood of their souls. Lord, give not over our souls a prey to their teeth; but rescue them from their destructions, our darlings from the lions, Psal. xxxv. 17.

"Heresies," in the plural, to point at a multitude. The troubles of the church seldom come single; but either they unite their forces, as the five Amorite kings combined against Gibeon, Josh. x. 5; or separately and apart, they vex her on every side: as Solomon was assaulted with Hadad the Edomite, Rezon the Syrian, and Jeroboam the Ephraimite, 1 Kings xi.; finding that true whereof his father complained, Mine enemies compass me in on every side. We read, that out of the camp of the Philistines came three regiments, all with a purpose to destroy, yet all taking several ways: one company of spoilers to Ophrah, another to Bethoron, and the third to Zebaim, 1 Sam. xiii. 17, 18. This is too true a portraiture of the church's condition; as Israel then was temporally wasted, so the church is now spiritually assaulted; and will be so used, until hell hath swallowed up all her enemies. For these Egyptians will not cease pursuing Israel, till they all be drowned in the deep. There is a treble band of them, all bent to murder several ways; the licentious by his scandalous life, the persecutor by his drawn sword, the heretic by his pestilent doctrine. And every one of these blows his trumpet to sedition, with Sheba the son of Bichri, "Every man to his tents, O Israel," 2 Sam. xxi. 1. Our case is not unlike theirs: there were three

garrisons of enemies, all armed with all manner of weapons for offence; yet against all these, the Israelites had but two swords for defence; yet it pleased God that those two were enough. One is the sword of the Spirit, that is doctrine; the other the sword of the church, that is discipline. That as Peter said, "Behold two swords;" but two swords for so many, and against so many? a word of extreme want. It is enough, saith Christ, those two shall suffice; a word of supreme mercy: mercy to them, comfort to us; that our God can defend us with small means, with no means. The sword of the Spirit shall overcome Satan's fiery darts; though the sword of the church prevail not against their bloody falsehoods. "In the last days perilous times shall come; men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous," &c. 2 Tim. iii. 1, 2. Oh what a rabble is there! you may say, They are Legion; as the devil called his name, Luke viii. 30: Legion, they are so many. Or, Here comes a company, as Leah said at the birth of Gad, "A troop cometh," Gen. xxx. 11. Be they never so many, we weigh not their numbers, so long as Christ is with us. It is his good Spirit that can stanched the wounds, and dry up the festered blood, wherewith our Syrophenician woman, the church, hath been so long vexed. Indeed we must spend the ink of our pens upon these creeping ring-worms; but be God only implored to cure the lazarus of his inveterate sore. They have not so many swords, as he hath shields; there cannot be so much venom in the seed of the serpent, as there are antidotes in the Seed of the woman, saving health in Jesus Christ.

They "shall bring in." Here is the necessity, as the apostle told us before of these impostors; they shall be. Shall; though provision spend all her wit, and prevention all her strength, yet not avoiding it. St. John tells us, that many spirits are gone abroad into the world, that would be tried before they be trusted, 1 John iv. 1. They "creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, and led away with divers lusts," 2 Tim. iii. 6. You have the picture of them drawn to the life, Jude 16. Do you think it impossible for the truth to forsake some private breasts, yea, even whole regions? This were a popish conceit; so they give out of their infallible Rome; that she hath clipped the wings of truth, as old Rome did once the wings of victory, that it might not fly away. This were to imagine the Holy Ghost bound to every pulpit, as they bind him to their chair. No, there shall be some perversers: some? yea, too many. There be some yellow seeds that abound; we might well spare them, they mar the field. We daily pray for labourers in the Lord's great harvest; but for such as labour for the Lord, not against the Lord; for such as row us in the vessel of the church toward heaven, not such as hurry us in a man of war to bondage. For then we should complain of multitudes, "Many pastors have destroyed my vineyard," Jer. xii. 10. They were pastors, and many pastors, but evil ones. What do they? They destroy my vineyard. We say not then, the harvest is great, and the labourers are too few; but the harvest is great, and these labourers are too many. Would they all labour for Christ? but when will that be? Oh it were special news to be told in Gath, and would sound terribly in the streets of Askelon; it would go cold to the heart of the devil, and shake the gates of hell; that the church had escaped the ingenious solicitations of these fiends, who not only trouble the waters of her peace, but poison her very springs of life. They shall bring them in, the Lord of his mercy cast them out.

"Damnable heresies." This is the last circumstance, the malignity of them; *ἀπειλαί*, they are corruptive,

destructive, damnable heresies, doctrines of perdition. 1. Because they are reprobated of God: so Jadas was called the son of perdition, because God for his sin had rejected him. A wicked person is called the son of Belial, because Belial had bred him up; the son of strife, because contention had begotten him, and he begotten contention. So here, the heresies of damnation, because damnation did bring forth them, and they bring forth damnation. 2. Because they are exitial and pestilent to the kingdoms and nations where they are admitted. How great a plague did Arianism bring to the East, Pelagianism to the West, now papism to all the world! 3. Because they bring destruction to all their followers and defenders: sometimes temporal; "That prophet shall die," Deut. xviii. 20. Sometimes spiritual; the Lord turning their rivers into blood, that no man can drink of their waters to comfort: the increase of their labours being given to the locust, and all their vines destroyed with hail: their priests falling by the sword, slain (if not with the sword of others) with their own malice; and their widows making no lamentation, Psal. lxxviii. 64: no widows, or but one at the most, to make lamentation. For who can pity them that hate the truth? the wickedness of their cause drowns all compassion of their case. The last of all is the worst of all, their eternal perishing; for those transformed ministers shall receive an end according to their works, 2 Cor. xi. 15. For how should the cross of Christ be a friend to them, that are enemies to his cross? Phil. iii. 18, 19. Their end is destruction, that is much; but their destruction is without end, that is more. There is nothing but damnation in their ways. "They build up Zion with blood," Micah iii. 10. "As troops of robbers wait for a man, so the company of priests murder in the way by consent," Hos. vi. 9. A robber waits for his prey, but being single he may either be avoided or conquered; but here are many robbers. Yet their divided forces may be subdued. Nay, but they join themselves in troops. Thieves may do thus, that profess not God. Nay, but even apostatized priests. It is much that they fall to robbery, but, I hope, no further. Yes, even to murder. The priest and Levite are condemned that did not succour the wounded man; what shall become of them that give wounds, yea, murderous ones? It may be there is some one such reprobate. Yea, they do it by consent. Or it were but one act. Nay, they commit it, it is their practice. Let us all then pray with our church, "From sedition and privy conspiracy, from all false doctrine and heresy, Good Lord, deliver us." Amen.

We see what kind of heresies shall be; consider we then (pardon it if it be a digression) what may be the causes that produce such inevitable effects. The efficient cause is double: the primary or remote is the just will of God, who hereby proveth his friends, as some of the Canaanites were left to teach the Israelites war, Judg. iii. and punisheth his enemies. The secondary or proximate, the natural rebellion, ambition, and covety that is in men. The end is double; that the good might be made good by their trial, 1 Cor. xi. 19: that the evil might be left more evil; "That they all might be damned who believed not the truth," 2 Thess. ii. 12. The form is error itself. The matter, *articulus ille in quo peccatur*, the very point of their provarication. The main fountain whence they are all derived, is the devil, that father of lies, and depraver of all goodness. But seeing he cannot well effect this immediately by himself, how may he facilitate his plot? By corrupting certain instruments. But what seeds of hell can he plant in their hearts, that should grow up to such pernicious fruits? For the devil can work no man to do evil

to another, unless he hath first wrought him to admit evil in himself. No reprobate will serve Satan's turn for nothing; but there must be some end propounded to his lust, for the satisfaction whereof he precipitates himself to such a hellish course. What may those infernal fires be, wherewith he sets them on burning, and with which they madly run, like a rotten inflamed vessel, among the whole navy? Let us a little examine the motives to this pestilent sedition.

First, pride, for that loves at all hands to be foremost. Heresies are set on foot by men that thought well of themselves; and perhaps had some cause so to do, if they could have done it within any good compass. Never mean parts set schisms abroad against Christ: the stronger wit, the stronger heretic. Excellent gifts bind to excellent modesty; *in humilitate sapientia*, wisdom is seen in humbleness. They that blow abroad their own praises, justly incur the suspicion of windiness. Thy praise would sound better in thy neighbour's mouth. Virtue never was a gadding Dinah, that runs abroad to be seen of the daughters of the land. But rather an Elisabeth, that hid herself six months together; lo, then was she fruitful, and bred a child, and that so famous a one as John the Baptist. Stand further from me, I am purer than thou; this is the voice of a proud sinner. Depart from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man; this is the voice of a penitent saint. The wise man never wrote upon his doors, Here dwells wisdom; nor did goodness ever dwell at the sign of ostentation. It is for hypocrisy to declare its own worth, otherwise it would never be understood for sincerity. As the foolish painter, having pictured a lion so rudely and without such due shape that no passenger could know it, he was fain to help his art with under-writing, This is a lion; so it is for pride, when she cannot make her charity understood, to proclaim it herself. This is charity. Sincere ministers never publish their own sufferings and virtues: it is enough for them if they be found one day among those, in whose mouth was found no guile, Rev. xiv. 5; that is, according to St. Augustine's gloss, who confessed meekly that they were sinners, and sought no other glory than humility. Whereas pride, saith Cyprian, is ever looking in her glass; at least the glass must say she is fair: yet is this Jezebel's paint no better than the plaster of a leprous countenance. Thus "professing themselves to be wise, they became fools," Rom. i. 22: a just judgment to light on them, that thought it nothing worth to be counted wise, unless the whole world were fools besides. None more thrust themselves forward into the lattle, than these dwarfs and demi-lanees; mere atomies in true being, yet big as giants in their own opinion. But indeed, if only artists might censure arts, and the common people were admitted no judges in the court of faculties; never was dumbness more incident to him that is born deaf, than ignorance is to heresy. He is proud, or a fool, *πρὸς ἑαυτὸν*; the word signifying both, as if it would teach us that every proud man is a fool; and *πρὸς ἄλλους*, knoweth nothing, 1 Tim. vi. 4. Alexander would be drawn in colours by none but Apelles, and graven by none but Lysippus, both excellent in their qualities. God will have none meddle with his Scriptures, but holy and illuminate minds; and they are most humble and circumspect. The most blind are the most proud, and soonest venture on the deepest mysteries. Of the two bad states, to be a Pharisee is worse than to be a publican: to be proud of good endowments is worse than to have neither pride nor good endowments. To be proud, then, according to St. Paul's method in ranking their attributes, is the first brand of the sectary; that same

radical cause of every sin, especially of schism. This is the common proceeding; first the devil brings in pride, then pride brings in singularity, and singularity brings in heresy.

The next cause is envy and malice: if this fury be in the heart, the devil may save a labour of driving. As they talk of a coach that moves without horses, being set forward by some vices and devices within, certain wheels and weights; so malice hurries away itself, and tarries not for the driver. All heretics are malicious, and carried with a rancorous hate to pervert others. As Archytas took no pleasure in viewing heaven, with all the celestial beauties, unless he may have one to tell it to again; so the sectary takes no pleasure in his error, unless he can work others to the same faction. The Pharisees would compass sea and land to make one proselyte, Matt. xxiii. 15: it was but a trick of their father, the devil compasseth the whole earth to spill a soul. Like men sick of the plague, they have an itching desire to infect others. *Hoc fonte derivata cludet*, that does in patriam populumque fluere: this is the head from whence springs all mischief. If Ahab must be deceived, there is no fitter means to deceive him by than a lying spirit. Generally all the corruptions of Israel are fathered upon the tongues of false prophets; their responsive oracles being not God's word, but their own conceit. This God acknowledged, that their sour grace had set the people's teeth on edge; and they might excuse themselves with Eve, The serpent gave it them, and they gave it the people. But it was an old saying, Cursed is he that poisons our current. The Jews did so once in England, and would have spilt lives: the emissaries of Rome strive still to be the Jews' successors, but with a worse event, for they spill souls. Now when the spring by the high-way is poisoned, the poor traveller that drinks of it dies for it. Such a place is to give drink to every beast of the field, and there the wild asses quench their thirst, Psal. civ. 11. Now that being envenomed, infecteth all the beasts of the forest, all the birds among the branches, and especially the wild asses, that there quench their thirst. Alas, what have the poor lambs deserved, that they must be thus deceived? alas, that they cannot be content to go to hell alone! He that hath once made himself a villain, studies how to make all others fools. Abner calls it play, though it be with edge-tools. Samson's foxes make a sport to toss firebrands, though they burn corn-fields. The skittish kine care not what becomes of the ark, so they may be frisking. If the church finds them, and smites them, straight they complain of persecution; but indeed it is not the church, but they that persecute. Hagar beats Sarah, not Sarah Hagar, though you would think it otherwise when you read the story. Hagar hath hope of a child, and now she dominieers over her mistress: Sarah doth but just, to strike when she is provoked. Thus the Jesuits come against us with new malice, though with old arguments; they cannot leave their old and own figure, *pseudologia*. Therefore concerning their tenets, let us not so much weigh the malice, as the validity and force. For they dip their pens in the gall of the red dragon, and write bitter things; as if they loved cursing, Psal. cix. 17. But, Lord, let blessing be the prayer of our lips, blessing the desire of our hearts, and blessing the end of our hopes and crown of our heads for ever.

Another cause or motive is discontent. He is not fed with such broth as he loves, finds not preferment as he would, and thinks himself worthy of, but nobody else thinks so. Hereupon he inveighs most lowdly and loudly, against them that scorned, and happy

had good cause to scorn, to set his fathers or his fathers' fathers with the dogs of their flock. Now the trumpet of Moses is made a trunk to shoot pellets at truths, and Moses' friends; and the characters of slander must be drawn in the oil of the tabernacle, to the abomination of God and man. Arius driving ambitiously at a bishopric, was prevented by Alexander his competitor, the worthier man, though not esteemed his match for heat of zeal. Upon the missing his suit, he pursued his spite, by broaching a heresy; that after the repulse he might seem somebody, and draw a world of malcontents after him. (Theod. Eccl. Hist. lib. 1. cap. 2.) How many hath this motive sent over to Rome!

Another cause is confidence of power and numbers. Seneca reports that the senators of ancient Rome ordained, that the slaves should go distinguished from the free-born in apparel; as it might be the cap which made a difference between a slave and a citizen. But at last they perceived that there might be inconvenience in this; for the slaves might chance to fall a numbering their own side, and upon the understanding of their own strength, might break forth into open rebellion, and shake off the yoke of servitude. So let every man do as he list, and every assembly assume what fashion it list; it will be at last considered who have the most of their side. And where is the greater number, the worst men will follow; they will be followers of the camp, partly for company, and partly for booty. So they will come to perform in deed, what Hushai dissembled in word, Whom the people choose, his will I be, and with him will I abide, 2 Sam. xvi. 18. Thus the ringleaders begin, not only to vaunt of their virtues, but to crack of their forces, and that by the hundreds and the thousands. But yet numbers should not, shall not, prevail against the right. It was God's charge, "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil." Exod. xxiii. 2. You have often a multitude of the simple led by one that is subtle; but one good man will not be led by a bad multitude. Error steals in at a little hole, through wantonness and neglect of order. Therefore to prevent it, St. Paul did heartily charge us to observe order; "Let all things be done decently, and in order," 1 Cor. xiv. 40. "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace," ver. 33. I rejoice in "beholding your order, and the stedfastness of your faith," Col. ii. 5. Such is the excellency of order, that the apostle ranketh it with faith. The church is compared to an army, because of the godly array and equipage wherein she marcheth, Cant. vi. 10. Without this, so many assemblies, so many rents in Christ's garments; so many congregations, so many distractions. As many schismatics as persons. (Hicrome.) It is not well to see a church like Jeremia's speckled bird, Jer. xii. 9, a bird of divers colours.

They shall "privily" bring them in. We have done with the matter, let us come to the manner of this induction: underhand, privily. Which word notes to us their subtlety, their vigilancy, their hypocrisy.

First, their subtlety and politic craft, whereby they insinuate their unseen poisonous seeds. Paul calls it the "sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive," Eph. iv. 14. As scandalizers scatter their libels; if it be liked, they know the authors; if it be dangered to penalty, it is none of theirs. Sin's agents are brought up in her own house, and taught the rudiments of her own discipline; as your decoys teach young practitioners their trade of cheating. It is the brand of sin, to be deceitful; "Take heed, lest you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin," Heb. iii. 13. This art of cozenage she teacheth to all her

litter. Oh it is the subtlest dam that ever the devil engendered withal, and most pregnant in generation! He was in the serpent when he begat iniquity on man; but now he hath made sin more subtle than the serpent, Eccles. xxi. 2. We see the craftiest politicians overreached by sin; they have tricks beyond all men, sin hath a trick beyond them. Sin, like the fencer, may teach his scholars many postures, and wards, and tricks; but still reserves one for himself. They can cozen other men of their estates, but sin can cozen them of their souls. Let us therefore pray for that blessed illumination, to find out the deceits and cunning of sin; that albeit it once deceived us of our birth-right, it may not now deceive us of our blessing. It stole from us the happiness of nature, let it never steal from us the happiness of grace.

Secondly, their vigilant care to spy out the opportunity, how they may privily bring heresy in. She that will lay her bastard at an honest man's door, must watch the time when the whole family is either far enough without, or is fast asleep within. Never was more watchfulness, than where is most purpose of wickedness. The ungodly cannot sleep unless he do mischief. They devise iniquity on their beds, and when the morning is light they practise it, Micah ii. 1. They lie waking all night, that they may be working in the morning. "The children of this world are wiser," yea, and watchfuller, "than the children of light," Luke xvi. 8. You seldom hear of them that watch all night to prayer, and the service of God. "In the dark they dig through houses, which they had marked for themselves in the day," Job xxiv. 16: they spy their opportunity by day, but act their villany by night. That is the private and secret season of bringing in their damnable traffic: they have found the key, and when all are asleep, they land their merchandise. The biting cur barks not before-hand; nor did he that meant to rob, send a messenger before to tell the passengers, Ware the thief. These repentine, serpentine mischiefs sting before they hiss; and like the musket, kills dead before it gives the report. The lion first roars, and then preys; the wolf first preys, and then roars: the heretic preys, but roars not at all. As the woman that loves credit more than conscience, will sin, so it be in private; so this incendiary resolves to adulterate the truth, and to prostitute his soul to falsehood; but his hope and help is in the shadow of darkness; privily. When all is quite sure, (the good man absent,) God not preventing, (the good wife suspectless,) the church without mistrust, (the servants asleep,) the ministers retired; then doth this incarnate fiend begin to work upon the children. And in confidence of his two confederate thieves, place and occasion, he so bestirs himself, that from poor innocent souls he often steals the best of blessings, a good conscience. Never did opportunity meet with one that makes more use of it; he will husband it to proof, and like a cunning antagonist, lose not an inch of his advantage. The diligence of such is admirable: the Pharisees would take great pains to damn a proselyte, Matt. xxiii. 15. The children of light are not always the forwardest in their generation. Besides, they have many obstacles: "We would have come unto you once and again, but Satan hindered us," 1 Thess. ii. 18. Our way is like Cushi's, full of rubs; but they, like Ahimaaz, take the plain way, 2 Sam. xviii. Mischief is nimble, and he that intends evil, will break his sleep to do it. It is the servants that sleep; it is the enemy that watcheth to sow tares, Matt. xiii. 25. I would we had their wings and speed; I wish not their talons nor their flight. If Hazael's feet did belong to Solomon's head, and both these to David's heart, oh there was a man for God, a man of God! The shepherd

watcheth to guard his flock, the wolf watcheth to destroy his flock: the wolf hath the advantage, for he may sleep out of fear; but whosoever the shepherd sleeps, the flock is in danger. Our comfort is, that though the wolf be waking, though the lambs sleep, though the shepherd sleep, though the church sleep, yet He that keepeth Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps; and this Keeper watch over us evermore.

Lastly, their hypocrisy, with the covertly carriage of their intended plagues: "By good words and fair speeches they deceive the hearts of the simple," Rom. xvi. 18. Without this there could be no privily: appearance would condemn them. Vice dares not walk without a borrowed shape: like an old courtesan, guilty of her own witheredness, she never goes without a mask. Countenances furthest from native beauty, love artificial shadows. Never ill would appear itself, if it could be hid. Hypocrisy is the usher of heresy, a marshal that makes way for her, and cries, Room, here comes my lady. Like the wench that led St. Peter into the high priest's hall; but not with the same purpose, to declare him. Ignorant people are beguiled with glosses and colours, as girls are with dolls, and Indians with rattles and such pretty toys. Satan himself seems fair, when he is dressed up like an angel of light; and a wolf cunningly apparelled in a sheep-skin, cozens the poor lambs. That damnable heretic Pelagius was a man of austere conversation: and false prophets come with a rough garment next their skins, like a Gileonite in his old shoes. Therefore we must learn to distinguish between Samuel and the devil, which the witch of Endor suborned in his likeness; and we may easily do it, by his ascending out of the earth. Hypocrites think, as Brutus said when he was dying, that virtue itself was but a name; that all piety is but a name, and that name they get. Who were they that opposed Paul's sermon at Antioch? "Devout and honourable women, and the chief men," Acts xiii. 50. Devout! That they were honourable persons, no wonder; that they were wise after the flesh, no wonder; that they were mighty, no wonder: for, "Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called," 1 Cor. i. 26. But that devout, religious, zealous persons should resist the truth; this is strange, yet true. Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, those three resisters of Moses, were the most famous and eminent men in the congregation. Let us therefore pray God, that they may be either inwardly lambs, as they are not; or appear outwardly wolves, as they are: either to turn their hearts from their wolfish condition, or to pull their sheep-skin over their ears; that no jugglers may privily by their mists and mysteries pervert the flock of Jesus Christ.

"Who privily shall bring in damnable heresies." I am not yet quite wound out of this labyrinth of heresies: I could wish myself well rid of them, wish you all well rid of them, wish the land well rid of them, wish the world well rid of them: but oh that I could as soon turn them out of the church, as I can out of my discourse. Now at most they do but trouble your ears; let them pass undiscovered, and they will trouble your hearts. All I have done, is but to show you the mazes and windings of error: and now I am ready to lead you out, and with due speed to bring you to a clearer coast. That remains is for application; to denigrate those birds of this feather, wherof we at this present are in danger. I will discover to you three sorts; one that would disturb your peace, another that would pervert your faith, a last that would corrupt your manners: all of which would wound your consciences.

They that would privily wrong your peace, are

seditions schismatics: who, when the bread of life is broken to the people, throw in crooked pins to choke them. These are they that villicate authority, that calumniate our Service Book, because the form is uniform. When we beseech Christ by his agony and bloody passion, this they call conjuring. When the minister to the penitent pronounceth absolution, this they call a pope's pardon. When we pray for all men, this they say is against God's election. When we pray for all those that travel by land or by water, this they say is to pray for thieves and pirates. When against lightning and thunder, this prayer they would have used only in summer; otherwise, they say, we pray against sparrow-blasting. When we pray that our forefathers' sins may not be laid to our charge, this they say is to acknowledge purgatory. Thus they have made our Service to stink in the nostrils of men; but our comfort is that it smells sweet in the nostrils of God. Our surplices and vestments, they say, are not made of the camel's skin, but of the dragon's tail. Take heed of these, who privily bring in offences to your peace. And *bonum pacis martyrio præferimus*, (Liber.) Indeed they are zealous against all errors but their own; but St. Augustine would not have men such confuters, that one error shall be convinced by another, and the less by the greater. Is this holiness, to be always finding faults? Is this zeal, to like nothing but their own inventions? I remember what Augustine said to Julian the Pelagian. When thou shalt master that stomach wherof thou art possessed, thou shalt possess that truth wherewith thou art mastered. "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them," Rom. xvi. 17; for their conviction, and your own security.

They that would privily bring in corruptions to your faith, as the papists. Here antichrist had cause to be angry, and plead that he had not his right, if he were not brought in for the ringleader; whose profession is to make your souls drunk with the wine of his fornications, Rev. xvii. 2. Beware of these Romish agents and instruments: all their desire is to intoxicate your hearts, and proudly to tyrannize over your consciences. He is that man of sin, that man of pride, "who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped," 2 Thess. ii. 4. He rose first above bishops, then above councils, then above kings, then above Scriptures, and now, so far as it is possible, above God himself. All that are not dead in sense, know his malice: killing all those that worship not the image of the beast, Rev. xiii. 15. St. Paul tells us, All things are yours. If all be ours, what insufferable wrong doth he to us, that takes away from us half a sacrament, the whole Scripture? For what purpose sends he over his seminaries, those flies that come humming out of the larder of hell? They envy, they inveigh, they write, they rail. But as the Jews did with Stephen, when they could not confute him with arguments, they did it with stones; so what they cannot evince by the word, they will convince by the sword. They have always powder in the pan; and when they spy their time, they will turn their pens into pen-knives, and their ink into blood. O but now they plead king's peace: yet as in France, when it was said there should be a consultation at Paris, to hear complaints, to redress wrongs, and set all things even; and that the protestants should have free access to declare their grievances, and safe-conduct to return; one answered, Promise what they list, for St. Bartholomew eve's sake I will not trust them: so, however they show themselves, looking smoothly, and speaking fairly, yet for the fifth of

November's sake let us never trust them. Only bless we our God, that though they do as much mischief as they can, yet they cannot do so much as they would. And if our sins provoke him not, Christ will preserve his flock from being a prey to their teeth for ever.

They that infect our manners are evil companions, Satan's agents; who is still scattering his fiery darts among the army of Israel. And when they light upon wood they kindle, when upon flax they flame, when upon gunpowder they blow up all. Infirmary is as the wood; desire to sin, that is the flax; delight in sin, that is the powder. If we be naked, or only clothed with hypocritical outsides, or with the thin coat of reason, these darts will wound us: only the shield of faith rebates the points, and quenches all the fire. Some are afraid of meeting the devil in a dark night; alas, he will not scare thee from himself: what should he get by that? No, it is worse meeting him like an angel of light; by an orator persuading, by a poet delighting, by a friend flattering, by a wife seducing: this is the devil often brought in like concealed ware. Some make question whether there be a devil or no, because they never saw any: but thou mayst see him in his effects, tempting thee to lewdness. In the time of superstition, the devil did often appear in some bodily shape, and he had reason for it; for by that means he drove men forward to desperation, to which in those days they were most inclined. But in these times of profaneness, he will not appear in his likeness, lest he should hold men back from presumption, to which they were running headlong. For he is never a worse devil, than when he comes lapped up in Samuel's mantle; privily under the cloak of holiness: so that now all the wisdom is to see the devil. If a man's eye be too near the object, the beams of his sight will be confounded; there must be a mediocrity of distance. As in the optics, if a man would perceive the art of a perspective picture, he must go a distance from it, and then look on it with artificial eyes, or spectacles fitted for the purpose; so if a man would apprehend the prospects of Satan, with all his shadowings and deep deceipts, he must not stand too nigh him, but go further off. And then he must look, not with the eyes of nature or reason, so he shall never descry him; but with the eye of faith in the glass of the Scripture, this shall plainly represent him.

Fear Satan then most, when with the fairest pretences of good he seeks to justify evil. When the woman of Tekoah with a subtle parable procured Absalom's repeal from banishment, David replied, "Is not the hand of Joab with thee in all this?" 2 Sam. xiv. 19. When thou beholdest sacrilege coloured under the title of an impropriation, is not the hand of the devil in this? When oppression passeth under the name of reasonable and allowed interest, is not the hand of the devil in this? If you see secret malice strike under the semblance of justice, is not the hand of the devil in this? If covetous worldliness pass for honest thriftiness, is not the hand of the devil in this? If flattery creep up to preferment, under the title of humility, is not the hand of the devil in this? If plumes, painting, gaudy parries, the ornaments of popinjays, to the inversion of nature, and destruction of modesty, march all under the colours of comeliness, and going according to their state, is not the hand of the devil in this? Let us find out his privy inductions of these damnable heresies, and resist him there; resist him stedfast in the faith, 1 Pet. v. 9: this wrings his sword out of his hand; he and all his adherents shall fall before us. "The prince of this world

shall be cast out," John xii. 31: what folly is it for the wicked to fight on his side, that is sure to be vanquished! Fear thy sin, never fear Satan: let him not have lust, that secret factor in thy city, that intelligencer in thy soul, and he can do thee no harm. Through sin only is their force and fury so terrible to us; "spiritual wickedness," or wicked spirits, Eph. vi. 12: but spiritual wickedness is more to be feared than wicked spirits. But the God of peace shall shortly tread Satan under our feet, Rom. xvi. 20. Now the Lamb that hath the key of the bottomless pit, and the great chain in his hand, bind that dragon with everlasting darkness. But for thy church, send forth thy mercy and truth, and save us; and let thy face shine upon us for ever.

"Denying the Lord that bought them." This I called their criminal evil, a sin that seems to keep the circle of their own selves; and not to extend to the mischief of others, but only by the force of example. In handling whereof, I will first consider the general doctrine, what it is to deny Christ, and wherein these false teachers deny him; and then the application of it, who they be that in these times deny him. In special we find the aggravation of their apostacy in three heinous ascendings. First, they *deny*: it were bad enough to slight him, worse to forget him, yet worse to forsake him; but to deny him, this is fearful. Secondly, *the Lord*: not a creature, not a man, not a father, not a friend, not an angel, not themselves; but the Lord, this is more fearful. Thirdly, *that bought*: it is much to deny a benefactor, more to deny a parent, more to deny a Creator; but yet there is a step higher, to advance this blasphemy to the full altitude; to deny a Redeemer, Him that with the precious blood of his heart bought them; this is most execrable.

Denying of Christ is of two sorts; either in judgment, or in practice; denial in faith, or denial in fact. The latter is of infirmity, the other of infidelity. Some have put away faith and a good conscience; and "concerning faith have made shipwreck," 1 Tim. i. 19. There is a denial of faith. Some having a form of godliness, deny the power of it, 2 Tim. iii. 5: "They profess that they know God, but in works they deny him," Tit. i. 16. There is a denial of fact. The former makes a man no Christian; the other makes him not no Christian, but an evil Christian. The denial of Christ in judgment hath many degrees. 1. Apostacy, a falling off from Christ, and from the known truth into wilful errors. "Take heed lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God," Heb. iii. 12. 2. A violent opposing that truth which they have rejected, both with tongue and hand; justifying and defending their own mischievous opinions against the gospel of Christ. Lastly, the sin against the Holy Ghost. First men forsake Christ, then deny him, lastly blaspheme him. This is indeed that which truly rents a man off from Christ, and deprives him of all hope to be saved. The denial in fact is a dangerous pit, yet the mercy of God hath helped some out of it. So was Peter delivered; the servant denied his Master, but the Master loved his servant. Paul did not only deny him, but persecute him; yet he "obtained mercy," 1 Tim. i. 13. Many of the Jews did not only deny him, but crucify him; "Ye denied the Holy One, and the Just," Acts iii. 14; yet were they pricked in heart at Peter's sermon, gladly received his word, and were baptized, Acts ii. 41.

Every action that gives way to God's dishonour, and heartens others to superstition, is a denial of Christ in some degree of fact: "The things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God; and I would not that ye should have

fellowship with devils," 1 Cor. x. 20. He that tasteth the meat offered to idols, hath denied Christ with his tasting. If he doth not so, yet let him but touch those things with pleasure, he hath denied Christ with his touching. Though he doth not touch, yet if he stand to look upon the idolatry, he hath denied Christ with his eyes. Though he forbear to look, yet if he listen to those charms, he hath denied Christ with his ears. Though he omit all these, yet if he smell to the incense, he hath denied Christ with his smelling. He may be denied with the voice, when men speak to dishonour him, though inwardly they reverence him; with the garment, when they wear idolatrous fashions of attire to escape notice; with the countenance, when they seem delighted to behold the brea-den god carried in a box; with the diet, when only to give content to some popish spirits, they will forbear certain meats on certain days. These be all degrees of denial in them, that rather seek to please men, than to be the constant servants of Christ. (Chrysost. Oper. Imp. in Matt.)

He that dissembles a false faith is thus guilty. Faith may be feigned, *ex parte objecti*, when it doth not credit all the word; *ex parte subjecti*, in respect of the false heart of man; *ex parte exterioris actionis*, when a man keeps the true faith of Christ, but dares not profess it. Nicodemus had a good mind to Christ, but he durst not be known of it: now in that he did not openly acknowledge him, he did in a sort deny him. It is objected, "Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God," Rom. xiv. 22. Therefore a man may conceal his faith. But the apostle speaks not there concerning the faith of those things we must necessarily believe; but concerning the faith of indifferent things. Shall I change my faith in these? No, do not change it, but hide it. Shall my faith then be quite concealed? No, God sees it. To what purpose have I faith, and not to show it? Yes, show it to God. Thy faith is to be concealed, not cancelled. But then a man may hide his faith in time of persecution, and be present at idolatrous services? No, for the apostle speaks not of that faith, *quæ ad dogmata pertinet, sed de rebus mediis*: but only of things indifferent, and therein sometimes to hide our faith is not to offend. (Chrysost.) Our own faith, I say; for a man may sometimes dissemble his own faith, but he must never counterfeit a strange faith.

Here may be questioned, whether it is lawful to be present at a mass, so long as we reserve our own faith; and whether this be to deny Christ in any sort. The apostle clears it, 1 Cor. x. 14, "Flee from idolatry." This exhortation he strengthens with two special reasons; the one, ver. 20, they that partake of things offered to idols, "have fellowship with devils." The other, ver. 21, "Ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils." Besides offending of the weak Christian, and confirming the strong papist. A protestant cannot possibly communicate with the papists without sin; yet they may communicate with us without sin. Our service is without all fear of idolatry, even themselves being judges: so that a papist remaining a papist, may communicate with us; and it is rather out of pride, than conscience, that they refuse it. Yet it sticks upon the stomach of some toy-headed professors, that they may lawfully see a mass, going with their kindred, for sport; and rather than want excuses, that they might more detest it. But Paul cuts off all these reasons: "Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he?" 1 Cor. x. 22. God shall condemn all colourable shifts, and expose thee to his wrath. To exhort this allowance, nothing is more commonly cited than the example of Naaman, "When

my master goeth into the house of Rimmon to worship there, and he leaneth on my hand, and I bow in the house of Rimmon; the Lord pardon thy servant in this thing," 2 Kings v. 18. To which Elisha doth seem to give approbation: "Go in peace." This place in their opinion doth prove it, when indeed this place makes most strongly against it. First, Naaman speaks of a civil worship to his master, not a superstitious one to the idol: the king leaning on his hand; either for weakness or for state. Secondly, he professed the resolution of his heart to worship only the God of Israel, that had healed him; begging earth to make an altar, erecting an altar for sacrifice, and sacrificing that he might be thankful. Thirdly, he puts the doubt of his own weakness, that notwithstanding his resolved sincerity; yet being with his master in that ensed place, he did not know how temptation might work upon him; therefore he says, God be merciful to me in this; pray for me that I may not fall, pray for me that I may find mercy. Fourthly, some think that Elisha did not approve, but suffer Naaman's fault; but there is no dispensing with sin. Fifthly, Go in peace, is as much as, God be with you, sir; a valediction; not the words of one that granted a request, but one that gave him licence to depart. Sixthly, indeed the prophet's meaning was to comfort the Syrian in God's mercy; whose strength should be glorified in his weakness. Who would either wholly keep him from idolatry, or if he fell upon infirmity, afford him gracious forgiveness. If such a thing happen; but either thou shalt die, or thy master die; howsoever, God will prevent it; go in peace. Seventhly, Naaman did confess that the bowing in the house of Rimmon was a sin, or else he would not have begged pardon for it. When I go to mass, I reserve my heart unto God: so did Naaman, yet he cried, Lord, be merciful to me in this. He desired mercy, as fearing beforehand: we have those that will do it, and never beg mercy afterwards; that never say, In this, Lord, pardon me. Thus they have a fair warrant from this place; for Naaman condemns it, and yet they would by his example find arguments to allow it. If it were not a sin, why doth he crave pardon for it? if it be a sin, why do we seek to justify it? But we go to behold it as a player: but plays are for stages, not for churches. Darest thou go to a temple, to see religion made a mockery, and the name of thy God a jest. But we would see it, that we may confute the absurdities of it. But would any sober man go to a drunken meeting, that he might learn to condemn drunkenness? he knew it was bad enough before. But we would go to convert others. Goodly! as if the wool should undertake to turn the pitch white by touching it; will not the pitch rather black the wool? Peter durst abroad draw his sword against a whole troop, in defence of his Master; yet after all his protestation of inseparableness from Christ, he was infected with the air of the high priest's hall. But yet we would see it, that no longer by report, but by ocular testimony, we might hate it. But would any man desire to see murder or incest, that he might more loathe it? All reasons are lost that make for sin: therefore resolve against this danger of temptation, lest you be found to deny Christ.

This for the general doctrine; now for the application, that we may perceive who they are which in any measure or degree deny Jesus Christ.

1. The Jews and Turks. For the Jews, their refusal of him more strongly approves him: neither could he be justified to be that Messias, if they rejected him not. Lo, now, how the Lord hath requited them: they denied him, and he hath denied

them. Their sin is capitally written in their long and desperate ruin. If they would compare their former captivities with their former sins, they should now find that they have committed some sin more heinous than all former sins, because they suffer a plague more grievous than all former plagues. This sin was the denial of Christ, and this plague for that denial. For the Turks, they have taken the name of Saviour from Christ, and given it to Mahomet, that cozening Arabian. Their malice is not only to deny Jesus, but to murder him; and by all stratagems, seconded with bloody violence, to waste Christendom, and to bring his name to nothing. But arise, O Lord, thou and the ark of thy strength; convert or confound thine enemies, and remember those tyrants that say of thy Jerusalem, "Rase it, rase it, even to the foundation thereof," Psal. cxxxvii. 7.

2. The Greekish church of the Russes and Muscovites have reserved from forgetfulness the name of Christ, but in the foundations of their religion have denied him. They are the basest dregs of all Christians, and so to call them is to allow them the most favour that can be. They will admit none of the Christian world to their font, but such as solemnly renounce, spit at, and abjure their former God, religion, baptism. They are as ignorant as Turks, as idolatrous as pagans, as obstinate as Jews, and more superstitious than papists. If the worst of the Roman and best of the Russian were compared, it would be hard to judge which were least evil. They give more honour to St. Nicholas, if at least he was a saint, if an honest man, than they do to Christ. They usually put a scroll into the hands of their dead, when they bury him; it is this, A Russ of Russes; which they call a certificate to St. Peter. It is their wickedness and infidelity to have denied Christ.

3. Such other heretics as have kept the name of Christians, yet have spoiled the just honour of Christ. These differ from the other, and are not properly called religions, but opinions. Every heresy, though fundamental, makes not a religion; we say not, the religion of the Arians, Nestorians, Sabellians, Macedonians; but the sect or heresy. Not to discuss the propriety, no opinion challengeth the name of a religion in our usual speech. Such were the Valentian and Manichean heresies, that denied Christ's humanity. The Arian and Samosetanian, that denied his Divinity. The Nestorian, that distracted him into two persons. Eutychian, that confounded the two natures. The Sabellian, that mixed him with the hypostasis of the Father. Donatus, that denied his kingdom, that is, his church, to be perpetual and catholic. Pelagius, that denied him to be the Redeemer of little ones in baptism. Novatus, that denied his grace and mercy to sinners fallen. There were innumerable such whom the Lord with his fan hath cast out, purging his floor from such damnable chaff. The same gracious hand purge it still; that all men may come with heart and tongue, to acknowledge one true God, and one blessed Saviour, Jesus Christ.

4. The religion, or rather fiction, of papism. It is most wonderful to read, how Fervandentius and others of them upon this text, do challenge us for the principal men that deny Christ. But when we come to examine the weight, their very arguments against us do strengthen us, and we find ourselves the more comforted in being so scandalized. Let indifference be judge. We adore and trust upon Christ for our only Saviour, and ascribe to him the whole of our redemption; they join other saviours, other mediators, with him; now which of us do most deny Christ? Do you look for more evidence? you shall have it; that both the cold neuters who treat of a reconciliation between us, and the hot sepa-

ratists that say we have not left them at all because we retain some ceremonies which they use, may be at once satisfied and ashamed. It is not matter of order, but matter of faith, that hath divided us; not ceremony, but substance; not a bush, but a wall of stone; that we can scarce imagine the separation greater which divided Abraham from the rich man in hell. "Who is a liar, but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ?" He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son; 1 John ii. 2. But they deny not the Father, albeit the Son. Yea, in this they have denied the Father: where Christ is but half a Saviour, God is but half a Father. "Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father," ver. 23. They worship images, adore relics, invoke angels; here they deny Jesus. They sacrifice for the sins of quick and dead with a wafer-cake, hold a purgatory for the scouring up of souls, as if Christ's blood was not able to do it; here they deny Jesus. They tread down the deputies of God from their thrones, and set up a usurping prelate, whom all ages have acknowledged a vassal to princes; here they deny Jesus. They take away Scriptures, mangle sacraments, license stews, condemn marriage, wrap up the treasures of our conscience in the strange livery of an unknown language, sell pardons for sixpence, open heaven where Christ shuts it, and shut heaven where Christ opens it; here they deny Jesus. They mingle the blood of martyrs, yea, of traitors, with the blood of the Lamb of God which is spotless; which only taketh away the sin of the world, only quencheth the wrath to come, only abateth the edge of the Father's justice, even that sword cherubical which glitters before paradise: this, this is to deny the Lord that bought them. They are all for traditions, we for the Scriptures. The goods of our Father are in question; whither shall we go but to his will and testament? Thither we fly; we do not deny thy word, O Lord, we do not deny thee: but they that deny the word of Christ, deny Christ himself.

Under this rank of deniers come those whilom professors of religion, that have now accepted the mark of the beast; who are so foolish, that having begun in the Spirit, they will now be made perfect by the flesh, Gal. iii. 3. They despise the chaste spouse of their Saviour, and are bewitched with the painted beauty of an ill-favoured strumpet. They that have seen her in her gayest dress with Christian eyes, have loathed her; others have looked on her with the eyes of flesh, and adored her. Divers have come to Rome with a purpose to be confirmed papists: by hearsay they magnified her; they came, saw, and scorned her. They looked for religion, and found rank idolatry: the fire of their zeal brought them to the flames of martyrdom. We have some that suffer their zeal there to die, where those good men's zeal began to live; and delight to live, where they would but die. Our mother weeps for them, not for need, but for pity, for piety, for love. Troops of better-informed souls flock daily into her bosom, disdaining their late antichristianism, and embracing her knees on their own. The Mighty One of Israel, that leaves the ninety-nine to reduce one lost sheep, fetch them home to his fold, though with shame, though by death; that they may shame the devil, forsake that harlot, love their own mother, bless their own Father, and lastly save their own souls.

5. The renegade, that being once baptized unto Christ, is afterward circumcised unto Mahomet. It is in vain to charge them with Paul's testimony, "If ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing," Gal. v. 2; for they desire not that Christ should profit them. Miserable men, that forsake the

blood of their Saviour, to accept the tyranny of an impostor! I have read of a Christian, that to save his life turned Turk; but it could not save him: for they presently in derision hanged him up, with these words, However thou livest, thou shalt die a Turk. They are so conscious of their own great prophet's weakness, that if any man deny Christ, they will never trust him in the acknowledgment of Mahomet.

6. The neuter, that is of either side, of neither side: to-day a Romist, to-morrow a protestant, next day no man can tell what, nor himself; this man denies Christ. They think him theirs, we think him ours, his own conscience finds him neither's. O but our differences trouble him; but shall a man deny Christ because his coat is divided? In religion and faith there is no wavering; he that doth not believe and profess the truth, denies it. There is no medium; we must be either for it or against it. "Curse ye the inhabitants of Meroz, because they came not to the help of the Lord against the mighty," Judg. v. 23. They did not fight against him, but because they did not fight for him they are cursed. Let us say, as that martyr answered, when he was offered both torments and rewards; rewards if he did deny Christ, torments if he would not, with time of deliberation: The case is so clear, that I need not study about it. Let us much rather lose ourselves, than our Saviour Christ.

7. The separatist, that speaking of his country, cries, he is fled out of Babel: he hath forsaken his mother, therefore denied his Father. And whither runs he? Out of the free and clear air of the gospel, into the stench and irksome mixture of Jews, Arians, Anabaptists. Who but a mad-man would forsake the Church of England, which Rome envies, all the world admires, to go to Amsterdam? It is their delight to be thwartingly peevish; and where the gate stands open, to be ever seeking for a stile. They will be cross, though they be absurd; and because the law enjoins abstinence on some certain days, therefore their greatest feasts shall be on Fridays. Like certain islanders near to China, that salute by putting off their shoes, because the men of China do it by their hats. He that wrongs the wife, is no friend to the husband: in refusing the church, they have denied Christ.

8. The persecutor, that invades the liberty of those who love the Lord Jesus, denies Christ. Joab smote Absalom's body, but therein David's heart. The rebel says, he means no hurt to the person of the king; but because he doth it to the subjects, he is therefore a traitor: so he that strikes the Christian, strikes Christ. Such shall not escape unpunished, either here or hereafter. Not even Paul himself was transmitted, without feeling what he inflicted. Examine his own testimony, 2 Cor. xi. 23, &c. Did he make havoe of the church? the world made havoe of him for it. Did he hale men and women to prison? himself was often clapped up for it. Did he help to stone Stephen? himself was stoned for it. Did he afflict his own countrymen? his own countrymen afflicted him for it. Did he lay stripes upon the saints? the Jews laid stripes upon him for it. Was he weary, painful, diligent to beat down the gospel? he was in weariness, painfulness, frequent watchings and fastings, in hunger and thirst, cold and nakedness, to defend the gospel, ver. 27. Thus he endured when he was Paul, what he inflicted as he was Saul. They that persecute Christians, and escape judgment here, shall find everlasting judgment hereafter. Let this point bind us all to the good behaviour, that we do good to them who love the Lord Jesus.

This is the superior and more immediate manner

of denying Christ: there is also an inferior and more remote manner; which is of such as turn the grace of God into wantonness, and evacuate to their own souls the virtue of his cross; who being redeemed to serve Christ, deny that service: there is a world of these. The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world," Tit. ii. 11, 12. It persuades to holiness by this token, that it brings salvation with it. It is grace, a sweet nature: that brings salvation, oh more sweet, most welcome! But it might lie hid in unknown obscurity; nay, it appears; not to Paul or Peter only, but to all men. Deliverance from danger binds to gratitude: this was David's security to Bathsheba concerning the succession of Solomon, "As the Lord liveth, that hath redeemed my soul out of all distress," 1 Kings i. 29. But advancing to great preferment bindeth more: this was Joseph's apology to his tempting mistress; "My master hath committed all to my hand: there is none greater in his house than I: how then can I do this great wickedness?" Gen. xxxix. 8, 9. We were all justly condemned for treason, to hell; the stroke of damnation was near us: at an instant and exigent cometh our pardon; not by the hand of an angel, God's special courtier, but in the hand of a Mediator: not written with ink, but with blood; not vulgar blood, that runs in common veins, but blood royal, no meaner than ran from the side of his own Son. Now our Sovereign Creator commends a suit to us, that we would serve him, by this token, that he hath redeemed us at such a price. If we break the covenant, vilipend the mercy, refuse the service, trample under our profane feet the precious token, deny him that bought us; what remains but a fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation to devour us? Heb. x. 27, 29. Under this kind I will touch but four offenders.

1. The dissolute and scattering rioter, that draws his patrimony through his throat; he denies Christ. Will he not believe it? let him read 1 Tim. v. 8, "If any provide not for his own, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." Where is no humanity, there can be no piety: he that is not a good moral man, will never be a good Christian. He is worse than an infidel, because he transgresseth nature, which teacheth us all providence, even the very beast, much more man. He sinneth against the knowledge he hath received, therefore is the worst offender. The purest ivory is turned by the fire into the deepest black. We use to extenuate the sinfulness of such a one, He hath no fault, but a little too kind-hearted: it is all one, He hath no fault, but that he hath denied the faith. He is no man's foe but his own: yes, he is his posterity's foe, and no friend unto Christ.

2. The oppressor. Paul says directly, "They have erred from the faith," 1 Tim. vi. 10. Yea, the very uncharitable: In that ye have denied it to my brethren, ye have denied it to me, saith Christ, Matt. xxv. 45. Little thinks the engrosser, that he denies Christ: what, to take advantage of the law, is this to deny the gospel? Yes, the poor hath lost their right; thou hast multiplied unjust gain, preferred mammon before the Lord; thou hast denied him that bought thee. But that whosoever refuseth to do mercy to the poor, denies Christ; this is a point of doctrine which the world will not receive, let God say what he will. But he that said, Whosoever giveth you, giveth me, hath said also, Whosoever denieth you, denieth me. I send to my friend for a poor courtesy in his easy power, that have done him many great favours; he denies it; it is all one, he denies

me for his friend. He that hath the world's goods, and takes no compassion on him that hath none of them, how dwells the love of God in him? 1 John iii. 17. He that being able, gives not to them whom the Lord hath bought, denies him that bought them.

3. The blasphemer denies Christ: for doth any man love him against whom he inveighs? "He that is not with me is against me," Matt. xii. 30. Indeed, the greatest denial of all is verbal, and the greatest sins against God are words. Obliquities in speech offend more than those of action; therefore the sin never to be forgiven, is called "blasphemy against the Holy Ghost," Matt. xii. 31. He that commits a sin, offends the law; he that blasphemes, striketh God himself. There is no greater grace than thankfulness; no greater sin than blasphemy. I would the common swearer would think of this, that rashly, yea, rancorously, blasphemeth that sacred side, those wounds, that blood, whereby our souls are redeemed; he doth in this deny the Lord that bought him.

4. The desperate, that rejects the offer of salvation by Christ; this is a fearful denial. Let all the rivers and streams that make glad the city of God run unto it, they are driven back; there is no entrance for the graciousness of God, though it be preached a thousand times. When the Lord, like a loving physician, promiseth to cure the sore, the desperate patient thrusteth his nails into it; Nay, it shall not be healed. What can be more derogatory and injurious to Christ, than to change his truth into a lie, and Satan's lies into truth, and to justify the devil more than God? When God on the one side shall bind by promise, confirm by oath, ratify by seal, exhibit, by the blood of his only-begotten Son, pardon and mercy to all accepting penitents; that though he hath broken he will bind up, though he hath made a wound he will heal it, though he hath killed he will give life; yet he is not believed. When Satan on the other side shall suggest, that the justice of God will never be satisfied, the heinousness of sins cannot be pardoned, (as if he had lost the name of being the father of lies,) he is credited. God hath made a decree in heaven, it belongs to the New Testament, sealed by the death of the testator, witnessed by three in heaven, and as many on earth, never to be altered: At what time soever a sinner shall repent of his wickedness heartily, I will forgive him. O heaven before heaven! and he that denies it finds hell before hell, and damnation before his time. The greatest sins are those that are opposed to the three theological virtues, faith, hope, and charity; such are infidelity, hatred, desperation. The other be monstrous sins, to the denial of God's justice; but desperation in this is the worst, because it denies his mercy; and his mercy is over all his works. Behold the Lamb of God, accept your remedy, deny not him that bought you.

"Denying the Lord that bought them." We have considered the general doctrine, let us come to a particular examination of the words, and an aggravation of their wickedness; which discovers itself in three degrees:

The quality of their act, They denied. So far from fearing or loving, that they fall to denying.

The excellency of the object; no mean person, not a servant, not an equal, but their master, The Lord.

The near relation that was between them, and the right that he had in them, by purchase, That bought them.

They denied. It had been very much not to have feared him, especially seeing himself so warned us. Fear him that can cast into hell, Luke xii. 5. The wrath of a king is frightful; we fear an ague, won-

der at a comet, tremble at thunder: and fear we not God, the commander of all these? Oh he is of infinite majesty! mathematicians wonder at the sun, that being bigger than the earth, it does not burn it. But this is the wonder, that God being so infinitely great, and we so infinitely wicked, we are not confounded. "He forneth the mountains, createth the wind, maketh the morning darkness, and treadeth upon the high places of the earth," Amos iv. 13: can he do this, and not punish sinful man? To fear him is the whole duty of a man; not to fear him is the way to be left worse than if we never had been. To want this fear is a wretched orbity; but to deny him, this is worse. It had been very much not to have believed on him, considering the oracles that he spake and the miracles that he wrought. They that hated him, were forced to testify both these of him; Never man spake as this man doth; and, We never saw it on this fashion: yet, This ye have seen, and believe not, John vi. 36. They saw, they heard, they wondered, they were convinced, yet they believed not. Their own eyes in seeing, their own ears in hearing, their own hearts in wondering, their own convicted reasons, shall witness against their unbelief. The Holy Ghost shall "reprove the world of sin, because they believe not on me," John xvi. 9. If faith comes, the guilt of all sin departs; if faith departs, the guilt of all sin remains. Israel had gross sins, as tempting of God, unthankfulness, adultery with Moab, idolatry with Baal-peor: every one able to have kept them out of Canaan, to have swept them out of the world; yet Paul imputes all to their want of faith: "They could not enter in because of unbelief," Heb. iii. 19. "Because of unbelief they were broken off," Rom. xi. 20. There is destruction enough wrapt up in this, not to believe on him that bought us; but to deny him, is yet worse.

It were very much not to have loved the Lord, who is every way so beautiful, that no soul can behold him but she must needs affect him. But the wicked never saw him: they look after him with carnal eyes, which are no more able to discern him, than a blear eye can look upon the sun; their spiritual eyes and intellectual faith never saw him. They behold him hanging on the cross, sleeping in a sepulchre, not sitting on a throne; as a man of sorrows, forsaken of his friends, afflicted by his enemies, exercised with terrors, killed with torments; yet even then he was lovely. But look upon his innocency, that immaculate Lamb; upon his righteousness, Christ the Just One: behold him waited on with angels, worshipped with prostrate knees, holding out a white hand of mercy, speaking gracious words to penitent suitors, smiling upon his saints, kissing the souls he bought: lo, now, his beauty! If any ask the church, "What is thy Beloved more than another beloved?" she answers that knoweth, "My Beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand. His head is as the most fine gold," &c. Cant. v. 9—11. If every member of him be so beautiful, how excellent is the whole composition! "He is altogether lovely;" take your choices where you will. "This is my Beloved, and this is my Friend," ver. 16. This is my choice. "Thou art fairer than the children of men," Psal. xlv. 2: all that are fair, are fair only in thee. "Therefore do the virgins love thee," Cant. i. 3. Suppose in a country there is a young shepherd, whose face hath but newly discovered to the world of what sex he is; his exquisite proportion and admirable beauty far transcending all the rest. The virgin shepherdesses desire his company, are glad to be in his sight, to do him any service, to tend his flock; and all for a kind word or a smile: striving like rivals one with another, who shall be most near him; and if it were possible,

would every one enjoy him. So ten thousand times fairer than all the sons of men is the Shepherd of our souls, Jesus Christ: all the virgins love him, every good soul seeks him, and remembers his love more than wine, striving in a holy emulation who shall most acceptable to him: they will do him all service and worship, honouring his name, feeding his flocks, making much of his followers; glad of a smile, but ravished with a kiss of his lips: all would possess him; and lo, all shall possess him that truly believe on him. On earth one husband is for one wife, but our infinite Saviour is a Husband for all faithful souls. As many as believe on him, he makes the sons of God, John i. 12. Christ being thus sweet, it were much not to love him. They that love not thee, O Lord, shall be written in the dust. "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maran-atha," 1 Cor. xvi. 22. But now to deny him, &c.

It was very much not to acknowledge Christ. To hold a man's place when his honour is in question, is to mistake the end of our redemption. Ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify Christ in your body and spirit, which are the Lord's, 1 Cor. vi. 20. Now he is poorly glorified, when his name is concealed. It is said of John Baptist, that "he confessed, and denied not," John i. 20. If he confessed, it might seem a pleasm to say, he denied not; but this declares that whosoever doth not openly confess Christ, doth secretly deny Christ. The Merozians opposed not, they denied not, they only stood still, did nothing, said nothing: they were cursed, Judg. v. 23. Think of this, ye that hide Christ, as the woman of Babilon hid the spices, 2 Sam. xvi. 18, 19, in the deep well of your hearts, and cover the mouth of it with corn; that would keep in with Christ, and yet not fall off from the world. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation," Rom. x. 10. Confession is the effect of faith; I believed, and therefore I spake, Psal. cxvi. 10. If it were enough to believe in the heart, to what purpose did God give thee a mouth? (Chrysost.) If it be sufficient for thee to know Christ, and not to acknowledge him thy Lord; then it shall be sufficient for Christ to know thee, but not to acknowledge thee for his servant. He denies Christ, that doth not profess himself a Christian. Nor is it any help for thee, to say that silence argues consent; for thou art bound both to consent and to confess; and indeed here *tacere* is *negare*. Christ loves this free and humble acknowledgment, and commands it. "Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:" thus you "sanctify the Lord God in your hearts," 1 Pet. iii. 15. Doth the persecutor question thy faith? Fear him not. What then? Sanctify the Lord in thy heart. How? By giving an answer, not silence. To whom? Not only to the magistrate, but to every man that asketh, whether friend or foe, home-born or stranger. Of what? The reason of thy hope, the ground of thy expectation of eternal bliss. Where and when? Not only in time of peace, and assembly of saints, but always, be ever ready to do it. Christ no sooner said to her, "Mary;" but she presently confessed him, "Rabboni," John xx. 16. It was but one word, to him that is the Word; it was taken for an acknowledgment. And can it be that we should not acknowledge our Saviour? He that will not confess a benefit, hath arrived at the utmost confines of ingratitude; but he that denies his benefactor, is fallen so low, that he can fall no lower, except it be into hell. It may be we have not feared Christ with due

reverence, nor believed with true confidence, nor loved him with sincere affection, nor acknowledged him with free confession; but, Lord, keep us from denying him: let us never deny the God that bought us.

"The Lord." One that by just right callengeth their service. Not a creature; yet the natural man will not deny his own horse or dog that hath done him service. A man will not deny his own house: wilt thou acknowledge thy house, and deny thy Master, thy Maker? Not a servant: Philemon would not deny Onesimus, a runaway servant, when Paul had written for him: wilt thou prefer thy servant before thy Lord? Not a friend: he is a prodigy that denies his friend. Nabal was branded for a churl, because he showed not kindness to David his friend; and such a friend as protected him, his whole family, his substance, 1 Sam. xxv. 16. It goes near when a man's own familiar friend shall do him a mischief, Psal. lv. 13. This Absalom objects to Hushai; "Is it thy kindness to thy friend?" 2 Sam. xvi. 17. Indeed men are sometimes so drunk with the honours of this world, that they forget their friends. Like as I have heard of a lawyer, that pleaded a case very strongly on the one side, yet before the trial of it being advanced to the bench, adjudged it on the other: yet thus answered all imputation; I spake then as an advocate for my client, I speak now as a judge of the cause. Or as when another challenged his friend, You were wont to visit me every day, now you keep at distance; he plainly answered, I then needed you, now I am afraid you will need me. A good man would not thus use his friend; but is there any friend like the Lord? Not a father: how unnatural is it for the fruit to deny the tree; and to forget the rock whence he was hewn! Solomon a king did not despise his mother, but set her at his right hand. There is nothing but the love of the Lord Jesus must make a man leave his parents, Luke xiv. 26. Indeed a man is bound to forsake his father and mother to adhere to his wife, Matt. xix. 5. But this is to be understood with a limitation, if the competition be impossible. But for Christ, "Hearken, O daughter, forget thine own people, and thy father's house," Psal. xlv. 10. But otherwise how cursed a thing is it to deny parents! Let them that glitter like the sun, and deny to their poor, obscure parents part of their superfluities, remember the doom: The ravens of the valley shall pick out that eye, and the young eagles eat it, Prov. xxx. 17. But what is the father of our flesh, to the Father of our spirits? Not a wife; and yet she is not to be denied but in case of known adultery, Matt. xix. 9. Hath God made you one of two, and shall one deny the other? deny yourself? No man doth this, but he lapseth into fornication: denying a chaste wife, to embrace an unchaste harlot. Not a sovereign: Rome only hath branched those leas of rebellion, and unloosed the bonds of allegiance. And no marvel though she hath denied God's deputies on earth, which hath first denied God himself in heaven. If kings do not serve her, she forbiddeth all subjects to serve them; she excommunicates them as profane. Yet Saul himself, though he had not sanctity of life, had sanctity of calling. Therefore David both honoured him living, and avenged him being dead, (August.)

These be all sinful denials in their several degrees; but now to deny the Lord, that is the supreme apostasy. If it be ill to deny the creature, what is it to deny the Creator? If to deny a servant that fears thee, what is it to deny a Master whom thou shouldst fear? If ill to deny a friend that may change, what is it to deny Christ that is the same yesterday,

and to-day, and for ever! If to deny a father that begat the body, what is it to deny God that created the soul! If to deny a wife with whom thou art made one flesh, what is it to deny the Lord with whom thou art made one spirit! 1 Cor. vi. 17. If to deny a sovereign be treason, what is it to deny the King of kings! We are subject to the prince for the Lord, to the Lord for himself. The very word the apostle here useth is *ἐσπάρης*, and not *κυρίος*. *Δεσπότης* ἑαυτοῦ. *κύριος* ἑαυτοῦ: Lord hath reference to a bond-man, master to a free-man, (Varin.) Intimating in the very propriety of syllables, that man is a very bond-man under the despotical power of God.

Here is then the second aggravation of their sin: *τὸν δεσπότην ἀρνούνται*. The Lord that hath given them his livery, allowed them maintenance, to whom they have vowed homage, and who can pour on them vengeance. First, his livery they take and wear. Question them, as the mariners did Jonah, What art thou? they will answer with him, I fear the Lord God of heaven. Yea, they will profess with David, "O Lord, I am thy servant," Psal. cxvi. 16. But, alas, they put on this cloak that they may be the more securely wicked under it: and if you trust them not, you shall be sure they will not deceive you. But how can they profess him and deny him too? Yes, they may profess him in words, and deny him in works. They bear Caesar's stamp upon base metal. There was one condemned for coming to the marriage without his wedding-garment: these have the garment, but they come not to the wedding: God shall pluck their coat over their ears. Secondly, his maintenance they take and live on: the bread they eat, the air they breathe, the clothes they wear, all are his; they are maintained only at his cost and charges; yet they deny the Lord that feeds them. We are to worship God, both for his glorious sovereignty and gracious bounty. If thou do not worship him, thou art unjust; if thou deniest him, thou art unthankful. Methinks thou shouldst fear, that the bread should choke thee, the air infect thee, the water drown thee, when thou considerest, I have denied the Lord of all these. Think of this, ye that forget God and his benefits: he that riseth from the table without giving of thanks, goes his way and owes for his ordinary; and because he will not pay God in his thanks, God will pay himself in his torments. Shall I take my Master's food, and deny my Master? Thirdly, they have vowed homage to him, and faithful adherence: Christ covenanting with his blood to wash away their sins; they to forsake his enemies, and continue his faithful soldiers and servants to the end of their lives. Now what kind of soldier is he that runs away from his colours, and denies his general? Fourthly, they deny that Lord, who can destroy all those that rebel against him: Those mine enemies that denied me to reign over them, bring hither, and slay before me, Luke xix. 27. They have not refused a weak, titular, mortal lord, but the Lord of heaven and earth, that spake the word and they were made, that can speak again and they shall be marred. "The earth trembled, the foundations also of the hills moved, because he was wroth," Psal. xviii. 7: it was this Lord. "Tophet is ordained of old: the pile thereof is fire and much wood: the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it," Isa. xxx. 33: it was this Lord. "His lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors," Matt. xviii. 34: it was this Lord: a Lord that is every where to see his wrongs, that hath a just hand to requite them, and an almighty power to revenge them; from the wrath of this Lord, the Lord himself deliver us. Lord, who knows thy greatness, and dares deny thee? who

knows thy goodness, and will deny thee? who knows thy mercy, and can deny thee? Thou art our God, and we will praise thee: thou art our Lord, and we will serve thee: thou art our Father, and we will honour thee: thou art our Judge, and we will fear thee: thou art our Advocate, we will not deny thee: thou art our hope, our joy, our blessedness, our salvation, and we will love thee for ever.

"That bought them." This last aggravation is derived from the consideration of the unspeakable good which this Lord hath done them; in that they were delivered by the most excellent benefit that ever came to mankind, which is redemption by the blood of Christ. For howsoever it was a singular work and favour of God, to give us by creation a blessed being: yet was it no otherwise given us, than with a possibility to keep it or lose it: but redemption hath instated us to a blessedness never to be lost. Here then is a doubt to be resolved: how they may perish from Christ if they were redeemed? how were they redeemed if they can perish?

First, we must lay this ground of truth, that no soul which Christ hath truly bought can perish eternally. "This is the Father's will, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing," John vi. 39. But all they are given to Christ whom he hath purchased: "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand," John x. 28. If I give them eternal life, nothing shall bring them to eternal death; and to pluck them out of his hand that is Almighty, requires an adversary stronger than himself. And our Saviour there adds, "My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand," ver. 29. Hereupon Paul makes a free challenge to all the actors, and pleaders, and powers that ever damnation had: "Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth," (and if all this be not enough,) "nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus," Rom. viii. 38: none can do it. And whether they be Romish or Arminian, that seek to weaken the grace of God, and permit the redeemed ones of the Lord to perish: let us know them for the brokers of Satan, the seminaries of despair, and deniers of Christ.

But against this doctrine is opposed, "Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died?" Rom. xiv. 15. "Through thy knowledge shall thy weak brother perish, for whom Christ died," 1 Cor. viii. 11. But those places may be understood not *κατ' ἀλλήλους*: not that they can perish through thy default, but that thou dost what thou canst to make them perish. But here it seems most plain, that they may be lost in denying Christ, whom he bought. To clear this, we say that reprobates may be said to be redeemed in divers respects.

1. In regard of the all-sufficient price paid for them. So Christ is said to be that Lamb which taketh away the sins of the world. Though he meant not to save all, yet he died for all, performing his part, (Chrysost.) For he doth not really take away all sin from the world; and this himself declares by not praying for the world, "I pray not for the world," John xvii. 9. Otherwise the two main parts or offices of his priesthood were disjoined, and he should sacrifice for them for whom he doth not supplicate. Now for his mediation, it concludes his own in it, excludes the world out of it; "I pray not for the world."

2. They are said to be redeemed, in respect of outward appearance. So all the Jews were called the elect people of God; yet Paul saith expressly, that

"with many of them God was not well pleased," and they were destroyed, 1 Cor. x. 5. Now, if any of the elect perish, God is deceived; but God cannot be deceived. (August.) They were then of his court, they were not of his council; I mean, not of that number which in his eternal counsel he decreed to save. Inward sincerity is not without external profession, but external profession may be without inward sincerity. If the form of godliness could save, hell should be filled with none but pagans and infidels, not a Christian should come thither. But we know that a man may unhallow that blood wherewith he was hallowed, and so deserve sorer punishment, Heb. x. 29; and a wicked spirit rejected, may make his re-entry with seven other worse than himself, Matt. xii. 45; and their fire in hell shall be hottest, that re-admit a devil, which the grace of God had once cast forth. As the wicked here say of the elect, That his life is madness, and his end to be without honour, in regard of their estate so outwardly miserable; so the elect judge of the reprobate, We number him among the children of God, and think his lot to be among the saints, in regard of visible appearance; at last they find him cast like an unprofitable and hypocritical servant into outer darkness, Wisd. v.

3. They are said to be redeemed, in respect of their own opinion; they thought themselves to be redeemed, and did apportion Christ. There is a temporary faith, which for awhile believes, and in time of temptation falls away, Luke viii. 13; neither should it be said, "Be thou faithful unto the death," Rev. ii. 10, unless there was a faith that might fail before death. St. James says, there is a faith without charity; which indeed may be, but never be good, saith Augustine. This faith is like a high ladder; if men have got up many rounds, and then let go their hold, they take the greater fall. Some reprobates may taste the heavenly gift; and yet fall so far away, that no repentance can renew them, Heb. vi. 4-6. They tasted it, but it seems they took it but upon liking, and could not digest it. Some are so impudently bold of their salvation, and presume themselves so familiar with God, that they dare challenge him to talk extempore with him. They may think themselves God's darlings and favourites, that never had their names registered in his book.

4. They seem to be redeemed, in respect of the judgment of charity; which holds all men partakers of redemption, that are of the profession. We must cast off none, until we are sure that the Lord hath cast them off. Let us not abridge or limit God's mercy. How often have our sins deserved his wrathful doom, which yet our prayers and tears have reversed! How often hath the scroll of divorce been drawn and signed, and yet again withdrawn and cancelled upon our submission! Let us not grudge others that mercy we have found. Why is man cruel, where God relents? If the creditor be pleased to forgive the debt, do standers-by complain? Well then, we hoped that these men were redeemed; they were not; we desired it, we endeavoured it; our charity did them no good, it did ourselves good; our prayer returned into our own bosom, Psal. xxxv. 13.

This truth then remains, that Christ only bought his church, and salvation for his church. "Feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood," Acts xx. 28. "Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it," Eph. v. 25. His name is Jesus, yet he shall save only his own people, Matt. i. 21. For the rest, "they went out from us, but they were not of us," 1 John ii. 19; howsoever, the price was paid for them, and there was a sufficient ransom in the blood of Jesus, if their faithful appre-

hension had made it theirs. The king hath granted a pardon for all malefactors at the parliament; we say, they are all pardoned; yet perhaps some afterwards are condignly punished, because they never sued out this pardon, nor took the benefit of it. First, therefore, consider what God hath done for them, then what they have done against him: the height of his mercy adds to the weight of their iniquity.

God in his love redeemed us by the blood of his Son. Now there are four kinds of redemption: First, when a slave is freely released to liberty; we could not be so discharged; for, besides that God is just, and his debts must be paid, Satan would not so part with us. Secondly, when a man is set free by commutation or exchanging another into his room; we could exchange no creature to supply our servitude. Thirdly, when a man is rescued by a forcible surprisal; as Abraham redeemed Lot; but herein God was far too strong for us. Fourthly, by a price paid; and thus were we bought with a price, even the blood of that unspotted Lamb. His payment consisted in suffering for our delinquencies, and in performing a sufficient obedience to God for us.

Here admire we the infinite love of God. The Egyptians in their hieroglyphics, or expressions of morality by pictures, used to paint Love naked, Minerva veiled; to show that wisdom may be concealed, love cannot be smothered. The cherubims covered their faces, which is the seat of wisdom; but not their breasts, which is the seat of affection. David by his dissembled madness kept his wisdom unseen from Achish; but spying Bathsheba from the battlements of his palace, he could not smother his affection. God reserves his wisdom to himself, and the reason of his actions; but his love is visible, breaking forth, and read by every running eye. "Many waters cannot quench love," Cant. viii. 7. It is an unsuppressible fire; much water cannot quench it; water and blood could not put it out. Now whom did God thus love? The world: not the frame of heaven and earth, but the little world, man; the compendium and abridgement of all creatures: that whatsoever is imprinted with capital letters in that large volume, as in folio, is sweetly and harmoniously contracted in decimo-sexto, in the brief text of man, who includes all. Planets have being, not life; plants have life, not sense; beasts have sense, not reason; angels have being, life, reason, not sense: man hath all; being with planets, life with plants, sense with beasts, reason with angels. Therefore he is called the world. This world God loved, *affectively* before all time, *effectively* in time.

But what good could man do to him, to induce this love? None; our well-doing extendeth not unto him, Psal. xvi. 2. When we were made, we added nothing to God; if we were dissolved to nothing, we take nothing from God. That which the Lord saw in us, was apostacy and rebellion. Every creature obeys God, in running that course which he disposed to them. But how was this true, when the sun, being appointed to move his incessant race, did yet stand still in Gibeon? when the sea, being charged to keep within his bounds, doth yet burst out with inundations? I answer, God bade them do so, dispensing with his former command, and they obeyed him. Well, yet man, rebellious man, he loved: what did he give for him? Paradise, large kingdoms, or mines of gold? No, they are but a farthing token to the price of this purchase. He gave his only begotten Son: as he says, What could I do more for my vineyard? Isa. v. 4; so, what could I give more for my vineyard? This Son he gave for unthankful men, that offered not so much as a prayer for him; for unrighteous men, that denied Him that was not denied

to them. Here was a *sic dilexit*; no man could ever find a *sicut* for it. Augustine supposeth that some great prince had a poor desertless subject, maimed in mind, without reason or honesty; leprous in body, without any soundness; yea, so full of stench that none could endure him; yea, more than all, so arrant a traitor to the same prince, that he would vex him, kill him. He hath one only son, a sweet and hopeful prince, the joy of his heart, the light and delight of his eyes, the singular heir of his kingdom; yet when nothing will cure this forlorn wretch of his leprosy, but only this young prince's blood, he freely gives that to bathe and cleanse him. This is much, and such as never was found, yet still short of this precedent. For if the life of a prince was given for a gnat, it is not so much as for God's Son to be given for man. He is worth ten thousands of us, more worth than all: O unspeakable love, gift, price!

St. Peter tells us what was the price of this purchase, the precious blood of Christ, a Lamb without blemish, 1 Pet. i. 19. Had he emptied the veins of the earth, and spoiled them of their richest ores; had he plucked the spangles from heaven, and impoverished the firmament of her sparkling beauties; had he given the whole inheritance of the world; yet all had been infinitely less. When David said to Mephibosheth, "Thou and Ziba divide the land;" he answered, "Yea, let him take all, forasmuch as my lord the king is come again in peace," 2 Sam. xix. 29, 30. This was much, yet Mephibosheth's content was for David, a friend, a king; but God parts not with an inheritance, but with his Son; and this for man, an enemy, a servant. Let death seize on my Son, that my servant may come again in peace. Oh never was so poor a purchase at so high a price! That he might show love to us, he forbare love to himself. Now see, O renegade, whom thou refuseth: thou knowest not whom thou deniest, therefore thou deniest. If thou hast bought honour by thy valour, thou callest it thine; if endeared a friend by thy loyalty, thou callest him thine; if purchased a house with thy money, thou callest it thine: Christ hath bought thee with his blood, and yet thou deniest to be his. This ransom is paid, and now in a merciful offer he tenders it to thee; wilt thou in a peevish sullenness refuse it? Conceive this dialogue between the Redeemer and the denier. *Red.* Open to me. *Den.* No, I know not whence thou art. *Red.* Rise and see. *Den.* No, I am in my warm bed of pleasures and carnal satisfactions, I will not rise: who art thou? *Red.* I am Jesus, thy Redeemer: wilt thou still swear and forswear, I know none such? I bought thee, thou art mine: I come to embrace thee, deny me not. *Den.* Yes, take me, when all other delights forsake me; let me be thine when I am not mine own: till then keep thy cheer to thyself, I have married my pleasure, and I cannot come. Oh obstinate hearts, whom the King of heaven must buy with his blood, woo with his grace, wait upon with his patience, enrich with profusers of mercy, and yet at last be denied! Lord, turn to such as love thee; we deny not thee, deny not us, O good Lord Jesus. Amen.

This is the latitude and dimension of their wickedness: wherewith I will have done, when I have declared the penalty of it. Their punishment is proportioned to their fault: they denied him that bought them, and he that bought them will deny them: "If we deny him, he also will deny us," 2 Tim. ii. 12. How, where, and when will he deny them? They surfeit on pleasures, and enjoy the wish of their own hearts; how then doth he deny them? Doth not God bless whom he loves, and love whom he blesses? Ake, these blessings to such men prove curses; wealth is

granted, but mercy is withholden. The earth seems their own, the world applauds them; and is not the voice of the people the voice of God? No, for the whole world lieth in wickedness. But here they are honoured, where then shall they be denied? The echo answers, Here: even where Saul would be honoured, there was he denied, before the people. They spend their days in peace, their minds are not troubled, they sit not sighing and blubbering for their offences; sure God is not angry with them; when shall they be denied? Now; even in that they lament not, their case is most lamentable: their pulse hath left beating, this argues God's direktion; that their life-breath is panted out, and they have given up the (Holy) Ghost. Will you hear how, where, and when? Take it from Christ's own mouth: "Whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven," Matt. x. 33. For the manner how: *I will deny him*: not conceal him, nor excuse him, not hold my peace and silence it, but deny him. For the place where: *before my Father*, where my word will be taken; for I have the key of heaven, to let in and keep out whom I please. Before my Father, who hath committed all judgment to me, and set me to sentence every man according to his works. Before my Father: if it had been only before men where thou deniest me, they would approve my justice; if before the devils, they would be glad of thy company, and with a hasty rape hurry thee to perdition; if only before the angels, (which is also expressed, "He that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God," Luke xii. 9,) they would witness how often I have sent them to guard thee, how little thou didst regard me. But what is the detestation of men, the rejection of angels, the derision of devils, to the loss of my Father's love? This "before my Father" shall strike thee with horror. When the Father sent Christ, he said, "They will reverence my Son;" but they conspired, "This is the heir; come, let us kill him," Matt. xxi. 37, 38. Reject them, O Father, for they rejected me. Away must their faces be turned, from joy, from light, from blessedness; to wander in horrid darkness, to lie bound in chains of torment: where unquenchable fire and unsatiable death shall not be denied them, that denied everlasting life. For the time when: *in heaven*. When they knock with hope to be let in at that gate, when they shall see millions of confessors enter in and be made welcome; in heaven I will deny them, that is, in the day of judgment. On earth they spake their pleasures, their tongues were their own, they denied me without control; but when I have denied them in heaven, and they have acknowledged me in hell, then shall they gnaw those tongues for pain, Rev. xvi. 10, and wish that they had been born dumb, never to have denied him that bought them.

This is a fearful plague, when God will suffer men to fall off from Christ, and to reject their Redeemer; alas, they do no less than split and sink that ship in the midst of the sea, which alone should save them. Whom shall they trust to make them righteous? none can do this but Christ, and they have denied him. Who shall condemn? it is Christ that justifieth, Rom. viii. 33: so who shall justify, when Christ condemneth? They have sinned, and God is offended, who shall make an atonement for them? Only Christ can do this: if any man sin, he is our Advocate and propitiation, 1 John ii. 1, 2; and this Advocate they have denied. Whom shall they call upon for love and favour? there is none to be had but in Christ, and him they have denied. "I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love," Rev. ii. 4. He that hath once broken

his faith, will not easily be trusted. Him that hath once vowed love to a virgin, and after fallen off with breach of covenant, no wise maid will ever admit within distance of liking. They "wax wanton against Christ, having damnation, because they have cast off their first faith," 1 Tim. v. 11, 12. Whom shall they call upon in the day of trouble? the Lord. This was the voice of Elijah in his agony, of Jonah in his fury; "Lord, take away my life;" of the apostles in their fear; "Lord, save us; we perish," Matt. viii. 25: of the malefactor dying on the cross; "Lord, remember me in thy kingdom," Luke xxiii. 42: of Stephen under the stones; "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," Acts vii. 59: of Saul cast down from his horse; "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Acts ix. 6. This is the echo of misery, the suppliant for mercy; but alas, how shall they call on this Lord, that have denied him? "How shall they call on him in whom they have not believed," Rom. x. 14; yea, whom they have denied? What wonder is it, if God doth not hear, where he hath not been heard? if he shut against them, that would not open to him? Complainest thou, Why hast thou forsaken me, O Lord? he replies, Why hast thou denied me, O servant? There is grievous punishment for them that fear not God; Pour out thine indignation upon them that fear thee not, saith the prophet. Grievous, for them that seek him not; "The wicked will not seek after God," Psal. x. 4, therefore are lost in the devices of error. Grievous, for them that call not on him; for he will be a stranger to their acquaintance. Grievous, for them that trust not on him; for they shall be left to themselves. Grievous, for them that love him not; for they shall be written in the dust. But most grievous for them that deny him here, for they shall be denied for ever hereafter.

The use that we are to make of it, is by this consideration to fortify our faithfulness and loyalty to Christ. Let us not deny him, yea, let us deny all things for him. For, saith Hierome, if necessity require it, it is godliness to hate our own delights in respect of the Lord. What good thing can be lost by our profession, which Jesus requites not in himself? Lose we riches? In him dwells all fulness. Liberty? The Son makes us free indeed. Wife? he is a Husband. Children? he is a Father. Life? he is the true life. Therefore is he called All in all; that he which hath left all for Christ, may find Christ instead of all, and sing cheerfully, The Lord is my portion. (Hieron.) Why should we deny him? he never denied us. Not to the Pharisees: "Why catch your Master with publicans and sinners?" this was their question. "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance," Matt. ix. 11, 13: this was his answer. Not to Pilate: "Before Pontius Pilate he witnessed a good confession," 1 Tim. vi. 13. Not to the angels; for he makes them ministering spirits for our good. Not to God the Father himself; They are all mine, and thine, John xvii. When he was betrayed and taken, he denied us not to Judas; "I am he." When he was scourged, he denied us not: when he was condemned, and nailed to the cross, lo, he did not then deny us. Though enemies denied him mercy, by-standers denied him pity, angels must deny him help, God himself seemed to deny him ease and comfort; so he cries, My God, why hast thou denied me? yet even then he did not deny us. But he confessed us to the death, "Father, forgive them," Luke xxiii. 34; and after death, as appears by his charge to Peter, "Feed my sheep," John xxi. 16; and for ever, "Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess before my Father in heaven," Matt. x. 32. Away then with all excuses of denial: there are two temptations or causes of it;

infirmity, and infidelity. Infirmity ariseth from fear of pain, infidelity from love of pleasure. Is any pain like the separation from Christ? think of that, "Depart from me, ye cursed," Matt. xxv. 41. Is any pleasure like the pleasures at the right hand of God for ever? Away with that coldness of heart, that like northern cloth shrinks in the wetting, I mean, in the floods of persecution. Away with that thindawned profession, that like mown grass withers in the sun, with the heat of prosperity. Let us deny our own worth, and become nothing in ourselves, that we may be wholly all in Christ. The poor man depends not upon the relief of others till he find nothing at home. Until our hearts be purged of pride and self-love we never depend on the favour of God. Be every thing denied that is not *in ordine ad Deum*, and hath no relation to Jesus Christ. Let us deny our pleasures, deny our lusts, deny our wills, deny our covetous desires, deny our seducing friends, deny ourselves; but let us never deny the Lord that bought us. To this blessed Lord of our redemption, with the Father of our creation, and the Spirit of our adoption, three Persons and one most holy God, be praise and glory for ever. Amen.

They "bring upon themselves swift destruction." We have anatomized the fault of these false teachers, in denying their Redeemer. Which haply was not with an open and manifest recusancy, for then orthodox Christians would have refused conversing with them, and the church excommunicated them; but rather, because such a denial did arise by just consequence out of their dogmatical, stigmatical assertions. For if we understand St. Peter by St. Jude, the very parallel and harmony one of the other, we find these heretics challenged for turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, Jude 4. Whereupon is inferred, that they deny the only Lord God, and Jesus Christ. So that to turn grace into wantonness, is to deny Christ. Neither was this only exemplary in their practice, but also doctrinal in their profession. For he that calls himself Christian, and teacheth that in Christ is granted liberty of sinning, denies the Redeemer. We are delivered out of the hands of all our enemies, that we might serve him without fear, Luke i. 74. That we might serve him without fear, not sin without fear. Christ came to unbind us from Satan, and to vex him at our new goodness, not to make him laugh at our wickedness; that we should sin less, not sin more, and more securely. "Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid," Rom. vi. 1, 2. Shall there be presumption in sin because there is abundance of grace? God forbid. This a true position: Whatsoever the Lord Jesus worketh for us, that he also worketh in us. If he hath freed us from the damnation of sin, then also from the dominion of sin. If with his blood he hath quenched the fire of hell for us, he hath quenched the fire of lust in us. They are miserable men, that are wanton in Christ: as if the law had lost itself in the gospel; and the statutes against blasphemy, adultery, idolatry, covetousness, were now repealed, to stand in no more force, but, like an almanac out of date, to be sacrificed to forgetfulness. This is a left-handed taking of Christ: Christ's humility doth not comfort the proud; his patience shall do no good to the revengeful, nor his love to the uncharitable. He was a prodigal young heir that encouraged his companions, Come, let us drink, revel, throw the house out at the windows; the man in the scarlet will pay for all; meaning his father, who was a judge: but he adjudged the patrimony from him to one of his younger sons more obedient. So say the luxurious, Let us swear, oppress, abuse, be wanton, be merry, be mad; the man in the

scarlet hath paid for all; meaning Christ, that he in his scarlet and bloody robes shall justify and acquit them. But be not deceived; as good men as we, and as jolly they were, that stood upon the fatherhood of Abraham. (We may put away our wives, we may swear, we may hate our enemies; we may kill the prophets, subject God's word to our traditions, and follow our own ways. Why? "Abraham is our Father," John viii. 39.) But by their leave, Christ calls them bastards, and finds out another father for them. "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do," ver. 44. So, ye profane wretches, bear yourselves as long as you will upon Christ, and flesh your lusts on his merits; if you think to take wilful sin in one hand, and Christ in the other, you shall find both your hands full indeed, but Christ in neither of them; the one being full of wickedness, the other full of vengeance: you have denied the Lord Jesus.

They "bring upon themselves swift destruction." This is the punishment. There are plagues enough, that wound the flesh, and fetch blood of the soul, without perishing; but this is the utter ruin, *destruction*. But yet this may be far off, and haply doth wait the succession of ages, and intervention of many years; and when it cometh, it shall give warning of the approach, like a porpoise before a storm: nay, it comes on a sudden, it is *swift* destruction. But who shall inflict this, that they may fortify themselves against it? *Themselves*: here need no engines, no enemies, no invasions; themselves bring it, or, they bring it on themselves. So that their punishment is described, by the author, measure, and manner. The author, themselves; the measure, no less than destruction; the manner, swift and sudden.

They "bring upon themselves." Very kind men! what would they do with others, that destroy themselves? He that is evil to himself, to whom will he be good? Every man thinks that he loves himself far better than his enemy; yet while he affecteth sin, he loves his enemy better than himself. All men would be happy, albeit most men take the course of infelicity. (August.) We hate our foes: thou hast no worse foe than thyself: hate thy sinful self. If there were no harlot, no drunken associate, no thief to cry, Cast in thy lot with us, no devil to do his office, wicked men would beget destruction on themselves. They send for destruction, so some read; as a man despatcheth messenger after messenger, because the expected party delays his coming. So, as if damnation were leaden-heeled, they send anger to fetch it to them, after that malice, after that murder, a bloody messenger. So worldlings send covetousness for it, after that lying, after that swearing, after that usury, after all oppression. Lest vengeance should be too slow, and forget itself, these be the messengers to bring it. "By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out, and blood toucheth blood. Therefore shall the land mourn, and every inhabitant languish," Hos. iv. 2. Now when the plague comes, and says, Here I am; they cry as the devil did to Christ, What have we to do with thee? why comest thou to torment us before our time? Before your time? replies destruction. Why, did you not send for me? Was not pride rapping at my door, blasphemy thundering in mine ears, sacrilege pulling me by the hand; all crying, Vengeance, come away, thou art sent for? And especially, when sacrilege hastened me, it was high time to come. As Ahaziah's three captains and their fifties that were sent to fetch Elijah: one said, "Come down;" another, "Come down quickly;" the last on his knees entreat: lo then God saith, "Go down with him." 2 Kings i.

9—15. Wickedness says, Wrath, come down: presumption says, Come down quickly; but rebellion begs it without nay; and then God saith, Go down with it. Yea, as if sending for it were not speedy enough, and they would not in this business trust a messenger, they put off all state, and go themselves to fetch it: they bring it on themselves. They "draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart-ropes," Isa. v. 18. That same threefold cord, not easily broken, that St. John speaks of, "The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life," 1 John ii. 16; this draws it home. But lest all these cords shall not hold, hard-heartedness is the cart-ropes that shall fetch it with a mischief. Why then doth a man complain for the punishment of his sins? Lam. iii. 39. Punishment reasons with the wicked; Why dost thou murmur in thy sufferings? Hast thou been so many years a bringing me, sent so many messengers for me, and now I am here complainest thou? I was long a coming, I will be longer a departing. No man becomes miserable on the sudden; such is God's patience: but being once made miserable, it is long before happiness returns; such is God's justice. Misery comes on horse-back, but goes away on foot: sin quickly brings her, long repentance must drive her gone. From this point of doctrine may be deduced three collections.

1. That the wicked are the causers of their own condemnation. "Which of my creditors is it to whom I have sold you? Behold, for your iniquities have ye sold yourselves," Isa. i. 1. I took no money, saith God, no price of any creditors, for you; ye have sold yourselves. "His own iniquity shall take the wicked himself," Prov. v. 22; there need no gins, nor snares, nor plots to surprise him; his own sins shall do it. Thou mayst say of thy sin, (as of thy son,) It is a child of thine own begetting: concupiscence, the mother, lays it to thee, and thou must father it. "They shall make their own tongue to fall upon themselves," Psal. lxiv. 8. Let there be no plaintiffs to indict, no devils to accuse, their own tongues shall condemn them. "Hast thou not procured this unto thyself?" Jer. ii. 17. Self do, self have. Procuring is a diligent labouring of a business: so they study to bring evil on themselves. They meditate mischief, Micah ii. 1; study to be naughty. Let our providence be never so vigilant, our circumspection heedful, sorrow will come: but these men study for it; they beat their brains, and break their sleeps, plot, consult, contrive; and all to bring on themselves swift destruction. It is true, that this is not their immediate proposed end, but it is a necessary consequent. He that to dig for some hidden treasure undermines the foundation of a house, his end is wealth; yet he knows the whole building will fall on his head, and quash him to pieces: if he do perish, let him thank himself.

2. Observe that God is not the cause of man's transgression or damnation. "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God," Jam. i. 13. Seneca hath a saying not unlike of the gods: *Di nec habent, nec dant malum*. But it is objected, It is God's will that I should thus sin, and thus fall; "Why doth he yet find fault? who hath resisted his will?" Rom. ix. 19. My will is borne by the stream of his inevitable will, I sin by compulsion; why doth he then complain? O detestable speech, that charges God with our iniquity; than which the grand devil could not roar a worse above-ground. Consider their dilemma: evil is done, and God doth suffer it; whether then doth he suffer it against his will, or with it? If against his will, this takes away his omnipotence: if with his will, then he willed it. For an-

swer, the will of God is partly secret, wholly just: it is two ways considered. First as it is written in tables, published by a trumpet, seconded with blessings, curses. Then as concealed, written in another book, wrapped up in the counsels of his own breast. What God formerly wills, is not done always, yea, is done seldom: what in the other respect he wills, is infallible. Sennacherib is a fool to challenge to himself, What god can deliver out of my hand? Nero, to plead, My authority gives me licence to do all things: Rome, to challenge to her chair an impetuous, imperious, and masterless will; to whom no man must say, as to the Lord, Why dost thou so? Thus they ground it: "Shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it?" Isa. x. 15. The saw must not lift up itself against him that moveth it; ergo let no man judge the pope. But they shall find to their woe, that this is only true of God, who doth whatsoever he will. If we press further into his secrets, we are bid stand back. Adam was driven out of Paradise for affecting too much knowledge: the Israelites had died the death, had they passed their bounds, and climbed up to the mount. Fifty thousand threescore and ten men of the Bethshemites were slain for looking into the ark, 1 Sam. vi. 19. There are some unsearchable mysteries, as high as the highest heavens, covered with a curtain of sacred secrecy, not to be drawn till the day come wherein we shall know as we are known. Now when men have spilt blood, defiled the marriage-bed, provoked heaven with rapes, treasons, depopulations, blasphemies; what, have they then done the will of God? Indeed, in respect of his hidden purpose they have done his will, spite of all their malicious and sworn contradictions. For upon them that will not do as he would have it, he will do himself as he would have it. But in respect of themselves the wicked have done what God willed not; for he commanded the contrary, and hath expressed that will in his word.

But yet he wills their destruction, therefore they bring it not on themselves. God found them revolted to sin, indisposed to believe, and so he leaves them: he will not give them faith; he needs not, he is not bound to it. This is God's hardening, when he will not soften. His making blind is when he will not enlighten. His casting off is when he will not call home. Neither is this only a mere permission; for there is a degree of some forward disposition in God concerning the actions of unrighteous men, than a bare toleration. There is great difference between these speeches, and between, he hath not a will to do it, and, he hath a will not to do it. The former argues a careless neglect, this a bent and resolved decree. A poor man asketh alms; some are not willing to relieve him, as not weighing his necessity; another hath a will not to do it, a determinate refusal of mercy. This is then the conclusion; *Multi ne laborerent detenti, nulli ut laborerent impulsu*: God lifteth many up, there are none whom he properly casteth down. By him we stand, we fall off ourselves. "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself;" if there be any help, it is in me, Hos. xiii. 9. Indeed it is my hand of justice that strikes, but thou by thy wickedness didst draw out the sword, and put the arrow into my bended bow: thy pestilent and stinking sins have conflated the plague wherewith I strike thee. God would have spared them, they would not be spared; they bring destruction on themselves; and still thou continuest holy, O thou Worship of Israel.

3. Observe that themselves bring it; therefore not any fatal necessity out of themselves, but their own malice within them. There be some that say,

It is my destiny to do this or that sin, the stars have signed it. Mercury committed the theft, Mars the murder, Venus the adultery. This is a barking at God's justice indirectly, involvally, and somewhat afar off, to charge the influences of heaven. As if, forsooth, God did not instigate them to sin immediately by himself, yet by other instruments. Thus Adam insinuated an imputation upon God; The woman which thou gavest me; as if God had given him a woman to tempt him. This is the fearfullest ruin of all, to accuse the Lord for the cause of our ruin. There is no fatal necessity from above, that drives man to sin. St. Augustine confutes them that used to charge the stars with their impiety. A woman was given to lust, and often played the harlot: which when her husband found, and objected to her, she excused herself, and pleaded that it was Venus which caused her to do so. Hereupon he took a staff, and edged her for it. Then she complained of his unreasonableness, to strike his own flesh; that she was his wife, dear unto him, and he ought not to beat her. He replied, It is not you, wife, that I strike, but Venus: declaring, that as it was not she that played the harlot, but Venus in her; so it was not she that he did beat, but Venus out of her. A thief hath stolen my goods; thou takest him in the manner; he cries, Let me alone, and charge Mercury with it, he stole the goods. No wise judge would indite or arraign Mercury, call a star from heaven; but cut off an ill member from the earth. Thus neither can the wicked charge the stars or any other creatures with their destruction. True it is that God useth their instrumental means often in executions. "They fought from heaven; the stars in their courses fought against Sisera," Judg. v. 20. In the days of Noah the windows of heaven were opened so wide, that they drowned the world. Fire came down from heaven, and consumed those that came to apprehend the prophet, 2 Kings i. 10. But there could be no destruction about us, if there were no corruption within us. Who or what shall harm you, if ye follow that which is good? 1 Pet. iii. 13. Nothing. It is our wickedness that makes the earth barren, the air infectious, the influences of heaven unkindly. If Pharaoh's heart had not been hard, all those plagues had fallen beside him. Let us go into ourselves; the head aches, the members are sick, but the stomach is in fault. Neither man nor devil could destroy us, if we did not destroy ourselves. God makes a wicked man *Henotentimoremnon*, a self-troubler: it is a sore punishment when men are forced to punish themselves. The whip that must scourge the wicked is of their own making, every cord whereof they have curiously twisted. The potion of bitterness which they must drink off, hath all the ingredients of their own putting in. Indeed, saith the Psalm, the Lord hath mixed it: he may compound it, but of their materials; he need not put in a dram more, for they afford themselves destruction enough. "As he clothed himself with cursing like as with his garment, so let it come into his bowels like water, and like oil into his bones," Psal. cix. 18. He made cursing his clothing; it is fit he should wear his own garment. Indeed hell was not made for nothing, and Tophet was prepared for them; but they should never feel it, till they had prepared themselves for Tophet. God in his justice would not bring them to destruction, unless they first by their wickedness did bring destruction to themselves. We see the punishment of denying Christ: O let us never be such enemies to ourselves, that have so good a friend as Jesus Christ.

"Destruction." - This is the measure of their punishment. Oh yet if the justice of God would but

chide them, not beat them; or if it did beat them, yet with rods, not with scourges; or if it did scourge them, yet with whips, not with scorpions; or if with scorpions, yet not with burning flames; or if with burning flames, yet not with unquenchable flames: oh yet if any thing might serve but utter and endless ruin; destruction! This is an indefinite word, of full latitude, that knows neither measure nor cessation; but comprehends all plagues, external on body, internal on soul, eternal on both; a punishment of extremity, of universality; destruction.

God concealeth the manner, but denounceth the measure. Destruction is either temporal in this world, or eternal in the world to come. If we first consider it temporally, we shall find it heavy enough; *incerti generis, sed certissimi ponderis*. Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be destroyed, Jonah iii. 4. He lets them know of a destruction, but he tells them not how: the quantity is plain, the quality is hidden. Nineveh might have been plagued many ways, and yet stood upon her foundation still: with want of rain, as Samaria in the days of Ahab; with want of bread, that women did eat their own children, as in the days of Jehoram: with pestilence, as in the days of David; with the siege of enemies, as was Bethulia; with the tyranny and exaction of her own kings, as once was Rome. But these are all too light in God's balance, and nothing will satisfy his justice but her final subversion. So is it denounced against the wicked, "Destruction unto them! because they have transgressed against me," Hos. vii. 13. "Pride goeth before destruction," Prov. xvi. 18. Thus they understand the general, not the special: this holds them in suspense, and adds to their fear, when they know not what they should study to prevent. God hath always enough to do it; *nulle nocendi artes*. He speaks of four grievous plagues, "the sword, the famine, the noisome beast, and the pestilence," Ezek. xiv. 21. If he should particularly threaten the famine, how would they hoard up corn, like Joseph; fill their barns, their granaries, penuraries, and store-houses! If the beasts, how would they be provided of engines to kill them! If the pestilence, how would they shift ground, and run from their country, as vermin from a house on fire! If the enemies' sword, what mustering of men, scouring of armour, preparing of munition, levying of forces, exercise of arms, would there be! Cities would be victualled, ramparts repaired, holds fortified; art and labour would study the best prevention, at least so far as their wisdom reached. Though indeed the best is flying to God by penitent supplication. Thus will I do unto thee: and because I will do thus, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel, Amos iv. 12. Divers plagues are threatened in that chapter; from which the prophet proves there is no evasion, but by repentance. Yet are men so averse from goodness, that as a guilty person before the magistrate, seeks not to amend his fault, but to know his accuser, and to be quit with him. Which of these shall be it, God knows: the least will serve; what havoc will the greatest make!

"Destruction." There is nothing to be bated of total ruin. "If grape-gatherers come, would they not leave some gleanings grapes? if thieves by night, they will destroy till they have enough," Jer. xlix. 9. This justice will leave none, but the wicked shall be preyed upon by insatiate judgment, till nothing be left. "His lord commanded him to be sold," &c, Matt. xviii. 25. That servant owed ten thousand talents; what had he received? But to pay this debt he had not wherewithal. No works, no prayers, nothing. "Then his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had,

and payment to be made." He might have been sold himself; but his wife? Or, himself and his wife; but his poor children? Or, if himself, wife, and children, yet also all that he had? Nothing to be left him, not so much as bread to sustain him, nor apparel to hide his nakedness? No, all must be sold, that all may be paid: here is utter destruction. God's judgment, like a canker on a tree, first eats up the leaves; but leaves not there; at last consumes the tree and all.

Let this teach us how to think of our sins, and their violent precipitating us to destruction. Unless we value the wealth of our country, the health of our friends, the peace of our consciences, the life of our bodies and souls, at so low a rate, as Honorius, lying quietly at Ravenna, prized Rome. When he heard that Rome was taken, he looked pale, fearing it had been his lien, called Roma; but understanding it to be no worse than the city's loss, he laughed at the news. So, except we esteem our own lusts and vanities more than the welfare of the whole land, and think the loss of all no more than if a fly were taken in the web of a spider, let us confess and redress our sins. Do we marvel in this rebellions age, why the barren turf yields pale and hungry grass, if the hail spoil the vine, whirlwinds the olive, if pestilent breaths corrupt the air; let us look to our sins, and cease marvelling. Not that there is destruction, but that there is not destruction, is the wonder. No marvel if miseries come, the marvel is that they stay so long. Let it not be so with us, as Josephus thought of Jerusalem; that if the Romans had not invaded them, the very earth would have swallowed them. Let us fall to our seasonable deprecation, that the Lord destroy us not. "Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings. Behold, we come unto thee; for thou art the Lord our God," Jer. iii. 22. Be our sins less, and our prayers more, that we may find mercy.

We have yet but lightly weighed the unsupportable load of their punishment, and confined it to the circle of this present world. Now this wound will be deep enough, especially when an Almighty hand shall give it. "I will overturn, overturn, overturn it; and it shall be no more," Ezek. xxi. 27. If the first subversion serve not, the second shall effect it; if they both leave any thing undone, the third shall accomplish it. Overturn his diadem, (for there it is spoken of the evil prince's crown,) yet he remains a man: overturn his life, yet there is hope of another: nay, but overturn his soul, here is destruction in her extremest spoil. So, "Let the sword be doubled the third time," ver. 14; if the two first should leave any life behind them. What the palmer-worm leaves, let the locust eat; what the locust leaves, let the canker-worm eat; what the canker-worm leaves, let the caterpillar devour, Joel i. 4. If the sword have left aught, the plague shall consume it; if the glutted plague leave any scraps, the famine shall eat them up. So, what the hail had left, that the locusts devoured, Exod. x. 15. Punishment shall grow like a gangrene, and never rest rankling till all be festered. "Why should ye be stricken any more?" Isa. i. 5. He smites hard, when there shall be no need of a second blow. "He will make an utter end: affliction shall not rise up the second time," Nah. i. 9. Here destruction is like Sodom fire, that left nothing behind it: they were stricken but once, that once was enough. As Abishai said to David concerning Saul in the trench, "Let me smite him with the spear even to the earth at once, and I will not smite him the second time," 1 Sam. xvi. 8. Let this destruction take away

their friends, yet they can live of themselves; let it take away their riches, they can begin the world again, and set up their trade afresh, though they were broken; let it take away their liberty, they can beg through a grate; let it take away their life, they are then destroyed. This is part of their portion, one bitter ingredient of their cup: "In the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red; it is full of mixture; and he poureth out of the same; but the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the earth shall wring them out, and drink them," Psal. lxxv. 8. It is a cup: well, there is a cup that David thirsts for, "I will take the cup of salvation," Psal. cxvi. 13. There is wine in it: better; for wine cheers the heart, and puts alacrity into the spirits. That wine is red: better still; so it should be, this argues the lustre and goodness of it: "Look not upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup," Prov. xxiii. 31: the colour adds to the pleasure. But now it is full of mixture: alas, this mixture spoils all. It is compounded, brewed, made unwholesome: this changeth the condition of the cup, of the wine, of the colour, of all. It is mixed with the wrath of God, malice of Satan, the anguish of soul, the gall of sin, the tears of despair: it is red, that is, of a sanguine colour, the wine of blood. But yet so long as it is in the cup they need not meddle with it: nay, but the Lord will pour it out; he shall hold their mouths to it, and make them drink it: the rankest poison in the world, the gall of dragons, and venom of asps, is pleasant and healthful to it. Yet be it but a little of the top, let them but taste it: nay, they must drink it off; to the very bottom, the sediments, dregs, lees, and all; even the very filth of vengeance. And lest any drops should be left behind, they shall wring them out, and suck them down to their confusion. The cup is all bitter, and full of sorrow, saith Augustine: the godly do often taste the top, and feel the bitterness, but then it is suddenly snatched from them; but the ungodly shall drink the very grounds, and extremest poison. "Though hand join in hand, he shall not be unpunished," Prov. xvi. 5. Though head be laid to head for counsel, and hand knit in hand for strength, yet shall there be no prevailing against it. Though Athiophel side with Absalom, Herod conspire with Pilate, Dathan confederate with Korah; though the drunkard join hands with the blasphemers, the blasphemers with the adulterers, the adulterers with the idolaters, the idolaters with the persecutors, the persecutors with the traitors, the traitors with the Jesuit, the Jesuit with the devil; yet they shall not escape unpunished. Destruction shall stick as faithfully to them, as the skin to their flesh. Our sins deserve destruction, our repentance is no satisfaction; it is only God's mercy in Christ that gives absolution.

Yet is all this but a temporal or corporal subversion; there is more behind, even eternal perishing. This is the sore extent, which reacheth to hell itself. Therefore we find these two, hell and destruction, most commonly united; "Hell and destruction are never full," Prov. xxvii. 20. Their "end is destruction," Phil. iii. 19, that is miserable; their destruction without end, that is more miserable. If man only smarted with the dislodging of his soul, alas, he might by Jesus find a better bed: death being to the faithful but a busy dream; when they awake, they shall behold the face of God in righteousness, and be satisfied with his likeness, Psal. cxvii. 15. Like the Red Sea, it puts them over to the land of promise. There is a "lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever," Rev. xx. 10. This is the place of residence for these false

prophets; this is destruction in her full pay, weight, and measure.

They "bring upon themselves swift destruction," Swift. You see the authors of their punishment, themselves; the measure, which is beyond all measure, destruction: two full aggravations of their unhappiness. Themselves: oh yet, that they might complain of others, and acquit themselves! Needs must those sins be sown like hemp-seed with curses, which must make halters for themselves. They might say to an enemy, or to their old companion in errors,

*Licet perituris viribus ignis,
Igne perire tuo;*

and this might seem *eladem autore levare*. But themselves bring it: not that they lay violent hands upon their own flesh or spirit, but by consequent; as no man properly and immediately calls the drowsy to him, yet by insatiate drinking of unwholesome liquors he procures it: "For the end of those things is death," Rom. vi. 21. Destruction is tied to the end of sin, as Samson tied fire to the foxes' tails: or, as a great weight of lead is bound to a small cord; it seems nothing to pull the cord, but the lead comes withal, and quasheth the puller to pieces. This is the vexation, when they feel extreme torments, they shall curse themselves for the cause. True it is, they shall blaspheme God desperately, Rev. xvi. 11, curse the devil maliciously, and execrate other company: expressed by gnashing their teeth, the effect of an impatient fury; but at last they shall be convinced, and have this acknowledgment extorted from them, We have destroyed ourselves. Besides, the measure of this self-procured woe is destruction: all the dregs of the vial, all the plagues in the storehouse of Almighty justice, so far as man's passive nature is capable: infinite in extension, what falls short in breadth to be supplied in length; infinite in everlasting passion. Now the last ingredient to this bitter potion remains; to the author and measure, the manner, swift. When it shall come, it makes no sparing; before it do come, it gives no warning. Nothing is more sure to despatch them, nothing more quick to attach them: it is swift destruction.

Sudden destruction seizeth on the wicked. There are judgments that creep on a man by degrees, every pull of pain being a warning of dissolution. These are easier, 1. Because preparation is tendered, and so the mind begins to be fortified against them. The first seen cockatrice is less noxious. Either we may hide ourselves; "A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself," Prov. xxii. 3. Where? The Lord is a refuge in the time of trouble, Psal. ix. 9. Under the wings of mercy, he hideth himself in the Lord, from the Lord. Or, by a well-furnished and resolute opposition; putting it to a courageous venture for the victory. Or, by a well-tempered patience to sustain; as wool meets iron, and turns the stern violence to soft embraces. 2. Because the mind is the better inured to bear or encounter those evils, to which it hath been exercised; as with wooden weapons men learn to fight at the sharp. "It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth," Lam. iii. 27. In the fable, when the new and old cart went together, the new made a creaking noise under the load, and wondered at the silence of the old; which answered, I am accustomed to these burdens, therefore bear them and am quiet. This is the benefit of sustaining crosses in youth, such a one knows how to bear them still. Thus death becomes welcome to us, because we are acquainted with his messengers. For when life, which is held a friend, becomes an enemy, then death, which is an enemy,

becomes a friend. It was promised to one Israelite, that he should beat ten enemies; now he that conquered the odds, will not cowardly shrink at the equality. 3. Because the sense is weakened by much suffering. Usual beating makes the child less to fear the rod. The faithful are so well acquainted with God's gentle chastisements, that they know it is the same hand that strikes still; perhaps now in death a little smarter at once, that it may never strike them more. Thus a consumption doth so by degrees spend up the choleric humours, exhaust the spirits, and weaken the sense, that the tyranny of death is lost in the want of our feeling. Some of the martyrs that were tumbled down from exceeding high rocks, left the bitterness of the pangs of death in the midway of their journey, and their souls went up to heaven before their bodies came down to earth. 4. Lastly, threatened punishment hath lost the nature of suddenness, though not in the passion, yet in the person; it may despatch with speed, but the patient before expected it. So when God menaceth, and formally gives notice, he means not to destroy. Jonah comes to Nineveh, and peremptorily threatens destruction, with the determinate limits of forty days; but God gave a feeling of it in the heart, that there might not be a feeling of it in the flesh. *Non est eversa, sed conversa*; the sin of the city was overthrown, the city stood. All menaces are not categorical, some are hypothetical; neither doth this argue in God levity, but mercy. God sometimes altereth his sentence, but he never altereth his purpose. If men's apprehensive hearts repent, there is a retraction of the judgment. If God give not his preventing sorrow, the punishment shall be new enough to the sufferer, how old soever it be in respect of the decreer. "The consumption decreed shall overflow with righteousness," Isa. x. 22.

But this is swift perdition. A man thinks lingering evils swift enough, though they come the tortoise pace, yea, sliding on. Though the fabric of his body be as long a plucking down as the temple of Jerusalem was a building up, six and thirty years; yet still they say to sickness, as the devils said to Christ, Why comest thou to torment us before our time? Matt. xviii. 29. Yea, could it give us as long warning as Noah gave the old world, a hundred and twenty years; yet, Lord, thou art too hasty: they find fault with the precipitation. Let the siege to thy life be as the Grecians' to Troy, of ten years' continuance; yet still thou sayest, It comes on a sudden, I did not look for it so soon. But we know whose mouth hath spoken it. Men of bloods and deceit shall not live out half their days, Psal. lv. 23; not half those which in the course of nature, and opinion of the world, they might have run. Herod was taken away quickly, in the midst of his popular applause; and the angel of God immediately smote him, Acts xii. 23. "God shall shoot at them with an arrow; suddenly shall they be wounded," Psal. lxi. 7; as a man sees not the thunderbolt till it strike him dead. "How are they brought into desolation, as in a moment! they are utterly consumed with terrors," Psal. lxxiii. 19; in a moment; there is neither before nor after. "As a dream when one awaketh," &c. ver. 20. All their prosperity is but a dream: they laugh in their sleep, but they awake howling. Yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: thou shalt diligently seek for his place, and it shall not be found, Psal. xxxvii. 10. Destruction shall leave neither the man nor his place. The wicked spreads himself like a green bay-tree; yet he passed away, and, lo, he was not: I sought him, but he could not be found, ver. 35, 36. Thou sawest him to-day aspiring like the cedars; seek for him to-morrow, and thou returnest with a *non inventus*. "The house

of the wicked shall be overthrown," Prov. xiv. 11. How? What seest thou? A flying roll, Zech. v. 2. What shall it do? It shall enter into the house of the wicked, and shall remain in the midst of his house, and shall consume it with the timber and stones of it, ver. 4. It is a flying roll, a winged curse, not seen till it be felt. It shall destroy, not with a lingering consumption, to "dwell in his tabernacle," and do it by a long succession of plagues; but, in allusion to Sodom, "brimstone shall be scattered upon his habitation," Job xviii. 15. By the civil law, every man's house is his castle; no man may be dragged out of his own door by the civil power: yet in such as we call crown cases, treasons and contumacies, great houses have been thundered down over the owners' heads; and like the house of Baal, 2 Kings x. 27, and of such idolaters, Dan. iii. 29, they may be converted into filthy draughts, dunghills, and receptacles of excrements. When God saw his own temple made a den of thieves, he destroyed it; therefore how much less will he spare private houses, when they are made shops of mischief and monuments of iniquity! "The stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it," Hab. ii. 11. The stones at every joint shall weep like marble, and the timber at every pin shall bleed like the vine; both joining in a mournful anthem; one beginning, the other answering, "Woe to him that buildeth with blood!" ver. 12. Yet if the man himself might escape, more houses might be had for money: nay, saith Bildad, "He shall be chased out of the world," Job xviii. 18. But though his body be accused like the barren fig-tree, "Never fruit grow on thee more;" yet he might have his estate continued to his posterity. No, "He shall neither have son nor nephew among his people, nor any remaining in his dwellings," ver. 19. His house shall be destroyed; and this, in Scripture, contains the whole family: I and my house will serve the Lord, Josh. xxiv. 15. The materials and formals shall be destroyed. But though body, house, and posterity be lost; yet still he may say as Absalom said, and do as Absalom did; he "reared up for himself a pillar," for he said, I have no son to keep my name in remembrance; and he called the pillar after his own name, Absalom's place," 2 Sam. xviii. 18. So, "Their inward thought is, that their houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling-places to all generations; they call their hands after their own names," Psal. xlix. 11. Let me build a house, and rear a monument after mine own name. No, down with it to the ground: "His remembrance shall perish from the earth, and he shall have no name in the street," Job xviii. 17. As Valerius speaks of those Romans, who besides their own deaths, *penatium quoque strage puniuntur*. This is a fearful destruction, to be so rooted out as Ravillae, that their very name becomes a stench. But that all this should be done suddenly, *uno actu, uno ictu*; vengeance itself, men think, can do no more.

He shall be destroyed: might it not be said, much ruined? As a house hath the windows broken, yet it stands: the covering is stripped off, yet it stands: the walls are beaten down, yet it stands: take away the foundation, then you may say, Here was a house. "If he destroy him from his place, then it shall deny him, saying, I have not seen thee," Job viii. 18. May it not be said of man, as of a clock; which growing foul, the maker resumes, takes it in pieces, lays it wheel by wheel, and pin by pin; scours it, puts it together in frame again, and sets it going? No, alas, the wicked is destroyed, put out of time for ever, and that as swiftly as if a clock were dashed against the stones. Oh that it had any other men-

sure but perdition, any other manner but celerity! "There is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease. Though the root thereof was old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground: yet through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant. But man dieth, and wasteth away, and where is he?" Job xiv. 7—10. He that should read the chronicle of some great man's life, find him endowed with singular gifts of nature, beautified with rare qualities of art, befriended with the successes of fortune; whom his prince had highly honoured, the people admired, flatterers adored; where nothing wanted to the concurrence of happiness: and thus pursuing the story, measuring the hopes of future glory by the experience of present prosperity, should now turn over the leaf to read, and find a blank, no more to be read, an abrupt suspension; he would either think the writer had mistook, or that some leaves were torn out of the book. No; there was a high finger that blotted it out, and broke off the history with an unexpected catastrophe. For Haman, the second man in the court, to forfeit all his glories at the gallows! as if destruction had the charge that Christ gave to Judas, "That thou doest, do quickly," John xiii. 27.

The dejection of Job was sudden, but it was not destruction: "While he was yet speaking, there came also another," &c. Job i. 16; as if he might not be allowed rest to consider of the former wretchedness. The fall of Jehoram was destruction, but it was not sudden: "In process of time, after the end of two years, his bowels fell out by reason of his sickness," 2 Chron. xxi. 19; day by day, for two years together. But here it is both destruction, and swift destruction; as to Nabal, the Lord smote him, and he died, 1 Sam. xxv. 38. It is sudden, both because it prevents the expectation of nature, and because the blow is like to that which David with his sling gave to Goliath, that sunk him down for ever. Such, according to our apostle's prophecy, hath been the destruction of the church's enemies: Pharaoh by the sea, Korah by the earth, the haters of those three faithful servants by the fire, Simon Magus in the air; all destructions, by all the elements, and all sudden, with a fearful expedition.

"Swift destruction." There are many swift things, none swifter than the reprobate's destruction, when God will hasten it. Birds are swift, the eagle cuts the air and is gone. Therefore Solomon compares the suddenest vanisher, riches, to an eagle, that makes herself wings and flies away, Prov. xxiii. 5. Yet is this destruction swifter. An arrow is swift: "A certain man drew a bow at a venture, and smote the king of Israel," and rid him, 1 Kings xxii. 34. Destruction is a swift arrow; that same "arrow that flieth by day," Psal. xci. 5. Surer and swifter than the arrow of Cephalus; *Consequitur quodcumque petit*. (Ovid, Metam. 7.) Or that Hercules shot into Nessus. (Metam. 9.) When he ran away with his Deianira, he told him that though he could not come to him, he would send after him: *Fulnere, non pedibus te consequar*; and he made it good;

Fugientia terga sagitta

Trajit.

These are not Jonathan's prick-arrows, to give warning; but destructive arrows, such as God shot against Sodom, feathered with fire; consuming in a moment. Such, Psal. xviii. 14. "He sent out his arrows and scattered them; he shot out lightnings, and discomfited them." Thunder and lightning, a swift and despatching arrow: "Cast forth lightning, and scatter them: shoot out thine arrows, and destroy them," Psal. cxlv. 6. Man may shoot and miss, or his

arrow be so slow of flight that it may be avoided; but if God shoots, he hits and kills. The Parthian arrow was so admired for swiftness, that Lucan says of Cæsar, he was

*Torto Bælearis verberc funda
Ocyor, et missa Parthi post terga sagitta.*

And Philoctetes' arrows are noted by Sophocles for fatal deadliness; *προφύλακτες γόνοιο*, forerunners of death: *et habent sub arundine plumbam*, headed with heavy vengeance. Yet are all these both weaker in fight, and duller in flight, than God's arrows, which, as the psalmist speaks, come from the hand of a giant. When he shall draw them up to the head, they wound with an incurable blow: "The bow of steel shall strike him through;" it shall come glittering through his gall, Job xx. 24, 25. The sun is swift, he "rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race," Psal. xix. 5. Yet the same day's sun hath seen a man high mounted with pomp in the morning, yet covered with destruction before the evening. But as Moses told Israel concerning the Egyptians, "Whom ye have seen to-day, ye shall see them again no more for ever," Exod. xiv. 13; thus swift is God's judgment, and outrunning the sun. Flame is swift; the poets feign that she is the daughter of Titan and Terra, the sun and the earth. The sun giving her such an aerial and spiritual swiftness by his generation, that if the mother by her grossness had not a little bated her agility, she would the first hour of her birth have run out of the world. Indeed she still flies apace, and like a channel, by continual accessions grows up to a river; *vires acquirit eundo*. As a little ball rolled in the snow, gathers itself to a great lump: the report that is but a little spark of fire at London, proves a great flame by that time it comes to York. But alas, even fame is slow-footed, and besides the invention of lies, must have intervention of space, before it arrives: and though it outrun the clouds, as Alimaaz overran Cush, because he ran by the way of the plain; yet still judgment is swifter, and so despatching that it leaves none to carry the report. When Job was afflicted, there was one reserved to bring news to him; what the Sabeans had done upon the oxen, the Chaldeans upon the camels, the fire upon the sheep, all these upon the servants; I am alone escaped to tell thee. But destruction is surer and sorer, when it leaves none to bear tidings. "All the host of Sisera fell upon the sword, and there was not a man left," Judg. iv. 16. His mother and her wise ladies insult: "Have they not sped? have they not divided the prey?" Judg. v. 30. No, forsooth, for there was nobody left to carry news. Lightning is swift, it "cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west," Matt. xxiv. 27; a similitude used by Christ himself to describe the suddenness of his second appearing. The thunder is called the Lord's voice; "The voice of the Lord is upon the waters; the God of glory thundereth," Psal. xxix. 3. This breaketh the cedars, makes them skip like calves; Lebanon and Sirion caper like a unicorn. This is a sudden manner of destroying, as the Lord smote the Philistines with a great thunder, 1 Sam. vii. 10. When the Lord rains this storm, he kills quickly: "When he is about to fill his belly, God shall cast the fury of his wrath upon him, and shall rain it upon him while he is eating," Job xx. 23. There is another swift perdition: the ordinance charged with that salt mineral, makes quick destruction; it bruiseeth and quasheth to pieces before it gives the report, and therein is truly sudden. Innumerable lives have fallen by this engine; a thing that can send the errand of death a great way off. I know not to what to compare it, un-

less to the pestilence that killeth afar off, Ezek. vi. 12. Gunpowder, the invention of a monk, of a devil, the daughter of salt and sulphur, the mother of death's nimblest children; nothing maketh a quicker end.

The fifth of November puts us in mind of this fatal destruction; intended by the malice of men, but prevented by the mercy of God. Those smoky locusts had prepared and furnished a black pit, the very image of hell; and had resolved on that desperate cry, *Incedium extingatur ruina*: they had devised a common bonfire, a universal combustion, both of mortal men and immortal monuments; churches, charters, and records of antiquity. Bloody priests; that would have offered a whole burnt sacrifice, and made our sons and daughters pass through the fire, an oblation to their Moloch of Rome. Think, countrymen, and let it never die in your memories, while the mercy of God may find a room in your hearts: consider a swift destruction; never was example of so facinorous an enterprise, the *primum genus* of all sin, a crying, a roaring, a thundering sin, as our sovereign truly termed it; a sin not only of blood, but of fire, fire mingled with brimstone, such as the attempters (without extraordinary mercy) now feel in hell. Ask from east to west, from one pole to the other, search all records under heaven, if ever there was the like. Their vault was a penury and storehouse of destruction; against us in the intent, against themselves in the event. Let us say as those four lepers, This day is a day of good tidings, and we do not well to hold our peace: if we tarry till the morning light, some mischief will fall upon us, 2 Kings vii. 9. Consider with them, 1. The speciality of the time, this day. 2. The occasion of that speciality, it is a day of good news. 3. The duty of that occasion, not to hold our peace. 4. The necessity of that duty, lest mischief fall upon us. But you will say, the day is past, and let it pass with the day; sufficient to the day is the sorrow thereof. I answer, "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge," Psal. xix. 2. The day gone reads a lecture to the day present; that day tells news to all days, without which they had not been days to us. In regard of the marvellous attempt, a day of news; in regard of the gracious deliverance, a day of good news. News in the intention, good news in the prevention: a privative, a positive good; for a negative is made an affirmative by reduction. Suppose you had seen it done; the king, prince, nobles, senators, priests; the flowers and ornaments of the land; without distinction of majesty, dignity, sex or age, degree or merit, reason or religion; tossed up with barrels and billets, pieces of timber, bars of iron, and great stones, the murdering artillery together with the murdered bodies, into the air, up toward heaven, their flesh accompanying their souls so far as that violence could send them; till their mangled carcases fell down again to the mother earth, to receive their remaining blood crying vengeance against their butchers. Behold here the type of the deflagration of Sodom, the model of Tophet, the nearest representation that earth could afford of the fiery deluge at the last day; yea, the image of that fiery Gehenna, which God hath prepared for the wicked. When father and son, dam and young in a nest together, had been blown away with a blast, a whirlwind of destruction; the whole state of a kingdom dissolved, and that in an instant of time, before they could have swallowed their spittle, or in remembrance and remorse of their sins have said, Lord, have mercy on us. This had been destruction in the winged precipice, and most desperate suddenness. As it was threatened to the house of Jerolam, to be cut off in a day: but

what? even now, in a moment; before they had leisure to think of it. But as the three servants of God were cast into a fiery furnace that burned them not, and as Moses saw a bush that flamed and consumed not, so the good-will of Him that dwelt in the bush defended us, Deut. xxxiii. 16. The Lord brought us back from death to life, and we were comforted as men awaked out of a fearful dream. Their destruction was swift, but the mercy of God was swifter. There wanted nothing but an actor to bring on that catholic doomsday; yet before the match could be brought to the powder, their artificial fireworks were discovered, their projection, prodition, depredation, all disclosed, and seasonably returned on their own heads.

So perish all thine enemies, O Lord. Now the mercy of God turn destruction into salvation, and then be as swift as he please; the sooner we get home, the sooner ease; therefore, Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Amen.

VERSE 2.

And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.

We have in these heretics contemplated their access to the church, now consider their success in the church. "Many shall follow," &c. It hath ever been the devil's aim, that seeing he must of necessity be wretched, not to be wretched alone. Now the company he desires, is not beasts and irrational creatures, (save where he may do their owners a mischief,) but his ambition flies man height, his envy strikes at the image of God, because he hath no other way to extend his malice to the Deity itself. To effectuate this, he works man to betray man: as man makes one fowl catch another, or one beast surprise another, the hawk the partridge, the hound the hare, all to make him sport; so Satan sets Ephraim against Manasseh, Manasseh against Ephraim, and both against Judah, Isa. ix. 21; himself against all. And because he thinks the pagan world sure enough his own, have at the Christian. There of all places God is glorious, there of all places he will be pernicious. The devil hath a desire to all, but especially he loves a religious soul: he would eat up that with more greediness than Rachel did her mandrakes. He is a black lion rampant in a bloody field. Christ is King of the whole world. Nay, soft, quoth the devil, I have the air. He is called "the prince of the power of the air," Eph. ii. 2. He hath loaded heretics with seed from hell, and sets them sowing in the church; that at the day of harvest his crop may be greater in the barn of hell, than the Lord Christ's is in heaven. In the former verse we had him sowing, his seminaries at work; in this verse behold with what a prosperous and lucky hand he doth it. "Many shall follow:" their cursed tares shall spread far and wide, *et mirifice multiplicabuntur*. It is little content for them to be reprobates alone; but as falling Lucifer drew numerous angels with him, so all his adherents and agents are firebrands to burn others with themselves. The Pharisees would travel sea and land to work proselytes to their own inheritance, yea, to procure them a double portion to themselves, Matt. xxiii. 15. The emissaries of Rome have that charge given them, to corrupt others. Like men sick of the pestilence, they have an itching desire to infect their neighbours. Here therefore behold their success,

"Many shall follow their pernicious ways." If we take the verse asunder, it will thus fall into parts; generally two:

An attraction, Many shall follow their pernicious ways.

A detraction, By whom the way of truth shall be scandalized.

In the attraction or congestion of this tumult, consider,

The ringleaders, They that broach these heresies.

The rabble or tatterdemalion that adhere, Many follow.

In the detraction, derogation, or injury done to the gospel, by these revolvers from the truth, let us examine,

The patient that suffers, The way of truth.

The injury that it suffers, Evil spoken of.

In the patient observe,

The singularity, The way, the only way.

The sincerity, Of truth, uncorrupted truth.

Thus here are many points, one into two, two into four, four into eight. Now you will say, as Leah of her son Gad, "A troop cometh," Gen. xxx. II, or, Here comes a company: yet all these branches have but one root, all these members but one head; they are but wheels of a clock taken a little in sunder to view, then to be put together again. When a wealthy favourite of the world, that had more livings than virtues, sent his servant before to take up lodging for him; the servant charged the host to provide good cheer; for here, says he, will come the lord of such a manor, the landlord of such a town, the keeper of such a forest, the master of such an office, the lay-parson of such a parish, a justice of peace, a gentleman, a usurer, and my master. The host blest himself; Alas, I have not room for half so many. Nay, quoth the servant, all these are but one man. So if you distrust that you have not room in your memories to lodge so many points, yet be comforted, all these are but one text.

The first general is the attraction, and the first particular the ringleaders; whence occur two observations.

First, the necessity of a head to every schism and faction: never was breach made in the vineyard of Christ, but some principal beast led the whole herd. There had been no treason nor insurrection against David, but for Absalom to set it on foot. Gamaliel spake of two such factions; Theudas, to whom a number of men joined themselves; and Judas, that drew much people after him, Acts v. 36, 37: these schisms had their heads. If Smith and Robinson had not led the way to Amsterdam, how many silly souls had stayed still with their mother in England! Their blind zeal misled them, and they others; their flight was not so much as their misguidance. Though the parties in sin have their parts in the punishment, yet to the principal authors be the principal plagues. If their reward in heaven be so great that save one soul from death, how great shall their torment be in hell that pervert many souls to destruction! *Minimus in celo, maximus in inferno*. He shall be least in the kingdom of heaven, but greatest in the kingdom of hell, Matt. v. 19. He that can damn a soul besides his own, overdoes the devil's expectation; he supererogates of Satan, and he shall give him a double fee, a double portion of hell-fire for his pains. *Salus capitis, caput salutis*: so *error capitis, caput erroris*. Our Saviour pitied the people, because they were as sheep without any shepherd, Mark vi. 34; but how would he have wept to see the poor lambs misled by an evil shepherd! It is miserable to want food, yet as good nothing at all as only poison. Christ is the only Head of his church, that all fall

off from him must have a new head, and join themselves to a new body: thus shall both head and tail be cut off together, Isa. ix. 14. This observation ministers two useful lessons to us.

1. That the way to suppress a schism, is to cut off the head; for it will be hard for a body to move headless. "Smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered," Zech. xiii. 7. These be strong colts, swift dromedaries traversing their own ways; wild asses that snuff up the wind at their pleasure, and whisk it about in the wilderness of their own boundless fancy and transporthive fury. I do not say, *percutite ferro*; like empires that can cure no disease without letting blood: no, I prefer, with Tertullian, suffusion of it before effusion of it; shame before smart; knowing that not only Christianity, but heresy, increases by persecution; and some have thought their cause good, only because it was their happiness to be in prison about it. But howsoever, *ubi non prosunt ubera, non desunt verbera: supprime errorum reprimendo errantem*. If their wickedness hath been formerly illustrated with the commentaries of the church's patience, if sternness hath given place to mildness without success, let now mildness be turned into sternness. Let the wheel of admiration turn about, and let the law begin to prick them a little, that have not felt it, but laughed at it a long time, and made connivance their warrant for contempt. Lay the medicine close to them, as Christ did to the cripple at Bethesda: Wilt thou be mended, or not? Let such wilful revolvers take heed; if they will not be converted, let them fear to be confounded.

2. Seeing there are such corruptors of our truth, and disturbers of our peace, let us be sure to hold the truth in peace; leaving all heads, and cleaving to our only one Head Jesus Christ. Let us hold "the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God," Col. ii. 19. Cursed is he that seeks to separate us from this Head. The Lord is our God and our Guide; him we follow, but all false ways we utterly abhor. That which you have learned and received, do: and the God of peace shall be with you, Phil. iv. 9. If we adhere to the truth peaceably, the God of truth and peace shall be with us; even that God of peace, whom such incendiaries would turn out of our land. "My soul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace," Psal. cxx. 6. Doth he hate peace? then peace shall hate him. "I am for peace; but when I speak, they are for war," ver. 7. Well then, God shall be even with him, and be for war when he speaks for peace. *Deus pacis nobiscum*. Oh the sweet habit of peace to appear in! Oh the gracious form of peace for our God to present himself to us! Let him always appear to me in that shape, always present himself to me in that form; not in burning fire, nor tempestuous wind, nor trembling earthquakes, but in the soft air and still breath of peace: the God of peace be with us. The more busy the devil is to scatter dissensions, the more unitedly let us hold together. As when the enemy assaults a town, and the men are defending it: the children meantime may not be allowed to keep what evil and misrule they will in the house, but are rather to live so much the more orderly. The tyranny of the one must not encourage the liberty of the other; nor are these to be excused because the other are increased. The common adversary assaults our substance; if we wrangle one with another about circumstance, it argues a confederacy, and brings on us a suspicion of combination; as if we expected advantage by the thriving of the contrary faction, rather than fidelity to our mother, and vowed adherence to her Husband Christ.

The second observation is, the great force of example. These ringleaders soon get abundance of followers; they shall give heed to the spirits of error, 1 Tim. iv. 1. Men should be led by precepts, and overled by precedents. The ear hath put off her business to the eye, to be despatched; and (as Casar drowned Bibulus' consulship) that fetcheth in all the informations to the heart, deriving from others' actions the warrant of practice. As Jacob's ewes did bring forth lambs according to the colour of the objected rods, so the people produce works according to the patterns before them. St. James saith, Be ye doers of God's word, not of man's work. It is preposterous for the feet to follow the toyish imaginations of the fancy, and not the voice of reason. The papist would follow Christ in the gospel, but for this same, First let me bury my father, kiss my mother, ask my grandam whether I shall do so or not; my forefathers followed other ways. We all say that we serve the Lord, but, as the psalmist speaks, other lords rule us. They that are "led by the Spirit of God, are the sons of God." Rom. viii. 14. By the Spirit of God, not by the spirit of man: our natural spirit is a giddy guide, yea, our sanctified spirit is insufficient: a spirit must guide, and this should be God's Spirit. The very heathen had their imaginary gods for guides, as Jupiter or Mercury; them they invoked, them they imitated. There is no such authority given to sin, as by example. He that is most eminent, hath most followers. Augustus, a learned prince, filled Rome with scholars; Tiberius, with dissemblers; Constantine, with Christians; Julian, with atheists. Indeed the people will sometimes lead themselves, and run without their rulers, as without rule. As in the days of Jehoshaphat, though idolatry were defaced much, yet the high places were not taken away. How was this? The king knew it not, the prophets condemned it, the priests were against it; the fault was in the people: they would not cleave to the God of their fathers. But if Jeroboam set up calves in Dan and Bethel, the people, like beasts in herds, go a lowing after them. The force of imitation makes many follow Rome; and because she once sent to this land some light, they will not forsake her though she lie now in darkness. We were beholden to Rome for our former conversion, we will not be beholden to her for her present religion; we will not follow her a step further when she leaves Jesus Christ. There is a double beneficial use to be made of this doctrine.

First, let this teach men of place to look unto their exemplary lives; lest, as they have made themselves examples of transgression, God make them examples of destruction. They that tempt to sin by their life, shall deter from sin by their death. The life of Julian made many infidels, the death of Julian made many Christians. The pride of the wicked doth pervert many, their falls shall convert many. God will teach men to fear him, even by their ruin that taught them not to fear him. *Magistratus indicat virum*, saith Aristotle: a private man, like an empty vessel, may have many flaws unseen; but in full vessels the chinks and fissures are desecured by the leakage of the wine. Infirmities in lay-men seem small faults; in teachers and governors, blasphemies. The more honourable, the more remarkable. Actual precedence, or silent connivance in them, heartens and hardens the inferiors. The high priest's money tempted an apostle; if the pope command, commend, or reward treason, the conspirator takes it to be religion. Therefore in men of high place, love should bind more than law. He should do least, that may do most mischief. Such are *superiores ceteris*, but there is *superior superioribus*: "He that is higher than

the highest regardeth; and there be higher than they," Eccl. v. 8. With God there is no respect of persons: the poorest may say to the richest, as the malefactor to his fellow on the cross, Thou art in the same condemnation. God charged Moses, "Take all the heads of the people, and hang them up," Numb. xxv. 4. They were princes, some of them; and these often think that no law can hold them, that they may live as they list; but God spares not princes. Yea, mighty sinners shall be mightily punished. As they that carry not their light reservedly to themselves, but communicate it to others, in turning them to righteousness, shall shine as the stars, the brightest part of their orbs, Dan. xii. 3. Men from high places are either lifted up to a great measure of glory in heaven, or cast down to a low degree of torment in hell. Against the unjust officer of God's kingdom, he will horribly and suddenly appear: an hard judgment shall they have that bear rule. The mighty shall be mightily tormented, and for the potent abideth the sorer trial, Wisd. vi. 5. Tophet is prepared for the evil king, Isa. xxx. 33. Wicked subjects shall have room enough, but the wicked prince shall have the chief place. Some reading the rich man so earnestly requesting Abraham to send one from the dead, to bring his brethren to repentance, Luke xvi. 27, 28, would think he had some charity in hell. But this was not out of love, but out of fear; he would have his brethren reclaimed, lest himself should be more tormented; because his example, as being their elder brother, had increased their wickedness on earth, and should withal increase his damnation in hell. A reprobate soul already swallowed into that lake, finds his torment every day augmented, as the brood and generation of sins is multiplied by the seed of his cursed example. Take heed, the fire of hell will be hot enough for a man's own iniquities; he needs not the iniquities of others, like fuel and bellows, to blow and increase the flame. Lord, make them good whom thou hast made great; and teach them to honour thee, as thou hast honoured them. They that travel in meekness, righteousness, and truth; let them ride on prosperously with their honour, Psal. xlv. 4; through the cities and courts of the earth, to the city that is above, the court of the great King in heaven, the inheritance of all those that love the Lord Jesus.

Secondly, seeing we are all apt to be followers, let us seek out the best patterns. It is the custom of the wicked to pretermitt all good precedents, and to single out such as they would have, not such as they should have. As the dorr, that passeth by all the sweet flowers of the meadow, humming in scorn, and ends his flight in a dung-hill. Or as the Egyptians, that behold the sun, the moon, the stars, all the glories of nature, without admiration, yea, without common regard; until they spy a crocodile, an ugly serpent, and then down on their knees to worship it. It is an unhappy thing to converse with the wicked; to be "a brother to dragons, and a companion to owls," Job xxx. 29; to "sojourn in Mesech, and to dwell in the tents of Kedar," Psal. cxx. 5. He that is a parasite to a great man's lust, is not a servant to the great God's law. "If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ," Gal. i. 10. Noah abhors the fashions of the old world, Lot of Sodom, Job of Uz; yea, they have opposed themselves: one Reuben was opposite to the rest of his fraternity, one pair of spies to the rest of their faint-hearted company, one Lot to the rest of the city, one Luther to the rest of his country, one Noah to the whole world. Suppose the example bates of multitude, and is supplied with magnitude, will it be a good answer to the tribunal, *Ego et rex meus*, The

prince and I? True, I did so, but there were better men in the company I durst not displease. But whether is better, to follow man's humour, or God's honour? At the day when sceptres and sepulchres shall be all one, what protection is there in thy lord against the Lord of hosts!

Let us then look out better precedents to follow: "Be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample," Phil. iii. 17. We must not imitate every one, but such as Paul; nor Paul in every thing, but wherein he follows Christ, 1 Cor. xi. 1. That great apostle encouraged our imitation, but gave a limitation: Do not you follow after me, unless you see the track of Christ before me. Let us follow good men, but only in what they are good. As rhetoricians make a double imitation of orators; one absolutely and always necessary; as Demosthenes among the Grecians, and Tully among the Latins: others but at some times, and in some things; as poets and historians. So in our Christian imitation, there is one example necessary: Christ, who is called the way; *Via in exemplo, veritas in promisso, vita in premio*; others but in some actions, and at some occasions; their lives being lines so far to be followed, as they swerve not from the original copy, Christ. We are not bound to be good men's apes; let us follow David where he followed God's heart, not where he followed his own heart; if he turn toward lust and blood, let us leave him there. Let us follow Peter's confession, not his abnegation: Judas Maccabæus' hearty devotion and hearty valour; not in bestowing money to make a sacrifice for the dead, 2 Macc. xii. 43. All our following hath the so far; if our precedents go out of the way, let us shake hands and bid them farewell. Two of us are going toward Jerusalem; but saith one, I must needs call in at Rome, or go a little about by Samaria. Nay, then I leave you; here our ways part.

Thus let us call out the best patterns; be our delight to the saints on the earth, and such as excel in virtue, Psal. xvi. 3. Now every saint excels in some virtue; one excels in knowledge, another excels him in faithfulness, a third excels him in zeal, a fourth excels him in humility, another excels him in that Christian virtue, yea, Christ's virtue, forgiving of wrongs; and yet a poor man may outgo them all in an admirable patience. Now as when Paul had propounded many rare graces, he concludes, Desire you earnestly the best gifts, 1 Cor. xiii. 31; take the best of every man, and so make up an excellent man; learn of him zeal, of him knowledge, of him patience. A proud dame will propose to herself the fashion of such a woman for her apparel, of another for her attendance, of another for her diet, of another for her carriage, of another for her place and precedence; of none for humility. Now as she that takes the worst of every woman, will make herself an extreme bad woman; so she that gathers obedience from Sarah, wisdom from Rebekah, chaste love from Rachel, faith from Mary, hospitality from Martha, humility from Anna, charity from Dorcas; she shall make herself a most excellent woman; the joy of men, the delight of angels, and the beauteous spouse of Jesus Christ. All these were the properties of that good wife Solomon speaks of; and in what woman soever you find them, you may say with him, "Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all," Prov. xxxi. 29. These be good patterns to follow. As we pray for our sovereign, that not only he may be like some former prince, but have the virtues of them all; the courage of Joshua, the heart of David, the head of Solomon, the zeal of Josiah, the integrity of Hezekiah, &c.; so all these excellencies which we find in the ancient saints,

we desire to be concentrated in our own heart. He that would plant a garden, borrows here a choicer flower, there an herb, there a plant; till at length his own surpasseth all the rest. But, alas, where is this imitation of goodness to be found among us? We are led by whom we are fed, without respect to him that feeds both them and us. Some spoil many of God's creatures to confer all on their own creature, which is some licking cur that they have drest up in high fortunes. Now, what cannot extreme malice do in a supreme place? Thus Absalom charged his servants concerning his brother Amnon, "Kill him, fear not; have not I commanded you?" 2 Sam. xiii. 28. Yet such prodigious comets are followed in all their deliraments and aberrations. Men will lie by pattern, swear by pattern, drink by pattern, whore by pattern; what is this but to go to hell by pattern? There is another way to heaven, and divers have gone it before us; who now being mounted above the clouds, and trampling under their victorious feet all the vanities of this world, seem to waft us up with their hands, and call us with their voices to follow them; saying, We have the sweet rest of peace, the rich apparel of glory, the society of angels, the blessed vision of God. Follow us, O follow us on earth, that you may come to us in heaven; that we with you, and you with us, and all together with angels, may sing glory and honour to our God for ever.

We have considered the ringleaders, now we come to the matter of their mischiefs: which are, for plurality, ways; and for pestilence, pernicious or damnable ways.

"Their ways." There is a plurality, diversity, number of them. Sin is called "the way of the ungodly," Psal. i. 6; because of their familiarity with it who are continually travelling that cursed thoroughfare. The way is broad that leadeth to destruction, Matt. vii. 13. There is room enough for all Satan's journey-men to pass in triumph, without justling for the wall, or without a flourishing fence to scour them a conveyance. The extortioner and the lavisher, the common harlot and the conniving officer, the thief and the corrupt lawyer, the griping citizen and the usurer; they have all room. Oh it is a dancing, a capering way: they go to hell as merrily as beggars to a fair; but then the house of correction mars all. Ways; truth is but one, errors are infinite; truth hath but one face, error is a Proteus. Goodness is a uniform simple, sin a multiform compound. "As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters," Cant. ii. 2. There is one health, many diseases; one way to do well, infinite to offend. The soul is more subject to aberrations than the body to surfeits. There are innumerable diseases to the body, whereas two hundred are incident to the eye; yet are there more sins to endanger the soul. The tongue is a world of wickedness, Jam. iii. 6. The tongue is but a little part of man; if that be a world of sin, what is the whole? even a world of worlds. St. Paul hath twice gone about to number these ways; yet breaks off his catalogue in both places with a silent supplement: Adultery, uncleanness, idolatry, &c. and such like, Gal. v. 21. Here is pretty store, yet lest he should never have done, he supplies all with an *et cætera*, a "such like." Lawless disobedience, &c. and if there be any other thing of the same nature, 1 Tim. i. 10. There is a whole hospital, or St. Paul's spital of incurable wretches; yet, as if there were more behind, he concludes with a "whatsoever is like to these." God knows all their ways; they are as clear before him, as if they were written with the brightest sunbeams upon a wall of glass. (Lactant.) Will men flatter themselves that God sees not all their ways? Yes, there is not one

hid from his sight: he can read the most crooked lines that ever man wrote, and pick out the meaning of every word, yea, and make the offender's conscience read them with horror. We cannot reckon up God's good deeds to us in order, but he can reckon up our evil deeds against him in order. "Not we his: Thou hast made thy wonderful works so many, that none can count them in order to thee, Psal. xl. 5. But he ours: I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes, Psal. l. 21. His ways are far above out of our sight; but he searcheth the ways of the wicked, and knoweth all their paths." "Whatsoever is like to these," saith Paul: no bill of Ignomies, all come within the catalogue; if not, there is a "whatsoever is like to these" to bring it in. Paul, in that scroll, Gal. v., hath neither blasphemy, nor perjury, nor sacrilege; but whatsoever is left out, there is a "such like" to fetch it in. Because a man is not in extreme rage of madness, is he therefore no fool with God? Because he cannot satiate his lascivious purposes, is he therefore no adulterer with God? Shall none be shut out of the kingdom, but those who are there precisely mentioned? Yes, without shall be dogs, Rev. xxii. 15, that is, blasphemers, scornors, liars; which are silenced in that roll, saying that they are made belonging to the ulcerous told by a "whatsoever is like to these." Hast thou none of those sins? thou hast other, perhaps not lighter. Discipline is one; now there are as many ways of sin, as deviations from doctrine. (August.) Although every particular be not reckoned, yet there is a writ of "if there be any thing else," to bring the sinner in compass.

The devil makes much of this variety of ways; that whom he cannot draw to hell one way, he may do it another. There are some spirits sinful enough, that will not yet be wrought to fetch treason from Rome; they hate Rome above hell, and will lie with any harlot in Europe before the whore of Babylon. Well then, Satan hath another way for him; he will fetch him a little sneezing-powder from Amsterdam, fire him with a puritan zeal; and then, though he dares not with the Jesuit discharge pistols, yet he will shoot squibs, and curse those that love his mother. Some trouble their heads about no religion at all, rather than venture the danger of being a party; the devil hath another way for him; Sit still, ply your business, take your ease; though you be not so hot as the rest, you shall be saved as soon as the best, I warrant you. Others are not so sluggishly minded; well then he hath another way for them, that damned path of luxuriousness: What say you, Samson, to a Delilah? Yes, I will venture my life for her. What say you to a knot of boon companions, a pack of sound cards, that will leave their wits rather than the wine behind them? Excellent well; drawer, give us an ocean. Are you for yet another way? What say you to a trick that will prostrate him you hate under your feet? Yes, I will hazard all my blessing in heaven, to bring a curse upon him on earth; I will undo myself to beggar him. Is not this to the grain of your affection? What say you to be a monarch's favourite, to ride in triumph through the populous streets, and hear the acclamation, This is the man whom the king will honour; vassals kissing the dust your feet trod upon; but then you must be proud and forget God: there is another way for you. Do not all these satisfy you? Will you be rich, and purse up gold? O, there is a way indeed! will I? will I not? Ask me if I will live. He that speaks to us of money and wealth, cheers our bloods with a tickling heat.

The devil would be undone but for these various ways. All will not be adulterers, nor all idolaters,

nor all usurers. But though it be true that by nature all sins are potentially in us, yet there is a predominance; and all temptations delight to run with the current of concupiscence. It is easy for a beggar to be no usurer; alas, there are many other ways to be damned. Satan, like the fisher, baits his hook according to the appetite of the fish. And as Christ took men in their own element, making fishers of animals fishers of souls; changing in his apostles not the condition, but the intention, of fishing; thus he appeared to Mary in the garden like a gardener; so doth Satan to pervert; becomes all things to seduce all men. Some Damae will not be won to play the harlot, unless her lover appear in a shower of gold; he hath that way for her. Another will not bow in the house of Rimmon, crouch at a mass, but for his master's favour; he hath that way for him. A third will not rend the church with schism, but to get himself a name; he hath a way for him too; he shall not be inglorious, though he be infamous. A Jesuit will not strike at the anointed blood, unless the pope will canonize him for a saint; there is a way for him. One will have this way, another that way; so they go to hell any way, Satan cares not. One trembles at the main ocean, that ventures to be drowned in a shallow puddle: No matter how, says Satan, so he be drowned.

To conclude; he studies many ways to make you wretched, do you study one way to make yourselves blessed. The devil is the father of lies, he would have showed Christ the way down from the pinnacle, but it was a false way, by a precipice; if thou standest in a quandy, and he should point thee a way; that is, if thine own lust, his town clerk, say this way; be thou sure to take the other, for he means to murder thee. If thou be in the path of obedience, and he say unto thee, as Elisha to the Syrian army, This is not the way, but follow me, and I will bring you whither you desire, 2 Kings vi. 19; answer him with a Depart, thou lying spirit, this is the way of righteousness which the Holy Ghost prescribeth. Now seeing that of many ways, one special way is hard to hit, Lord, guide us the right way, open our eyes to see it, incline our hearts to walk in it, and bring our souls to the end of it, through him that is the way of truth, and the truth of way, and life of both, Jesus Christ.

"Their pernicious ways." We have done with the number, let us come to the nature of their ways; which are pernicious, or damnable. The word is diversely read; by some *ἀσώτως*, by some *ἀσεβώς*, in the later copies *ἀσέβως*; for luxuries, lasciviousnesses, or destructions. If understood in the former acceptations, we have this observation:

That the end of heresy is to make men proud and insolent, or riotous and excessive; contrary to the doctrine of mortification which the gospel preacheth. For that which promiseth that the flesh shall not kill us, chargeth us also to kill the flesh. The one is promised, Rom. viii. 1; the other imposed, Col. iii. 5. Ahab was assured by the prophet that Benhadad should not slay him, but wistful he was commanded to slay Benhadad, that proud enemy of God and his church; but because he did not, "Thy life shall go for his life, and thy people for his people," saith the Lord, 1 Kings xx. 42. But now the doctrine which encourageth and flesheth the flesh, which admireth and admitteth the world, doth also make much for the devil. His first policy was to catch the soul through the treason of her guard, the senses. For unless the sense had first submitted, the consent of the soul would never have followed. And still he insinuates to the soul, as the men of Tyre to Herod, by Blasts the chamberlain, Acts xii. 20. The flesh is

a perfumed, fawning Blastus, that does all with the great one. Here is then the difference between true doctrine and false; the former only intends to unbodily the body of death; and the scope of the other, is to turn the grace of God into licentiousness, and to enlarge the jurisdiction of sin.

The gospel intends our newness of life, and perfects this through four degrees; in allusion, yea, in conformity, to the death and resurrection of Christ. 1. His body was wounded and beaten with thorns and buffets: answerable in us there must be contrition: *trajectum vulnere corpus*: when the publican did but knock his breast, he gave this wound to his flesh. Strike it soundly with remorse of heart, set it a bleeding. 2. Christ's body was pursued with incessant afflictions; so follow thy sin with continual blows, till thou make it so weak that it cannot creep: I beat down my body, and bring it into subjection, 1 Cor. ix. 27. Though sin will not say, as the prophet to his neighbour, "Smite me, I pray thee:" yet God bids us smite it; and if we deny to do it, his wrath will smite us, as the lion slew that refuser, 1 Kings xx. 35, 36. Therefore let us deal with it as the other man did with the prophet, ver. 37; smite it soundly, and smite it daily: a little sorrow is not sufficient. *Gemitus, quasi gemitus*: Let us water our bed every night with our tears, Psal. vi. 6. Do not only blow upon it with intermissive blasts, for then like fire it will resurge and flame the more. Sin is like a stinking candle newly put out, it is soon lighted again. It may receive a wound, but like a dog it will easily lick itself whole; a little forbearance multiplies it like Hydra's heads. Therefore, whatsoever aspersion the sin of the day hath brought upon us, let the tears of the night wash away. 3. They crucify Christ; so when sin is thus wounded and weakened, let us have it to the cross, and nail it fast: let our old man be crucified with him, that the body of sin may be destroyed, that henceforth we may not serve sin, Rom. vi. 6. It is fit we should crucify that enemy, which crucified our best Friend, Christ; yea, that we should kill that which, if we destroy not, will destroy us. It is written of Ahaz, that he sacrificed to the gods of Damascens, which plagued him, 2 Chron. xxviii. 23. Let us never seek to please sin, which seeks to confound us. He is a fool that loves his sin better than his soul. No, let the sin die, that the sinner may live. Neither daily this execution: save this malefactor from the gallows, and he will be the first that shall hang thee: be sure it is dead. 4. Lastly, as Christ was taken down from the cross, and laid in his grave: so, is it dead? O bury it. The gospel will not bate one degree of this proceeding, even to burial: "We are buried with him," &c. Rom. vi. 4. Mortification may begin at some few principals, as an arm is stricken dead with a palsy; but burial covers all: therefore rest not until all be laid in the grave. Yea, as Christ was buried in a grave of rock, lest the softer matter of the earth should seem easily possible; in one entire rock, lest the clefts and fissures should breed evil; yea, to the mouth of the rock was a stone rolled, that stone sealed, and that seal watched: so make sure work with thy sinful flesh; bury it in a rock; if thou find none ready, in Christ's grave; there are no seams for Satan to steal it out, and bring it in judgment against thee. Roll a stone to the mouth of the sepulchre, that is, detestation of sin; hate it, as Amnon hated Tamar, more than ever thou lovedst it. Seal the stone, bind it with a vow of resolution: "I have sworn, and will perform it," Psal. cxix. 106. Set a guard about it, watch it; with all diligence keep thy heart from it. There are three watchmen; fasting, circumspection, and prayer. Fasting is a

plot to cheat iniquity, for she is no pinger, but loves pampering. By fasting keep the body, by circumspection the soul, by prayer both. This is the doctrine of the gospel, to kill the lusts of blood and flesh; that the soul may live without the tyranny of sin in this world, and without the company of sin in the world to come.

Now the aim and scope of false doctrine, is to hearten this Jezebel that bewitcheth us; that who-soever is led by it, may share the testimony, the infamy, the penalty with Ahab: "Which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of God, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up," 1 Kings xxi. 25. The doctrine of Rome may here justly be indicted for ascetical, the nurse of voluptuousness. O you wrong it; nothing is more corrective, restrictive, austere. Doth it not command fasting? No. What not Rome? No, not Rome: it commands abstaining from some kind of food, but not fasting. A merchant is following his business all day, at night comes home; he must have no flesh; but he hath his cullices, his jellies, his junkets, ten times more provoking than moderate flesh. The poor labourer, if at night he eats a piece of bacon, O he is a heretic, but the other an excellent catholic. But does it not forbid marriage, and commend vows of chastity and celibate? Yes, that it may allow stews, and have large fees out of harlots' hires. But there is a curse against them; They "gathered it of the hire of an harlot, and they shall return to the hire of an harlot," Micah i. 7. Why do they not boast their Pauline order, founded by Ghastalia, a countess of Mantua? How contrary was their doctrine of mortification to that taught by St. Paul; "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry; for which things' sake the wrath of God cometh," &c. Do they not commend prodigality, when they tempt a young landed man to part with all he hath, to undo his parents, that depend upon him, that he may take their order, and they divide his inheritance? Do they not approve lasciviousness, when they forbid marriage to a chaste wife, and tolerate turpitude with an unchaste courtesan? Whether then we take it for the first or second, the third will fit all, as our translation read, it, damnable ways. In that third they all meet; whether it be a luxurious way, or a lascivious way, it is still a damnable way.

If it be taken for riot and voluptuousness, that is a pestilent doctrine which shall teach a man to cast away God's blessings like troublesome rubbish; "If any provide not for his own, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel," 1 Tim. v. 8. It is pernicious to both the estates, present and future. First, for this world, it hastens beggary: it is the rioter's phrase, when he calls for supplies to his lusts, It is but begging a year the sooner. Diogenes requested of a prodigal a talent: he asked him what he meant, to desire so much of him, and so little of others: he answered, Because thou hast, and they will have; I shall beg of thee but once, of them often: give me now a talent, I may live to give thee a groat. Secondly, for the world to come, when the account must be given, the matter will be worse. If the servant that but hid his talent was cast into utter darkness for not improving it, what answer shall he make that hath riotously wasted it? Luke xvi. 1. There shall be more fire, because there was less faithfulness.

If it be taken for wantonness, then that is a damnable doctrine, that shall teach a man to go to heaven by uncleanness. Such a pestilence is derived from the papal faction, that fornication is but a venial sin. Paul saith, "Shall I take the members of Christ,

and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid," 1 Cor. vi. 15. That sacrifice, to make the member of Christ a limb of the devil by the congression of lust, is with them venial. Paul saith, God forbid it; but Rome allows it, and in some sort commends it. But he that so taught it, shall never so find it. "They wax wanton against Christ." What is their reward? It follows, "having damnation, because they have cast off their first faith," 1 Tim. v. 11, 12. Such a damnable opinion was hatched by the Familists, that a man might lie with his neighbour's wife while her husband slept; as if the sleep of the innocent excused or acquitted the guilt of the waking. But let them all pretend what they will, as the woman that presumed so much of her husband's love, that if he should find her in the bed of incontinence, he would not harm her; but it proved far otherwise, to her shame and ruin. So there is another judgment must pass; and let them not think they are so sure of God's favour, that he will not find fault though they be lascivious; for "whoremongers and adulterers God will judge," Heb. xiii. 4.

To conclude, observe the horror of false doctrine, and the inextricable confusion it wraps the followers in: *ταῖς ἀπολαύσις*, pernicious; literally, destructions, or damnations. The wicked never rest till they meet with final ruin. Pharaoh, though by one plague he had lost the fruits of the earth, by another the fruit of his cattle, by a third the light of his eyes, by a fourth the fruit of his loins, even all the first-born of Egypt; yet, as if all this could not content him, he would not give over till he met with utter destruction, till he was drowned and damned. Yea, they follow it as if a man should woo and court unhappiness: one would think it were enough to say to destruction, as Ahab to Elijah, "Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?" 1 Kings xxi. 20. But so to pursue it, as not to give it over till they overtake it, is a desperate madness. Like flies that still hover about the candle, and the burning of a wing serves not their turn; they must sacrifice their lives in the flame. So busy are the wicked about hell-fire, playing on this side and on that, dancing through it as boys through a bonfire; yea, as in the sacrifices of children to Moloch, and that with pipes and melody in the valley of Hinnom; never ceasing till God make an utter destruction, affliction not rising up the second time, Nah. i. 9. It is a fearful protestation of the prophet against them, "As he clothed himself with cursing like as with a garment, so let it come into his bowels like water, and like oil into his bones," Psal. cix. 18: as he loved it, so shall he have it, and be always girded with it. For us that love salvation, let us never rest till we are assured of it; not suffering our eyes to sleep, nor our eye-lids to take any slumber, till we be possessed of Jesus Christ.

"Many shall follow their pernicious ways." Thus for the ringleaders, now view the rabble; and therein their multitude and their aptitude: their number, Many: their forwardness, tractableness, easiness to be tempted, Shall follow.

1. Their multitude, Many. Wickedness walks with numbers, and is never scanted of followers: "Many shall come in my name, and deceive many," Matt. xxiv. 5. Paul says, they shall draw a world after them. Goodness hath few adherents, because the gate is narrow that leadeth to life; the wicked in a proud disdain blanch heaven-gate, as too strait for their greatness. All that the master graciously invited, disdainfully refused; all with one mind make excuse, Luke xiv. 18; well, his cheer shall not be lost. Goodness may complain with Paul, At my answering no man assisted me, but all forsook me;

yet still prays for them, that it may not be laid to their charge, 2 Tim. iv. 16. Christendom is the least part of the world; they that profess Christ truly the least part of Christendom; and of this little part there be many that may be called heretics, not so much in their lips as in their lives, not in their doctrines, but in their doings: they colour for Christ, but confederate underhand with the world. Therefore, "Many are called, but few are chosen," Matt. xxii. 14. It is said, that the books shall be opened, and another book which is the book of life, Rev. xx. 12. There is but one book of life, wherein the elect are registered; but the books of the reprobates are many, for one book will not hold them. But if I forbear the common customs, I shall be held singular, and irregular, a by-word of the people, and as a tablet before them, Job xvii. 6. And what, must thou prefer fame before conscience? Remember the philosopher when the people applauded him, he asked what evil he had done? Socrates ever suspected that, which passed with the general most commendation. Augustine reckons up two hundred and eighty-eight several opinions concerning the supreme good; (Civ. lib. 19. cap. 1.) but amongst all these we never found any so mad, as to place his happiness upon common fame. Indeed so long as great men be good men, and the most the best, we may follow both: but because this is rare, let us not do as the most, but do as we must. It is better to have good company in heaven, than great company in hell. It was a satirical, an atheistical answer of a jester, when a great lord asked him whether he would go to heaven or to hell: he said, To hell: for there I shall be sure to meet your Lordship, and the most part of my acquaintance. But he little loves Christ, that will not love him without company; and his zeal is cold to heaven, whom the example of numbers can turn another way. No, let us say as much as Peter said, and do more than Peter did; Though all men should forsake thee, yet I will not leave thee, O Saviour. Neither magnitude of princes, nor multitude of people, shall prevail with me: I am thy sheep, I will follow my Shepherd. Lead me on with the bands of love, and hold me with the hand of mercy: knit me to thyself, now with saving grace, and hereafter with everlasting glory.

2. Their tractableness, Shall follow. There is a pliable disposition in all men naturally to evil, in these a desperate and unstayable precipitation.

They need not be compelled with scourges, nor tormented to it; their own willingness saves the labour of painful coercion. It is only a Job that the devil delights to vex with anguish: he knows an Absalom will run laughing to hell. Satan hath desired to winnow you, Luke xxii. 31. To winnow you; there are some all chaff, he will not meddle with them. "Ephraim is joined to idols; let him alone," Hos. iv. 17. Let him alone, says Satan, he is as safe as I would wish him. No general wounds his own soldiers, that march under his colours; but his enemies. "If Satan be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand?" Luke xi. 18. He never makes reprobates feel his hate, till they feel his heat, even his fire in the burning lake.

They need not be drawn with cords, haled with authority and command. Indeed if Doeg hear a Saul bid him murder the priests, he will run upon them, and quickly despatch them, 1 Sam. xxii. 18. If Nebuchadnezzar charge the people to adore his new-created idol, they quickly fall down, as soon as the music gives warning, Dan. iii. 7. John shall not want a death's-man, if Herod send for his head. The centurion's servants never run faster on his errands, than these to do mischief. Such headlong

followers of false teachers are the papists, who have learned blind obedience, to be so tractable as to follow their leaders blindfold. They practise an indiscreet surrendering up of themselves to the command of their superior. Like those unclean beasts, Deut. xiv. they swallow and never chew the cud. It is an inconsiderate, undiscursive apportionment of themselves to another's will, without weighing the goodness or fitness of the action. An abbot commands one to cast his crying child into the river, and drown it: he doth it, and, saith my author, God did reveal that he accomplished Abraham's work. (Cassian.) Another was desirous to be instructed in the point of predestination: his superior turned him to a place in Augustine, and bade him read there: when he came to the end of the page, not of the sense or sentence, he durst not turn over the leaf, because his superior bade him read there. This following they so commend, that if a man were dignified to talk with angels, if his superior called him, he must come away. When one of them was in discourse with our lady, a friar called him, and he very unmannerly quitted her. (Climach.) They stick not to affirm, that it is a greater pride to do a good work against a superior's command, than to do a bad one with it; because that is vice under pretence of virtue. That it is better to sin against God, than against our spiritual father; because he can reconcile us to God, but nobody can reconcile us to him. Here is a dueible disposition indeed, a generation that will follow upon the least hint. If Peter should have asked them that question, Whether it is better to obey God or man, judge ye, Acts iv. 19; they would have answered, Man, so he be a superior. Yet, saith Eli, "If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him: but if a man sin against the Lord, who shall entreat for him?" 1 Sam. ii. 25. Yea, these men would follow were they never called. They would be glad to hear it from the mouth of their Joab, Run; and, like Cush, they would bow themselves for it, 2 Sam. xviii. 21. Yea, like Gehazi, they run though they were never sent.

They need not be led on with flatteries, as Absalom stole the hearts of Israel. When a courtier, to work Sejanus out of favour with Tiberius, had luxuriously flattered and gilded him with his own virtues; and the emperor found that the intention of all his design was to overthrow Sejanus; he replied, Alas, you might have spared all this pains and oratory, for I meant before to ruin Sejanus. So to persuade a covetous man to become a usurer, and to flatter him with the safe and easy gain, it is but labour lost; he meant to do it, though he were never counselled to it.

They need not be hired with rewards: yet this same, I will give to thee, goes far: it tempted Balaam to curse, where he should bless; Judas to betray, where he should adore. Saul thought that this only would stay the Benjamites from revolting to David; "Will the son of Jesse give you fields and vineyards, and make you all captains of thousands, and captains of hundreds?" 1 Sam. xxii. 7. This engine Satan planted against the walls of eternity, "All these will I give thee," Matt. iv. 9: as God said to Abraham, "All the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it," Gen. xiii. 15. But these men, though they had no reward, yet *insani sine munere currunt*. Though the tempter says not as Balak to their cursed false prophet, "Am I not able indeed to promote thee to honour?" Numb. xxii. 37; yea, though he confess plainly, I have neither silver nor gold, lands nor vineyards to give you; yet they resolutely proceeded in the satisfaction of their own malice: "We

will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel," Isa. iv. 1; only do thou own us, and let us be thy retainers. Though upon our own cost, we will follow. So greedy is the wicked man of his own ruin, that himself will bear the charges of it.

From this point of their tractableness, dueible and easy disposition to be led on to evil, we may raise five observable deductions.

1. The greediness of the ungodly to sin, that they scarce tarry for temptation. They are past feeling, (sick without sense,) and have given themselves (without hire, or pay, or compulsion, but by a deed of gift, not only to think, but) to work (not a light kind of immodesty, but) uncleanness, (not some little, but) all uncleanness, (not with indifferent appetite, or some forward disposition, capable of dissuasion, but) with unsatiable and desperate greediness, Eph. iv. 19. The apostle sets down here two especial marks of their self-violence. 1. They have given themselves: not ravished, as Tamar, but they have prostituted their own souls, like that impudent strumpet, that sits at the door, and calls in passengers, Prov. ix. 14. So Ahab sold himself to work wickedness; he had no hire. I remember David's lamentation over slain Abner, 2 Sam. iii. 33. How died Abner? how? His hands were not bound, nor his feet tied with fetters of brass; yet he fell down at the feet of the conqueror; yesterday a man, to-day a corpse. Nobody compelled these, nobody forced them; but their own will was their own overthrow, their own following their own undoing, and the battle is fought between them and themselves. 2. With greediness: they follow as the iron adamant, by a natural and hidden propensity; or, as a lackey follows his lord, and hath no course of his own but which way his master pleaseth: to be sure of not being behind, they will be before. Or, as a dog follows his master, through foul or fair, thick or thin, whether north or south, which way soever he doubles his point; howling and questing if he be at a loss. Or, more properly according to the phrase here, as scholars following their master, novices their superiors; subjected to their doctrine and discipline, without questioning what they learn, or why they suffer. Marching like Jehu the son of Nimshi, driving as if they were mad, 2 Kings ix. 20. Hastening as a bird to the snare, or a fool to the stocks: as if they had fire at their heels, like Samson's foxes; whereas indeed the fire is before their faces; they run not from it, but unto it.

2. Sin is strong when it meets with a weak resister. How easy is it for error to domineer over ignorance! They lead captive silly women, led away with divers lusts, 2 Tim. iii. 6. Silly women are easily led captive by subtle men. The devil is called a strong man, yet the faith of the weakest Christian is able to beat him back. Give no place to the devil, Eph. iv. 27; for there is no place for him but where it is given him. When Satan had Christ on the pinnacle of the temple, one would think that a child for strength might have turned him off. No, his commission extended not so far: he met now with a strong defendant, and he is as weak as water. It is man's infirmity that sets off the glory of his strength. "He is a king over all the children of pride," Job xli. 34. Satan is a tyrant; but over whom? None but the children of pride. He is called the prince of the world, but indeed only of worldlings; yet let not this so disgrace his strength, that you become secure. Though the devil stands at God's courtesy, let us not be fearless or careless of such an enemy. Sin is strong, it could fetch angels out of heaven, arrest God's courtiers before his own face. A whole world could not withstand

the fury of it, when it came marching against them with a flood. It was strong enough to lay all the sons and daughters of Adam in the dust. The devil is strong as a lion, yea, stronger than a thousand lions; that counteth darts as straw, and laughs at their shaking of the spear, Job xli. 29. Death is strong, a stalking giant, that like Goliath dares all the world to match him with an equal combatant. Hell is strong, it can hold Alexanders, Casars, Tamerlanes, the sons of Anak, sure enough for ever breaking forth. But now whence have all these their strength? They fetch it from the life of sin, which only souls them all with their vigour: take away that, and they are as weak as a bulrush. What power hath death but by sin? It is the sting of it: all a serpent's power is in his venomous sting. Yea, death had never been, had not sin engendered it. "Sin bringeth forth death," Jam. i. 15. It is be-holden to sin for its very being; for it is none of those positive things that God made. The devil had been damned alone, but for sin; and all the world had mocked his malice. But *intra te, quod contra te*: he fetcheth the poison from within thee, whereby he fighteth against thee. He finds that weapon in our own lusts, wherewith he runs through our souls. Mark the Philistines' policy, to leave the Hebrews not a smith in all Israel, lest they should make them spears or swords, 1 Sam. xiii. 19. Let this be our stratagem, to disappoint the devil of his weapons. Oh that he had no smith amongst us! howsoever, let not us be his smiths, to hammer, work, and fashion his temptations in the forges of our own breasts. And for hell, though without sin it have the strength of retention, yet loseth the strength of attraction: it may be powerful to keep those it hath, but not to draw in those it hath not. That great gulf may hold the prisoners from coming forth, but the gates of hell are too weak to scramble in a believing soul.

But, alas, when sin invades a weak natural man, it boasteth the power in present conquest. Man's strength is wounded by an original blow; and as when sickness hath gotten the better of him, and cast him down, still as the patient grows weaker, the disease grows stronger; and the more that tyrant usurps, the less able is the sufferer to resist. At first Samson was hard enough for all the princes of the Philistines, at last they set a boy to lead him. Abimelech was a stout prince, yet had his death's wound by a woman. Totylas, that mighty conqueror, who vanquished Rome, which vanquished the world, was slain by Narses a eunuch, a *semi-vir*. It is recorded of Solyman, a late Turk, that having a great German brought prisoner unto him, in spite and derision of the German nation, he caused his dwarf, a very pigmy, to take him in hand after he was bound, to back him and hew him, to run at tilt at him with many courses, and at last to kill him. Let little David mace Goliath with his sling, and he will cut off his head. Thus may the lion and leopard be tamed, and a little child lead them, Isa. xi. 6. The Scythians had a pestilent enemy that infested their country: they levied a troop, and with a great conflict took him. When they had him, they were yet troubled to hold him: they then so scant his diet and sleep that six men could master him: at last, by degrees they brought him so low, that they set a dog to lead him. Thus Satan first sets on man with troops of spirits; and if he be unruly, they starve him by detaining the food of the soul, the word of God: at last, when he is brought low, they set a dog to lead him, his own lust. This Naaman feared, and escaped; Hazael scorned, yet admitted; Am I a dog, that I should do this? 2 Kings viii. 13. He became

that dog, or at least was led by that dog. Thus prone are we to sin, and therefore let us pray Him that is the strongest to fortify us. If we be left to ourselves, sin no sooner calls than we follow: all our help, all our hope, is in the preventing grace of God.

3. Observe the power of evil men over their associates; whether in perverting the higher faculties of the soul, reason, and understanding, and conscience; or in corrupting the lower, will and affections. There is some correspondence between a physical and this ethical or moral corruption. It is wrought,

Either by privation, withering the good qualities in us: like an evil north wind, they blow upon the buds of our grace, and nip them. Whether the ill companion be a white-skinned hypocrite, or a black-hided ruffian; the one like fair water, the other like foul; but any water, fair or foul, may quench the fire of God's altar in thee. He doth work a taint and consumption into his fellows' virtues: and wasteth them from an ounce to a dram, from a dram to a scruple, to a grain, to nothing. He that hath money will beware of thieves: if thou have any grace, venture it not among these rifters. Art thou inclined to pray? he tempts thee to play. Wouldst thou go to a sermon? by his persuasion the theatre stands in the way. Wouldst thou relieve the poor? No, says he, this will help to bear charges at the tavern. A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, that robbed him, &c. Luke x. 30. He that will go from Jerusalem to Jericho, shall fall among thieves, that will rob him of his good conditions. The devil hath such agents, that practise the art of debauching men. As Amilear swore his young son Hannibal to the revenge of the Romans; and as Rome now swears her proselytes to the revenge of the protestants; so the devil swears all his instruments to the revenge of Christians. So that a man may say with Christ in the crowd, Who touched me? for 1 feel virtue gone out of me.

Or by position, infusing his own bad qualities into thee. Lot hath a little tang from Sodom, that sticks by him in the mountain. Jacob sware by the fear of his father Isaac; but Joseph learned in Egypt to swear by the life of Pharaoh. Peter durst draw his sword against a whole troop in his Master's quarrel; but after all protestations of inseparableness, was infected with the air of the high priest's hall; and then he fell to cursing: it is likely that was their fashion, to get credit to their speeches. Herod was loth to give away John Baptist's head, but for the company, Matt. xiv. 9. As a musician tunes his instrument, so he will stretch all thy cords, till he hath brought thee to his own key; thou shalt be forced to sing as he will have thee, Psal. cxxxvii. 3. Let sin be but an embryo in thee, he will so midwife it that he will deliver thee of it by action; yea, so nurse it, till he make it the darling of thy affection. Is thy soul thus ravished of her chaste love to Christ? thou must say to her as Absalom to his sister Tamar, "Hath Amnon been with thee?" hath the bad associate met with thee? This poison is never more dangerous than when it comes in a golden cup. All the spite of Joseph's brethren was not such a cross to him, as the inordinate affection of his mistress. Temptations on the right hand are more perilous, because they are most plausible and glorious. Joseph saw this pleasure would advance him; he knew what it was to be the minion of one of the greatest ladies in Egypt. Yet he contents it; "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" Gen. xxxix. 9. He knew that all the floods of honour could not wash off the guilt of one sin. He shuns her society. Oh that we were so wise to avoid the occasions of evil company! She impudently catcheth hold of his

garment, her hand seconds her tongue. But Joseph will rather lose his cloak than his faith, rather be spoiled of his livery than of his chastity; refuse all, rather than blemish her honour, his master's in her, his own in both, God's in all. Were we all such Josephs, the pedler of hell durst not open his pack; his damned wares might lie like dead commodities stinking upon his own hands.

Let this teach us all to flee the societies of the wicked, lest we follow them home, through their transgression to their destruction. But if I consort with them, I do it to convert them. Alas, there is a great deal more danger of poisoning the physician than curing the patient. They are such as have taken the devil's oath of allegiance; that what he cannot do immediately by himself, he may do mediately by his instruments. To err is the part of man; but to seduce is the part of a devil. It is ill to play the wanton, worse to play the beast, worst of all to play the devil. There have been such cursed men, that delight in the murder of souls. Paul fought with such beasts at Ephesus. The men of Nazareth were worse to Christ than the devil: he says, Cast down thyself; they would violently throw him down, and that on the sabbath day, when they took exception against him for curing on the sabbath day, Luke iv. 29. The Gadarenes but besought him to depart: his own countrymen were worse, for they drove him out. Cain replied, "Am I my brother's keeper?" yet he could be his brother's butcher. These violences indeed are not always in sociable fellows, but subtle and supple fomentations. Persecution hath made martyrs, schism apostates: the former's corrosives are not so noxious as the other's balsams. (Tertul.) We call some devils, familiars. It was thou, my guide, my companion, my familiar, that didst me the mischief, Psal. lv. 13: he that eats our salt betrays us. There is no such speeding engine of destruction, as the friendly seducer; that damns a man in kindness. As a man sinking into the deep water, catcheth hold of him that is next him; so men diving into the bottom of iniquity, pull down their adherents. The sheep make the ground fruitful wheresoever they lie; so the godly make all places blessed where they dwell. But the wicked, like the weed gosses, make the land barren where they grow. When such a one provokes thee to sin, though with the smoothest face; if thou say not to him as Christ to Peter, "Get thee behind me, Satan," yet take thy leave of him, as the angel did of the devil, "The Lord rebuke thee," Jude 9.

Oh that we could see the mischief that evil company doth us! the sins unpurposed, unthought-of, come thus to be committed. Let a tempter but hold up his finger, the sabbath shall be profaned, the word relinquished, and all religion suspended. This man is a harpy that peeks up all the good seed, a great beast that breaks through the fence of God's law; makes a vast gap or breach, and, as my text says, the whole herd follows him. How does Dives in hell now curse his flatterers! If thou knewest whose factor thy ill companion is, thou wouldst hate him. He is such a pleasing murderer that he tickles thee to death; and, like Solomon's fool, thou diest laughing. A good man accompanying an evil, is like a living body bound to a dead corpse, noisome and irksome. When God shall charge thy soul with sin, wilt thou answer, Such a one brought me to it; as Adam, The woman gave me? thou shalt be wretched in sinning, though he be more wretched in tempting. He hath helped thee to much of thy sin, he shall bear none of thy torment. Be circumspect rather with whom thou eatest and drinkest than what thou eatest and drinkest. (Sen.) Leave them;

we offer you better things. Leave them? then must we go out of the world, 1 Cor. v. 10. But have no fellowship with the unfruitful works; and if thou canst avoid it, neither with the workers of darkness. If we must converse with evil men, yet let it not be in evil matters. Love evil men, not in that they are evil, but in that they are men. Love what they are, not what they do; as God made them, not as they make themselves. Affect the man, not his fault; as in relieving an evil beggar, we give to the man, not to his manners. But if by admitting their persons, we cannot avoid their vices, let us deny both. How should we hope, feasting with Job's children, the house should not fall down on our heads? When we find ourselves following evil men, I wonder we do not tremble at their ends. Can we walk in the midst of the fire, and feel no scorching? Man's nature is like the fire; if there be any infection in the room, it draws it straight to itself. Like jet, it omits all precious objects, and attracts straws and dust. Trust not thyself with these incendiaries: cull out the best and follow them: oh sweet is the communion of saints! Worldly mirth is more talked of than felt, spiritual joy is more felt than talked of. I appeal to any man's conscience, that hath been softened with the unction of grace, and truly tasted the powers of the world to come; suppose thou hast tried both, been mad-merry with thy friends at a luxurious feast, sung psalms with the saints in the church; whether of these have most refreshed thy heart? Alas, temporal mirth is like the widow's joy, a blaze and good-night: spiritual rejoicing leaves an impression in the soul behind it, the unspeakable comforts of the Holy Ghost, never to be rased out.

I conclude with three cautions given by three several saints from one most holy Spirit. Follow not a multitude to do evil, Exod. xxiii. 2. Foolish birds follow the kite in hope of a part of the expected prey, when she draws her treasure after her. Fashion not yourselves to this world, Rom. xii. 2: it is a fashion that must be washed off with fire and brimstone. Blessed is the man that feareth alway, Prov. xxviii. 14. Salvianus gives the reason: No man so truly loves, as he that fears to offend. I confess, there be many things lawful that the common people do, but I will suspect that which the common people do. The Jews might give offenders forty stripes by the law, yet they gave Paul but nine and thirty. Perhaps they thought that if they had given the full number, their fingers might have itched to give one more. He that abstains from nothing that is lawful, neighbours upon that which is unlawful. *Nam mala sunt vicina bonis.* The note which comes too near in the margin, will skip into the text at the next impression. Of all studies, let us never study to range in the borders and extremities of our liberty; as, how much of this world we may swallow, and riches not choke us; how near we may come to the skirts and suburbs of hell, and hell not wholly devour us; how much we may drink, and be no drunkards; how far we may wade in usury, and yet escape hell. The devil is crafty and watchful; if he spy our venturesome outroads, and find us extravagant out of our own grounds, he will not lose one inch of his advantage.

4. We must not fall off from the faith and church of Christ, because multitudes travel another way. He that proclaims pleasure and carnal content to all his followers, shall have many scholars in courts, palaces, colleges, senates, fields, shops, offices; for all they love darkness whose deeds are evil. There are few whose faith finds a passage through the strait gate. Of six hundred thousand Israelites but two entered into the land of promise.

*Non facile invenies multis e milibus unum,
Virtutem pretii qui putat esse sui.*

The papists fable to us of St. Bernard, that the fifteenth day after his death he appeared to a certain monk; and when the monk asked whether it were a difficult thing to be saved, he should thus answer him: The same day I died there died also four thousand three hundred, and of all them only myself and one hermit were received into heaven; there was one cast into the fire of purgatory, and all the rest went to hell. For the story, I have not so spacious a faith as to credit it; but I fear of the many thousands which every day depart this life, the greater number take the wrong way. If this be so, strive we to make sure our own salvation; that when many follow these damnable ways, we may be found of that number that followed Jesus Christ. When Agelmond king of the Lombards (be it reported upon Sigebert's credit) passed by a pond into which seven infants were cast, he thrust down his spear, and that infant which took hold of it he brought up from the pool, brought home to his house, and brought up at his house like the king's son; and at last he succeeded him in the kingdom; he was called Lamussio, or Lamussinus, from Lama, a ditch out of which he was taken. So when the great King of heaven came into the world, and the world knew him not, he found us all drenched in the whirlpool of sin, and ready to be everlastingly drowned: he thrust down his spear, the saving gospel; and as many (not many, scarce one of seven) as received him, (took hold on his spear, as it followeth there exegetically,) that believed in his name, to them he gave (not only obtaining for them, nor proclaiming to them, but to them he gave) power to be the sons of God, John i. 12; to be repossessed of the kingdom, and to divide the inheritance with the principal Heir, himself.

5. Lastly, seeing there is such certain danger in following after common copies, give me leave to avert you from all these pestilent examples, and propose to you one worth your praise and imitation. It is the glory of all precedents, the life and excellency of what is good in man, that man of God, and God of man, Jesus Christ. Here is a pattern. The godly, like the eagle, disdain all objects but the sun. It is the marrow of religion to imitate him whom thou worshippest. The Italians got up all the excellent pictures in the world, that out of them all they might make one master-piece, or most excellent picture. The sweetness of all the best flowers makes most sweet honey. Christ in the whole course of his life was a pattern of goodness: in his birth a pattern of humility, in his life a pattern of innocence, in his death a pattern of patience, in all a pattern of holiness. If thou wilt not follow him in his word commanding, yet follow him in his work directing. (laetant.) Now saith Paul, Put on Christ. He is put on two ways; by imputation, and by imitation: the first justifies, the other sanctifies. He is put on sacramentally by baptism: all that are baptized into Christ, have put on Christ, Gal. iii. 27. He is put on internally by faith, externally by imitation. Look unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, Heb. xii. 2: look upon him, and so eye him that you may follow him, and so follow him that you may live like him. That you may say, when thine eyes be baught with ambition, Did he carry his eyes so? Like a lamb before that bloody wolf Pilate, his look was meek and lowly, though lovely. When thou cursest him that angers thee, did he carry his mouth so? No, "Father, forgive them." Thou art provoked with words, and returnest blows; did he carry his

hands so? No, being stricken, he struck not again. "Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners," Heb. xii. 3. Against covetousness put on the contentedness of Christ; against anger put on the meekness of Christ; against wrongs put on the patience of Christ; against pride put on the humbleness of Christ. For as he told Peter, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me," John xiii. 8; so he says to every one, If I lead thee not, thou shalt never come to my kingdom. The painter went to one virgin for an eye, to another for a lip, to a third for a forehead, to a fourth for a chin, to make exquisite the face of his goddess. We need not go to one saint for this virtue, to another for that: for perfection, take Christ, and take all. In him dwells the fulness of Godhead: there can be no want where all is infinite. Let the many follow their own fancies, or the fancies of others; let us follow Christ. This is the praise of those virgin saints, that they "follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth," Rev. xiv. 4. The inseparable effect of justification is obedience: now we follow him in following his, relieving them whether in want or prison, sickness or persecution. And thus he will acknowledge at the last day, with a "Come, ye blessed." Come to me, for you have followed me wheresoever I went. I was hungry, and you followed me with meat; thirsty, and you followed me with drink; a stranger, and you followed me with lodging; naked, cold, and sick, and you followed me with clothes, warmth, and comfort. Whithersoever I went, I had your company; now you shall have my company for ever. You followed me in the regeneration; you shall be with me in eternal glorification, Matt. xix. 28.

"By whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of." I come to the detraction, the cursed effect of their perversion; which is not only pernicious to their own souls, but also derogative to the glory of God. Herein I considered two generals, the patient and the injury: in the patient, the singularity and the sincerity.

1. The singularity; "the way," that excellent way. There is only one way of truth, and of salvation by it. There are many ways in the world, yet but one way of truth. "There is one Lord, one faith," &c. Eph. iv. 5. The Turk hath his way, the Jew his way, the Gentile his way, heretics their way, schismatics their way: though there be almost as many ways as feet to walk in those ways, yet the way of truth is but one. Diversity of ways is sought out; either for peevishness, they cannot abide the common road: because most men pass through the gate, they will climb over the wall; and if others climb, they will creep through. They are so cross, that if authority should command them to wear clean linen, rather than not rebel they would go woolward. Or, for pride, when men seem to go the king's highway, because there they have the company of beggars and base fellows. There are some that disdain the poorer sort, and will rather forbear the common duties of religion. But alas, what brag of estate should there be in the church? there is no spiritual difference; bond or free, all are one in Christ. The emperor eats of the same bread that his lackey doth: the beggar's child is baptized in the same font as the king's. This they disdain, and therefore will have sacraments by themselves, a synagogue of their own. Or else for glory, that their singularity may be pointed at. Diogenes was ducking himself in cold water in a frosty morning: the people beheld and pitied him: Alas, saith a philosopher, depart you to your houses, and leave gazing on him, I warrant you that he will come out quickly, and keep himself warm. There are many ways: as it is said

of Poland, if a man chance to lose his religion, he shall find it there, or give it gone for ever. But truth hath one way, not a second, not another. What so near one as two, yet a Christian must not go so far from one as two. "He that is not with me is against me," Luke xi. 23: whatsoever is not with this way, is against it. Now it is near to impossibility, *ut res oppositas mens ferat una duas*: to write with two pens together, to hunt two games together, to fight with two swords together, to travel two ways together, is a troublesome folly. "Woe to the sinner that goeth two manner of ways!" Eccles. ii. 12. It is said of Solomon that he went two ways, the way of the Lord, and the way of Ashteroth, 1 Kings xi. 5, 6.

Let us all seek this one way, and all false ways utterly abhor. You have but one Father in heaven, Matt. xxiii. 9, and but one way to please him, which is, to walk in this one way of truth. "As many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy," Gal. vi. 16: all other rules are warped and out of square. "One thing is needful," Luke x. 42. "Wherewith shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word," Psal. cxix. 9: all other ways defile, do not cleanse. There are innumerable ways to hell: you may go thither by pride, by avarice, by malice, by hypocrisy; any way will serve to meet at the bottom of the hill, that infernal centre: but still to heaven there is but one way. There is a way to honour, by flattering insinuations into the bosom of princes: there is a way to pleasure, by making the flesh mistress, and denying her nothing: there is a way to be rich, by usury and oppression; there is a way to get offices and livings, by swallowing a simoniacal oath, or putting out the giver's eye by bribery: but there is but one way to make a man blessed, and that is the way of truth. Withal it shall make thee great enough, and merry enough, and rich enough; but howsoever, happy enough. Refuse all to take this way. They write of the stone pyrrhenus, that so long as it is whole it swimmeth, but being broken, every part sinketh. So is man's heart; if divided, it sinks all to confusion; keep it whole to the way of truth, it shall be saved.

2. The sincerity; the way "of truth." Which is that way? as Pilate asked Christ what was the truth, when the Truth stood before him, John xviii. 38. There is a legal truth; God's law is the truth. It was a custom among the heathen, to derive the authority of their laws from their gods, that they might be received for truth; Trismegist to the Egyptians from Mercury, Erontes to the Carthaginians from Saturn, Solon and Draco to the Athenians from Minerva, Numa Pompilius to the Romans from Egeria. But we have from the true God, the truth of God. "What nation is there so great?" &c. Deut. iv. 8. Now if they magnified their laws so full of error, how shall we dare to blaspheme God's law so full of truth? No, let us bless it, and obey it. David in his 119th Psalm beats in every verse upon that one string. The law, the statutes, the ordinances, commandment, truth, &c. of God. There is also the truth of the gospel, Gal. iii. 1. But if this be the truth, then is the other excluded? No, for the gospel is not contrary to the law; neither delighteth in the other's overthrow, but both espouse friendship in a kiss of peace. But it is said, "the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ," John i. 17. But then the law was not the truth; for here seems to be a comparative opposition. No; truth is not denied to the law, but only the truth of justification: the law is true, but not the true means of salvation to us. The law is a condemning truth, the gospel an absol-

ving truth. For if the law could have justified us, God might well have spared his own Son: but the grace of justification, and the truth of salvation, is only by Christ. If ye believed Moses, much more believe me, saith Jesus: if you embraced your thralldom, then much rather accept your freedom. Only, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free," John viii. 32. Christ is called the end of the law; not a terminating, but a fulfilling and accomplishing end. Having then received the truth, so gracious a truth, such promises of everlasting life, from a God so true, they are wretched men that blaspheme it. Thus it is the truth both for the infallibility and excellency of it.

It is certain. It is called "the testimony," Isa. viii. 20, because it bears witness unto itself; so it is called "the truth," because it shall accomplish itself. God doth promise Abraham a seed like the stars for number; and Solomon says, I am in the midst of a people that cannot be numbered: here is an accomplished truth. All the promises of God are yea and Amen in Christ, 2 Cor. i. 20. Abraham in alliance of this truth, ventured to forsake his country, offered to sacrifice his only son. Noah upon this truth lays out money to build an ark. Moses upon this truth forsook the court, to suffer affliction with the children of God. We must all venture on this truth, or perish. When the soul is to leave the body, woe to him that hath not a firm dependence on this truth!

It is excellent, as being the letters patent of our salvation. The law was a killing truth, this is a saving truth. Incomparably fairer is the truth of the Christians, than that Helen of the Grecians. Let my soul not be deficient in believing, and as sure as Christ is truth, I shall be saved. Oh far be it from me to vilipend that truth, without which I were eternally lost! If we had an antidote warranted to us by some naturalist, to preserve our life temporal, how would we esteem it! But for that truth which preserves our life eternal, how precious is it, and beyond value! Let heaven thunder, earth reel, and hell roar, I will hold fast this truth, and be blessed for ever.

"By whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of." We have considered the patient that suffers, let us look upon the injury that is offered to it. "By whom?" and herein two things; the instruments or occasioners of this scandal, those misled proselytes; and the effect or aspersion cast upon the gospel by their means, which is blasphemy.

"By whom." The seminaries of infection have poisoned them, and they divulge that pestilence, to the dishonour of Christ and the scandal of his gospel. Nay, as if their teachers could not do mischief enough, these strive to go beyond them in wickedness. According to that, Matt. xxiii. 15, they make them two-fold more the children of hell than themselves. And indeed, albeit the other were originally the worse, yet these are instrumentally and operatively worse than they. For if false teachers had not store of followers, their heretical positions would fall to the ground, and themselves sink away with reproach and shame. Here occur two notes to our observation.

First, that not only the principals, but even the accessaries in schism are guilty of sin, and liable to punishment. The receiver is worse than the thief; and the abettors of sin do more mischief than the authors. So long as the infected person is shut up, his plague doth not spread: while the evil man doth only be mad at home, his evil lives and dies with himself; the diffusion or dispersion of it is the bane. Let it wander like a fatherless child up and down, no man taking it in, but all shutting their doors against it; the very air will stifle it, it will be its own death. But when

it becometh *filius populi*, and every one challengeth a part in the generation of it, the multitude fostering it; now it stands up in defiance, and, although a bastard, dares challenge the true heir, and wrangle for the inheritance. How ridiculous appears a fantastical fashion, while it is singular in the inventor's wearing and habit! The first apparition of a *hie mulier* was like a monster; but when it had stolen an approbation into women's hearts, and gotten a custom on their backs, now it stood on the terms of justification, called itself a noble accoutrement, and scorned to be dashed out of countenance. It is the many's acceptance of evil, that brings a scandal on the truth. When Theudas had gotten four hundred followers, he thought himself a jolly fellow, Acts v. 36. The pope did once send usurers into this land; they were at first hooted at, like owls in a desert; but necessity forced men to borrow; and when they had store of customers, they stood upon their points for very honest men, (in their own opinions,) and thus the way of truth was blasphemed. The pope might be the father and founder of the sin, but these executioners gave occasion of the blasphemy.

Secondly, the authors of this seducement are not discharged, though their scholars have dissipated the evil. The breeder of a sin is the father of a bastard; and he that kindles a mischievous fire, shall answer for all the harms it doth. Those whom thou hast taught to do ill, increase thy sin as fast as they increase their own. He that breaketh the law, and teacheth others to do so, shall be called least in the kingdom of God, Matt. v. 19. It is easy to be guilty of another's wickedness; for if he doth evil by thy suggestion, thou shalt answer for it. The parent that either commands, connives, or exemplifies sin to his child by pattern, makes himself liable to all the iniquities which that infused habit shall produce. Be not partaker of other men's sins, 1 Tim. v. 22. Therefore a man may be partaker of others' sins. This may be done nine ways.

1. By counselling. Thou advisest, he practiseth, both are guilty of the sin that but the one doth. Aithophel counselling Absalom against his liege, was guilty of treason: so was Caiaphas, counselling to put Christ to death. Some advise and instigate others to that mischief, wherein they will not be seen themselves, thinking thus to extricate and deliver their own souls; but, as the prophet says, they shall perish in their own counsels.

2. By commanding. Thus David sinned in the murder of Uriah; Saul in charging Doeg to kill the priests; Jezebel in commanding the nobles of Jezreel to stone Naboth. This is a sin that sticks to many tradesmen; they command their servants to lie, and their falsehood shall lie on their master's soul. O stay this running sore; and when thou repentest, think not only on thine own personal sins, but upon others' committed at thy bidding.

3. By consenting. Thus Saul sinned in keeping their garments that stoned Stephen: "When the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I was consenting to his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him," Acts xxii. 20: it was the confession of St. Paul himself. It is God's charge, "If sinners entice thee, consent thou not," Prov. i. 10. It is the reprobates' brand, that they not only do evil things, but consent with them that do them, Rom. i. 32. They that consent to the same sin, shall feel the same punishment. Every man's hand is not an able instrument of mischief; but whosoever the instrument be, the consenter is as deep both in the sin and penalty. For *quod deest operi, inest voluntati*: and God values (both in good actions and evil) the will for the deed. Job for consenting to David in the

murder of Uriah and numbering of the people, bore a part in those sins.

4. By provoking. All they sin that provoke others to sin. "Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath," Eph. vi. 4. Potiphar's wife was a strumpet, because she provoked Joseph to have made her one. "She caught him, and kissed him, and with an impudent face said unto him, Come, let us take our fill of love," Prov. vii. 13. Thus libidinous women feed their paramours high, to provoke them to lust. Drink is given to provoke shameful drunkenness; offences, to provoke indignation and blows, that the stricken might be revenged on the striker; but they that thus provoke others to wickedness, provoke God to vengeance. "Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he?" 1 Cor. x. 22.

5. By flattering. When we soothe up others in their sins, this is to make them our own, Isa. ix. 16. They bless the people in their errors, and cause their delinquencies by flattery. "The wicked blesseth the covetous, whom the Lord abhorreth," Psal. x. 3. The flatterer thinks to make all his, his patron's favour his, his wealth his; but withal he makes his sin his, his damnation his. He gets all; he gets entertainment, he gets riches, he gets respect, he gets wickedness, he gets hell, he gets the devil and all. "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil!" &c. Isa. v. 20.

6. By partaking. Be not partakers with the children of disobedience, Eph. v. 7. If you partake of their sins you must partake of their plagues, Rev. xviii. 4. It is just that they who have made themselves partners in sinning, should not be separated in suffering. The same law condemns the receiver, that judges the thief. They may say one to another, as that malefactor on the cross to his fellow, "Thou art in the same condemnation," Luke xxiii. 40. In the matter of bribery, the taking hand and the giving hand shall be equally punished. As they shock hands in the iniquity, so they shall shake hands in the penalty. For this sin Jehu reproved Jehoshaphat, "Shouldst thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord? therefore is wrath upon thee," 2 Chron. xix. 2. In this predicament they stand that prefer bad men to good officers; the faults of that man's insufficiency lie upon the head of his promoter. "Thou hast been partaker with adulterers," Psal. l. 18. To give entertainment to them we know dissolute, is to communicate with their sins: "He that biddeth him God speed, is partaker of his evil deeds," 2 John 11. There are cases, wherein to give a God speed to the wicked, is said to make one a partaker of his evil deeds. "He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house," Psal. ci. 7. If thou bestow on them the offices of thy friendship, thou receivest the blemishes of their fellowship.

7. By silence or connivance. When our tongues ought to reprove, and our hands to correct, the forbearance of those duties draws us into guiltiness of other sins: "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them," Eph. v. 11. While we rebuke not their sins who belong to us, we make them our own. Eli, concerning the sins of his sons, did not connive, nor altogether hold his peace; but because he touched them so lightly, and I reproveth them so slightly, this brought a temporal destruction upon himself and his family. If this fault befall a minister, it is grievous. If a man offend in blaspheming, another hearing it, and being witness of it, "if he do not utter it, he shall bear his iniquity," Lev. v. 1. Nothing more plain; that sin he hath concealed, is as much as if by himself committed. When God says to the wicked, Thou shalt surely die, and the watchman gives him not

warning, "his blood will I require at thy hand," Ezek. iii. 18. Pardon us then in our reprehensions; if we reprove not, your transgressions become our afflictions; and we have reason to love our own souls better than your sins. Not to reprove, were the way to harden your hearts, to make you think well of evil, and to justify that God condemneth. Two ways thou mayst escape the guiltiness of another's evil; if thou consent not to him, and if thou reprove him. Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart, but shalt rebuke him, and not suffer sin upon him, Lev. xix. 17. Not to rebuke him, is to hate him in thy heart: the original carries it thus, that thou bear not sin for him.

8. By defending. When others' iniquities are not considered of us in their true value, but find an estimation far lighter than the gravity of them requires, this is a sin that God abominates. He that justifieth the wicked (as he that condemneth the just) is an abomination unto the Lord, Prov. xvii. 15. Justice would punish a malefactor, but the protection of some great one delivers him; and now the law may put up his dagger. Thus a lewd person need not fear to offend, that hath a great man to his friend, or hath not a great man to his enemy. "The shady trees cover him with their shadow," Job xl. 22. The robber riles a passenger, is apprehended and indicted: the booty he gives to some mighty one to procure his pardon, and escapes. Thus the poor traveller is robbed doubly, both of his money, and all relief of the law; and the protector of the lewd person is become the greater thief. This is a common appropriation of others' sins, when men's wits are set on work to make that good which their malice hath made necessary. Covetousness begot usury, injustice doth practise it, and some are fed to defend it. Pride and profaneness make tithes arbitrary; and is there no man will take pains to justify it? This is to bring the sins of all men that transgress in that nature to become that man's whose pen did patronize such sacrilege.

9. In giving bad example. He that leads men to sin is guilty of their sin. An unruly beast breaks the hedge, and feeds in a forbidden pasture; the whole herd follows: the owner must answer for all these harms. The reproach of Jeroboam was, that he made Israel to sin; not only by commanding, but also by leading them in precedent: and the wickedness of Israel will not be taken off from his soul for ever. In a rebellion, the captains intend nothing but some reformation; but the multitude is not so qualified; they break into houses, pillage, spoil, and commit outrages: shall not the exemplary leaders be guilty of all this? If the master love quaffing, there will scarce be a sober family: he shall answer for that sin in his servants. One peevish teacher broacheth a schism or pernicious doctrine; presently many catch hold of it: thus the truth hath a wound, and suffers blasphemy. He that gave the occasion shall bear the burden, unless timely and hearty repentance recant it, retract it, and his soul find mercy.

Thus easy is it to be guilty of others' sins. Indeed we believe that no sins shall hurt us but our own; but by all these ways we make other men's sins our own. "His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself," Prov. v. 22. His own? why not another's also? Yes, if he make them his own by any of the former conveyances. We have all sins enough of our own, we need not attract others. We deserve punishment enough for what we have done in our own persons; it were heavy for us to add to our vengeance by participation of others' wickedness. In all this let us confess our own guiltiness, and for all this implore God's mercifulness in Jesus Christ.

"The way of truth shall be evil spoken of." Lastly, we come to the effect, or aspersion laid upon the gospel by their means; which is blasphemy, the worst kind of evil speaking. Be the way of truth taken for Christ, who is both the way and the truth; then woe to him that dars blaspheme Christ! Or, be it taken for the true means of bringing man to everlasting blessedness; will any man blaspheme the means of his own salvation? Is the sacred word of truth, which the saints have valued above all gold and jewels, treasures and pleasures, of so poor an esteem with them, that they should blaspheme it?

Blasphemy is now the subject of our discourse; and therefore first begin we with the definition, next with the distinction of it. It is called blasphemy, ἀπὸ τοῦ βλαττεῖν τὴν φήμην, it blemisheth the credit of another. It differs not from αἰσχρολογία, or εὐκαλολογία, evil speaking. They that would derive it from βλάξ, a fish so vile that the very dogs will not touch it, come short; for it is more than a stolidity or stupidity, even a cursed malice of the heart desiring to hurt. The contrary virtue is εὐφημία, a study to speak well of others. It is a vice that offends *in defectu*, depressing and disgracing that is good, and *in excessu*, extolling and magnifying that is evil. For distinction, blasphemy is a speech of derogation, either against the truth of God, or against the God of truth, or against the friends of both God and truth. That blasphemy which is against God's friends and true worshippers, I will lightly pass, because it is not here within the centre of the text, though not out of the circumference.

The son of Rapha defied Israel, and Jonathan slew him, 1 Chron. xx. 7. This sin is interdicted; "Thou shalt not revile the gods, nor curse the ruler of thy people," Exod. xxii. 24. This is the vulgar sin of this world, for the greater sort are apt to blaspheme the better sort. The apostles could not escape it: "Being defamed, we entreat," 1 Cor. iv. 13. Such were the aspersions of the infidels against the Christians in Justin's and Tertullian's times, that their feasts were Thyesteian banquets, that they had promiscuous mixtures, &c. They spake evil of us, as of evil-doers, accusing our good conversation in Christ, 1 Pet. iii. 16. This blasphemy what saint hath escaped? Because God wrought miracles by Moses, they called him a conjuror. Because John Baptist lived an austere life, they said he had a devil. Because Paul spake of Christ's death and our redemption by him, Festus called him a mad-man. They abused holy Cyprian with the nickname of Caprian. When Christ himself cast out devils, they blasphemed that he did it by Beelzebub. Now all these maledictions offer injury and ignominy to God himself: because his saints are the organs whereby he will propagate the glory of his name, they do what they can to obscure his majesty. When that proud Philistine defied the armies of Israel, 1 Sam. xvii. 10, David says directly that he had blasphemed God himself; "I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, whom thou hast defied," ver. 45. Rabshakeh defied the Jews; yet saith Hezekiah, he hath reproached the living God, Isa. xxxvii. 4. The weight of this sin is felt in the punishment. If it be against the magistrate, "a bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter," Eccl. x. 20. If it be against parents, the ravens of the valley shall pick out that eye, and the young eagles shall eat it, Prov. xxx. 17. He that despiseth you despiseth me, saith Christ to his apostles. And in that you have done it to these little ones, you have done it to me, saith the Lord Jesus.

Blasphemy immediate against God is, either by denying God his own, or by ascribing to him that is

not his own, or by abusing that maliciously which is to be referred to his glory. 1. Such as deny his wisdom, justice, mercy, providence; as if he had neither care nor power to redeem his people: The rulers make the people to howl, as if God had forgotten them; and thus is my name blasphemed, Isa. lii. 5. 2. Such as make him the author of evil, load him with affections, charge him with injustice. "Ye say, The way of the Lord is not equal," Ezek. xviii. 25; as if the Lord had dealt unjustly with them. 3. Such as execrate and curse the Lord; and this is the proper acceptance of blasphemy; "They blasphemed the God of heaven, because of their pains," Rev. xvi. 11. Thus too many make that sacred blood which saves the world, and washeth all our souls white, the subject of a furious oath; and fortify the credit of a trifle with those wounds that cost the Son of God his life. What is this but to rend in pieces the Lord Jesus, and to subject him to new sufferings, so far as their malice can extend? For they sin no less, that revile Christ reigning in heaven, than they that crucified him living on earth. Oh that we should be more insensible of this injury, than the very senseless creatures! The veil of the temple was rent, the earth did quake, and the rocks clove asunder, Matt. xxvii. 51. When the Jews heard blasphemy, it was their custom to rend their garments. So when the apostles heard the superstitious Lystrians' intention, they rent their clothes, Acts xiv. 14. Lo now when the Son of God was blasphemed upon the cross, because men's hearts were so hard, the very temple itself rent her veil, her garment, the earth rent her bosom, yea, her very ribs, the stony rocks. So execrable is the sin of blasphemy: some have observed that the greatest sins against God are words; obliquities in speech offend more than those in action. Their blows cannot reach God, but their blasphemies shall fly upon him. Therefore the sin that is never to be forgiven, is blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. He that doth a sin, breaks God's law; he that blasphemes, strikes the person. Such offenders were to be stoned by the Mosaic law, Lev. xxiv.: by the civil law, to have their tongues cut out; as most unworthy to have a tongue, that abused it to their Maker's dishonour. In a word, to derogate any thing from God, is blasphemy. When Christ pronounced remission of sins to the paralytic, the Jews said, "This man blasphemeth," Matt. ix. 3. Why, wherein? Because he forgiveth sins; and "who can forgive sins but God only?" Mark ii. 7. For man to arrogate that which is God's peculiar, they call blasphemy. For otherwise, to heal both body and soul, to cure his sickness and to forgive his sin, had not been to blaspheme, if they had known Christ to be God. "The high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy: ye have heard his blasphemy," Matt. xxvi. 65. Why, what was it? "Ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power," ver. 64. This is God's right, therefore when he challenged it, they say, he blasphemed. Say ye to me, Thou blasphemest; because I said I am the Son of God? John x. 36. Now which way the Romists, in giving that honour to the creatures, which is only due to the Creator, can quit themselves from blasphemy, let themselves look to it.

Blasphemy against Scriptural doctrine, this way of truth. Paul confesseth that in his persecution of the church he enforced men to this blasphemy; "I punished them off in every synagogue, and compelled them to blasphemy," Acts xxvi. 11. "Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by which ye are called?" Jam. ii. 7. He meant, they reproach the doctrine of Christianity. "I know the blas-

phemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not," Rev. ii. 9. This is done two ways, according to the difference and quality of the persons blaspheming; and they are either enemies or friends. If they be enemies, they disgrace it by their language; if friends, by their lives and conversations.

Enemies by their tongues, casting foul aspersions on the fair cheek of truth. They accuse the very sun of darkness, and peace itself of contradictions. To omit the Turkish calumnies, and Jewish contumelies, even they that call themselves Christians, have not stuck to vilipend the truth of Christ. The Romists have called it a shipman's house, a waxen nose: it is little beholden to them, for it hath heard as ill of them, as David did of Shimei, or the living God of Rabshakh. God says, it makes wise to salvation; but they seal it up under an unknown tongue, that the people might be fools still. Harding called it a spiritual dumbness: such a mouth should be made dumb for ever. How do they magnify the writings of their own, how vilify the writings of God! Those, they say, will make men good catholics; these will make them heretics. O blasphemy in the height, that a Jesuit's pen should make saints, and the Holy Ghost's pen should make sinners! What devil durst roar out such a blasphemy above ground? These are they that speak evil of the truth of God; the God of truth be their Judge.

Friends by their bad lives: "The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles, through you," Rom. ii. 24. That men should be in profession Christians, and in conversation pagans, the devils look on it, and laugh at it. The profession of faith, and operation of good works, are the integral parts of Christianity; and in the children of God admit of no divorce. "God hath not called us to uncleanness, but to holiness," 1 Thess. iv. 7. But this is to be called one way, and to run another; as Jonah, being sent to Nineveh, went to Tarshish. "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die," Rom. viii. 13. God shall render to every man according to his works. In our baptism we give a defiance to sin and Satan: shall we re-entertain what we have sworn to renounce? In the Lord's supper we profess to be made one with Christ; now can we partake of the Lord's table, and the table of devils? 1 Cor. x. 21. These are incompatible. Nature itself loves nothing simulated or counterfeit; but would have us know the verity of things from their effects. We know the nightingale by her sweet notes, and can discern the eagle from the vulture by the cry: our manners distinguish us from unbelievers. Suppose a Christian and a pagan were together, and both should swear and forswear; how could a stranger tell, which was the pagan, which the Christian? Anacharsis approved *operum copiam, verborum parsimonia*. Socrates among philosophers, and Hippocrates among the physicians, desired practical orations, and would have their scholars speak little and do much. And if any did not philosophize in his life, they rejected him as a blasphemor of their profession. This is a weighty point, wherein the Scripture liberally spends itself; and out of that armory I will produce five weapons, to convince this kind of blasphemy.

Ezek. xxxvi. 22, Ye have profaned my holy name among the heathen, whither ye went. They should have converted the heathen to the true God, and they suffered themselves to be perverted by the heathen to false gods: They learned their works, served their idols, and sacrificed their children unto devils, Psal. cvi. 35—37. Thus they became twice their slaves; their bodies conquered by their weapons, and their hearts by their vices. Thus the Jews brought them out of love with God, and to mislike his

religion, which they might judge to produce such cursed effects. So the cruelty of the Spaniards to the Indians made them cry, With a mischief what god is this, that hath such blood-hounds and tigers to his servants.

I Tim. vi. 1. Let the servants that are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed. Let Christian servants honour their unchristened masters, lest their rebellion be laid as an imputation upon God, and as a blasphemy upon religion. And the same apostle says that even servants may "adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things," Tit. ii. 10. The lowest condition, blessed with an honest conversation, may grace the gospel. Often it is true, that the lowest in the world's eye may be the highest in God's estimation. While superstition dwelt in this land, how was it adorned! the garments of an idol cost hundreds; and the appurtenances to some, thousands: men gave their estates, as the Israelites their ear-rings and most precious jewels, to make a golden calf. Now the truth is advanced among us, we are so far from adorning it, that we shame it.

I Pet. ii. 12. Have your conversation honest, that they who speak against you as evil-doers, may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation. There be many elected that are not yet called; they are yet out of the fold, but they belong to the covenant by God's everlasting decree. Now the clew whereby God will unwind them out of the labyrinth of error, may be the manuduction of your exemplary life. There be some that shall believe on Christ through our word, John xvii. 20. Now if we live as they live, how can we hope they will believe as we believe? The pagan concludes, If I saw their works better than mine, I should think their faith better than mine. Suppose the robbed and wounded passenger (Luke x. 30) had been a heathen; finding no mercy of the Jew, much of the Samaritan, would he not have embraced the Samaritans' religion sooner than the Jews' yet the Jews' religion was true, and not the Samaritans'; as our Saviour said, "Salvation is of the Jews," John iv. 22. Thus as at the bar truth is often wronged by an ill pleader, so religion is scandalized by an ill professor. The Jews call themselves the sons of Abraham; yet they wanted faith, which was the most glorious grace of Abraham. So many style themselves the children of God, yet have not so much holiness as should make them in any respect like their Father.

Matt. v. 16. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father in heaven. Shall that which should lighten others to heaven, be itself darkened? As Naaman said, I thought that he would come and do something, strike his hand on the sore, &c. 2 Kings v. 11; so we look for deeds, but behold nothing but words: to mine ears he is a saint, to mine eyes a devil. The king sends an ambassador to magnify his state in a foreign country, and he to contract something to himself, by penurious and dishonourable courses, brings his sovereign's majestic worth into question. When God put the sun into heaven, he bade him shine there; when he placeth a Christian in his lower orb, he imposeth upon him an actual remembrance of that which he meant him. Every Christian is a lamp that should shine to God's glory: all sins damp the light, continued wickedness puts it out; and then darkness internal must unto darkness eternal.

Solomon says, A wicked son is a grief to his father, and a shame to his mother. If a man nourish

the son of a stranger, and he prove rebellious, the sorrow sits as far from his heart as the offender is from his blood: when his own son degenerates, the shame redounds to himself. If we belong to God's family, let us show what house we come of, not only by our livery, but by our living. How do the devil and his limbs triumph at the falls of professors! The saints are reproached, the truth disgraced, and religion itself scandalized: this is to shame our Father. The blame shall be laid on the religion, whereas it is because men are not enough religious. Yea, our mother suffers for us, the church is dishonoured; and if any one protestant could be found a traitor, Rome would justify her many thousand treasons by that singular exprobration. His life is bad, therefore his doctrine is false, I confess, is a harsh *non sequitur*: yet will the world so conclude it; and it is a thousand times better that our good lives should prevent it, than afterwards be driven by our arguments to disprove it. We are but sorry friends to God, that give advantage against him to his enemies. We beseech him to honour us in heaven, and he forbids us to dishonour him upon earth: how should men look to be advanced by that truth they have disgraced? Preserve we it from malediction of men, and it shall preserve us from the malediction of God: let us vindicate the truth from present blasphemy, and the truth shall deliver us from everlasting misery, through him that is truth and life, Jesus Christ.

To conclude; the truth is not the less glorious indeed, but in the world's estimation. It lies not in the power of men, or malice of devils, to disgrace the truth; for it shall shine glorious, when heaven and earth perish, and all her maligners subjected under her conquering feet. It is of the nature that God himself is, whose glory is not capable of any augmentation, nor passive of any diminution. He is said to be dishonoured by our sins, to be magnified and glorified by our good works. But let our works be good or evil, still thou continest holy, O thou Worship of Israel. Whether the Turks despise Jesus, or the Christians adore him, still he abides the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever. Such is the immutability of truth, the patrons of it make it not greater, the opposers make it not less; as the splendour of the sun is not enlarged by them that bless it, nor eclipsed by them that hate it. That thing which may be extended, may also be contracted; if it admit addition, it may also suffer diminution: God and his truth are liable to neither. Indeed the blessed Virgin sung, "My soul doth magnify the Lord," Luke i. 46. This word may naturally seem to signify, to make great; but cannot there so be understood. God is so immense, that nothing can be added to him nor taken from him. The sea may be multiplied, the earth swollen bigger, the heavens stretched out, hell enlarged; but God is ever the same. There is nothing greater or more than infinite. In himself he is neither magnified nor vilified, but in respect of others. When we blaspheme his name, we do what we can to lessen his greatness; when we praise his name, we do what we can to augment his greatness; because the former teacheth others to condemn him, the latter to admire him. So *magnificare* is only *magnum significare*; to magnify him, is to express him great. Let men be won by your good works, to glorify God, I Pet. ii. 12. Thy contempt of the truth makes not it worse, but thyself; thy advancing it makes not it greater, but thyself better. Therefore for Mary's giving her soul to magnify God, God doth magnify her soul; He that is mighty hath magnified me, Luke i. 49. It is not we that make free the

truth, but the truth that makes us free; "The truth shall make you free," John viii. 32. When we profess it with our lips, and confess it in our lives, the truth is not beholden to us, but we are beholden to it, that our testimony may be accepted. Our grace is the Lord's glory; the more we are amended, the more he is commended. Thus we may cause the truth to appear greater in us, though it cannot be made greater by us.

So contrarily, by the wickedness of their conversation, whose profession promiseth most holiness, the truth appears more inglorious to others, is no whit less glorious in itself. The truth is great and will prevail; and how big soever they look that blaspheme it, yet still "wisdom is justified of her children," Matt. xi. 19. The Lord will always keep some defenders on foot, that shall glorify the truth; it shall be strong enough in those weak and single adherences, to lay all the enemies on the ground. What hope was there of this event in Martin Luther, when he disliked only one point of popery, the base prostitutions of indulgences in Germany? yet will that God (who glorifies his own power in the disability of his instruments) by that one man vindicate the truth from the universal blasphemies of those apostate times. As Beza wrote of him, not without admiration:

*Roma orbem domuit, Romam sibi papa subegit.
Viribus illa suis, fraudibus iste suis.
Quanto illa major Lutherus, major et isto;
Illam istumque uno qui domuit calamo!*

Rome overcame the world by her power, the pope overcame Rome by his cunning, and Luther overcame them both by his pen. If we now shall wound that truth by our sins, which God hath sent to save our souls, no wonder if we perish by her forsaking us, that have lost ourselves by forsaking her. No, let us keep her, and keep her from unjust aspersions: let us bear her in our hearts, wear her in our lips, and rear her up in our lives, that others may see, and our own consciences feel, we are the friends of truth. She hath made that proffer to the Romanists that Paul did once to the Jews: The truth hath been first spoken to you; but seeing you put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, I turn unto others, Acts xiii. 46. Neither she is come, and by the mercy of God hath long dwelt; let us now leave off to offend her, lest she fly to others that will give her more honour and better entertainment. Woe were it to us, if the kingdom of God should be taken from us, and given to a nation that would bring forth the fruits thereof, Matt. xxi. 43. No: Lord, give us hearts to love thy truth, that thy truth may love us; let her dwell with us while we live here, and let us dwell with her in heaven for ever.

VERSE 3.

And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.

Thy apostle in this verse makes a continuation of their sins, and a declaration of their plagues. They extend the thread of their mischief very long, till hell-fire burn it off; and then they shall find that they have spun a fair thread. They breach heresies, corrupt multitudes, sell souls, as merchants do their wares; cozen men's consciences, colour foul

natures with fair words, blaspheme the gospel, deny Jesus Christ: oh how constant and long-winded are they in their wickedness! But there is a judgment, an unsleeping judgment; a damnation that wakes while they slumber, and shall at last take them napping. The root of their noxious intentions is covetousness; that makes them merchants; they traffic in the bargain of souls, to buy them, not for Christ, but from Christ. Being once cunning merchants, they get smooth tongues, milky language; and like practitioners in that legal thievery, embrace men in their arms, and laugh in their faces, while they pick their purses.

Their heart, tongue, and hand are employed in this project; all have their distinct offices, and they accomplish their duties. The heart dictates to the tongue, the tongue prepares the way for the hand. Their hearts covet, their tongues flatter, their hands traffic. They covet your goods, they flatter your sins, they sell your souls. The root is covetousness, the branches feigned words, the fruit merchandise of men; and there follows the axe of judgment to hew them down, and the fire of damnation to burn them.

In this description of false teachers consider generally,

Their prodition, Through covetousness, &c.

Their perdition, Their judgment, &c.

In their prodition, or treachery against the church, observe that the metaphor of merchandising is used; wherein examine four concurrences,

The traders, False prophets.

The wares, You.

The ground of traffic, Covetousness.

The means of utterance, Feigned words.

In their perdition or ruin, consider,

The severity of it, Judgment and damnation.

The vicinity of it, Lingers not, slumbers not.

First, let me spend a little time upon the general similitude (merchandising) here used by the Holy Ghost. The calling of a merchant is of great antiquity and necessary use; the state of the world cannot well stand without it. *Non omnis fert omnia tellus*: Our northern parts have no wine for the sacrament. Meshech king of Moab was a lord of sheep, Hiram had store of timber, Ophir was famous for gold, Chittim for ivory, Bashan for oaks, Lebanon for cedars; therefore there must be a path from Egypt to Ashur. Merchants are the feet of the world, whereby remote and distant countries meet together. Yet it is a dangerous profession, not only for wreck of life and goods, but also for wreck of conscience; which is not always made in their ships abroad, but too commonly in their shops at home. There be the quicksands of nimble fraud, and the rocks of perjury. Gain is a busy temptation, and they can neither use measures nor balances, but the devil is at one end to do some office. The quest of wealth is dangerous; to seek it by war is injury, by falsehood ignominy, by sea danger, by husbandry honest and safe. I will not say with Chrysostom, Come not near the market, for fear of deceiving or being deceived. (Mic. b. 10. Cassian.)

It is a lawful calling if it be lawfully used. No man is bound to stay at home; he may visit foreign countries if either authority or necessity send him forth. A calling is a good warrant, and it cannot want danger to go unsent. But two things are to be weighed; who must go, and whither. Who: not a feeble and ungrounded Christian. Religion hath in it all statutes, all strengths, children and men. Let a child or a fool be turned loose into the apothecary's shop, that gallipot which looks fairest shall soonest have their fingers, though there be poison in it. He that is unsettled endangers his own infection; he had

need be a resolute Caleb that goes to view the land of the Canaanites. Whither: not a place of enforced blindness and compulsion to idolatry, but where holy profession is free. Is there no trade allowed with heretics? Yes, but not with heresies. We may converse with men, not with idolatries; civilly, not in religion; deal with them in the business of commerce, not communicate with them in their superstitious services. How hateful is a Bimmonite, pretending an upright heart in a prostrate body! Trade with their persons, not with their vices: traffic is allowed, not amity; not friendship, but peace.

All company with unbelievers or misbelievers is not condemned. We find a Lot in Sodom, Israel with the Egyptians, Abraham and Isaac with their Abimelechs; roses among thorns, and pearls in mud; and Jesus Christ among publicans and sinners. So neither we be infected, nor the name of the Lord wronged, to converse with them, that we may convert them, is a holy course. But still we must be among them as strangers: to pass through an infected place is one thing, to dwell in it another. The earth is the Lord's, and men are his: whosoever God shall find the merchant, let him be sure to find God in every place.

Howsoever, it is a profession not without great danger of iniquity; it is a hard thing to keep sin out of trading. A merchant shall hardly keep himself from doing wrong: and the very name of it doth in the common dialect sound unhappily; when to be a deceiver is said, in a phrase, to play the merchant. Nor is the suspicion of it without all probable ground, for the world hath had tradesmen in a continual jealousy. I do not derive merchants from so wicked a patron as Mercury;

Expertos furandi homines, hac imbuunt arte Mercurius;

says the verse. But certainly our Saviour would have found another name for buyers and sellers in the temple, than thieves, if to buy and sell had been of so clear and innocent a consequence. But our customers (say they) are either acquaintance or strangers. If acquaintance, they come in love, and our affection keeps us from deceiving them. If strangers, we lose our trade in losing our credit, if we deceive them. But, alas, what do men talk of acquaintance and love, where covetousness admits of no friend but gain? And for strangers, they are soon forgotten; you think never to meet again, till you meet in heaven or meet in hell. Desire of profit in overprizing, pride of wit in overreaching; these are the principles of brokery, that foul the fairest merchandise.

Such a conceit in a pasquil I have read, where bringing in the states of the world, he appropriates cozenage to the merchant. He placeth together Charles the Fifth and the pope reconciled. To them comes kneeling a husbandman, saying, I feed you two. To them a merchant; I cozen you three. To them a lawyer; I rob you four. To them a physician; I kill you five. To them a divine; I absolve you six. But of all sorts of merchants, two especially would be whipped out of the state; merchants of time and temple. Such as sell time, which is God's fee-simple; and such as sell tithes, which is Christ's inheritance. For us, let us only be merchants of Christ: the kingdom of heaven belongs to such a merchant as will sell all he hath to purchase it. Of all purchases, let us buy Jesus. Be thou never so poor, Christ will sell himself unto thy soul. (Ambr.)

1. The tradesmen or merchants are false teachers. Christ came into the world to buy souls, and he paid

a dear price for them; not silver and gold, and such corruptible things, but the dear blood of his immaculate heart, 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. All his ministers level their courses at the same end, to buy souls for Christ. The price they pay for them, is their labour, vigilancy, prayers. They break their sleeps, spend their spirits, consume their bodies; suffer infamy, poverty, misery; and yet think all nothing so they may purchase one soul. No usurer was so griping and pinching for money, as Paul was for souls. He had a bank in every place; in Macedonia, Antioch, Ephesus. "I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost," 1 Cor. xvi. 8. Why? Because "a great door and effectual is opened unto me;" there is a market of souls. I must to Jerusalem. Why? To purchase souls. After these, he takes God to witness, he did greatly long in the bowels of Jesus Christ, Phil. i. 8. We have a deposit with God, God a deposit with us. Our deposit with him is our own soul. I know he will keep that I have committed to him. There is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, 2 Tim. i. 12; iv. 8. His deposit with us is the souls intrusted to our charge. If the depositary do not return what he may, he is the son of death. Take heed to the flock whereof the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God which he hath bought with his own blood, Acts xx. 28. The whole verse is a purchase; you shall see the good minister's part in it. The seller is God; the buyer, Christ; the thing sold and bought, the church; the price paid, blood; the great Steward of this purchase is the Holy Ghost; the overseers, and lookers to it, are ministers and pastors. Some are too lazy, *not tentantes sed tentantes*; others too busy, *contradentes*: good pastors are *superintendentes*, and good hearers *attendentes*.

God doth not impose on us a purchasing price, that is for Christ; nor a converting power, that is for the Holy Ghost: no more than one man can make another; creation is for himself. Paul says not, I have profited more than all; but, I have laboured more than they all, 1 Cor. xv. 10. God judgeth us not by the souls we have converted, but by the pains we have taken. He will not call us to account for his own work, which is to convert souls. A great patron who is now gone some whither, was wont to say when a minister petitioned for a living, Can he make the drunkard sober, the covetous man liberal, the malicious charitable, then he shall have it freely; else not. But if God should give us no reward unless we converted you, woe were to us. We would have cured Babel, but she would not be cured. We can so far testify; we would have saved you, but you will not. Ask your souls, Who hath believed our saying? Still we preach, and still you continue the same. Nature is bountiful though men slight it; flowers grow though nobody gather them; rivers run, springs fill wells, though none drink of them; we do good, though we be neglected. Indeed our preaching something shortens the horns of sin: though we cannot dissuade men from swearing, yet we get them to forbear it at the church, in holy services.

Thus we desire to buy you for Christ, these seek to sell you from Christ. The gospel speaks still of Christ's buying; "Ye are bought with a price," 2 Cor. vi. 20; vii. 23. To sell that he bought, is to cross the proceedings of Christ. The seller of a man shall die; it was God's law. If any man steal an Israelite, and sell or make merchandise of him, that thief shall die, Deut. xxiv. 7; though he sold but his body: what shall become of them that sell his soul; and that not to man, but to Satan? God complains by the prophet, They have sold my people; as the brethren sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites: little did those merchants know what a treasure they had

bought! As Judas sold Christ to the Jews for thirty pieces: poorly did he value the pennyworth! Thus they sell men to sin, little esteeming the price that a soul cost. The prodigal selling out his inheritance by parcels, now a part and then a part; a friend told him that he never knew the price of it; his progenitors paid dearly for it. His lands being gone, he sold his goods: being asked what he would do at the last, he answered, I will sell myself. When they have sold you, they will sell themselves after you: as Judas, having betrayed his Master, betrayed himself. They shall pay dearly for that they sold basely. When "he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made," Matt. xvii. 25. His principal jewels must be sold for satisfaction. Haply the wicked would part with his wife and children without pity, if he might so escape himself: nay, himself also must be sold, that the justice of God may be satisfied.

2. The wares, "you;" your estates, your liberties, your lives, your souls. They set up a mark of holy things, and with their impostures fill their purses. As Simon Magus so wrought upon the mad Samaritans, that by selling them to the devil he stuffed his coffers with the treasures of blood. And Mark his scholar so bewitched the noble women, that they sold their husbands to buy their sorrows; as Irenæus writes. Of this bran are the Romish merchants, whom we may see in this text as pointed out by the apostle's finger. Their main doctrines are points of merchandise: wherein the devil is beholden to them: for they are content to enrich him with souls, to enrich themselves with monies. They enlarge his dominion in hell, to extend their own possession on earth. What is their auricular confession but a trick of merchandise? A man must confess all his sins, or have none of them pardoned: well, he hath disgorged all the crudities of his stomach; what then? Then must he make satisfaction according to their prescription. You are content to buy out a pardon. Yes, what must I pay for it? You shall give such a sum of money to such a church: so much land to such a college; such a pension to that friary. Here is a cunning traffic, a market made to purpose; thus they increase their revenues through all Europe. Their distinction between the fact and punishment is a merchant's doctrine: the fact may be remitted, the punishment retained; what then? Oh here ereeps in purgatory, a milder fire than that of hell, to eat out the penalty hereafter. What profit is this? Yes, the pope is lord of purgatory, he keeps the keys, which he will turn never without a round fee. Indulgent he is to them that will pay, either for merits of others, or masses of their own. This painted fire in his parlour, maintains the material fire in his kitchen. Thus are the people sold, for who would not empty his purse to escape that burning? Yea, if he be rich, and have any charity, he will pay the fees for all his friends, and release them out of prison. Still the priests laugh, how for maintaining a jest they get money in good earnest.

Their forbidding of marriage to many degrees of men is a pretty trade of merchandise; when they can purpose forbid them, that they may dispense with them. So still the more prohibitions, the more dispensations; and the more dispensations, the more accumulations of treasure. The truth is, policy hath quite eaten up their religion; and to make themselves great, they care not for making themselves, or any other man, good. *Roma dat omnibus omnia dantibus*. The foundation of the popedom was laid in pride, the building set up with rapacity, and now it is kept in reputation with tyranny. The pope is

pontifex maximus; si non doctrina, tamen pecunia maximus. Paul says, "I have coveted no man's silver or gold." Acts xx. 33: but with them, no penny, no Paternoster: they covet your gold more than yourselves. Paul says, "I seek not yours, but you." 2 Cor. xii. 14: they seek not you, but yours. They sell men's estates to beggary, their freedom to slavery, their lives to treachery, their souls to danger of perdition.

They sell you. An evil pastor may sell his flock three ways: by flattery, by heresy, by silence.

1. By flattery. He that encourageth a man in his errors, sells him for his own gain. These are they that sew pillows where they should quilt thorns; that proclaim peace instead of war; that skin ulcers with leutinives; and say, All is well, when God sees and says, All is stark naught. There is a faithful zeal required in ministers, but it hath many hinderances. Such are affection: when parents (not unlike Zaleucus) put out one of their own eyes, that they may not see their children's faults. Corruption: when they are guilty of the same sins. The people argue thus; Such a preacher taxeth many sins bitterly, but you never heard him find fault with usury: therefore certainly it is lawful. Fear of great men; who, like mules, kick when they should suck. Bashfulness; which is in a woman a great virtue, in a preacher a great vice. Now this boldness must not be without meekness. If a man be fallen, restore him with the spirit of meekness, Gal. vi. 1. The original implies, put him gently into joint again. Some are over-bold; that send much talk out of their mouths, before discretion come into their heads. Nothing is more wordy than ignorance; "A fool's voice is known by multitude of words," Eccl. v. 3. Impudent speakers are like the gaping oysters; when you open them, either they stink, or there is nothing in them. He that professeth ignorance, and hath knowledge, is culpable of ingratitude; he that professeth knowledge, and is ignorant, is guilty of a proud rashness. There is a difference between a dumb dog and a barking cur.

Many have too cowardly spirits: a John Baptist were now a great miracle. To do well, and hear ill, is the fate of greatness; but to do ill, and hear well, is the fault of greatness. Envy follows upon justice; therefore often doing well is made to hear ill. But flattery waits upon unrighteousness: therefore doing ill is made to hear well. Tell my people their sins: there is no greater contradiction to that charge, than to conceal men from themselves, or in a false glass to show them their own faces. He that forbears to tell the people their sins, doth not forbear to sell their souls. I could say something to them that control the mild freedom of ministers: "Prophecy not again any more at Bethel," Amos vii. 13. And indeed greatness carries too strict a hand over some, that they are fain to run at their stirrups, and come in at the least rebuke. They are muzzled for barking, and dare not quest; but, like silent setters, hear, and see, and keep counsel. This is miserable, when the preacher must stoop at the pulpit door, to take measure of the people's feet.

2. By heresy; broaching schisms, and factions, and erroneous opinions; as it were feeding the people with bones, or rather with poisons, instead of wholesome meat. The apostle speaks of such, not with malice and contempt, but with sorrow and tears: I tell you of them weeping, Phil. iii. 18. They so fill their hearers' heads with crotchets and simples, that they run about like franties, and cry down all plain-song with their divisions. He that dissolves your union, and breaks your peace, doth what he can to sell your souls.

3. By silence. The advocate that ought to plead, betrays the cause by his voluntary silence. The watchman that doth not ring the alarm bell at the approach of danger, betrays the city to the enemy. If the minister hold his peace when he sees Satan in the market bargaining for souls, he doth as it were make merchandise of them, and take money for them. I grant that as Demosthenes had a great fee for his silence in a cause, so many have gotten preferments by rarity, or rather nullity, of sermons. I envy not their purchase, nor desire a partnership in their merchandise. The Lord keep me from selling that by holding my peace, which he bought by dying on the cross. I will sell any riches to buy a soul; I will never sell a soul to buy riches.

They sell you. Perhaps they bought you first, may they not then sell you? If they bought you dear, would you have them sell you cheap? One might buy a benefice haply of some unsanctified patron (for no hallowed man will sell hallowed things); and will that merchant live by the loss? But to buy is simony, to sell is sacrilege. Christians are the Lord's properties, sanctified and set apart from the world for himself. He that sells them, is guilty in some proportion of Judas's merchandise, when he sold Christ himself. He went to the chief priests, and said, What will you give me? &c. Matt. xxvi. 14, 15. First, against the custom of the market, he did not tarry in his shop or stall, till customers came to cheapen and buy; but he went to them, like a pedler that had no standing: he sought chapmen, exposing his wares; quite contrary to the reason of modesty, which observes that proffered ware stinks. Thus do these merchants keep no markets nor warehouses in public, but run up and down to get trading for souls. They seek buyers, as their master, that seeks whom he may devour, 1 Pet. v. 8. Many a cursed patron and pattern of atheism holds a benefice vacant in his hands, till he hath sold many chapmen with a Who gives more? And then, if Balaam's ass can but give him silver enough, he will sell him all the souls of the parish. Yea, they are worse than Judas: he came to the priests with a How much will you give? he set no price on his commodity, but left it to the buyer: not, Thus much you shall give for him, or not have him; but, Give what you think good, make your own match. But these patrons set a precise rate on their livings: Thus much you shall give: it is worth a hundred pounds a year, and I will have three years' purchase for it; and yet say that I use you kindly; for such and such have taken six, seven, nine years' purchase for their mere donations. Yea, they are craftier merchants than Judas; for it is probable that he had neither ready money nor good assurance, but these will be sure of their monies beforehand, or else a good pawn. And let the best preacher in the land come at such a season, if he bring nothing, he may depart.

Thus are the poor souls that Christ died for sold into the hands of ignorance or impiety; for neither learned nor honest men will be the buyers of sacred things. But when Judas is the patron, Simon Magus must be the priest. Yea, Judas is overdone by these merchants: he sold Christ but once, and thought that once too much; these sell him often, over and over again: as one of them thanked God, that he had turned over three incumbents in one benefice for his time; but he was a popish one, as it is said. Now the chapman that buys this, purporeth to sell it again and to make a commodity of the sheep's wool, whatsoever become of themselves. Like the wolf, who sucks the ewe while he is a little one, and devours her when he is grown a great one.

But let this be spoken to the horror of their consciences, that make merchandise of the church's endowments. Such a patron shall find it hard enough to answer for his own soul; but to have the blood of so many souls required at his hands, it is a question when he comes to hell, whether Judas himself will change torments with him. It is horrible, and would make any heart shudder and tremble, to think that poor people bought and sold on earth, should lie blended in torments with their patrons and priests; cursing the one for selling, the other for buying, their souls.

They sell you. You are private persons perhaps, and this text concerns not you. Yes, strongly in another sense. Beloved, we sell not you, but you sell us; the pastor doth not make merchandise of the flock, but the flock of the pastor. Our hand is against every man, and every man's hand is against us; our hand is against your sins, and your hand is against our livings. There is no fraud or cozenage that less troubleth your consciences, than that whereby you rob the church: yea, this sacrilege is held an action of justice. While you had leaden priests, you paid golden tithes; and were then persuaded, that blasphemy and drunkenness were tolerable sins in respect of sacrilege. But now those that in your own consciences teach you the true way to blessedness, you will be sure to make exemplary subjects of poverty and miserableness. You were then glad to lick up the dust that fell from their feet (no whit beautiful): we are glad to pick up the crumbs that fall from your superfluous tables. It is the pride of this sacrilegious city, that the minister be always the poorest man in the parish.

I do not think it a curse upon us, (as it was upon Eli's house, to beg a priest's office for necessity's sake, that they might eat a piece of bread, 1 Sam. ii. 36,) for we have learned to want; and it is a small matter to fast a day, that we may feast the whole year, in heaven for ever. But it is a curse upon yourselves, of your own begetting, that you may perish in your incorrigible sins; while the poor minister must not dare to reprove his rich benefactor; if he do, he is sure the next quarter to lose his benevolence. Luther's observation is too true; so soon as the gospel revived, money grew dead. Ministers shall not be both wealthy and faithful: rich and not true, or true and not rich; both together were a miracle.

It is Satan's policy, that they who maintain the truth, should not have to maintain themselves. I know that some divines, transported with fanciful views, have refused the positive and unquestionable rights of the church, to feed upon arbitrary contributions; wherein they are more foolish than those friars that have made themselves voluntary beggars. I know that they would retract it now, and shut the door when the steed is stolen; repenting too late that they have betrayed the Lord's inheritance into the hands of impious tyrants, who laugh at the poor minister, when he comes to beg a straw of his own sheaf. This fanatical opinion is not quite dead; we have had such transportive furies amongst us, who would persuade all preachers to live upon benevolences, in confidence of their own merits and popular approbation; for so they hope the biggest share would fall to themselves. But if we appeal, as Bishop Grotius did from Pope Adrian private, to Pope Adrian public; or, as another, from his passion as Clement, to his holiness as Peter; so from them then out of their wits, to them now come again to themselves; we shall find it concluded, that it is better for Christ to keep his inheritance in his own hands, than to stand at their courtesies, who had rather there were no gospel nor preacher in

the world, than that their heir should want a parsonage.

That the altar should have maintenance for her servants, none but those who would give sin a passport to offend, can deny. "Let him that is taught in the word, communicate unto him that teacheth in all his goods," Gal. vi. 6. To go close home to that place, or to bring that place close home to your consciences, would appear harsh to these times. If any man does not communicate, "God is not mocked:" you see how it falls, and I fear it falls heavy on many amongst us. Make *him*, not them: you hear many, one is your pastor; make him partaker. Some will give little to their own minister, but somewhat to another of their own humour. He can tickle their heads with crochets, bring into suspicion the integrity of church government, discredit their poor pastor. I will tell you one mark of a fox; though a puritan, yet a puritan fox: such a one as disgraceth your own minister, that he might get you to heed him, and feed him. If he were a Paul, he would never suffer thee to do Peter any wrong. If he were a good teacher, he would never teach thee to injure thy own minister. "Let him communicate." Pastors have tithes, that they may have a fellow feeling of the people's loss, and fellow comfort in their increase. That the priest as well as the merchant might pray to God in a storm, and praise him in a calm; both alike depending on God's providence. I know they should do so howsoever, but we are men, not angels; the wisdom of God thought it fit by a portion to encourage us.

I know that nothing is more enviously grudged than the livings of our clergy. The gentry hath gotten near upon three parts of the spiritual maintenance, and left the church but one quarter; and yet they could eat her with salt for having so much. The Levites under the law, besides their tithes, offerings, first-fruits, sacrifices, vows, had forty-eight walled cities, with large suburbs for their cattle, large glebes to plant and sow in; whereas their whole land was not so big as England. Now men think it arbitrary, at their choice whether they will give the minister any thing or not. You shall have a civil libertine give a commissary more for a licence to eat flesh in Lent, than to his pastor for feeding his soul all the year. But thou sayest, I give him as much as the law allows: but the law must needs leave something to the liberty of thy conscience, to be answered in a higher court. Wilt thou perform no more duties to God or man, than human law can extort from thee? If we should preach to you no more sabbath days in a year than the law doth exact at your hands, you would think we dealt injuriously with you. Who feedeth a flock, and receives none of the milk? 1 Cor. ix. 7. You partake preachers' goods, and shall not they partake your goods? You must not only give an ear, but an earring: not only put on their wedding-garment, but also give them garments to put on. You have read how villainously the Ammonites entreated David's messengers, cutting off their garments, &c. 2 Sam. x. 4. We are messengers of the Son of David; but, O Son of David, send us not to such Ammonites, as will do us no more good than stripping us of all we have. Nehemiah complained, that in his time the Levites, for want of maintenance, were fain to leave the temple and follow the plough. Luther says, this was the cause why the clergy invented such points of superstition as were advantageous to them; prayer for the dead, indulgences, &c. This was not for the people's souls, but for the priests' bodies; not for piety, but for the stomach. As Abasurus said of Haman, Will he force the queen before my face? Esth. vi. 8; so may Christ

say of these sacrilegers. Will they force my church before my face? If the buyers and sellers in the temple deserved whipping, certainly the buyers and sellers of the temple deserve hanging. Who knows whether they therefore escape correction here, that they may have the greater damnation hereafter!

Men would have fire kept in the sanctuary, but allow no fuel; they would have the lamp burn without oil. To take away the provant from the army, is to betray it to the enemy. In darkness they did strain it, now they restrain it. The world thinks we can live like John Baptist, by miracle; who was in his diet, habit, carriage, indeed a miracle. Offer to God, saith the psalmist, Psal. iv. 5: instead of this *offerre*, the common course is *oufferre*. He that will be a voluntary minister, must be content to be a necessary beggar. So the mendicant friar told the woman of her three sons' fortunes; that one should be a thief, another a homicide, the third a beggar. Which for a second alms he would teach her how to prevent, or at least so to qualify their fates, that they might retain their trades without danger. He that shall be a thief, make him a lawyer; so he may steal by law. He that shall be a homicide, make him a physician; so he may be rewarded for killing. He that shall be a beggar, make him a priest, a friar; so he may beg by authority. God hath made their profession honourable, the world hath made their condition contemptible. Yet they bring saving truth in their mouths, which the lawyers cannot say. A divine can say, This is true divinity; a physician can say, This is proper physic; what lawyer can say, This is true law, and I will warrant it? Yet we reward the latter, and disgrace the former. If our state be questioned, we go to the lawyer for counsel, thank and fee him. Being sick we send for the physician, credit, thank, and pay him. We send for the priest, but neither reward, nor so much as thank him, for we hold it his duty. How rarely hath the minister the tenth of the others' fee! Yet we falsely say, that we prefer our souls before our estates or our bodies.

Thus you sell us; and what is the event? with the price which sacrilege takes for the churches of Christ, is purchased a field of blood. A field of blood indeed, to bury their own souls that thus merchandise, and many thousand innocents that are the chaffer of their cursed bargains. The end of all these merchants always hath been, and always shall be, fearful. For Magus, the father of them, he presuming in a public theatre at Rome to fly up into heaven, caught such a fall that he brake his legs, say some; that he who attempted to fly, was not able to walk. Nay, this bold adventure broke his neck, say others. Felix, Satan's choice friend, died vomiting of blood. In a word, none that ever robbed churches, and merchandise holy things to fill their own purses or fulfil their own humours, but they were overtaken with some horrible judgment. As the eagle that took a piece of flesh from the altar, but a hot coal withal that set her nest on fire. And if the rest do so perish, no good Christian will lament. If they be made like Oreb and Zeeb, that say, Come, let us take to ourselves the houses of God in possession, we shall not mourn: yea rather, our mouth shall be filled with laughter, and our tongue with joy, Psal. cxxvi. 2. God of his infinite mercy forgive England's ingratitude in this kind; and grant that the burning lamps in our temples may be supplied with sufficient oil, that the light of Israel go not out.

3. "Through covetousness." This is the ground or motive of their traffic. It is true of every schism, what was said of Lucilla's faction, with a little inversion: Anger bred it, pride fostered it, and covetousness confirmed it. Here, indeed, pride challengeth

the uppermost seat; it is a high and audacious conceit, which seems to go in the common path that begets it. Anger and impatience of contradiction nurseth it; and what it cannot maintain by reason, a feminine testiness shall outwrangle. Covetousness binds it up with the indissoluble knots; while the sweetness of private gain (not unlike our monopolists) neglects all public good. But as it is the humility of the best judgments, to apply their studies to the confirmation of received truths; and the meekness of blessed understandings, to disaffect singularities; and the charity of Christian teachers, rather to be losers of their own than extorters of others, or to press and oppress the unripe grapes unwilling to yield their juice: so false-hearted schismatics, to do themselves profit, unto they care not whom. Let their bodies famish, and their souls perish, so their own state may flourish: building up their Jericho in the blood of all their spiritual children.

This sin of covetousness is iniquity in all men, blasphemy in a clergyman. As our doctrines are, "Thus saith the Lord;" so our lives should be, if not like God, (for who can match the sanctity residing in that pure essence?) yet like men of God. The titles we bear, the office we sustain, the person we present, the nearness of our calling to that absolute integrity, are remembrancers unto us that we be not covetous. We are men of God, and "thou, O man of God, flee these things," 1 Tim. vi. 11: the apostle insists there upon covetousness. God is a God of knowledge, and of inconceivable holiness; therefore the Urim and Thummim, the light of knowledge and conscience, must be upon the breasts of his Aarons. The minister is to the people as the body is to the shadow; if the body stoop to the earth, the shadow will not be upright toward heaven. Our Master is in heaven, not on earth; our doctrine is from heaven, not from earth; our directing Spirit is of heaven, not of earth: and shall our conversation cross all these, and be of earth, not in heaven?

There is no fault in a minister like covetousness, because there is no sin reigning in the world like worldliness. We may spend our spirits, and preach our hearts out, to dissuade men's affections from this world; if we embrace it ourselves, they will never believe us. When a preacher, as if he had lost all his former time spent in learning, and were now to recover it by a preposterous imitation of the hungriest muck-eaters, gives over himself to that as most precious, which he bids other men give over as most superfluous; men now hearing his sermons will think his doctrine possible to be taught; but seeing his life, they will think it impossible to be kept. What scholar is not ready to imitate his master's exercise? There is nothing further from heaven, nothing more unlike our Maker, than worldliness. It is observable, that those creatures which are nearest the earth are most busy in hoarding, those more remote are less careful. What an abundant provision makes the ant, which is a creature housed in the earth! The birds of the air, that fly next heaven, neither sow nor reap, nor carry into the barn, Matt. vi. 26. How unnatural is it, that they who by their vocation are next heaven, should yet by their conversation be furthest off. How confidently doth the apostle draw on their affections, upon his known unguiltiness of this sin! "Receive us; we have wronged no man, we have defrauded no man," &c. 2 Cor. vii. 2. Receive us in understanding, obedience, charity. Why? Though we rebuke sin, yet we have wronged no man in his reputation; though we preach mysteries, have corrupted no man in his conscience; though we receive our own dues, we have defrauded no man in his state and condition. False teachers are otherwise minded,

subverting whole houses for filthy lucre's sake, Tit. i. 11. As physicians give to sick men potions, that themselves may live; so all their conceptions are others' consumptions. Their mouths shall be stopped, saith the apostle: if not with the hand of human authority, yet with the fire of hell. They are such as the psalmist describes, Psal. lxxiii. 9, 10. Their tongues walk against heaven, therefore the people turn in unto them, and thereout suck they no small advantage. But he that warreth entangleth not himself with the affairs of this life, 2 Tim. ii. 4. A priest in a town is like a fish out of water. What should a priest do in the world's market, or a merchant in the Lord's pulpit?

This vice of covetousness is an epidemical disease, the Grand Cairo of mischief, the metropolis of wickedness, a universal plague that hath infected all conditions of people. Therefore albeit the point here do centrally concern the church, and such as have negotiation in ecclesiastical business; yet circumstantially it fetcheth in all. One moved Christ to persuade his brother to a division of the inheritance with him; and "He said unto them," Luke xii. 15. After he had given him his errand, he directed his speech to the whole auditory, which is said to be an innumerable multitude of people, treading one upon another. So, Luke xiii. 23, "One said unto him, He said unto them;" applying and amplifying his doctrine to them all. "What I say unto you I say unto all," Mark xiii. 37. Some sins are peculiar to some vocations, as to the magistracy or ministry alone; other to some conditions, as to the rich or poor alone; but this pestilence is incident to all: "From the least to the greatest, every one is given to covetousness," Jer. vi. 13. But because most men are like bashful guests, that will fast for want of a carver, that office falls to me here; to cut every one a morsel of this dish; which haply may be against his stomach, but let him well digest it, and his soul will bless me for it.

Now according to the rule of discreet and well-disposed charity, let me begin at home, which is the heart of my text. In the reproving of this sin among others, God hath used to begin at his own sanctuary. Let not us, that bid men look upward, cast our own eyes downward. They will think that we abuse them, when we call them from the world, as Elisha did the Syrian army; "This is not the way, neither is this the city," 2 Kings vi. 19: like foxes, dissuading other beasts from that booty which we mean to make our own. God and mammon are two contrary cures, we cannot serve them both. Some have dispensations for cures distant many miles; but no Court of Faculties can dispense with this, for they are so remote one from the other, that heaven and hell scarce exceed them. "Thou, O man of God flee this." We find "men of the world," Psal. xvii. 14, and "nations of the world," Luke xii. 30; they "seek after these things;" but this "man of God" opposeth those. Paul says not, as at other times, "O Timothy;" but, "O man of God:" it becomes not the men of God to be men of the world.

Let me also reflect this point upon the impropiators of ecclesiastical rights, before I leave the church. Whether they be popish, that steal away our portions to give them to the Romish emissaries; who suck their bloods as they suck our bloods, and laugh at them as they laugh at us. They fat the rich epicures of Rome, and grudge Lazarus their very crumbs. Their conscience serves them, that God's ministers should want maintenance rather than their horse-heels shall want litter. Or whether they be puritans, or any thing, or rather nothing, (to speak most favourably of them,) men without God. How impossible is it that they should not perish with that

covetousness which hath been the perishing of many souls! They will have the tenth of their neighbours' estates, let their salvation go whither it will. They will sooner lose their lives than their livings; as an impropriator once rebelliously and traitorously spoke, when mention was made of the king's willingness in their restitution.

That which the bad servant spake to his good master wickedly, Thou reapest where thou didst not sow, Matt. xxv. 24, may be charged upon them justly; do they not reap where they never sow? It is we that sow spiritual things, and they that reap our temporal things. They thrust their sickle into our harvest; making that profane which God hath sanctified to his ministers; putting an Egyptian trick upon the world, to take away our straw of means, and exact our number of brick in preaching and hospitality. We are put to labour in our ministry, to the care of getting bread for our family; while they look on us with scorn, laugh at us with contempt, and domineer over us with pride. Men dissolutely proud, inordinately avaricious, unserviceably idle, are entered on the means of honest labourers. What if the churchmen in those former times were corrupt in opinion, must their maintenance be given to those that are ten thousand times more corrupt in conversation? This were as Comineus writes of the French king; who having a gallant in his army that cowardly ran away, he took all his offices from him, and gave them to one that ran ten miles farther than he. Meantime, that curse which every eye sees upon the predecessors before them, will continue upon themselves and their posterity after them, so long as the spoilers of Jesus Christ be found with them.

For the common defrauders of our poor remaining dues, as they swarm like locusts over all the land, so their principal borough is this principal city. For men that most plainly and impudently defraud their pastors, of all places in England commend me to London. Honest, honest Pharisees, you are too good to live here, for you pay just tithes! You would be such an example of equity, that some would quickly trounce you, and teach you to be such a precedent. *Non ignota cano*: some would, and dare not, publicly render their legal dues according to the bond of their conscience, for fear the city should punish them. They have found out busy lawyers, to question the tenure of tithes, by what right they are due; and some are cunninger in this point than in the fundamental point of salvation. But who examines by what right impropriators hold the church's maintenance? Let that case be disputed in the court of conscience; and if God determine on their side, we have done, much good do it them. Let God say what he will, thou shalt pay me the tenth: they have a trick to withhold it; but the devil hath a trick beyond them. And howsoever they have wit to fool their innocent mother, they shall never beguile their Almighty Father, who hath eyes like a flame of fire, Rev. ii. 18. The book whereby man's law judgeth the church, and the book whereby God's law judgeth them, have infinite difference. All this obstinate opposing the truth, is for covetousness and ambition. Paul proves Melchisedec the better man, because Abraham paid him tithes, Heb. vii. 4. Therefore by St. Paul's argument, lawyers are far better men than ministers; because men are fain to pay them the tithes due to the ministers. Simon Magus is now justified; sacrilege hath found a Christian patronage. And, men of God, look to yourselves, the Ammonites had took away half your apparel before, now they have a warrant to turn you out naked. Mend them, O Lord, or end them; let them be converted or confounded that hate Zion,

Let them be as the grass upon the house-tops, which withereth afore it groweth up: wherewith the mower filleth not his hand; nor he that bindeth sheaves his bosom. Neither do they which go by say, The blessing of the Lord be upon you," Psal. cxxix. 5—8.

For the patrons of church donations, too many of them have so locked up our livings in this lutch of covetousness, that they cannot be unsewered without a golden key. They look to the gifts of the hand, not to the gifts of the heart. One would think that Judas's halter should make them afraid of Judas's question, "What will ye give me?" What will you give me? Satan gave him a rope. Take heed, lest while you ask the same question, God do not suffer you to receive the same answer. That sin made Judas a thief, and it makes you no better; and what can a thief look for but a halter? We find other merchants selling pearls, and purple, and scarlet, and silks; but these sell also the souls of men. Cursed merchants! that traffic in the blood of souls, Rev. xviii. 12, 13. These bring into God's sanctuary, instead of Levites to divide the word, Gibeonites not worthy to divide wood. But seeing they are content to venture themselves upon God's vengeance, I leave them to their Judge.

This sin is not here confined: covetousness in divers others, though it do not make merchandise of men's souls, yet of their estates. Bribery in officers, which is a burning sin, Job xv. 34. It is one of those three that are called mighty sins, Amos v. 12. They sell a man and his heritage; they are very thieves, Isa. i. 23. Why thieves? Because they love gifts, and take bribes for the widow and fatherless. They are thieves, not for taking purses in the high-way, but bribes in their chambers. Their language is, Give, Hos. iv. 18; and the thieves' is but, Deliver. Now what is the difference betwixt Give and Deliver; yet often Give walks in chains of gold, while Deliver lies in chains of iron. Evil men in the places of judicature make merchandise of the poor, while they spin one cause throughout three generations; like surgeons that keep the wound raw, to draw out of it the more money; that often the recovery of a man's right by law, is as dear as if he had bought it by purchase. Corrupt lawyers are also merchants in this trade of covetousness, and selling of men. Absalom's tongue is in their heads, that says to all clients, Thy cause is good, 2 Sam. xv. 3: so he stole away their hearts, and these steal their estates. The buyer says of a good commodity with less sin, It is naught: than these speak of a naughty cause, It is good. Let them meditate the objection of Joash, "Will ye plead for Baal?" Judg. vi. 31. But they do it out of a good mind, to sift out the truth. Yes, as Judas did, (according to the heresy of the Cainites, as St. Augustine relates it,) that betrayed Christ out of a good and honest mind, foreseeing the infinite good that his death should bring to the world.

All oppressors are free of this company of merchants; they also sell men. "Thou fool," Luke xii. 20: God lays the imputation of folly upon him that hoarded but his own abundance. Whereupon Augustine infers, If he be a fool that lays up his own goods, find out a name for him that extorts other men's. What name? It is found, Eccl. iii. 18; they are beasts. What only kind? Amos iv. 1. No, they are not so kind beasts; but lions and wolves, that are beasts of prey. Beasts they are, and should be served like beasts; Nebuchadnezzar's destiny, to be turned to grass. There is but a company of merchants, a company of mercers, &c.; but these merchants are not in themselves a company, because indeed they be of every company. There be personal

sins, and conditional sins, and local sins, and national sins; but this covetousness is a universal sin.

We are troubled about many things, but neglect that one thing most necessary. Other creatures are content with a little;

*Non ita mortales, quos urget habendi,
Tantus amor; domibus domus, arvis additur arcum,
Monticulus monti, maribus mare, jungere mundo
Conantur mundum, sua dicere cuncta volentes.*

This sin is like a talent of lead tied to a man's heels, that utterly disables him to climb up the ladder of blessedness. Our Saviour hath described eight stairs, Matt. v. 3—10; the covetous cannot get up one step.

First, "Blessed are the poor in spirit:" the covetous may have a poor spirit, cannot be poor in spirit. To be poor in purse is his fear, to be poor in spirit is none of his desire. *Per mare pauperum fugiens, per saxa, per ignes*, Through the sea of deep policy, the rocks of stony bowels, through the fire of lust, the fire of hell, he seeks riches. Nothing humbles him to the sense of his sins, but the loss of his goods; and this so despairs him, that he will be at the charges of his own halter. "Blessed are they that mourn:" alas, the troling in of riches makes his heart too merry for that blessing. If Peter will weep he must go out of the priest's hall. It must be some premature or confiscation, or such a loss that brings him to repentance. "Blessed are the meek." But if he lose his money, he will trouble his own heart, his own house, the whole city, and outswear a ruffian. If his servant but break a glass, it shall be deduced out of his wages. He had rather be damned, than damnified. "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness." But his appetite stands not that way: let him glut himself on the filthy garbage of ill-gotten goods, he cares not for manna. To lap in the foul puddles of usury, he refuseth the streams of mercy that make glad the city of God. "Blessed are the merciful;" but that stands not with his profession. For the penny which comes out of his purse, it is like a drop of blood from his heart. His reward must be accordingly, to have "judgment without mercy," Jam. ii. 13. "Blessed are the pure in heart." What purity can you look for in a stable? There is no mischief so tetrical, but if it be covered with gold, they will swallow it. "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart," Psal. xxiv. 3, 4. *Innocens manibus ascendet, but mundus corde stabit*. The covetous keeps his hands too guilty to ascend, his heart too foul to stand there. "Blessed are the peace-makers." He loves peace so long as it waits upon profit: if otherwise, he hates it; and instead of a making it, will make it nothing: he hath a lawyer for the purpose. All his dues to pay, he out wrangles: if a debtor fall into his hands, the devil will as soon pardon a forfeit. The last step is, "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake. This he will never endure. If it should come to that choice that he must leave either Martha or Mary, righteousness or riches, he loves God well, but his money better. What, part with a certainty for an uncertainty? If he can keep both, well and good; if not, whatever betides, he will keep his money. It would sound terrible, to invert our Saviour's terms upon him: Cursed is the covetous, for he is not poor in spirit, but proud in spirit; therefore his is the kingdom of hell. Cursed, for he never mourns for his sins; therefore shall not be comforted. Cursed, for he is not meek, but forward in heart; therefore he shall not inherit the earth he so desires. Cursed, for he longs not after righteousness, but after riches; therefore shall never be satisfied. Cursed, for being

unmerciful, he never shall have mercy. Cursed, for he not makes peace, but breaks peace; therefore shall be called the child of the devil. For pureness of heart, and patience of hurt for Christ's sake, he is a professed enemy to them both; therefore must inherit the curse.

4. The means of their utterance, "feigned words." Heresy was never found disjoined from hypocrisy. As it is said of the liar and the thief, Show me a liar, and I will show you a thief; so, show me a schismatic, and I will show you a hypocrite. Their speeches are so ambiguous and equivocal, that they seem to hold both ours and our adversaries' tenets. With heretics they are heretics, with catholics they are catholics. The cup of poison had need be anointed with honey, to allay the bitterness. What they cannot perform by the evidence of truth, they seek to attain by the eloquence of art. St. Paul affirms his preaching to be, "not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power," 1 Cor. ii. 4. They, on the contrary, come not with the demonstration of the Spirit, but with the impostures of oratory. Thus are all those Italianated emissaries qualified, whom the grand Cæsar of the western world sends abroad; being first thoroughly instructed in the cunning legerdemain of their divinity. The fittest denomination and fundamental principle is, that "gain is godliness," 1 Tim. vi. 5. For their doctrine emptieth itself from point to point into the church's treasure. They most unjustly exchange their lead for gold, which the French lawyers account no better than robbery. Heronpon their Paternoster and Ave maria have been worthily called, the two Neapolitan thieves. They "devour widows' houses, and for a show make long prayers," Luke xx. 47. They are thieves in that spiritual kind of sacrilege, that do *πλάστοις λόγοις*, with feigned words cozen men's souls. Neither doth this art of dissimulation limit and content itself with the bare narration of untruths, and suggestion of errors in the credulous adherents; but it extends to perjury, and that we call equivocation.

Thus they do not only speak vainly, but swear falsely, which is proper perjury. Morally the end doth determine natures; and that which doth precisely cross the good end, must needs be most directly opposite to the virtuous nature. The scope and purpose of an oath is for confirmation, therefore none so directly crosseth it as false swearing; whether it testifies falsely of things past or present, as in an oath assertory; or undertake things *de jure vel de facto*, possible without performance, as in an oath promissory. Which principles of perjury being their dogmatical positions, we have good cause to mistrust them; for by the benefit of this politic invention, they can say what they will, swear what they will, against knowledge, against conscience; provided that they reserve in mind the contrary. Think of this, you that have an itch of travelling beyond the Alps upon you. With what security can you converse with them, that pervert the formal intent of words? as if speech had been ordained for concealment, and not for discovery of our minds. What fruit or safety is in their society, that poison the remedy of contention, and cancel all seals of confirmation? But they that have broken their faith with God, will keep no faith with us. When they had lost the sincere truth of the gospel, they determined on this doctrine of the devil: to keep no faith with heretics. They can feign words, and coin distinctions, but all is their old trade of merchandise, Rev. xviii.

Here is the description of hypocrites; they are all words, smooth, unctuous, and feigned words. Christians in the skin, devils at the core. Like the Armenian dragons, that have cold and squalid bodies; yet cast fire out of their mouths. Such was that Dio

genes Sinopensis; in opinion a Stoic, in conversation an Epicure, a fool in both. That apostate Julian so wrote of himself, that he had a busy tongue but a lazy hand. Their rhetoric is pretty and their logic witty, but their practice is naughty. They gape like sea-fishes, so wide as if they would devour the whole ocean: rip them up, and search their interior, and you find no water within them. Cruelly, that is, open malice, is hurtful; but hypocrisy, secret malice, is most pernicious. A player and a hypocrite are all one with the Greeks: hypocrites are the devil's company of players. As men sometimes play in the shapes of devils, so devils play in the shapes of men. As Christ to deceive the devil took man upon him, so divers to deceive man take the devil upon them. Satan's best trading is by metamorphoses and transformations. He once changed himself from an angel of light to a devil; so now he would change himself from a devil to an angel of light. What is true of every evil, *Quanto interior, tanto deterius*, holds strongest in hypocrisy. Pagans allow us peace, heretics peace, hypocrites no peace. The church's persecution by tyrants was bitter, by heretics more bitter, by hypocrites most bitter. There is scarce a house in the world, but it is haunted with this kind of spirits; familiars, visible and carnal devils, familiar hypocrites. "Fear, and the pit, and the snare are upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth," Isa. xxiv. 17. Either the fear of tyranny, or the deep pit of policy, or the snare of hypocrisy, continually assault us. But as Christ said to his apostles, "He that receiveth you receiveth me;" so he that deceiveth you deceiveth me. Ananias lied unto Peter; Peter tells him that he had lied to the Holy Ghost. It is well observed, that many men's religion is like the adverb *quasi*: which denotes a picture, not a nature; an appearance rather than an existence; likeness, than a true being: "as it were." So the locusts are described; As it were horses prepared to the battle, and on their heads as it were the faces of men, &c. Rev. ix. 7. They were not horses, but as it were horses; had not crowns, but as it were crowns; not faces, but as it were faces of men; not hair, but as it were hair of women; not teeth, but as it were teeth of lions; not breastplates, but as it were breastplates of iron. Their whole description runs upon as it were: they had not tails, but as it were tails of scorpions; but in those tails were stings, not as it were stings, but stings indeed: the farewell of hypocrites is deadly. All their balms are as it were balms; but their stings are pernicious indeed. They draw near to God with their lips, not with their hearts; so God's blessing may shine upon their outward estates, but it shall never come near their hearts. A hypocrite is like the Sicilian Etna, flaming at the mouth when it hath snow at the foot: their mouths talk hotly, but their feet walk coldly. With the Jews they cry thrice over for failing. The temple of the Lord; without once regarding the Lord of the temple. One writes of the onyx, that about the centre it is of an earthen colour; on the circumference, azure, or sky-colour. Hypocrites have a heavenly garb on the outside, but an earthly heart in the centre. They think themselves so holy, that they cannot choose but be saved; but confusion of sins becomes the just, and defence of merits the proud. (Royard.) Good men give God *fructum laborum*, the fruit of their labours; hypocrites think it enough to give *fructum laborum*, the fruit of their lips. Four days in a week he will spend in hearing, not one hour in a month in doing good. The Latins do not so much call him *falsus* as *falsus*; more by the passive, than the active; he but thinks to deceive, he is sure to be deceived. Yet methinks he should

not so flatter himself, as to think that he can be too cunning for Satan.

As rebels make their proclamations in the name of the king, and pirates intending to rob merchants hang out the flags of other nations, both to scandal them and to conceal themselves; so do hypocrites wear Christian colours that they may be the devil's cozeners. I would they were no worse than the nightingale, *rot et præterea nihil*, nothing but voice; but they have a sweet voice and a pestilent hand. Rome broacheth all her poison under the name of Christ; but pull off her borrowed livery, and she is a church apostatical, not apostolical; not militant, malignant; not for God and for Gideon, but for anti-christ and for Babylon. Their *prælati*, *Pilati*; *speculatores*, *spiculatores*. (Bern.) The hypocrite loads Christ with many sins, therefore Christ loads him with many woes and curses, Matt. xxiii. It is not enough *dicere faciendū*, but *facere dicendū*: Saul was not a saint because he did once prophesy, nor is every one a believer that talks of faith. An apparent wickedness of life cannot be excused by pure language among wise men: that deceives the ignorant, and upon such a ground the simple man thought: Pontius Pilate a saint, because his name was put in the creed. Hypocrites refuse our ministry, our congregations, our society, they scorn to be with us; but herein they do us a kindness, for we are blest in being out of their company.

Hypocrites think that they do all their villany now unseen; but the Judge beholds, and the day of retribution shall lay them open. The just Lord doth bring his judgment to light every morning; but the unjust knoweth no shame, Zeph. iii. 5. The unrighteous will not yet be sensible of shame, though the Lord bring his judgments to light every morning. Still he encourageth his sin with this supposal, My master is gone into a far country, Luke xii. 45. "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, the heart of men is fully set in them to do evil," Eccl. viii. 11. Tush, the Lord sees it not, neither doth the Highest regard it. Because thou art one of those scape-goats, in whose temporary reprieve the Judge of all flesh doth but represent the necessity of his last assizes, shall not thy skin of hypocrisy be pulled over thine ears, and thy feigned words be made an evidence against thy wicked deeds? When an architect proffered Livius Drusus, a heathen, to build him a house free from the sight of all men; he desired him rather, if he had any skill, to build it so that all men might see whatsoever he did. So clean should be our hands, and so honest our hearts, as if our bodies were transparent, and men might see through us. Howsoever, God sees here, and men shall see hereafter, the shame of the wicked: "Their folly shall be manifest unto all men," 2 Tim. iii. 9. Now they lie, dissemble, swear, forswear, in a desperate madness: as if a malefactor should swagger at the foot of the gallows, because there are some few rounds of a ladder between his neck and execution. Yet a little, and behold the Judge in the clouds, the only visible Person in the Trinity; over a place, though not the same, yet as conspicuous as the valley of Jehoshaphat; the books all open, and the secrets of all hearts manifest. When that Sun of justice shall appear, hypocrisy (that cold glow-worm of the night) shall lose her van-glorious shining. These feigning and fawning counterfeits, whose tongues are the tongues of mountebanks, their hands the hands of painters, and their lives the lives of players; which neither did what they said, nor said what they did, nor were in any point the same they seemed; they all must now appear in their likeness. The rotten

inside shall be turned outwards, and painted sepulchres of stones shall turn out more painted sepulchres of men. Blessed souls then, in whose mouth there is found no deceit! Rev. xiv. 5; happy Israelites, in whom there is no guile! John i. 47. Such let us all be, that we may be redeemed from the earth, and like pure virgins be received into the bosom of Christ. Whenas that spurious generation of Loyolists, that cozen all laws and magistrates with their bastardly doctrine of equivocation, shall be rejected from the Lamb because guile and feigned words are found in their mouths. Our God is the God of truth, Christ is the word of truth, the Holy Ghost is the Spirit of truth; let us all be children of truth; casting out dissimulation from our habits, guile from our mouths, hypocrisy from our hearts; that we may live on Mount Zion with the Lamb of God, our glorious Jesus, for ever.

"Whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not." This is their perdition: wherein consider the severity or extremity of it; it is judgment, and damnation: the vicinity or propinquity and nearness of it; it lingers not, slumbers not. First for the extremity, set down in two terms, judgment and damnation. Which howsoever some refer to one and the same thing, their eternal confusion, yet, because judgment properly and in order goes before condemnation, as the malefactor is arraigned and judged before he be executed; so I am willing to distinguish these two, judgment into their punishment temporal, and damnation into their punishment eternal.

The sum is this; there are certain plagues ordained for liars, and the teachers of wickedness. Be not deceived with their glorious shows, sumptuous magnificence, mountains of honours, piles of riches, victorious triumphs (as they vaunt) over the truth; for this world will not last ever with them. If you see faithful ministers discountenanced, impoverished, persecuted, and these impostors advanced, supported, honoured, yet totter not in your faith: their casting down and your lifting up is near; neither shall they living escape judgment, nor dead damnation. God suffers them to riot upon his forbearance, and to grow luxurious on his mercies; but there is a rod of judgment made, and a caldron of damnation set a boiling for them. The Lord shall consume them with the breath of his mouth, and destroy them with the brightness of his coming, 2 Thess. ii. 8. First, therefore, lest any believers should stumble at their temporal prosperity, whereby they bluster and domineer in the world, they shall see their judgment; and then, that they may avoid them, observe the confusion that is ready to swallow them. "Depart from the tents of these wicked men, lest ye be consumed in all their sins," Numb. xvi. 26. "Be not involved in their sins, lest ye be dissolved with their plagues. This whole discourse I will resolve into certain extractions, observations, and inferences.

1. Their "judgment." The menaces of God are not always followed with an infallible event, being sometimes on purpose signified, that they may be by penitence prevented. Consider this fearful curse for a part of God's counsel, then followeth an absolute ratification of it. "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure," Isa. xlvii. 10. Who hath resisted his will? None can or shall do it by their power; if they do attempt it, be it at their peril. For even in that they have done against his will, his will is done upon them. (August.) None but the King of kings hath right to the style imperial, (I will, or I will not,) without all limitation: because his will and power be matches only; and when his decree hath gone before, an answerable success doth

ever attend it. Therefore for the correction of those merchants, who would traffic without God, and resolve on voyages without his passport, the apostle chargeth all human language to observe that necessary parenthesis, "If the Lord will," Jam. iv. 15. William Rufus proudly threatened, from the rocks of Wales to make a bridge over into Ireland. But a prince there understanding that he asked no leave of God, answered, that he never feared that bridge whose foundation was not God: the name of whom the king had omitted, in a presumptuous confidence of his own strength.

If it be the Lord's determinate decree, this judgment shall come upon them. But because God often threatens before he once strikes, allow it not so absolute, but that it may admit an intervention of repentance. When God threatens to pull down, pluck up, and destroy a nation, if that nation shall repent of the evil they have done, God will repent of the evil he thought to do, Jer. xviii. 7, 8. But whosoever shall continue in this blasphemous course of disobedience, their judgment shall hasten, and their damnation not linger. "The consumption decreed shall overflow with righteousness," Isa. x. 22. To close up the passage or hinder the course of Divine justice, will be more impossible than for a man to stop the flowing of the sea with his arms, or to beat back the lightning into the clouds with his breath. The name of God shall be famous in every sinner's infamy. The wicked may as soon steal the book of vengeance out of God's hand, as steal themselves from the plagues written in his book: their judgment shall come. They can no more flee the power of their Judge above them, than they could stand still if there were an earthquake under them. There is no appeal from this tribunal: no writ of error lies against this Judge, though he be both Judge and party; because he can neither be overborne, nor overseen. It is the Lord of hosts that can muster up plagues out of the dusts of the earth; that strong man, that will break forth in a martial manner against his enemies.

2. For whose sake doth God execute judgment and confusion upon these false teachers, and cut off the instruments of sedition and error? For his own glory and the church's good, that they may no longer cozen men's souls with their impostures. God hath two sorts of works; some of position, some of privation. His positive works are those of creation, making heaven and earth; of supportation, bearing up all things with the word of his power; of redemption and reconciliation, "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself," 2 Cor. v. 19; of restitution and reparation, "the times of restitution of all things," Acts iii. 21. Thus he giveth, maintaineth, or bettereth the being of things. Which we now clearly read in the book of nature, more clearly in the book of grace, most clearly shall read in the book of glory. His privative works are of judgment; corruptive, destructive works; acts of desolation; destroying the annoyances of his saints. Both these he appropriateth to himself; "I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal," Deut. xxxii. 39. Now in these desolating actions of his justice, the only end is not to mar, destroy, and deprive of being, but to further the growth of the church; as a man roots up the weeds of his garden, that the good herbs may grow the better. "Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?" Luke xiii. 7: why does it take up the room where a good plant might prosper, and bring forth acceptable fruit? So that their corruptions are our generations, their desolations our consolations, their impairings our reparings, judgments upon them are creations, recreations to us; as God destroyed the Canaanites, to make room for the

Israelites. "God is the Judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another," Psal. lxxv. 7. "He breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire," Psal. xlvii. 9. Those instruments of spoil and murder; the bow that kills afar, the spear at hand, those winged chariots, with hooks and scythes to mow down all their opposites; these doth the Lord disappoint and desolate. Those menaces against his children, and insolences against his own majesty, his justice doth retail into their own bosoms. That 88 for a year, and 5th of November for a day, put us in mind of such an intended destruction, and such an intervenient desolation; as that day and year shall be for ever both famous and infamous for. It is the ruin of enmity, that is the resurrection of peace; unless severity be showed to our adversaries, security cannot dwell in our streets. Our redemption was a work of this nature: sin by the devil, and death by sin, not only entered, but triumphed over the world as a tyrant, Rom. vi.: like Alexander, *pervenimus ad solis ortum et occasum*. Now because no man hath lived and not sinned, or having sinned should have lived, or could have escaped the second death by reason of his universal usurpation of sin; therefore there came a work of destruction between, that disappointed the work of death. "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil," John iii. 8. He razed, spoiled, unharnessed those principalities and powers, Col. ii. 15: confounding our enemies, that we might be saved. So still doth he deal with all the instruments of Satan: their judgment and damnation is hastened, that deliverance may be to all that trust in him.

3. Though the Lord will judge these wicked persons, yet this forbid not magistrates to execute their justice upon them. They that are called after God's own name, seated on his own throne, armed every way with his own authority, let them also bring forth judgment, in imitation of their Father. It is a cruelty that is showed to incorrigible offenders; like water poured upon lime, that instead of quenching, doth inflame the furious heat of sin. "Let favour be showed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness," Isa. xxvi. 10. "I know that the life of man is precious: yet is the life of the whole church more precious. And though in less important things judges may proceed on by fair and not fast degrees, yet in such capital causes as endanger the whole, the expedition should be more quick and peremptory. "I will early," or in the morning, "destroy all the wicked of the land," Psal. ci. 8. It was David's morning work, let none put it off to the evening of their declination; as the setting sun makes the larger shadows. This killing preservation of notorious and insufferable offenders, is a discouragement to them that in the most desperate times dare keep a good conscience. If popish incendiaries may be tolerated to make merchandise of men's souls, and never be judged for this: what remains, but that we appeal to a greater court, and open our grievances to a higher Judge? no judge dormant: whose sentence is no dead letter, but a determinate oracle, without admission of either appeal or reprieve. If they hold their peace, enlargement and deliverance shall arise from another place: but they and their fathers' house shall be destroyed, Esth. iv. 14. "God shall bring every work into judgment," Eccl. xii. 14: every work, not one shall escape: with every secret thought; not the work only, but even the thought, and that he never so deeply laid up in the heart; to cut off all opinion of secrecy, as well as of impunity. Sinners shall hear and fear; and woful experience shall wring from them this acknowledgment,

that when God enters into judgment, no sinful flesh shall be justified. Judgment, that rough handmaid of heaven, remains still a virgin: neither power can force her, nor wealth win her, nor any thing in the world corrupt her. "The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance: he shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked. So that a man shall say, Verily there is a reward for the righteous: verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth, Psal. lviii. 10, 11.

4. Their "judgment." Their own; as proper to them as the inheritance they have bought with their monies. They "forsake their own mercy," Jonah ii. 8, the mercy that might have been their own, to embrace vengeance, which they have made their own. So it is said of dead Judas, he went into his own place, Acts i. 25. As the stone naturally inclines to the centre, the proper place and home: so the wicked are never at home, and in their proper place, till they be in hell. "The rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous," Psal. cxv. 3. It is their rod, made for them; if God scourge his children a little with it, he doth but borrow it from the immediate and natural use for which it was ordained: their rod, their judgment. So it is called their cup: "This is the portion" and potion "of their cup," Psal. xi. 6. If the godly be made to taste a little of the top, it is but a draught lent from their cup; but the dregs thereof the wicked shall wring out, and drink off, Psal. lxxv. 8. Their end is damnation, Phil. iii. 19; such an end can come to none but themselves. Theirs; it is as surely their own, as if they already had it. "He that believeth not is condemned already," John iii. 18: as we say of a sentenced malefactor. He is dead in law.

Whence infer, that sin doth naturally draw on punishment; and is like the thunder that breaks the cloud, and makes way for the lightning of God's vengeance. Whosoever presumption goes before, destruction follows after. When the evil servant had not to pay, his Lord commanded him to be sold, his wife and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made, Matt. xviii. 25. The wife may be taken for concupiscence, the children for fruits of it. Or thus, the wife of the covetous is avarice, the wife of the haughty is pride, &c. These things are very dear to them, but they must be sold. The children of Israel committed fornication, "and fell in one day three and twenty thousand," 1 Cor. x. 8. There is punishment of sin, 1. In the full measure, they fell; nothing bated of utter ruin. 2. In the full number, twenty-three thousand; a few examples would not serve the turn. 3. In the due time, in one day: no long forbearance. For the measure, it was not sickness, not lying before enemies, not scourging, but death: they fell: either by plague, or some other immediate judgment: some of them were hanged up against the sun. For number, the apostle speaks of three and twenty thousand; but, Numb. xxv. 9, there is mention of one thousand more. Paul did not exceed the number; nor doth the Scripture tie itself always so precisely. It is most probable, that the princes with their servants that were hanged up, made up the other thousand. For time, it is in one day: no space of preparation, they presently fell. Thus if adultery walk in our streets, the plague will bear it company. God is angry with all sin, but his wrath is most hot against universal sin: thousands fall, a whole army of men. When God rides his circuit, he will strike fearfully: with death, with general death. Universal sin will bring universal destruction; and it is his great mercy, if he do not always punish so generally. All offend, some only are punished; because so it pleaseth him. There is no

policy against God's judgments: Cæsar Borgia is made, by Machiavel, a precedent of policy to princes: yet he was caught at his own trick. The escaping for awhile, is no argument of exemption: God's temporal plagues are but short excursions before the main battle.

5. Their "judgment:" but is it so certain theirs, that no repentance can prevent it? Yes, serious repentance may avert the vengeance, if their gracious God gives the repentance. For the apostle makes a prophetic prediction of such heretics as should invade Christ's flock after his time: and threatens them with the malediction of God, if they attempt such impostures. By which if they receive warning, and lay it to heart, they may avoid the sin, and so escape the denounced judgment. And this hath ever been the mercy of our God, that he will speak before he strike; and preach the lecture of premonition, before he pronounce the sentence of perdition. And this is a course that shall make men either preventively thankful, or inexcessively desperate.

It is a question among philosophers, whether it be better to know or not to know future evils; and this dispute is crept into the schools. Erasmus, opposing the astrologians, held all prognostications and predictions unprofitable: for if they foretold joyful news, they decrease our future pleasure; if evil tidings, they increase our present pain; the fear of danger being often more bitter than the danger itself. Thus Favorinus reasons: (Apud Gellium. lib. 14.) Either adverse or prosperous fortunes are foretold. If they say prosperous, and those fail thee, thou art made miserable by thy vain expecting; if adverse, and those thou escapest, yet thou art made miserable by thy vain fearing. Howsoever, thus wretched is a man made by a false prediction. Suppose they foretell a truth: let it be calamity; thy own mind shall afflict thee, before fate touch thee. Let felicity be promised and come, yet here are two inconveniencies. First, our mind will be tired with expectation, and our joy be abated before the object reach us. Again, hoping for a prosperous estate to come, we grow idle for the present. Men of an indifferent fortune having (after the expiration of some years) a great inheritance assured them, prodigally spend that which is for that which shall be; yea, they spend that which shall be before it is.

But they run this argument beyond a gallop: let them take truth along with them. Whatsoever Erasmus and Favorinus have written, more subtly than soundly, in this argument, it is a conclusion acknowledged by all sober men, that it is better to know a calamity before we feel it, than to feel a calamity before we know it. Indeed, any unhappiness that ariseth from prescience, is only incident to a weak mind. Where there is not a well-fortified reason, there expectation makes an evil greater and a good less. But in a resolved mind, it digests an evil before it comes, and makes a future good long before present.

First, they say, evil foretold racks a man with as much torment of fear, as, when it is present, it doth with torment of pain. Nay, but it rather pre-arms the well-tempered mind, either to conquer or to suffer, and in suffering to conquer. He that hath already borne the burden, and overcome the extremest brunt, takes up the cross with joy; he counts it his joy to fall into trial, Jam. i. 2. and out of trouble extracts peace. When the prophet's servant saw the host of chariots compassing the city, he cried out, "Alas, my master! how shall we do?" Elisha answered, Fear not, there be more with us, 2 Kings vi. 15, 16: he knew it before. When Satan thinks to scare thee with sorrows, and says as Delilah, The Philistines be

upon thee, Samson, there is an army against thee; answer, I fear not, my soul knew that before, and I have by prayer made my provision against them. The burden seems light that hath been borne before.

But then they say, suppose the threatened evil comes not, then in vain thou hast disquieted thyself with a needless fear. Nay, but I have bettered my soul by a cautionate repentance. Nineveh was menaced, Yet forty days and it shall be destroyed. They quaked, and repented in sackcloth and ashes, turning from their wickedness: Nineveh stood still. Did they lose any thing by their sorrow, fasting, humiliation? No, their conversion saved them from subversion; had they not sorrowed, they had been destroyed indeed. No man is the worse for his repentant grief: if the evil do come, it is a labour well spent; if the evil do not come, it is a labour well lost. If the body be not the worse, yet the soul is the better.

But would it not have doubled Saul's sorrow, if he had known that he was to fall on the mountains of Gilboa, and that his enemy should succeed him? Could Biron the French marshal have been so merry at the banquet, had he known his instant arrest for treason? Would Julius Cæsar have gone to the senate, knowing his ruin there? These be poor exceptions against the forewarning of future evils: for, as knowing them contingent, they would have sought to prevent; so, knowing them certain, they would have sought to repent. But saith Boskier, this made Christ himself *Agelastum*, kept him from laughter; the prescience of his dire future passion: he wept for other causes, but for this especially; he often spake of it, because it ran in his mind; and in the garden, he sweat blood to think of it. Grant this in part to be true: he told it to his apostles, not for his own fear, but to show how much he loved them, that would suffer this for them; to strengthen their faith in him, and love to him. Neither wept he so much for his own sorrows, as for our sins. We were more unkind and cruel to him than the thorns and nails. That which drew blood from his side, drew tears from his eyes: we were so guilty, that he could not be merry. Therefore he foretold his disciples, that they should be sorrowful, weep and lament, John xvi. 20. As a learned physician looks not only to the disease of his patient that afflicts him for the present, but often administers physic to prevent a future malady. Therefore he called together his disciples, as Jacob did his sons: and told them what evils they should suffer for his name's sake.

This then be the sum; judgments forewarned come more easily on the prepared heart. The wise mariner in a calm makes all his tacklings sure and strong against a storm. The fen-man mends his banks in summer, lest his ground be drowned in winter. Howsoever these predictions may afflict the body, they benefit the soul. Therefore if the physician perceive evident reasons of approaching death in his patient, he is bound not to flatter him with hope of life; lest seeking his own gain, he lose Christ's purchase. But the conceit will exasperate his disease, and the dejection of mind hinders the recovery of body. Yield it; yet is this no reason of concealment, unless the body were more worth than the soul, a life mortal than a life immortal, the company of sinners on earth than the communion of saints in heaven. I have seen some such physicians, (for not seldom the physician and divine meet in the sick chamber,) that when we have been at prayers to the God of life, have neither bowed their knee, nor uncovered their head; as if the name of God were but a mockery, and they could cure a man without him. But let not my body fall into his hands, that

hath no care of his own soul: he that loves not God, will never love me. Alas, how should that potion work health where the chief ingredient, the grace of God, is left out? Or, how should the blessing of God be found, when the God of blessing is not regarded?

Indeed no man is worthy to know the time of his own dissolution. God hath secret steps. "Thy foot-steps are not known," Psal. lxxvii. 19. Though we dare not pray, "Lord, let me know the number of my days, that I may be certified how long I have to live;" yet still we pray, "Deliver us from evil;" especially from that evil, "From sudden death, good Lord, deliver us." Some naturalists have affirmed that sudden dissolution is the best; and seemed to desire (if at least they did desire in heart) so to die. They looked not backward to their sins past, nor forward further than death; of that they saw a necessity, therefore wished a facility. Now the least sense is of the shortest pain; though it be violent, it is not permanent. There is no protraction of sorrows, nor extension of pains, in sudden despatching; death doth not, like a tyrant, keep them long a dying, racking out life to further days, and cutting off with pining sickness. Isa. xxxviii. 12; but quickly begins and makes an end. But let it rot in the dust with them, let that suddenness be suddenly forgotten.

There is a generation of men amongst us, Christians, yea, the most ardent and furious Christians, that blame our Liturgy for that prayer, "From sudden death, Lord, deliver us." These men are so sure of heaven, that let God take them where he will, and when he will, they are for him. Presumptuous men! do they sin, and would they in that sin be taken away? There is a time when the dearest saints of God had rather live than die. "What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit?" Psal. xxx. 9: he was sick, but at that time had no heart to die. Elisha, when he knew in spirit that the king had sent a messenger to kill him, bade them "shut the door and hold him fast." 2 Kings vi. 32. Sick Hezekiah wept and prayed to live. Jonah cries from that dismal prison not to die yet, but to be forborne to a longer day. These saints would not die then; they found some sins yet burdening their consciences, to scour off which they wished the convenience of further time. "Let me alone, that I may take comfort a little, before I go whence I shall not return," Job x. 20, 21. It was a violent and swift departure which David and Job deprecated: but alas, what do you compare David and Job to these men; mere dwarfs to these giants? They have cast up their accounts as well as Paul, and are every moment prepared; their reckoning is ever ready in their pockets: they know themselves chosen, the Spirit told them so, and then the elect cannot perish. It is true indeed, that not death amongst the rest, death of what kind soever, lingering or sudden, can separate true believers from Christ, Rom. viii. 38, 39; yet pardon me, if I be charitably jealous of such presumers of sanctification. Do they never lie to their neighbour, never lust after forbidden flesh, never rankle another's credit with malicious report, never pamper the groom with feeding, never covet penny of another man's, are they never puffed up with a self-opinion? Suppose God strike thy proud heart in this act of sin, when thou hast not so much leisure or sense as to say, Lord, have mercy on me; goes not thy soul then to the judgment-seat without a prepared answer? We leave thy censure and sentence to him that knows thy heart; but though charity hopes a mercy *inter pontem et fontem; inter actum culpæ, et ictum pænæ*, yet he not angry with me for praying, God keep my soul

from such a venture. There proceed from heaven lightnings, from earth damps, from the body palsies and apoplexies, from men those murderous engines, pistols and poniards: these make sudden riddance, and allow not the leisure and liberties of repentance.

Think, ye secure wretches, that have promised your own souls to repent when you are sick: alas, the least of a thousand things can kill you, and give you no leisure to be sick. Lo now if there be any hope, it is the extraordinary mercy of God in Jesus Christ. For us, *vita est in iudicio, mors est in iudicio*. We have charity, God hath mercy.

To conclude; we condemn not him that so dies, yet we pray against such a death. We say of death, as David of Absalom, "Make speed to depart, lest he overtake us suddenly;" 2 Sam. xv. 14. Lord, never let the sin of our souls, and the end of our lives, come so near together. Give us grace to break off our sins by repentance, before thou break off our lives by death; let us have time to repent, grace to our time, thy mercy to both, and the merits of our Saviour Christ to all; and then, come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Oh it is swift when the prayers of our hearts shall usher the journey of our souls; when our faith hath unlocked the gates of heaven, ready for our spirits to enter; when by our comfortable declarations, we have testified our assurance of blessedness, left the perfume of a good conscience to sweeten our death-beds, and our virtues and graces, like fragrant flowers, to stick round about our hearse; when, after a consoling valediction to our mourning friends, we have commended our spirits into the hands of Jesus Christ. Let the confidence of others be as bold as it pleaseth, let my soul pray, and let them that love their souls join with me, and the God of mercy hear us all, "From sudden death, good Lord, deliver us. Amen."

6. Their "judgment, and their damnation." Observe the proportion and aptation of their punishment to their sin. It holds in divers analogies. 1. They denied the Lord that bought them, therefore the same Lord shall judge them. It is fit ut *quon fecerunt suum sacrificium, inveniant suum iudicium*. They made the profession of Christ a colour for their bloodiness, and under the counterfeit seal of his name committed outrages; now therefore the same injured King shall sit upon them and condemn them. 2. They acted all their villany in secret, therefore now it shall be laid open. 3. The way of truth hath been blasphemed by them, therefore now it is fit that it be glorified on them. 4. Before they sold men in covetousness, therefore now they shall be sold themselves in justice. God's debts must be paid, and they that made merchandise of others are fit to be made merchandises themselves. 5. Before they brought in the heresy of damnation, therefore now they shall sustain the penalty of damnation. 6. Before they did pull on themselves destruction voluntarily, therefore now must father the child of their own begetting, and suffer destruction necessarily. 7. Their sin did hasten punishment, and make it swift, therefore fit it should no longer tarry; it "lingereth not." You see with what a proper analogy their sinning meets with their suffering, and makes way for this note:

God always punisheth *de condigno*, sometimes *de congruo*. For the former, as the school truly says, that God rewardeth his elect above their deserts; so it teacheth, that he punisheth the reprobate short of their demerits. But as he will requite any thing in mercy, that will recompense a cup of cold water, Matt. x. 42; so he will deny any thing in justice, that will deny a cup of cold water, Luke xvi. 24. Christ's tribunal is said to be a white throne, Rev.

xx. 11; milk white, without any drop of injustice to alter the colour, or stain the seat. Moral men have commended justice: the Grecians placed her between Leo and Libra, courage and indifference. The Egyptians in their hieroglyphics had the figure of a man without hands, winking with his eyes. And our emblem is as good as the rest, as the best; the picture of a man holding a balance in one hand, and a sword in the other; by the balance intending judgment, and by the sword due execution. The balance puts no difference between gold and lead, but gives them equal or unequal poise; not attributing more to the gold for the excellency of the metal, nor less to the lead for the drossy baseness, but with an even hand weighs the poor man's ease with the rich. It is said of the throne of David's house, that it was placed in the gate of the city towards the sun-rising. In the gate, that all might have access to it, poor and rich; for all sorts had egress and regress through the gate. Towards the sun-rising, to signify that their judgments should be as clear from corruptions and errors as the sun in his glorious brightness. Now he that calls upon magistrates to do justice, shall he not do it himself? "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" Gen. xviii. 25. Yes, certainly; as he will crown the faithful with eternal glory above their deserts, so he will load the wicked with eternal torments according to their deserts: so that a man shall say, "Verily there is a reward for the righteous; verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth," Psal. lviii. 11.

For the other, as he will punish all sin in some kind, so he will punish some sin in its own kind. For it is just with him "to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you," 2 Thess. i. 6. With the troward he will show himself froward, Psal. xviii. 26. "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed," Gen. ix. 6. But sometimes it is not so; but always it should be so, and certainly the magistrate that omits it shall find his case like Ahab's; "Thy life shall go for his life," 1 Kings xx. 42. "They that take the sword shall perish with the sword," Matt. xxvi. 52: they that take it, before it be given them by lawful authority. His punishment is qualified to his sin, that is made to perish by the sword, who did destroy with the sword. He that stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, shall cry himself and not be heard, Prov. xxi. 13. Judgment without mercy shall be to him that shows no mercy, Jam. ii. 13. In vain he seeks mercy out of himself, that had none within himself. Woe to thee that spoilest, for thou shalt be spoiled! Isa. xxxiii. 1. It is just that they who ruin others, should be ruined themselves. "If ye bite and devour one another, take heed ye be not consumed one of another," Gal. v. 15. If the greater serpent devours the less, there is a dragon to devour him. The fire of the Sodomites' lusts flamed up to heaven, therefore heaven's fire of wrath flamed down upon them. Nadab and Abihu offered strange fire, and therefore they suffered strange fire, Lev. x. 2. They have gone a whoring from their God; therefore their daughters shall commit whoredom, and their spouses adultery, Hos. iv. 12, 13: spiritual fornication shall be punished with corporal pollution. If we consider that shop of pride, Isa. iii, we shall find every ornament made an abhorment. Instead of sweet smell, there shall be a stink; for the girdle, a rent; for well-set hair, baldness, ver. 24. Observe how the particular plagues are proportioned to the nature of the particular sins. They loved the redness of wine, they shall feel the redness of eyes, Prov. xxiii. 29. Do they detain Abraham's wife? none of their wives shall be pregnant, Gen. xx. 18. This Job ac-

knowledgeed to be just; "If mine heart have been deceived by a woman, then let my wife grind unto another," Job xxxi. 9, 10. Beasts they worshipped, and by beasts they shall be devoured. That they might know wherewithal a man sinneth, by the same he shall also be punished, Wisd. xi. 15. Let not the people break through unto the Lord, lest the Lord break forth upon them, Exod. xix. 24. Jonah crossed to the sea, therefore he was lost in the sea. He would needs to the water, he shall have water enough. Their flesh was torn with briars and thorns, that were briars and thorns to tear others, Judg. viii. 16. "They have shed the blood of thy saints, and thou hast given them blood to drink," Rev. xvi. 6; as Tomyris gave Cyrus: to give one blood, is to put him to death. I will cause thee to be slain, as men are slain in the burning rage of wrath and jealousy. Thou didst lay open thy nakedness in sin, I will therefore lay open thy nakedness in shame, Ezek. xvi. 37—39. To allow the sins of others, is to become guilty of the same sins: as Christ condemned the living Jews for killing of Zacharias, whom their ancestors slew many ages before; because they approved their courses, and therefore justly inherited their fathers' sins and judgments, Matt. xxiii. 35.

I might be endless in the prosecution of this doctrine. "They shall bury in Tophet, till there be no place," Jer. vii. 32. In Tophet they had committed that monstrous abomination, burning their children in the fire to Moloch; in Tophet they shall find destruction. The Jews report that in Tophet there was a deep pit or ditch, called the mouth of hell, never filled; in that pit the Chaldeans threw their slain bodies. "His lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had," Matt. xviii. 25. Perhaps he sinned in his wife and children, therefore was punished in his wife and children. He might turn his wife into an idol, and set her in the place of God; he might be indulgent to the vices of his children; therefore, "Let his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow," Psal. cix. 9. How usual is it for men to obey the will of their wives before the will of God! How just is it with the Lord to suffer the wife so luxuriously allowed, to dote on forbidden pleasures, and for another's sake to break her faith with her husband who for her sake had broke his faith with God! Why doth such a man find fault? he doth by his servile affections what he can to make his wife a harlot, and then complains that she is so. Immoderate diet, inordinate will, immodest apparel, himself proudly vouchsafes her: what are these but midwives to bring forth that shame he is loth to hear of? What more usual than to buy places in reversions, expectant on the lives of three, four, six, to be served and expired, before theirs bear date? Therefore what more just, than to cut them short, and extend the decaying terms of the other? "Let his days be few, and another take his office," Psal. cix. 8. They have admitted invasions upon their own honesty, secretly to wish that the days of others might be few, that they might take their office; therefore shall their own days be few, and another take their office. The proverb fits them, He that waits for dead men's shoes, shall go barefoot. The rivers that Pharaoh bloodied with the slain infants, are turned into blood; that he might read the colour of his sin in the sanguine waters. Thus murderous men, so prodigal in sluicing out blood, have been affronted and affrighted with bloody visions. They think their eyes see nothing but blood, their ears hear nothing but the sound of blood, all their meat tastes of blood, their drink hath a bloody colour, the very ways they travel are sanguine; they dream of nothing but

blood, till their heads, like Nero's, be soaked in blood: Thou hast thirsted for blood, of blood take thy fill. This suffering could not even David escape; his house was haunted with the sword. He sinned in a proud numbering of his people, therefore was punished in shortening the number of his people.

Herodias' daughter, that like a dancing whirligig footed away the head of John Baptist, was herself cut shorter by the head with ice. Caesar had undone three and twenty countries; he died of three and twenty wounds. Croesus, that loved gold insatiately, had of gold his throat full. Many penurious fathers are so scraping for their children, that they ravish the poor children of God; but the hand of the Lord shall be against their young lions, Nah. ii. 13. They join house to house, and field to field; but their children shall be vagabonds, and beg; seeking their bread out of their desolate places, Psal. cix. 10. How many a covetous mole is now digging a house in the earth for his posterity, and never dreams of this sequel, that God should make those children beggars, for whose sake the fathers have made so many beggars! This is a quittance which the sire will not believe, but as sure as God is just the son shall feel. Now if he had but leave to come out of hell for an hour, and see this, how should he curse his folly! sure, if possible, it would double the pain of his infernal torture. Be moderate, then, ye that so insatiately devour, as if you had an infinite capacity; you overload your stomachs, it is fit they should be disordered in shameful spewing. How quickly doth a worldly-minded man grow a defrauder, from a defrauder to a usurer, from a usurer to an oppressor, from an oppressor to an extortioner! if his eyes do but tell his heart of a booty, his heart will charge his hand, and he must have it, Micah ii. 2. They do but see it, like it, and take it. Observe their due payment. "Let the extortioner catch all that he hath," Psal. cix. 11: they got all by extortion, they shall lose all by extortion. They spoiled their neighbours, strangers shall spoil them. How often hath the poor widow and orphan cried, wept, groaned to them for mercy, and found none! They have taught God how to deal with themselves; "let there be none to extend mercy to them," Psal. cix. 12. They have advanced houses for a memorial, and dedicated lands to their own names, Psal. xlix. 11; all to get them a name; and even in this they shall be crossed: In the next generation their name shall be quite put out, Psal. cix. 13.

Our neighbours of Rome presume that they have the keys of heaven and hell: some they bring down from heaven to hell, as they did that blessed queen, Elizabeth; others they lift up from hell to heaven, canonizing bloody traitors: they censure as they will, not as God will. But their punishment is fitted by Christ; "With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged," Matt. vii. 2; when they shall find that they have mistaken the keys, and learn what it is to condemn, by being condemned. Because they have put away sacred marriage, therefore they are given up to unclean cloisters, and unholty practices.

Not to be favourable to ourselves at home; what is the reason that this land is so defiled with blood, and that (not feeling the sword of an enemy) a man complains, I am wounded in the house of my friends? Zech. xiii. 6. Nor is this alone in those unmanly trials of manhood in the fields; but even in the streets, in the houses; no place is safe, but a mistaken word is requited with a stab or some mortal blow. And when this comes to be ensured, it is found chance-medley, at worst manslaughter, and that perhaps self-defence. Whereupon these homicides

are so fleshed with blood, that they make no more to kill a man, than a fly. Oh, they may mend, and become good Christians, good subjects: but that sin is rarely repented of. If he had been cut off for the first murder, the second man had been alive. Why do we presume to cozen God by the warrant of law, to perjoin the maintenance of the minister, and to put ourselves in God's place? What is this, but to point God the way to plague us, and to send upon us a famine of preaching, who have brought a famine upon the preachers? Is it not just with God to take away the lamp from that nation, which hath taken away the holy oil that should maintain it? And, Lord, that I might herein be a false prophet! I fear that England shall want the gospel, when the barbarians receive it; because England had the gospel, and would not give a penny to keep it. We hope this nation shall live to see the fall of Rome and antichrist; so we may, if our sins, and among the rest unthankful sacrifice, do not first give Rome a triumph over us. Consider how immediately upon this charge of rendering the teacher his portion, the Holy Ghost infers, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap," Gal. vi. 7. You may deceive yourselves, you shall never mock God: you shall drink as you have brewed. Thus when we see surfeits do we not point at gluttony precedent? when a body is drowned with a dropsy, do we not say, There hath gone an inundation of drink before? When that Neapolitan evil hath wasted the marrow and rotted the flesh, we know this fire was fetched from the hearth of iniquity. The matter of sin is written with capital letters in the punishment. God is just, he hath ways enough to punish us, we have no way to escape him. If he doth not punish the adulterer with rottenness in his bones, yet he can add fire to fire; to the flame of lust, the flame of hell. If the usurer escape bonds here, yet he that bound others above, may be bound himself below. The litigious may get the better, until God comes to enter his action against him. There is no evasion but seasonable repentance: let us punish ourselves, that God be not put to do it. Let us correct drunkenness by abstinence, pride by humility, covetousness by charity, cruelty by mercy, uncleanness by chastity, anger by patience, usury by restitution. This is to take a congruous and proportionate vengeance on ourselves, that God may spare us in the day of reckoning.

7. "Damnation" is principally taken for the censure or sentence condemning; as the sentence follows the trial, and the execution the sentence: here it intends the execution of the judgment. But if damnation be meant for the execution, how doth it precede the sentence? Seeing it seems very unjust to execute a man before his judgment: after that old scandal of the stannaries law, that hanged a man in the forenoon, and sat in judgment on him in the afternoon. The day of judgment is the second appearing of Christ. Now for evil men to receive their damnation beforehand, were to antedate the sentence, and to execute persons unjudged. It is easily answered: Every unbeliever must pass through two judgment days: a particular, when his guilty soul leaves his unfortunate body; a general, when both body and soul having been co-instruments of sin, shall be made co-partners in punishment. Hence the soul, as it hath been the principal in offending, being that part of man wherein God hath placed natural reason and knowledge of his will, shall be the first in suffering. Leaving the body a dead and insensible piece of earth, while herself grows under the burden of unsupportable torments alone, till the body comes to suffer with it.

If it be objected, What need any second judgment, seeing the world stands wholly either of believers or unbelievers? And the believer shall not come into condemnation, but is already passed from death unto life, John v. 24; and the unbeliever is already condemned; why then any further judgment? Yes, for though the believer shall not come into the judgment of condemnation, yet he must also pass the judgment of absolution; and as he is made just by Christ, so must he before all the world be pronounced. The first justifies the person, the second justifies God's righteousness. So the unbeliever is condemned already in effect three ways. 1. By the predetermined will of God; God did foresee and fore-appoint his damnation, as it is the punishment of sin, and execution of his justice. 2. By the word of God, which sets down his damnation, finding him in the number of those to whom it is due, and out of Christ, by whom alone he might escape it. 3. By the verdict of his own conscience; which doth so judge him here, as God will judge him hereafter; therefore it is called, a deputy god. But if there be a precedent damnation upon the reprobates, why is it here said, their damnation hastens? That cannot be called closely propinquant, nearly future, which is actually present, yea, which hath been before. If they were damned in the purpose of God for their sin, and are damned in the word of God judging sin, how are they said to be hereafter damned, or, their damnation lingers not? I answer, for their former damnation in the decree of God, they know it not; for their present damnation in the word of God, they mind it not; and for the damnation of their own conscience, they feel it not. Therefore the execution of this shall fall upon them, and then they shall know it, mind it, feel it.

Thus death shall execute his office to kill their bodies, and hell his office to receive their souls, and the devil his office to inflict torments, when God hath pronounced on them the particular sentence of his justice. This damnation, then, is that fearful punishment of sin imposed on reprobates, made up of an extremity, universality, and eternity of torments; so extreme that they refuse addition, so universal that no part hath exemption, so everlasting that they never admit conclusion. Their extremity is undefined, their universality unconfined, their eternity without hope of end.

But how doth this stand with the justice of God, for finite transgression to give infinite destruction? Sins are the actions of time, done in a temporality, limited in a certain space. Now if the punishment be proportionate to the sin, how can the one be temporal, the other eternal; sin transient, plague permanent? I answer, this equity and equality is observable in our civil punishments: the thief despatcheth a robbery in half an hour; he lies many days in irons for this, and at last answers it with his neck. Adultery is soon perpetrated; a long and infamous shame depends upon it. Treason may be a villany of no length; yet the delinquent finds mercy if he but lie in prison for it all his life, and lose his possessions for ever. A man quickly gives himself a wound, but the surgeon cannot so quickly heal him. David was not long in killing Uriah with the sword, yet did the sword never depart from his house. A man commits murder but once, and it was soon done; yet he is condemned to the perpetual galleys. There was one sick thirty-eight years, and Christ says, this was because of his sin, John v. 14. Consider some reasons why their punishment is not less than damnation eternal.

1. Because their sins are infinite in number. David propounds a How oft; who can find a So oft for

it? Who can tell how oft he offendeth? Psal. xix. 12. No man. The hairs of a man's head may be told; the stars appear in multitudes, yet some have undertaken to reckon them; but no arithmetic can number our sins. Before we can recount a thousand, we shall commit ten thousand more; and so rather multiply by addition, than divide by subtraction; there is no possibility of numeration. Like Hydra's head, while we are cutting off twenty by repentance, we find a hundred more grown up. It is just, then, that infinite sorrows should follow infinite sins.

2. Because they are committed against an infinite Majesty. He that clippeth the king's coin, or defaceth the king's arms, or counterfeits the broad seal of England, or the privy seal, is adjudged to die as a traitor; because this fact offers a disgrace against the person of the king: much more doth he deserve the second death, that violates the law of the King of kings; seeing that breach doth not only tend to the defacing of his own image in us, but reflects upon the person of God himself, who in every sin is contemned and dishonoured. "If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him; but if a man sin against the Lord, who shall entreat for him?" 1 Sam. ii. 25. Compare *protasis* with *apodosis*, sequel with sequel, the former with the latter, by the rules of opposition. What doth the former affirm? no more but a civil meditation for a temporal satisfaction. What doth the latter deny? a religious or divine intercession for eternal satisfaction. Sins receive their nature from their objects in a formal consideration: to be plain with all capacities, sins take their nature from their aim. When the will from within shall give the king of Aram's charge, "Fight neither with small nor great, save only with the king of Israel," 1 Kings xxii. 31, this must needs be immediate treason. According to worth; that sin is foulest that strikes at the fairest. Therefore the sin directed against an infinite Majesty deserves infinite penalty. Ask a recusant what that servant merits, which, like an Onesimus, is a fugitive from his master. What will he say, but the whipping-post, or house of correction? But what deserves he that changeth his God, his religion? yet there must be no whipping-post for such a renegade, no correction-house for him; whatsoever he condignly suffers, is held persecution. Ask the sacrilegious what shall be done to him that steals; Hang him, he cries. But what shall be done to him that robs his God? here he can see no felony; he shall feel it. Ask a man abused in his name whether he will send his reviler: he presently curseth him, as if he meant him to hell; but howsoever he will send him to the consistory. But whither shall he go that dishonours the name of God? Doth that bear no action? No, cursing and swearing infers no defamation. Yes, he is damned of his own self. Tit. iii. 11. If they could satisfy an infinite justice at once together, their plague, though it admits of no latitude or weight, being a universal extremity, yet it should have an end. But what to the uncapable subject is defective in place, must be made up in durance. He shall not come forth, till he hath paid the uttermost farthing, Matt. v. 26. He might pay this at once if he had it; but because he hath it not, he must be paying it continually, and answer it with his own imprisonment for ever.

3. Because they frustrate a price of redemption that is infinite. Did the Son of God accept their nature, shed his precious blood, and pay that infinite debt to God's justice for all believers; and will they make void to themselves that work of unspeakable goodness? He is worthy of eternal damnation, that despiseth the redemption of him that is eternal. It

is just with Christ to forsake them for ever, that forsake him for ever. There remains no more sacrifice for them, Heb. x. 26; therefore till Christ die again they must lie in hell, that is, for ever. They that fall from everlasting grace, justly meet with everlasting wrath; from salvation eternal, to destruction eternal. Every drop of Christ's blood doth save the believing soul for ever: if that inestimable treasure be trod under foot, the soul is justly lost for ever. Who pities that man's death, who having the medicine by him which can help him, dies and will not take it? Serjeants are out to arrest thee, the law hath condemned thee; we may say of thee as of a sentenced malefactor, thou art dead in law: speed then to Christ; if thou be taken before thou get to thy Saviour, thou wilt be laid up for ever.

4. Because they are unthankful for blessings and graces infinite. God gives them life while they can live; if they be ingrate, he will give them death while they can die. His mercy strove the utmost to make them blessed, his justice shall strive the utmost to make them cursed. If any deliverance, preferment, or content come to an unthankful person, let him know that it is but his impropriation, God will make him pay for it. Contribution of blessings requires retribution of thanks, or will bring distribution of plagues. We have many *adcoletes*, but return few *dedolates*. God gives freely and continually, so let us praise him with the voice and the heart: not the voice alone, for then the heart is tied; not the heart alone, for then we are tongue-tied. Continually; for if thou canst find one hour wherein he doth not give thee something, take that hour to return him nothing. Yet is there thanks enough owing for the former; but there is no new hour which is not witness of new benefits. Thy mercies are new every morning, Lam. iii. 23. Christ hath bought us both in body and soul; we must glorify him in both, or he will destroy us in both. He will be glorified either in our voluntary obedience or necessary vengeance. Thus how easy is it for a reprobate to bring upon himself damnation! The more God loads him with benefits, the more he loads himself with accounts. Be thankful, this is the way to ease thy reckoning; flee to Christ, this is the way to get it quite taken off. As Aleibiades told the steward, when he complained of his trouble about making his accounts, that his care were better bestowed, how to make no account at all, than how to make his accounts even. If our faith have gotten Christ to account for us, we shall make no reckoning at all. Every benefit forgotten in present gratitude, must be remembered in future servitude. Thus he that receives infinite favours, and remains unthankful, deserves infinite pains.

5. Because they have omitted infinite duties. The hours that are not spent in obedience against sin, are spent in sin against obedience. Wicked men think they commit but a single sin, when indeed they always double it; for while they do what they should not, they leave undone what they should, and so bind two sins together. The sabbath ranger, that is gone about the business of the pot, thinks he only offends in his excess, forgets his not serving God at the church. It is one sin to be absent from the house of God, though he did not admit the other, to be present in the house of sin. Doth the oppressor barely transgress in wringing the poor? yea, at that very time he should have relieved the poor. Think not thy hours waste papers, to fill them up with nothing but blanks, as if God would take this for a good reckoning. When the book of thy conscience comes to be opened, all those blanks are filled up with indictments; and thou shalt find it a *requiem*,

which thou thoughtest a *requiequam*. No greatness of blood can privilege idleness, no more than much money can justify usury. When God calls thee to account, Why wast thou not industrious? It will be no good answer, Because thou hast made me rich. Now that these omissions deserve eternal destruction, it is manifest, because we are bound to the duties. Therefore in the form of Christ's judicial proceeding, the wicked are condemned for sins of omission, perpetrations not being spoken of, as if there were no question of their guiltiness; to show that there is damnation enough wrapped up in those very omissions. Neither shall they be only punished with the privation of all joys and peace, and no further, for then they were mere indifferencies; but with the position of torments, to declare that good works were imposed; not voluntary, but necessary. Now if these be as innumerable as our waking minutes, how infinite must be the unrepentant's destruction for them!

6. Because sin is infinite in their desires, and the desire of sinning God judgeth sin itself. As the desire of grace is grace, and the desire of repentance is one degree of repentance; so the concupiscence of iniquity is the iniquity. He that lusts after a woman, hath already committed adultery with her in his heart, Matt. v. 28. Now, what is more insatiate than the desires of the wicked? They enlarge themselves beyond all bounds, and are scarce limited with the world. How unsatisfied is the adulterer's desire! he goes from woman to woman, as the sick man from fountain to fountain, and none can quench his thirst. For woman is not the bounds of lust, but womankind. Love's number is no number but one; he that errs from that is incessant in concupiscence, and, if it were possible, would embrace all the beauties he sees in his luxuriant arms. Vice hath no mean, measure, nor cessation, till it hath no being. One wife is the desire of love, but lust would have infinite. And though it be straitened to enjoy but one at once, yet it hath an infinite desire to many; neither doth all the variety of the earth change it; whosoever his pleasure is served, he is the same man he was before, and begins again to desire afresh. For lust is still a beginning, and would be more common than any one, could it, as other sins, be done alone. But age ceaseth it, therefore not infinite; then desire filleth, Eccl. xii. 5; yet many in age, though they cannot desire, yet desire to desire. Now an infinite fire of lust must have an infinite fire of hell. What limits hath the ambitious desire? what degrees of honour, though, Phaeton-like, to sit in the chariot of the sun, would content him? Let him reduce all the kingdoms of the world to one monarchy, and possess as much as ever the devil promised Christ; yet *astutus infelix angusto limite mundi*, he wants elbow-room. He calls for more worlds, or is angry that God made this no bigger; yea, erects his statue, and would be worshipped as the Lord himself. He thought the whole earth too little for him, and why should God think the whole hell too much for him? The angel that would have all the glory in heaven, is justly damned to all the pains in hell. If thou be infinite in thy sinning, why may not God be infinite in thy punishing?

What confines have ever hedged in covetousness? who ever heard it say, O Lord, I have enough? A handful of corn cast into the bushel makes it the fuller; put water into the sea, it hath by so much the more; but "he that loveth silver, shall not be satisfied with silver," Eccl. v. 10. One desire may be satisfied, but another comes. *Crescit amor mundi quantum ipsa pecunia crescit*. Natural desires are finite; as the thirst is satisfied with drink, the hungry

appetite with meat. But unnatural desires are infinite; as it is with the body in burning fevers, the more they drink the more they thirst. Now as these proceed not from natural causes, but from diseases; so exorbitant affections arise not from the temper, but from the distemper, of the soul. Grace can never fill the purse, nor wealth fill the heart. Here is an infinite sin; why should it not have an infinite punishment? Hence covetousness is compared to hell itself, for the near affinity between them; both alike promise at once to be satisfied. "Hell and destruction are never full: so the eyes of man are never satisfied," Prov. xxvii. 20. As the covetous enlarge their mouths to swallow the earth, so "hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth" to swallow them, Isa. v. 14. Let not our oppressors now flatter themselves, that hell is full, and there is no room for them; for the Lord hath made it large, of immense capacity, Isa. xxx. 33. It is a great lake, Rev. xix., able to receive all that are cast into it. If it were not so spacious, and there seemed to want room for oppressors, yet God would take out thieves, and harlots, and drunkards, I had almost said, liars, and swearers, to put in oppressors; they must have room. Hell from beneath is moved for them to meet them at their coming, Isa. xiv. 9. Hell itself will come to meet them in state, as glad to give them entertainment. Now if the usurer can keep himself out of the number of oppressors, he may hap to escape. But are not their desires unlimited, that "join field to field, till there be no place?" Isa. v. 8. They would leave no room for others, but engross all the earth to themselves; therefore though there should want room for others, they shall have all hell to themselves. If sin have an infinite desire to offend God, God will have an infinite hand to punish it.

7. Gregory adds another reason of this infinite punishment. He that dies without repentance, is presupposed by justice, that if he could have lived for ever he would have sinned for ever. And it is just, if thou wilt rebelliously sin so long as thou livest, God should punish so long as he liveth. Nothing is more proportionable, than that those who will sin against God so long as they have a being, without repentance, should perish from God so long as he hath a being, without mercy. It is the Lord's just judgment, *ut nunquam mortuus careret supplicio, qui nunquam vivus carere voluit peccato; ut nullus detur iniquo terminus ultionis, qui quamdiu vivit, habere noluisset terminum criminis.* (Greg.) They would have lived for ever, that they might have sinned for ever. Their injustice would put no date to their sins, God's justice shall put no date to their sufferings. On earth, he that will still run in debt while he lives at liberty, shall at last be cast into prison to lie while he lives in misery. Shall man have this law against his brother, and not God against his creature? Yes, there will come a day when all reckonings shall be east over, when justice must be satisfied to the full; at least so full as the delinquent can satisfy it, not with ready money, the merits of Christ; then, with eternal durance, he must lie by it for ever, till he hath paid the uttermost farthing, Matt. v. 26; and, which is lamentable, he hath not one farthing towards it. The reprobate cannot do many things he would; the needy drunkard cannot be a usurer; the base pilferer cannot be a rich commonwealth's oppressor; no thanks, they would but they cannot. The power, not the will, is wanting in them to any wickedness. Now it is just, he that doeth what he will, must suffer what God will.

8. The sinner is often admonished, often threatened; dealt withal mildly, and taken up roundly; now tempted with a crown, then terrified with a

source; allured with the promises of heaven, affrighted with the menaces of hell; encouraged to grace by the gospel, thundered against for sin by the law; offered either a cursed devil to torment him, or a blessed Christ to save him. Neither is life and death set before him only once, but all his days: All day long hath God stretched forth his hands unto him, Rom. x. 21. This choice is put to him so long as he lives on earth; therefore if he make election of sin, it must stick by him so long as he lives in hell. What could God do more in mercy, what can he do less in justice? The sinner is showed an easy way to salvation; Believe in Christ the remission of sins, and endeavour in thyself an amendment of life, and thou shalt be saved. The publican said but only, "God be merciful to me a sinner;" what great labour or pains was this? (Chrysost.) The malefactor on the cross declared three things; reprehension of his fellow's sins, confession of his own sins, supplication for mercy; and he was taken up into that glorious paradise. He that will not take so little pain to get so much ease, is worthy of little ease and much pain. If men make God lose all the labour of his mercy to save them, he will not lose all the labour of his justice to punish them.

9. Though it be true that every sin is finite as considered in respect of the act; as it is a transient action it is finite, but it is infinite in respect of the inherence in the subject. For the soul of man is immortal, and so the sin which sticketh on it is made immortal with it. For the guilt can no ways be taken from it, but by imputing it to Christ. And besides the guilt contracted by the fact, there is a blot that doth stain the soul; as the scarlet or crimson dye doth the silk or wool; which can no ways be undyed or gotten out but by the blood of the Lamb. All the saints had stains, blemishes, and polluted colours; but they "washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb," Rev. vii. 14. "Such were you; but ye are washed," &c. 1 Cor. vi. 11. Now those turpitudes and aspersions so dyed in grain by sin in the soul, if they be not purged by him, remain for ever inseparable; and can no more be taken from it, than the spots from the leopard, or the scarlet can fade till the cloth be worn out. So long therefore as this stain abides, the wrath of God abides; and as that tincture can never be gotten off, so the fire of hell can never be burnt out. There is no more extinguishing the one, than relinquishing the other; both remain for ever.

10. There is a habit of evil in the wicked. Some think that sin in itself is nothing, because it hath no formal being or subsistence; but punishment is a thing of being and position. Now shall that which is nothing be punished with something? shall a creature be punished for nothing? This were, as David complained of his persecutors, a course of injustice; They hated me without a cause. But that which is held nothing in a positive existence, will be found something in a privative sufferance. To clear this point, we must examine what sin in itself is. In its own proper nature it is, saith St. John, an anomy, or want of conformity to the law of God; or an ataxy, and absence of goodness and integrity in the thing that subsisteth. In Adam before his fall were three, not indistinguishable, yet inseparable, things. 1. His substance. 2. The faculties and powers of his body and soul. 3. And the image of God, consisting in straightness, conformity, and rectitude of all these to his will. What then was his sin? not the want of the two former, he had his substance and faculties still; but of the latter, the conformity to God's will. In a musical instrument there is not only the substance of it, and the sound, but also the

harmony in the sound. That which is contrary to harmony, is none of the two former; but only the last, that is the disorder or discord in music, which is the absence or want of harmony, we may call it disharmony. Neither is this a mere absence of goodness, but also a presence or habit of evil. As it is received into man's nature, it is only a privation of good; but as being received it continues, it is a habit of evil. But it may be said, that a mere and single privation can perform no act: as darkness, which is the absence of light, can stir nothing; silence cannot move or produce an effect. But concupiscence draws away the heart from God's service, and enticeth it to evil; now this is an action, and no action can proceed of a mere privation. To answer this we must distinguish of original sin: as it is of its own nature, so it is no inclination or action, no moving power, but only a want; but as it is mixed with the subject wherein it is, it inclines, moves, compels to evil.

The like reason holds in actuals. In murder are two things. 1. The moving of the body, and exercise of the weapons: this considered as an action is properly no sin; because every action comes from God, the first cause of all things and actions. 2. The killing of a man, defacing the image of God: this is the disorder and aberration of the action, whereby it is disposed to a wrong use or end; and thus it is sin.

For the sum, then, the nature of sin lies not in the action, but in the manner of doing the action. So that it holds, sin is nothing formally subsisting, (for then God should be the author of it, as being creator and ordainer of every thing and action,) but a want of that which ought to be and subsist, partly in the nature of man, and partly in the actions of nature. In sin there is nothing positive, as the school in this truly. But now to the question: If there be no positive thing in sin, why should there be a positive thing in punishment; if it be only the want of goodness, why is it not revenged only with the want of blessedness? so here should be no place for damnation or the torments of hell. Certainly if it were no more, this was punishment enough, to be deprived of the glory of God; "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God," Rom. iii. 23. But there is more, for upon the absence of goodness there necessarily follows the presence of evil. And the sinner doth not only omit what he should do, but also commit what he should not do. And as there can be no difference between not good and bad; so at the same instant when a man loseth his goodness he contracts badness. There is in sin four things: the fault, whereby God is offended; the guilt, whereby the sinner is bound to punishment; the punishment itself, which is damnation; and the blot or stain, which defiles the person. Now it is not the second and third, but the first and last, which make man a sinner. Hereupon it follows, that after a man hath committed a sin, and the offence is done and gone as to its act twenty years, yet he does not therefore cease to be a sinner. Now why is he called a sinner in the time present, that did the sin in a time so far past? It is the stain, as it were the fruit of the fault, that so denominates him; and this is an indisposition of the heart to all good, and an inclination to all evil. He that hath forfeited his goodness, is like the dropsy patient; the more he sins, the more he is apt to sin, and the more desirous of sin. As he that turns his face from the sun, remains so till he turn again unto it; once turning from God, we continue naughty till we return to him by repentance. David was not only a sinner in the very act of his adultery, but when the act was done and past, he re-

mained still an adulterer; because a proneness to sin had got place and strength in his heart, till he rid himself of all by unfeigned repentance. There being therefore in the reprobate an inconformity to goodness, an unchangeable disposition to evil, and an uncleanable pollution by evil, there must remain an interminable damnation for evil.

II. God's temporal plagues are images of his eternal judgments: but the temporal often last all the days of their life on earth, why not the other all the days of their death in hell? There be some sins that may be called sinning sins; for they leave a perpetual venom and malignity behind them, and continue a pestilent act without any less termination than the world: as oppression, sacrilege, &c. There be also public sins, that leave a bad example behind them; and such men do sin as long as they cause sin. Such was Jeroboam's making Israel to sin: let himself be dead, yet so long as any worshipped his calves, Jeroboam sinned. This urged the rich man to desire one from the dead, to warn his brethren; because he felt his own torment increase so long as their sin increased, which they had derived from his cursed precedent. There be sins not so manifest, and exposed to the common eyes or sense; not hurting others in their posterity, nor corrupting them by lewd pattern, but do *intra orbem suum furere*; as private lusts: yet these turn the soul into a blackamoor; and for mortal endeavours to wash them out, we may call it the labour in vain. The sins that damnify our brethren, without restitution, are perpetual; and so is the wrath of God upon them: "It shall remain in the midst of his house," Zech. v. 4. This argues not only a domineering and reigning nature, which shrinks not into corners, but takes possession in the middle and most honourable room. Like princes that have chosen the middle places of kingdoms for their seats. According to the old similitude; The way to keep a stiffened hide from rising at the sides round about, is to set your feet on the midst. He that stands in the centre, may the readilier see the whole circumference that environs him. But it further intimates the stubborn and indomitable quality of vengeance: it doth remain; if once admitted it will not suddenly remove, nor yet remaining will ever be quiet. Athanasius pronounced of Julian's hot persecution, It is a cloud, and will soon be blown over. The ground of that heroic persuasion and confidence, was the knowledge of God's temporary castigations and trials of his church. But to the unbeliever, "The wrath of God abideth on him," John iii. 36. Which words, like Janus, have a double aspect. One backwards, as if it were a wrath of great antiquity; it comes not now, it was before upon him. (August.) Another aspect forwards, as some expound it; noting the countenance of wrath, it shall not depart from him. Upon him, as another noeth on the word "upon": the intimation of advantage from an upper place; as though vengeance did stand continually preying upon him: as in the poet, the ravenous bird upon Prometheus, or that other upon Titius, in hell.

If any impenitent sinner complain. Why is my heaviness continual, my plague desperate, and cannot be healed? there is matter within himself to make him answer. "Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?" Lam. iii. 39: there is the inquisition of the proper cause. "Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord," ver. 40: there is the application of the proper remedy. No wonder if the curse continue with them that continue in obstinateness; impenitence can have no hope of mercy. Though they suffer that extreme burning for sin, yet they repent

not of their sin. They blaspheme God for their sores, yet repent not of their misdeeds, Rev. xvi. 9, 11. It is an argument of their vain ignorance, to wonder that the term of their heavy visitation is not yet expired; while their sins are unrepented, their lives unamended. Correct the passion of thy heart, and direct it to contrition for sin; or, expect no cessation of penalty. As when the sinner is dead, all the while any moisture remains the worms will not forsake his carcases; so while he lives in his sin, the curse will wait close upon the cause: still a sinner, and still a sufferer. Israel could not stand before their enemies, till they had put away the execrable thing. Nor will the plague forsake oppressors and sacrilegious usurpers, till their treasures of wickedness be returned back to the right owners. Let the example of little Zaccheus, the greatest example that ever was for effectual and substantial restitution, teach them to break off their injustice with righteousness, which giveth every man his own, and their iniquity with mercy to the poor; lest they find this sin heavier than a millstone, when the shallow rivers of temporary punishments shall run into the ocean sea of eternal torments. Where is no restitution, there is no remission; where is no remission of the guilt of sin, no decrease of the power of sin; and where the power of sin is not lessened, there the plague of sin will be augmented.

12. Lastly, this equity and equality of damnation to sin, is illustrated and proved by the contrary. As every good deed shall have a hundredfold of comforts, Mark x. 30, so every bad deed a hundredfold of torments. God's mercy is for ever to them that please him; so his wrath is for ever upon them that offend him. The faithful find eternal mercy, therefore the unfaithful shall find eternal misery. He that endureth to the end, shall be saved. By what rule or proportion? Because God in his goodness doth presuppose, if that man had continued for ever living he would have continued for ever well doing. Josiah feared God all the days of his life, therefore God hath crowned his everlasting life in heaven. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Rev. ii. 10. Fidelity for a short service, hath a diadem of never-ending glory. Thus as God in his good mercy doth reward perseverance in good with immortal life, so in his just judgment he doth punish impenitence with eternal death. Thus is guilty man punished, and the just God cleared, in this damnation of the wicked; though it be a total, final, (call it what you will,) an extreme, universal, eternal punishment. But to cease preaching of it, and fall to praying against it: "Spare us, good Lord, spare the people whom thou hast redeemed." For the death of thy eternal Son, let us not be the sons of eternal death. Be not angry with us; or, if we do provoke thee, let not thy anger be for ever. Let not thy wrath burn like fire; but whensoever our sins have kindled it, Lord, quench it in the blood of Christ. Let us not undergo the malignity of one sin, even the least, the shortest; for it deserves great and eternal torment. Our greatest goodness merits not the least glory, but our least wickedness deserves great pain. A small leak will sink the vessel, unstoppered; a great one will not do it, if well caulked. The weakest instrument can pierce the flesh, and take away the life, unarmed; but armour of proof will beat off strong assaults. There is no wickedness so weak, but it can destroy us without Christ: none so strong as to destroy us with Christ. As Rachel cried to Jacob, "Give me children, or else I die," Gen. xxx. 1; so, give us our Father, or else we perish. Lord, behold us not out of Christ, though robed with all our righteousness; but behold us in Christ, though

with all our sinfulness. Preserve us in him, crown us with him, that we may give all glory to him, together with thyself, and most Holy Spirit.

8. Sleepeth not, lingereth not, slumbereth not. Though it be not yet present, it is propinquant; if not extant, yet instant. If it be not visible, yet it doth not linger; if it linger, it doth not slumber; if it seem to slumber, it doth not sleep. To sleep is more than to slumber, to slumber more than to wink, to wink more than to look upon a thing though with disregard, not minding it. Neither sleep, nor slumber, nor connivance, nor neglect of any thing, can be incident to God. Because he doth not execute present judgment and visible destruction upon sinners, therefore blasphemy presumptuously inferreth, Will God trouble himself about such petty matters? So they imagined of their imaginary Jupiter; *Von vacat eriguis rebus adesse Jovem*. What a narrow and finite apprehension this is of God! He that causeth and produceth every action, shall he not be present at every action? What can we do without him, that cannot move but in him? He that takes notice of sparrows, and numbers the seeds which the very ploughman thrasts in the ground, can any action of man escape his knowledge, or slip from his contemplation? He may seem to wink at things, but never shuts his eyes. He doth not always manifest a reprehensive knowledge, yet he always retains an apprehensive knowledge. Though David smote not Shimei cursing, yet he heard Shimei cursing. As judges often determine to hear, but do not hear to determine; so though God do not see to like, yet he likes to see. It is only the forbearance of his correction, that makes sinners presume of his connivance. These things thou hast done, and I held my peace; therefore thou thoughtest that I was altogether such a one as thyself, Psal. l. 21. *Impuneris peccatum, Deum cogitat peccatum*. God holds his hands, and he holds his peace, but he does not hold his eyes; and he sees, whatsoever he says. All things are naked and open to his eyes; not because he will observe them, but because he cannot look beside them. But, The time of your ignorance God winked at. He is said to connive, because he doth not correct. It is the promise of his mercy to pass over the sins of converts, as a father winks at the error of his little child. So we pray, "Turn away thine eyes from our sins." "Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities," Psal. li. 9. That is, *omite, remitte, demitte indemnatum*. Still the Lord sees; "I have done this evil in thy sight," ver. 4. He doth observe all sin in knowledge, he doth not reserve all to vengeance. He is said not to make it, because he doth not punish it. But if the Lord do wink at the aberrations of his servants, must he therefore slumber? Doth every one that shuts his eyes, presently fall into a slumber? Or, if he seem to slumber, can he sleep? Sleep is to refresh the weary; can rest itself be weary? "Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep," Psal. cxxi. 4. He is so far from sleeping, that he doth not put his eyes together. This might be Juno's opinion of her Jupiter: whom Homer relates making an earnest suit to Somnus. *Obsoprare oculos Jovis*. This is for a Baal: "Cry aloud, for peradventure he sleepeth." 1 Kings xviii. 27: a necessary slumber for a temporary god.

Sleep (such is the nature of it, that it) cannot occur to the nature of God; who is an eternity of rest, without any vicissitude or change. There is no mutation in himself, nor mutation or borrowing from another. *Phæbus ab externo radios non mutuatur*; much less God. "Who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed?" Rom. xi. 35. Who hath laid out

any thing for him, and it shall be paid him again? In sleep the exterior senses are bound up, and there follows a quiescence from motion. As of the contrary; wakefulness is the remission and unbinding of the senses, that they may freely officiate the requirements of nature. But the Lord moves all, and created things derive their first motion from him. Aristotle says, sleep is a retirement of the heat to the inward parts, and a conflux of that natural exhalation which ariseth from our sustenance. But God lives not by nourishment, therefore hath no need of sleep. Galen defines it to be a remission of the soul, according to nature, *ob extremis ad principium*; binding up the mind, and discharging the sensitive instruments of their offices; the heat which is taken up in those organs being recalled to the heart and lungs. Others thus summarily: Sleep is the rest of the animal virtues, together with the intention of the natural faculties, stirred by a profitable humour in the brain; wherein the soul suspends her functions in the outward parts, to relieve the inward and principal, for the health of the whole. But God is not capable of any weariness, therefore not liable to any sleep. Nothing needs sleep but what is nourished or wearied. No spirit is subject to such a nutrition, therefore not desirable of such a cessation. The sword of God may be said to sleep in the scabbard, while he forbears to draw it, but he that wears it sleepeth not.

9. This wakeful and prepared vengeance is threatened against the ungodly very fitly; for nothing is more proper to the nature of sin, than to sleep in security. "Awake, thou that sleepest," Eph. v. 14; that is, Repent, thou that sinnest. The godly have their naps, the wicked their sound sleeps. Continuance in sin may be compared to sleep in many resemblances.

1. For the cause of sleep: the natural heat drawing in its virtue, stirs up a vapour or exhalation, which ariseth from the meat, or from labour, sorrow, weariness; this ascending, the coldness of the brain beats back again, and so comes sleep. Thus the heat of concupiscence in the sinner first reigns within, and strives to fortify itself in a complacency of evil: and when the conscience sends any motions or considerations to the intellect, like vapours to the brain, they are reverberated back again by the extreme cold and grossness which possesseth the rational part; and thus follows the sleep of sin. When the conscience cannot prevail with the concupiscence, it is rocked asleep in sin, and all the organical forces are called in to wait upon lust.

2. As Aristotle delivers the formal cause of sleep to be an antiperistasis; it being made by a reciprocal motion, the stomach sending up fumes to the head, and the head sending them back to the heart; so by reason of this conflict they obstruct all the organs of sense, locking up the exterior parts as they pass in their journey. As a river that ebbs and flows, is driven by her own floods. The heat drives these vapours from the heart, the coldness from the brain, and they must needs rest some where: *hinc faciunt gurgulionem oppilando, et inde somnus*. In the spiritual sleep, the coldness of the brain is ignorance, the heat of the heart is concupiscence, the exhalations are lusts: while these with a sensitive pleasure are bandied up and down, the whole man becomes fast asleep; and sin reigns like an undisturbed lord in all faculties of body and mind, neither feeling nor suspecting the danger.

3. As there is a difference in corporal sleep, so in the spiritual slumber, *ενοχος* from *τὸ ἐνοχῆναι*, is called, to draw the breath; for the lungs do not fail their office in sleep. Now some bodies are so well composed, that they send forth a soft and gentle air, and

respire an easy spirit. Others that labour of some error in the lung-pipe, draw their breath with such diffinently and distance, as if they were in danger of suffocation; that the wind being held in, breaks forth with a troublesome noise; it comes out by many circuits and windings, involved in the muscles; and the breath being gathered into those straits, with a forcible eluctation opens the artery, breaking out with an allision and murmur, as the pent air at an evaporation. Thus spiritually: some take a quiet sleep, an unmolested security in wickedness, without the least starting or jogging of their conscience. "The Lord hath poured out upon them the spirit of deep sleep," Isa. xxix. 10. The breath they draw is *tenuis aura*, such as sometimes in summer riseth from the earth with an insensible effumigation. *Ducunt mollem anhelitum*, they sin without trouble about it; as a great part of England now sleeps in sacrilege, and their hearts are never disturbed for it. Other men sleep indeed, but unequally, full of startings, stoppings, and reluctations; as if they were affrighted with some sudden noise, and their own conscious thoughts did, like faeries, nip and pinch them, interrupting their desired repose. There is more hope of these than the former; for they that are often disquieted, will at last be wakened. When a man begins to stir in his bed, we conceive some likelihood that he will before long arise.

But they that can sleep when it thunders; like the Catadupans, inhabitants of the catacarts, who hear not the roarings of Nilus, *ingenti cum sonitu se precipitantis*; drums and trumpets, and that loud rupture of the air with ordnance, being like soft music to their ears to play them asleep; what hope of their waking? Declaration of sins, denunciation of judgments, description of torments, no more stir them, than a tale moves a man in a dream. Here is a supine stupidity, as capable of excitation, as the sea-rocks are of motion, or the sea-billows of compassion. As *mori mortem* is to die an everlasting death, so this *dormire somnum* (as the psalmist speaks) is to sleep an everlasting sleep. The Hebrews call sleep by three distinct and gradual terms. *Therumah*, which signifies a light sleep, *capitis mutatio, quasi prima rudimenta somni*. *Schemah* is a more profound sleep. *Thardemah* exceeds all, as it were a dead sleep. "The Lord caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam," Gen. ii. 21; that he neither had his sight offended, nor his sense oppressed, when his side was opened. *Thardemah irruit*, "A deep sleep fell upon Abraham," Gen. xv. 12. So the Greeks distinguish them; *καρπος*, which is a certain necessity of sleep; *καταφορά*, which is a heaviness of sleep; and *ἀπάθεια*, an inextinguishable appetite of sleeping. The Latins, if we consult physicians, distinguish them into *somnum, soporem, et veternum*: a natural sleep, a preternatural sleep, and a continual slumber. The faithful cannot avoid some naps, their nature is so weak; some sins they admit: vulgar sinners have long and drowsy slumbers: only the desperately wicked are cast into a dead sleep; an ecstatical, stupefying lethargy of sinfulness, hard even to be a little roused. The first is a natural, the second a preternatural, the last a contranatural sleep. A natural sleep is short, for six or eight hours, allowed by physicians, to the body; but allowed not by divines, to the soul. The preternatural is a drowsy slothfulness, an inordinate desire of sinning. "Yet a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep," Prov. xxiv. 33. The last, contranatural, is beyond all measure, a lethargical kind of death, which will never wake until it hath no more power to sleep. The natural sleep of the body is for the reparation of nature's forces, so much as may only be sufficient to absolve con-

coction; but the last, as in sweating sickness, sleeps to death.

4. As by sleep the brain is clouded, the nerves dulled, the veins obstructed; (Arist.) so by customary sinning the understanding is darkened, Eph. iv. 18; the spirits blunted, the affections stupified, the receptacles of grace filled with the obstructions of lust. And there is not only an indisposition to goodness, but a mad and unrestrained precipice to all manner of mischief.

5. As nothing is more pleasing to man's nature than sleep; *quia perpetuus motus naturæ inferiori repugnat*. It is most acceptable, *illabens animantibus amica dulcedine*. *Somme quies rerum, placidissime somme dorum*. (Ovid.) Sleep is feigned to love Paradise, because it is a common benefit to all living creatures. *Quæ a rerum veritate ad fabulas, Græca levitas et poetica vanitas transtulit*. (Aret.) So there is nothing more pleasing to corrupt nature than pravity: it is a delight to the wicked to do evil; and sleep is not more welcome to the body, than that is to the lust of the soul.

6. As sleep is justly called, the brother of death: so is sin, the sister of pain. There is little difference between him that sleeps and the dead, save only in time: both are void of sense, both like trunks; both blind, deaf, dumb. Either of them appeneth our cares, finisheth our labours; only death is the longer and more perfect privation. *Stulte, quid est somnus gelide nisi mortis imago?* (Ovid.) Sleep partakes of the nature of death. A certain middle thing betwixt life and death. (Arist.) *Dulcis et alma quies, placidaque similima morti*. (Æneid.) Death is a long sleep, sleep a short death. So sin is the elder brother of death: if man had not sinned, he should not have died. Sin was born first, but the elder shall serve the younger; for death shall swallow the whole inheritance. Here, the sleep of rebellion precedes the sleep of damnation. They sleep, but their destruction sleepeth not. The apostles said of Lazarus, "Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well." John xi. 12: but if you sleep, you shall do ill. As it is with the improvident heir involved in usurers' bonds; while he sleepeth, his interest runs on. Destruction takes the wicked napping, as Baanah and Rechab slew Ishobosheth, 2 Sam. iv. 7; or, as Somnus is said to slay Palinurus; *soporatum in mare præcipitavit*. (Æneid. 5.) He is easily subdued, whom his own slothfulness hath left unarmed. As death corporal proceeds of a cold vapour possessing the brain, and oppressing the animal senses and spirits; so from the cold dregs of sin, freezing up the heart in wickedness, comes the sleep of destruction: as Gideon slew the secure and careless host. When Diogenes Synopensis slept much in his sickness, and was dissuaded by his physician, he was answered, One brother doth but prevent another. Samson could not be bound, till he was first got asleep. Temporal death is not the only punishment of his sinful security; but while the worms are sporting among the reprobate's bones, the devils will make themselves merry with his torments.

7. Lastly, as sleep turns a man *in non hominem*, so doth sin *in non bonum hominem*. In sleep he neither hears like a man, nor speaks like a man, nor walks like a man. So in this spiritual lethargy, he neither thinks like a Christian, nor understands like a Christian, nor effects like a Christian, nor acts like a Christian, nor appears like a Christian. There be three seasons, wherein a wise man differs not from a fool; in his infancy, in sleep, and in silence. For in the two former all are fools, and in the latter we are all wise. In sleep the wisdom of the wise is not exercised, and the folly of the fool is not discovered.

In Psal. cxv. 5—7, there are six impediments orderly specified, wherein the sinner differs not from the sleeper. 1. "They have mouths, but they speak not." He cannot confess his sins, nor profess his faith, nor pour out his prayers. In sin, as in sleep, he hath a mouth, but not to speak. 2. "Eyes have they, but they see not." They have closed their eyes, lest they should see, Matt. xiii. 15. They differ something in this from an idol: the idol hath a counterfeit eye; these a shut eye. See, that cannot; these can, and will not. Who is so blind as he that will not see? The object is exhibited, their sight is self-darkened. They have eyes, but not to see. 3. "They have ears, but they hear not." The blind hath eyes, but not to see; the cripple feet, but not to go; the spiritual sleeper hath ears, but not to hear. The ear is a benefit of nature, but an ear to hear is the benefit of grace. 4. "Noses have they, but they smell not." They give themselves to sleep, and never suspect the danger that may prevent their waking. Let them come into that blessed garden of God, where innumerable flowers give delectable scents; they neither smell the odours nor relish the fruits. They receive not the things of the Spirit, 1 Cor. ii. 14; the natiurium is not capable. They have noses, but not to smell. 5. "They have hands, but they handle not." As that *organum organorum*, the instrument of instruments, the busy and active hand, is bound in sleep; so sin hath enervated the practice of goodness, and obsessed the sinner, not only with a designation of good works, but also with an indignation against good workers, and an unsatisfied delight in misdeeds. God reacheth out mercy to him, as the charitable doth an alms to the maimed; alas, he is fast asleep, and puts not forth a hand to receive it. They have hands, but not to work. 6. "Feet have they, but they walk not." Worse than that cripple, Acts iii.: he, though he could not go, would be carried to the temple; but these have feet and will not go to the temple; they have no desire to be brought into that vigilant and waking place. There the preacher's voice would be like a trumpet, and they cannot endure noise. They have feet, but not to walk.

Nothing is more dangerous than this drowsiness and security in sin; when men think they can pass as they please, through the womb to grace, through grace to wantonness, through wantonness to glory. With Gallio, they think religion only a question of names and words, and therefore will not meddle with it. Acts xviii. 15. Or, if they resolve to hear it, with Felix they can neither get a convenient time, nor a convenient heart for it. They are not like the bee that filleth her belly and thighs with honey from the flowers; but like the butterfly, which only dyes and paints her wings in their colours, and so leaves them. They swim like dolphins, playing upon the waves of carnal delights; and are always merriest when destruction is nearest. Wake, therefore, and learn to die before thou die; that when thou must die, thou mayst have no more to do but to die. While the foolish virgins slept, they lost their entrance into that joyful bride-chamber for ever. Watch and pray; they that would keep themselves waking, do it best by talking. Hold thyself in a continual conference and discourse with God, so shalt thou not fall asleep in sin. If thou dost fall into a slumber, yet let thy heart wake, Cant. v. 2. But the reprobate doth sleep soundly. "Therefore let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch and be sober," 1 Thess. v. 6. As Christ couples watching and prayer, so the apostle couples watching and sobriety. Sobriety is either corporal, the moderation of appetites; or mental, the moderation of affections. Now as drunken-

ness enforeth sleep, so sobriety keepeth awake. But as physicians rid their hands of incurable patients, and send them to the mineral or metalline baths, or leave them to God and nature; so I remit these to their Maker to be wakened, either by the trumpet here, or by the archangelical trumpet hereafter.

10. Observe that sin will not let justice sleep, but sends it up continual challenges and defiance; provoking Him to draw that sword, which he had rather should rest and rust in the scabbard, than be sheathed in the bowels, or shine with the galls, of his own creatures. But impiety will not let him alone, nor give him over, till his righteousness breaks forth into vengeance. As the prayers of the saints, with a kind of prevailing importunity, offer holy and humble violence to his mercy; that he descends with the flag of truce, in the milk-white ornaments of peace, pardoning sins and healing sorrows. If importunate solicitations could move an unjust judge to equity, will they not much more move a merciful God to pity? Luke xviii. 7. "Give him no rest, till he establish Jerusalem," Isa. lxii. 7. As the kingdom of heaven requires and requites this holy violence, Matt. xii. 12; so the King of heaven is content to have his hands as manacled from executing wrath, and his sword locked up by the prayers and tears of penitents. Let me alone, saith the Lord to Moses, that I may smite them; as if the groans of his heart did hold God's hand. So do the sins of the wicked hasten judgment, and cry to vengeance. Come away, why tarriest thou so long? Thus the blood of Abel murdered, cried for the blood of the murderer. Gen. iv. 10. Wickedness is not grovelling, but aspiring; not base, shame-faced, and fearful to advance itself, but swelling like Jordan above the banks. "Their wickedness is come up before me," Jonah i. 2. It was not hid in the secrecy of private chambers, not kept close in the closet of their own breasts; but an ascending, aspiring, climbing wickedness; so impudent that it durst press into God's presence. "Before me;" it wakens my justice, and will let me sleep no longer: "Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous," Gen. xviii. 20.

Sin with a voice is sin in action: sin with a cry is sin in presumption. (Greg.) Their wickedness passed the bounds of all moderation: the fame of it was not only spread upon earth, and blown into the ears of men; but it pierce the air, passeth the stars, climbs like the sun in the morning, comes up amongst the angels of God, and exposeth her filthiness to the throne of his majesty. This iniquity here is not less than a theomachy, a desperate war against heaven, a tower of sin like Babel, reaching to the clouds. A sin which the Scripture calls lifting up the hand, and lifting up the heel, against the Lord: lifting up the hand in opposition, the heel in contempt.

There are two ladders whereby men climb up into heaven, and become acquainted with God. The ladder of petition, and the ladder of presumption. The saints ascend by the one to their consolation, the wicked by the other to their confusion. Both press into the presence-chamber, both have the like access, both have not the like success. The one thrusts in like a conspirator, to practise treachery: the other like a petitioner, to implore mercy. Wickedness is saucy and peremptory, and will be notable though it be notorious. It seems to keep low water, or live in an ebb; but, like pride, is only to that end proud, that some notice may be taken of it. Commonly it is gone from the memory of the offender, ere it come with so fierce an inundation before the punisher. And that wind of rebellion which causeth

justice to wake, rocks unrighteousness asleep. But shall our sins come up before God, and not first come before ourselves, who dwell in the region where they were born, and were present when they were done? This is the greatest fault of our ignorance, to be ignorant of our faults. Must heaven know what is done on earth, before earth itself be acquainted with it? As Tully said, he could hear at Antium what news was at Rome, better than at Rome itself. Shall we turn our wickedness so far out of our own remembrance, that we never think of it till we feel it in vengeance? These be wilful mistakings, tricks to make ourselves blind. Alcous took a mole upon one's face for a grace: it was none, by his leave. The more quietly and securely sinners sleep in the good opinion of themselves, the more certainly their damnation sleepeth not.

I know that some sins are not so solicitous and urging upon the justice of God, as being the infirmities of his children, which he passeth by with connivance. Yea, he doth not strike at every provocation of the wicked. There is a time when God is said to take especial notice of sin: "Because thy rage against me and thy tumult is come up into mine ears," &c. 2 Kings xix. 28. But is there any sin when the eye of his knowledge is blinded? No, but this devotes to us the order of the actions of his knowledge. He sees sin in the book of eternity, before sinners' hearts do conceive it; he sees it in their breasts, before their hands do commit it; he sees the conception, birth, and commencement of it: but then he sees it to purpose, when being in the mature ripeness he lanceth it. "They that seek her will not weary themselves; in her month they shall find her," Jer. ii. 24. When the measure is full, God will find them out; as the wild ass in her month, great with foal. Thus he sees it with fiery eyes, bent to vengeance. There are some aspiring sins, pressing unto God's throne, like presumptuous mountains darted at his own majesty. They arise with a vocal ascension; the wings that mount them up so high, being the cry of their malignity in the ears of God: as oppression, Jam. v. 4. From this Job, in his apology presented to his Judge, excused himself: "If my land cry against me," Job xxxi. 38. "The stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it," Hab. ii. 11. "Violence and spoil is heard in her; before me continually is grief and wounds," Jer. vi. 7. So the prophet tells Israel, that God being displeased with Judah, and delivering them into their hands, they had slain them in a rage that reacheth up even to heaven. This is an outrageous impudence, that is ambitious of enhancing sin, despising the censures of men, and judgments of God. Though they have been plagued, they change not the colour of one hair of their heads, one work of their lives; nor add a cubit to their stature, one inch to their Christian growths. This, this is the way to fall upon that irrevocable sentence, which God hath purposed, and he will not repent, nor turn back from it. As the wicked cannot sleep till they have offended, so they will not let God sleep till he be avenged.

11. Long ago. There is a preordination of plagues for reprobates, and the very moment of the execution appointed. They were "of old ordained to this condemnation," Jude 4; as if they were booked, enrolled, and billed to this confusion, and their particular names set down in a book. God keepeth a book of registry and records, in which he engrosseth the persons' behaviours, and eternal state of all men. Besides the book of providence, wherein are all our members written, Psal. cxxxix. 16; and the book of life, which contains the names of the faithful, Phil.

iv. 3; there is also the book of judgment, out of which the wicked shall be judged, Rev. xx. 12. To think these material books, were a gross conception: they are the counsel, providence, pleasure, knowledge, and justice of God; which comprehend all things as if they were written in a book. Therefore, howsoever, in respect of men, things be contingent and casual; yet in regard of God, there is no chance, nor event by it, for he hath all things written before him with their causes. God's providence, and fortune, are direct contraries. Hereupon, the very actions of men come not to pass without God's purpose. He not only foreseeth, but wisely ordereth them; and even that which is done against the will of God, is not done without the will of God. He doth not command it, he doth suffer it. Albeit he esteem not evil to be good, yet he accounteth it good that evil should be.

This serves to qualify our impatience, when we see some reject the means of salvation, despise the word, vilipend the ministers of it, rob God of his church's patrimony, malign the professors of the truth, and give over themselves to a resolute contradiction of godliness; knowing that some are of old and long ago ordained to this condemnation, and that their judgment (a destruction which is properly their own) is long ago prepared. And for ourselves, though we be confident in Jesus Christ, through the testimony of the Holy Ghost; yet "be not high-minded, but fear," Rom. xi. 20. Our fidelity must take heed of security.

This point is not barren, but useful to us in a double application; the one of caution, the other of consolation.

1. Seeing God doth not sleep in his justice, let not us sleep in our injustice. When Alexander had a great battle to fight, he was found fast asleep in his tent. We have lists to enter with the justice of God; O let not the slumber of our souls and the judgment of our sins come so near together. "Jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship; and he lay, and was fast asleep." The air is troubled, and sends out a tempest, the waves roar, the winds blow, the sea is disturbed, the ship almost broken, the mariners afraid, (happy man that can pray fastest!) the burden of the vessel unladen; and all this for the prophet's cause: yet the prophet alone is ignorant of the matter, he is fast asleep. It could not be but he much forgot himself: though he had refused to preach at Nineveh, yet here was an auditory and an occasion that required a sermon; and the conversion of one sinner is a blessed work, because he covers a multitude of sins, Jam. v. 20, which either the converter or the converted hath committed. The very uncircumcised master wakens him; "What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God." An infidel leads him that knew God to his prayers. The prophet is become an auditor, and the auditor a prophet; the sheep leads the shepherd, the patient heals the physician; the Gentiles are devout in their superstition, the Israelite cold in his religion. Truth is truth wheresoever we find it; "Call upon thy God," was good counsel from a heathen.

It is desperate for men over shoes, to run over shoulders; and having transgressed the bounds of obedience, to neglect any desire of revocation. Cyprrian, who was at last a martyr, wrote of himself, that being a persecutor, he was so far in, that he had no hope of getting out; therefore freely welcomed all vice, as resolving upon the worst that could befall him. Sleep departeth from the eyes of distressed and anguished spirits: "I am full of tossings to and fro unto the dawning of the day," Job vii. 4. He that is troubled in his conscience for his iniquities,

will resolve with David, not to suffer his eyes to sleep, nor his eyelids to be closed down with slumber: as he, till he found a resting-place for God, Psal. cxxxii. 4, 5; so this, till he find rest for his own soul.

Yet how hath this sleep possessed even God's children! David being full slips into idleness; from idleness he passeth to concupiscence, concupiscence begets adultery, adultery hatcheth murder. And when all these ingredients, put together, would have troubled the strongest and most retentive stomach, he takes a sleep with them of almost a year long. Thus are sinners like a man surcharged with a glutinous meal, who is apt, his belly being full, to lay his bones at rest. Christ came to his disciples and found them asleep, Matt. xxvi. 40. He had often inculcated this admonition to them, "Watch;" yet now in the greatest extremity they are fast asleep. I know that sleep is necessary to human nature: all living creatures on earth have their sleeps. Though the poet *salse sed false* of the nightingale, *Tu cantare simul nocte dieque potes*; that she sings night and day; if at least he mean, without intermission: as Pliny also too confidently avers, lib. 10. cap. 75. The credit of Ælian is engaged for as much, that she is without all sleep; but, by his leave, it was an error. Sleep is that natural help,

*Quod corpora duris
Fessa ministeriis mulcet, reparatque labori.*

Therefore the Pythagoreans used to play a lesson on the harp and sing to it, when they were going to bed: *Quo citius et blandius obdormirent*. (Quintil. lib. 9. cap. 4.) The apostles therefore having supped late, drank wine, wearied with travel, now being midnight, sleep's principal season, not walking but sitting still; all which were *valde suadentia somnum*, as Virgil speaks, provoking and attractive of sleep; why then doth Christ reprove them, for not watching with him one hour? But is there not a time to wake, and a time to sleep? Eccl. iii. 2. What! in that very hour when the Lord of life was betrayed into the hands of death, the King ready to die for his people, the Creator as it were unmade to new-make his creatures, the innocent suffering for the nocent, could they not even then forbear sleeping? Not one hour; it was short: watch; it was easy: not be exposed to scorn, not cast into prison, not beaten with scourges; but only *spectare et expectare*, to look and wait, while their Master was finishing that great work of their own redemption. Not watch with me, me your Saviour; one hour, I say not a whole night. He found them all sleeping, but directs his reprehension to St. Peter, Mark xiv. 37; because he before, with fervent zeal, had confidently promised this, yea, far more than this, to lay down his life for Christ: "Simon, sleepest thou?" There is a time to sleep without reproof. Samuel slept. David slept, Psal. iv. 8. Christ himself slept, Matt. viii. 24. Peter had often slept before without reprehension; yea, and afterwards too with consolation, angels guarding and delivering him, Acts xii. 7. But now to sleep! "Couldst thou not watch with me one hour?" I say not a thousand, nor a hundred, nor a score, but one: not month, or week, or day, or whole night, but hour; and this not to fight for me, but to watch with me: *Simon, dormis?* Simon, signifies obedience: Christ calls him not Peter, nor Cephas, but Simon; arguing his forgetfulness, not only of his Master's love, but of his own name. But if it be such a sin to sleep, what is it to betray? *Judas, tradis?* was worse than, *Simon, dormis?* It is better to sleep with Peter, than to betray with Judas. He that sleeps well thinks no harm; but there be some that study mischief in their beds, Micah

ii. 1. *Ut jugulent homines surgant de nocte latrones.* We may better suffer *desidiosum monachum, quam insidiosum Jesuitam*, than the pope's wakeful Judas, *discipulum decipulum*, his snare and gin to entrap poor souls, and send them to Rome, like virgins taken up for the Turk, to suffer his antichristian ravishments.

To conclude; seeing that sleep comes from cold and moist humours dominant in the brain, and wakefulness from hot and dry reigning in the head, let us cast away the cold and crude humours of sin, and stir up the holy and almost extinguished fire of zeal. That as Christ at his first coming found the shepherds by night watching over their flocks; so at his second coming, whether by day or night, he may find us all watching over our souls.

2. As this is terror to the ungodly, so comfort to the righteous. As justice is ever waking, so mercy is never asleep. He that keeps Israel, never lets his providence fall into a slumber. Yea, even in the lethargy of our disobedience, when we remit of our uprightness, the hand of this ever-watching God preserves us. David was asleep a long while together, but the Lord that chose David slept not for his good. Upon this confidence he betaketh himself to rest: "I laid me down and slept, for the Lord sustained me." "I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety." As he sets his angels to guard us in the natural sleep of our bodies, so his preventing grace doth keep us in the spiritual slumber of our consciences. But let not this make us presume upon his mercy too much; nor so trespass upon God's un-sleeping protection, as to take our ease in our corruption. Thou sayest, Others have long slumbered, and yet been graciously awakened; as David, Paul, Zacharias; why not I? I dispute not: God will measure out his graces at his own pleasure; and though they run over to some, they are plentiful enough to all. "The same Lord is rich unto all that call upon him." Rom. x. 12. "My grace is sufficient for thee," was Paul's answer; and it may suffice all suiters.

God hath given us no small space, nor a few mercies; if we will sleep with Peter, we put it to the hazard whether we shall ever rise with Peter. We cannot expect miraculous revocations: a whale to reduce us, as Jonah; or the sun to stand still for us, as to Joshua; or the sea to divide itself, as to Israel; or a voice heard from heaven, as to Paul. Shall we say, The arm of God is shortened, because we see not these wonders? Will we not be wakened without miracles? Must the course of nature be altered, the pillars of earth moved, the channels of the sea discovered; must we see signs in the sun and moon, and have some rise from the dead to warn us, or we will not be wakened? "The Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified," 1 Cor. i. 22, 23. Woe unto us, if the open face of the gospel cannot rouse us without a sign, and the simplicity of Christ persuade us without further wisdom! "They that sleep, sleep in the night," 1 Thess. v. 7. But the night is past; let us therefore give over slumbering. The less sleep we give sin in our souls, the sweeter sleep we shall find to our bodies. Thus shall we be sure, that while the wicked are overtaken with this un-sleeping damnation, we shall be guarded and guided with a vigilant preservation. For Christ "died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him," 1 Thess. v. 10: to whom be praise for ever.

VERSE 4.

For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment,

THE apostle having dogmatically confuted, and prophetically condemned, the depravers of true doctrine, proceeds to an exemplary demonstration of the judgments of God upon sinners. For God cannot be unlike to himself; nor doth tolerate that in one, which he doth punish in another; but hates iniquity wheresoever he finds it, and preserves one immutable tenor of his justice. Whensoever sin goes before, punishment shall certainly follow after, unless seasonable repentance come between. Of this he makes

A relation, to ver. 8.

An illation, ver. 9.

The relation considers two generals; God's justice in punishing offenders, mercy in sparing his servants. This holds in three histories. 1. Of the angels: they that fell are confounded; there is his justice: they that stood are conserved; there is his mercy. 2. Of the old world: when the impenitent were swept away with a flood; there is his justice: and righteous Noah, with seven more for his sake, were saved in the ark; there is his mercy. 3. Of Sodom and her sister cities: when fire from heaven burnt up the reprobates; there is his justice: and righteous Lot was delivered; there is his mercy.

Now upon all these premises comes the illation, ver. 9, "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished." If our faith be as much, his mercy is not less; if their rebellion be no less, his justice is as much. The first judgment takes hold on altitude, the second on latitude, the third on plenitude. For height and excellency, the angels were glorious in heaven, yet some are cast into hell. For breadth and numerous amplitude, no less than a whole world were drowned. For fulness and opulency, the Sodomites lived in a second Paradise, yet were they burned. There is no wickedness so high, none so broad, none so rich, but God's justice can overthrow it. Let men be as high as angels, as many as will make a world, as rich as the Sodomites; yet if they be unrepentant sinners, they shall perish.

We begin aloft first, and behold the angels revolting from heaven, and for their fault turned out of heaven. Wherein we have considerable,

Their excellency, by nature angels.

Their apostacy, they sinned.

Their penalty, were not spared.

In the former I will touch upon four points:

1. Their creation, which though it be not precisely specified by Moses, is most certainly included. "By him were all things created, that are in earth or in heaven;" who were created in heaven but the angels? "whether thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers," Col. i. 16. Which though some understand of empires, orders, and governments; others, the palaces of God's majesty, and seats of immortality. But the opinion approved of the most, and the most approved opinion, conceives all there spoken of angels. He "maketh his angels spirits," Psal. civ. 4. Some philosophers conceived that angels had their beginning of the souls of men; that good souls became angels, and bad souls devils. And some would father this opinion upon Plato, but inconsiderately. Plato, indeed, thought and taught a metempsychosis, a transmigration of souls into new bodies. Such was that Homeric fiction of

Ulysses' companions turned into hogs and bears. But he said never, that of souls were made angels.

But why was this omitted by Moses in his history of the creation? 1. Some think it was to avoid idolatry in the Israelites, who, if they had known angels, would have fallen to their adoration. (Chrysost. Theodor.) But they could not be ignorant of the angels, which had so often appeared to their fathers, and done them so many ministerial kindnesses. 2. Others thus: Moses treated of things that had their beginning with the material world, but angels were created before the visible world. (Basil. Damasc.) But this is a false supposition; for before the world there was nothing created. 3. Others thus: Their creation is comprehended under the names of heaven and light, because they are set over all heavenly things. (August. Bed.) But this were to leave the literal sense, and to divert it unto allegory, which may not be admitted in so plain a history. The best opinion is, that their creation is omitted for two reasons. 1. Because Moses applieth himself to the simple capacity of the people, and describeth the creating of visible and sensible things, leaving spiritual as above their understanding. (Hieron. Ep. 139. ad Cyprian.) 2. Lest men should think that God needed the help of angels, in the production or disposition of the other creatures. As if the fabric of the world had been too great a business for himself alone to undertake; and therefore should be required the ministration of those angelical powers.

That they were created is undeniably plain; now the next query is, when. 1. Some think they were made long before the world. (Origen Tract. 35. in Matt. Damascen. lib. 2. cap. 3. de Fide.) But the Scripture testifies that the evil angels apostatized as soon as ever they were created. "He abode not in the truth," John viii. 44. And our text infers, that as soon as they sinned, they were cast into hell. But before heaven was made there was no hell. Before the constitution of the world, there could be no distinction of place; for there was nothing but God. 2. Some from the first verse of Genesis would prove, that the angels were created together with the world; "the heaven" comprehending angels, as the continent doth the content, the house doth the inhabitant. And whereas it is said, "darkness was on the face of the deep;" Origen thinks this deep to be that place whither the devil and his angels were cast. But the Holy Ghost showing the eternity of Wisdom, saith, "I was from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth," Prov. viii. 23—25. The angels therefore were not before the earth and hills; for then this should be no good argument to prove the antiquity and eternity of Wisdom, which is the Son of God. 3. It is most probable, that they were created upon the fourth day, when the stars and other ornaments of heaven were made. "When the morning-stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy," Job xxxviii. 7. They are said to rejoice and praise God together with the stars; therefore then it seems they took their being and beginning; for, unquestionless, immediately upon their creation they praised God. Besides, the heavens were that day perfected, the matter of them being only before prepared. It is fit that the house should be formed, before the inhabitant be produced. And this may satisfy any honest inquisitor, unless he rather desires to wrangle than to learn. But these be the Lord's own secrets, wherof we may be ignorant without danger. Howsoever, we have proved that the angel is a created substance; which confutes that Pythagorean dotage of philosophers with this

two beginnings, one of good and another of evil: together with that Manichean heresy among some Christians, of which rank were the Archonitick and Caian heretics, of whom we read in Epiphanius; that the angels were from everlasting, coeternal with God; whereas it is plain that they are creatures of his making.

2. Their nature; an incorporeal substance, subtle and powerful, created after the image of God, resembling him as they are spiritual and immortal, but especially as they are holy and just, and full of divine created perfections. They are substances, though invisible, that have being, life, sense, understanding; and not mere qualities. Pure qualities can neither sin nor be capable of punishment; but my text proves both these concurring in the reprobate angels. But how can an incorporeal substance be capable of punishment? Yet who would ask that question, that finds a soul within himself troubled with passion; even when no offence or distemperature riseth from that gross and corporal part? yet is his soul vexed with the sense of sin, with sorrow, care, and perturbation of conscience. Though the angels be spiritual, they are capable of punishment, for the torments of hell are spiritual. This confutes the Sadducees of our times, who think angels to be nothing but motions, and melancholy passions; or those that take evil spirits to be only evil qualities and dispositions inherent with us; or the Libertines, that think good or evil angels to be nothing else but good or bad fortunes and successes. But whom they would not beware of in their sins, they shall feel in their torments. As they that live like angels on earth, shall be made like angels in heaven; so they that will not believe any devils, yet live like devils, must have their portion with devils; and *stultus in culpa*, will be made *sapiens in pena*.

2. Their office. Angel is not a name of nature, but of office. (Greg.) They stand round about the Lord as attendants, and execute his imposed hests like ready servants. (August.) *A quo dominatio, ab eo denominatio*: this name is given them for some supereminent quality. "He rode upon a cherub, and did fly," Psal. xviii. 10. They are said to have wings for their speed of obedience. Therefore Gregory says, that their titles are according to their messages. They that are sent on business of less moment, are called angels; they that of greater importance, archangels. The angel sent to contract that sacred match between the King of heaven and the Virgin Mary, was called Gabriel, Luke i. 19. Gabriel signifies, the power of God: a fit ambassador for such a message; because the conception of Christ, and by it the redemption of the world, is called, the strength of God's arm, Luke i. 51. Gabriel was sent, 1. I do not think, with Hierome, because virgins are as angels: as Isidor. *Coelibatus*, as if *coeli beatus*. Indeed Christ says, that in heaven "they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God." Matt. xxii. 30. But so all the faithful are virgins to Christ, and shall be made as angels by Christ. 2. Nor yet so much to show that he was a high angel, because of his high and glorious message. 3. But indeed, as Aquinas in this truly, that our human nature might be repaired after the same manner it was ruined. As a serpent was sent to Eve by the devil, to work our woe; so an angel was sent to Mary by God, to bring news of our bliss. By Eve man was separated from God, in Mary God was united to man: an evil angel was the worker of the separation, a good angel was the messenger of the conjunction. So great is their office, that Christ himself accepted the name, "the Angel of the covenant," Mal. iii. 1. Popish writers deny that Christ

was ever called an angel in the Old Testament. For that, Gen. xlviii. 16, they would thence prove prayer to angels. "The Angel which redeemed me from evil, bless the lads;" but no angel redeemed us, but Jesus Christ. They say, If at any time the Son of God appeared, it was most likely to be in Mount Sinai, at the giving of the law; that being the most noble apparition of all. Yet saith Stephen, Ye "received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it," Acts vii. 53. Angels then appeared, not Christ. But the angels there were ministering spirits, giving their attendance, and executing their office. It is no good argument, Because the law was given by angels, therefore not by Christ. St. Paul clears it, "The law was ordained by angels in the hand of a Mediator," Gal. iii. 19. The ministry was of angels, the authority of Christ. They further object, If Christ had appeared at any time before his birth, it was most likely then when word was brought to Mary of the incarnation of God's Son: both for the dignity of the person to whom, and of the ministry what. But the messenger was Gabriel, not Christ. *Anse.* 1. Mary was not yet so great a person, as to be preferred before all the patriarchs, Christ's progenitors. Her dignity came not by her own worthiness, but by God's special grace: freely beloved. 2. There was greater reason that the same angel Gabriel, the first revealer of the prophecy to Daniel concerning the Messiah, should also be the messenger of the accomplishment of it. 3. It was not fit that the Son of God himself should be the messenger of his own coming into the world. Princes send their officers before, to give tidings of their coming; and should not that great Prince send his angels before, that it might appear he was Lord of the angels?

This is their office, wherein they are patterns to us. "Bless the Lord, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word," Psal. ciii. 20. For this we pray, that the will of God may be done by us on earth, as it is done by the angels in heaven, Matt. vi. 10. Our obedience cannot be like in perfection, must be like in proportion; for quality here, for equality hereafter. We must obey like the angels, if we desire to shine like them. In life we are men, in hope angels: now while we want the perfection of angels, God bless us from the presumption of the devils. (August.) Let us confess Christ before men, that he may confess us before the angels, Luke xii. 9.

4. Their glory. When the Scripture attributes the highest praise to inferior creatures, the comparison is drawn from the glory of angels. Jacob commending the countenance of his reconciled brother says, I have seen thy face, as the face of an angel, Gen. xxxiii. 10. "Man did eat angels' food," Psal. lxxviii. 25; which was manna, a most excellent meat, that if the angels needed sustenance, they could wish no better. "Though I speak with the tongues of angels," 1 Cor. xiii. 1. *Si que sint angelorum lingue*: if the angels had tongues, they must needs be admirable. They looked stedfastly on Stephen, and "saw his face as it had been the face of an angel," Acts vi. 15. David admiring man's creative glory, with uncontained passion breaks forth, "Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels," Psal. viii. 5. Man in his greatest glory is inferior to angels. Famous men in the church are called angels. So John Baptist: "I send my angel before thy face," Matt. xi. 10. "The angels of peace," Isa. xxxiii. 7. "To the angel of the church," Rev. ii. 1. The preacher of repentance was called the "angel of the Lord," Judg. ii. 1. The prophet is called the Lord's angel, Hag. i. 13. "He is the angel of the Lord of hosts,"

Mal. ii. 7. The king of Tyrus is called an "anointed cherub," Ezek. xxviii. 14. The widow of Tekoah put the term upon David, "As an angel of God, so is my lord the king to discern good and bad," 2 Sam. xiv. 17. This was their happy estate, unto which *nihil deficit, nisi quod non immutabilis fuit*, there was nothing wanting, but the unchangeableness of it. But *optimi corruptio pessima*: they were the best of all creatures, they are the worst of all creatures: being not content to remain angels, they became devils.

"The angels that sinned." I come to their apostasy; wherein consider four circumstances; the persons, the cause, the manner, and the measure of their fall.

1. The persons that fell: some of the angels, not all; they that sinned: for they that sinned not, stand for ever conserved by the mercy of God. This is St. Paul's distinction, "I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus, and the elect angels," 1 Tim. v. 21. Some are elected; and because election presupposeth refusal, the rest are rejected. Upon this falling, they are not properly any more angels, but devils and spirits of darkness. Satan, in Hebrew; an enemy, or detractor. Solomon acknowledging his peace saith, I have not an adversary, 1 Kings v. 4. The princes of the Philistines put the word upon David: "Lest he be an adversary to us," 1 Sam. xxix. 4. So David to the sons of Zeruiah: Why are you adversaries unto me? 2 Sam. xix. 22. So Christ to Peter: "Get thee behind me, Satan," Matt. xvi. 23. The Greeks have, *diabolus, εἰς βάλλω, insidiosè capere*. His whole exercise is to deceive man, and to reduce him to his own ruin. Thus he is called, The father of lies, the prince of darkness, &c. all corruptive, destructive names. Beelzebub, the god of flies, or the master-fly. Flies, though beaten off, will return again; so doth Satan after many repulses. The red dragon; dyed into that sanguine hue with the blood of souls. The tempter; "unclean spirits," Matt. x. 1. Which discovers their folly that, proverbially, The devil is not so black as painters make him. But, by their leaves, let us not trust him; but endeavour by a good life, and a holy faith, to keep ourselves out of his clutches.

Proclus, and Psellus a Greek writer, make many kinds of devils. Some fiery spirits, Leburion, conversant about the orb of the moon; some aerial, in that part of the air next us: others watery, earthy, subterranean, metalline spirits, which obsess the covetous and metal men. And the Scripture in some sort allude to it, which calls them powers of the air, and wanderers through the earth. "Woe to the inhabitants of the earth! for the devil is come down unto you," Rev. xii. 12; down, as if before he had been hovering in the air. They delight in filthy places, deserts, and sepulchres, and hogs. They drove one into the wilderness, Luke viii. 29. Another amongst the tombs, Matt. xxi. 28: from whom being cast they entered the swine, and drove them into the sea; as if they delighted in the waters, sporting like the leviathan in the ocean. They make some deaf, other dumb, other furious, all miserable whom they possess. They insinuate themselves into men by sly temptations, and therefore are called familiars. The best and blest angels seem also to have their distinctions; "thrones, dominions, principalities, powers," Col. i. 16. I do not speak of those nine orders, as the bold Dionysius, and the over-venturous papists. But they are so called, because God by them governs the nations, moves the heavens, restrains devils, works miracles, conveys prophecies, protects his servants, and executes judgments upon his enemies. Yet so as these names may be given to all angels, by oc-

caasion of divers employments; or to some for a time, and not for ever.

2. The cause, which was indeed wholly in themselves. For either God or man must be the cause of their sin, or themselves; but neither man, nor God, therefore themselves. Not man; for had not the angels fallen first, they could not have been the cause of his fall. That nature continuing good itself, would never have procured evil to others. But now their whole endeavour is spent upon hindering man's ascent to that glory, from whence they are justly dejected. Man either was not then made, when the angels revolted; or if he were, how could he living on earth ruin the spirits in heaven? The devil cannot challenge man, but man may thank the devil, for this perdition. He first tempered the cup for himself, and then tempted man to drink; but he had better never have pledged him.

Not God; for then that were injustice, to condemn them for that which himself caused. It were unrighteous to make them fall, and then punish them for falling. But he did foresee it and would not prevent it, and in not hindering it he seemed to cause it. Indeed, this holds in the creature; who is bound, foreseeing an evil, to do his best in preventing it, and otherwise is made accessory to it. But God is an absolute Lord of all, and not bound to any of his creatures, further than he bindeth himself. In Christ he hath bound himself to believers, and all his promises are yea and Amen; and he will keep his word. But shall any creature challenge him for not doing that he never promised to do? But God did not confirm them in their created grace, therefore caused their fall. *Answe.* God did not purpose their confirmation: he gave them power of willing, not will of standing. He is not tied to confer more grace upon his creature, than himself pleaseth. It was enough that he created them righteous, without addition of their confirming. He is not bound to do whatsoever he can, nor to give account of whatsoever he doth.

In a word, the angels had in themselves the proper cause and beginning of their own fall; which was, a free and flexible will. They might will good, and perseverance in good; and that will being mutable, they might also will evil, and so fall from God. The same kind of will was in innocent Adam. But good trees cannot bring forth bad fruit; therefore the angels being good, could not sin of themselves. *Answe.* Those words must be construed *sensu composito, non disjuncto*. Indeed a good tree, remaining good, cannot produce evil fruit; but being changeable, it may. But God foresaw it, therefore the angels could not escape it. *Answe.* Yet is not his prescience any cause of their fall, but only an antecedent. Because we sin, therefore it was foreknown to God; not because it was foreknown to God, therefore we sin. God saw Judas's treason in the glass of his prescience before Judas had a member composed, or the world was formed; yet was not this the cause why Judas betrayed Christ. He foresaw it; he did neither compel it, nor command it, nor allow it. Prescience is to God, as memory is to us; memory presents to us things past, prescience to God things to come. Our memory is not the cause why things past were done; nor is God's foreknowledge the cause why things to come shall be done. We remember some things we do, we do not all the things we remember. So God foresees all he does, he does not all he foresees. We remember an orchard such a time planted, that now yields good fruits, by nature, not by violence; so God foresaw it. We remember a murder done, by will, not compulsion; so God foresaw it. Neither our memory, nor God's prescience, caused these; but

they come to pass, natural by nature, voluntary by will, contingent by hap, necessary by necessity. But did God only foresee it? No, he also decreed it: why, then, how could they avoid it? *Answe.* He decreed to leave them to themselves, that they might fall if they will, and then to give them no grace of rising. But then as good hit me, as throw me: it is all one to thrust an old man down, as to take away his staff that should keep him up. Nay, but the old man throws away his own staff, and God doth not reach it him: they did forsake their own grace, and fall by their own folly. But here let us fall from disputation to admiration. "Oh the depth of the wisdom of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" Rom. xi. 33.

3. The manner: this was by sin, saith our apostle. But what was this sin? Though it be no where precisely expressed in the Scripture; yet from two places it may be collected, that it was a rebellion against God arising from pride. "Ye shall be as gods," Gen. iii. 5. He tempted man to this sin, an ambitious pride of bettering his estate. Now it is probable, that he sought to overthrow him by the same way he fell himself. "He charged his angels with folly," Job iv. 18. The sin whereof Eliplaz would accuse Job, was a justifying or lifting up himself before God. From this hypothesis or supposition he reasons, that if God so plagued pride in those angelical natures, how will he dissemble it in man, who dwelleth in a house of clay, whose foundation is in the dust! Some say, God subjected the world to man, not to angels; "What is man, that thou hast put all things under his feet?" Psal. viii. 6. This the reprobate angels could not endure, therefore rebelled and fell. Yet still the manner and matter of their revolt appears to be pride; an insinuating sin: it crept into Paradise, and robbed us of our birth-right; we may curse it to this day. It climbed into heaven, and robbed angels of their glory; they may curse it for ever. It is an impudent and stupid sin, more insensible than Solomon's drunkard. We have not only thrust thorns, and needles, and goads, but even swords and spears into her heart to make her bleed; and yet she is proud to be spoken against.

I speak not of pride in the husk, but in the heart. Her tailor, fashion, is now held an honest man; I am sure a powerful one. How ridiculous soever a garb appears, fashion can persuade men to it. Oh that our preaching were in fashion too! then we should hope to persuade you. We tell pride, that as the freshest rivers run into the salt sea; so all the honours of the world shall end in baseness, all the pleasures of the world in bitterness, all the treasures of the world in emptiness, all the garments of the world in nakedness, all the delicacies of the world in rottenness. If Christ bids us cut off and cast away the offending eye, hand, foot, all which are needful members tied with joints and nerves to the body, we may well spare these unnecessary dependants, no parts of our flesh, but flags of our shame. The Pharisee prays not for supply of defects, nor acknowledgeth a defect of supplies; but tells his own fullness, and that great difference which his mistaken eyes saw between himself and the publican. Luke xviii. 11, 12; swelling with his own wind till he burst. They plough with the oxen of their own imaginary righteousness, and contemplate the farm which their own works have purchased, and marry themselves to merit as to wife; therefore in the pride of their peremptory stomachs they scorn the Lamb's supper. Therefore Christ refuseth them in his call, but seeks sinners; not sinners in perverseness, but sinners in sense and conscience, in plea, action, confession, and condemnation of themselves.

It is a needy and acknowledged emptiness, that lies at his gate who is rich in mercy, like Lazarus with all his ulcers open, and begging the very crumbs of commiseration.

Humility is the hardest of all virtues; all vices are against it, yea, all virtues are against it; men are proud of their wisdom, proud of their beneficence. Yea, humility itself is against humility, and by a strange, prodigious birth brings forth pride: as Diogenes, and that worse Cisterian, is proud of his very patches. How common is it for men to disclaim vain-glory vain-gloriously! making a remembrance of that within them, whereof they study a renouement from them. But the best things are always most humble. The boughs of trees, the more laden with fruits, the nearer they hang to the ground. The best gold goes down in the balance, the lighter stays above. Good corn lies in the bottom of the heap, the chaff keeps aloft. The good angel lifts him up that would worship him; "See thou do it not; I am thy fellow servant," Rev. xix. 10. The bad angel affects it; "All these will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me," Matt. iv. 9. Good angels are fearful to be worshipped of that nature, which they see exalted in Christ; evil angels desire to be worshipped of that nature, which they know is made after the image of God. Satan is "a king over all the children of pride," Job xli. 34. Pride turned angels into devils; humility shall turn men into angels. Of all sins, let us bless ourselves, yea, the Lord keep us, from pride; that humbling ourselves, we may be exalted by Jesus Christ.

4. The measure: they left their condition totally and wholly; they quite forsook God, his image, heaven itself, and the office therein assigned them. "He abode not in the truth," John viii. 44: by this truth is meant the image of God; which Paul says, consists in righteousness, and the holiness of truth, Eph. iv. 24. It is called truth, 1. Because it never deceived any man, as unrighteousness doth; which promiseth pleasure, profit, content, and performs nothing but grief and shame. 2. There is no hypocrisy in it, it makes no show of other than it is. This original condition the angels voluntarily left, forsaking their place, as St. Jude speaketh. God in the beginning appointed most excellent places for his several creatures, wherein they were to perform their required homage and service. Heaven was the proper place assigned to the angels; to man in his innocency, Paradise; after his fall, the families of the patriarchs; before and in Christ's time, the temple; now, the congregations of the faithful. These were our appointed places to set forth the praises of our Maker. This place the angels left, forsaking the presence of God, and their own office wherein they should have been for ever employed.

But do not the devils keep in the air? Some do by God's permission; but not as in their proper place and first habitation, for that was in the comfortable presence of God in heaven. But whosoever they are, they carry a hell about them; if they be not in hell, yet hell is in them: as the militant saints have in them the kingdom of heaven, though the kingdom of heaven do not yet contain them. And the blessed angels protecting us on earth, are still in a heaven, by reason of the gracious and glorious presence of the infinite God that is with them. So the devils are never remote from their hell. "He was a murderer from the beginning," John viii. 44: whereupon Manichee grounds, The wickedness of the devil had no beginning: hence came that conceit of two beginnings. *Ans.* 1. He was not so from the beginning, as Christ, who had no beginning.

The latter confutes it; it is not said, in the beginning, but, from the beginning. 2. Neither was he made so in his own beginning of being; as some sottishly draw that literal Leviathan into any allegory: "There is that Leviathan, whom thou hast made to play therein," Psal. civ. 26; as if God had made him a devil. 3. Nor yet so from the beginning, that in the same instant he took of God a being, and of himself an evil being: as it is said of our soul, *cum infunditur, infectur*, the infusion and infection meet together. For he was first made good, and therefore must by intervention of space become bad. 4. But because there was a little time between his creation and apostacy: "He abode not in the truth." "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!" Isa. xiv. 12. He was a son of the morning, not a son of the day; he stood not so long. 5. Especially, he was a murderer from the beginning, not of himself, but of mankind. And St. Austin's reason is good, Man could not be murdered before he was made: the devil could not be a murderer before he had something to kill; unless we say, he was his own murderer. But from the beginning he murdered us; and we should never have recovered that wound, unless it had been by a second murder, the killing of Jesus Christ.

But if the angels in their innocency and excellency fell wholly and utterly from God, then much more may weak man rend himself from God by sin, yea, and also from Christ. *Ans.* The grace of creation came far short of the grace of redemption. There was a power to stand or to fall; but that power was in itself. Here's a power to stand, none to fall; but this power is not of ourselves. The power stands in the promise of God, and gracious covenant in Christ. "I will make an everlasting covenant with them, and they shall not depart from me," Jer. xxxii. 40. We so stand as never to fall. God doth not trust our salvation in our own hands; but we are dead, and our life is hid with Christ in God, Col. iii. 3. If our portion were in our own hand, we would quickly spend it, as that prodigal did his patrimony, Luke xv. We are the foolish children of Adam, and would part with our salvation for an apple; and by nature the brothers of profane Esau, that sold his birthright for a mess of pottage. But it is there laid up, where we can never spend it, nor the devil find it. There is a difference between the state of nature, and that which is above nature; betwixt a created and a regenerated will: not that the latter is not also created; but because the former is in the will by creation, so is not the latter. 1. The created will had a freedom to will that is good; so hath this. 2. The created will had a power to will perseverance in goodness; so hath this. 3. The created will had not the will itself, nor the act of perseverance; the regenerate will hath both these.

Here the doctrine of the Romish school errs, which teacheth, that in conversion the will hath a freedom to receive grace, or not to receive it; so man's power of faith and salvation should be in his own hand. But the unconverted will refuseth grace, yea, rebelleth against it; and no man can come unto Christ, unless the Father draw him, John vi. 44. It is not the will itself, but the conversion of the will, that makes it willing to goodness. The will of regenerate man is not as the will of created angels, able to stand or fall; but God hath conformed it, and confirmed it, to will its own standing for ever. True saving grace is never lost; without Christ man could never get it, but when Christ hath given it him, he shall never lose it. Some schoolmen say, that God doth *creaturis dignitatem causalitatis communicare*, and Austin seems to favour it; but man could as well

make himself, as make himself good. And if he were naturally worthy to have grace, where had he that grace to be naturally worthy? Sure this makes him little beholden to God, that gives him but the grace whereof he is worthy. As we say, God could do no more in mercy; so this says, God could do no less in justice. But they for the latter object, "Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown," Rev. iii. 11. Now *si alius potest accipere, tu potes perdere*, if another may take it, then thou mayst lose it, and so fall from grace. Indeed common graces a man may have and lose, but not that grace which makes him accepted with God: he can as soon lose the being of nature, as the being of this grace. The Romists, as they establish a free-will to get grace, so they confess a power to lose it; on both sides they run into gross errors. As August. contr. Tul.; *Ut statueret liberum arbitrium, negavit præscientiam futurorum: itaque dum vult facere liberos, facit sacrilegos*. But our seed is immortal whereof we are made holy; therefore our holiness is immortal. Three things can never be lost; the love of God in Christ, the grace of the Spirit, and our inheritance in heaven. We are in Christ; and unless Christ could be severed from God, we cannot be severed from Christ. Indeed for pagans, that are not in Christ, but in darkness; and for Jews, that are not in Christ, but in the law; and for Libertines, that are not in Christ, but in the flesh: these all may perish; but they that be united to Christ, never. There is a cordial union, of friend to friend; a carnal union, of man to wife; a vital union, of soul to body: these may be parted; but a spiritual union, never. As Christ is in God, and God in Christ, so are we in him. Prove it: "That they may be one, as we are one: I in them, and thou in me," John xvii. 22. But, "Thou hast left thy first love," Rev. ii. 4. Not fallen from love, but from such a degree of love. Besides, there is a counterfeit charity, but true can never be lost. To conclude, we stand not of ourselves, but by the grace of Christ, and mercy of God. We may look on our right hand for comfort, on our left for supportance, and find refuge to fail us, no man caring for our soul; but if we cry unto the Lord, Thou art our refuge, thy mercies fail us not, Psal. cxlii. 4, 5. The sea hath no mercy, the fire hath no mercy, the earth hath no mercy, beasts have no mercy, man hath no mercy, the world hath no mercy, the devil least of all hath mercy; but the Lord hath mercy. David by experience gives it, the children of God affirm it, and let no man at the peril of his own soul deny it.

Thus we have considered the apostacy and fall of these angels; a point somewhat intricate and thorny, and would have been much more confused, had I followed all the perplexful, barren, and unnecessary questions of the school; which have in them more subtlety than doctrine, more doctrine than use; full of scholastical, yea, sophistical doubts. One charged a painter to draw him *equum volitantem*, a trotting or prancing horse; and he (mistaking the word) drew him *equum volutantem*, a wallowing or a tumbling horse, with his heels upward. Being brought home, and the bespoker blaming his error: I would have had him prancing, and you have made him tumbling: If that be all, quoth the painter, it is but turning the picture the wrong side uppermost, and you have your desire. Thus in their quodlibetical discourses they can but turn the linements, and the matter is as they would have it. I speak not this to disgrace all their learning; but their fruitless, needless disputes and arguments; who find themselves a tongue, where the Scripture allows them none. It speaks of the angels' sin generally, without particular-

izing what it was: hereupon say the papists, it is an insufficient judge to decide all doubts and controversies. But because it doth not answer punctually the curiosity of their idle brains, can it not therefore decide all profitable questions, and satisfy all just doubts? Yes, it determines all things that concern our consciences, and everlasting salvation. In unnecessary things it is silent, as if it forbade us to inquire. For use to ourselves:

1. Seeing the fault for which God confounded the angels was the leaving of their being and first estate, this should humble us to bewail the same sin in ourselves, for we have also left our beginning. The image of God was imprinted on us, as well as on them. They defaced it in themselves. When the devil telleth a lie, he telleth it of his own, John viii. 44; no man suggested it to him. To this they also tempted us, so that we lost our beginning: a thing that few of us truly lament; our original corruption. Sometimes men sorrow for their actuals, but seldom for their originals: as if that should not trouble them which they brought into the world along with them; or as if that were their parents' fault, none of their own. But the royal prophet confessed, I was conceived and born in sin, Psal. li. 5. When a little child, I was a great sinner. (August.) I dispute not problems, whether this comes to us by imitation, which was the Pelagian heresy; for certainly it comes to us by propagation. The good man may generate, cannot regenerate, the children of his flesh. (August.) Nor is it material to be decided, whether the soul be infected by the contagion of the body, as good unction is by a fusty vessel: for the soul is infected as soon as ever it is infused; or whether in the very moment of infusion God did forsake it. Only let our care be, as in a common fire, not to question or examine how it came, till first we have put it out. A passenger brought to a pit by the cries of one fallen into it, fell a wondering how he came there: to whom the poor man replies, Forbear marvelling how I fell in, and do thy best to help me out. Miserable parents have brought forth a miserable child into this miserable world: *Nec citius tolerant utrum, quam damnatum*. (Bern.) We are sure we have it; oh that half so sure we were all delivered from it! How should this humble us, to look unto the rock whence we were hewn, and the pit whence we were digged? Deny not thy pollution, but cleanse it. All our tears are few enough to wash out our original stains: what are left for our actual and continual aspersions? Men rail on fortune, challenge the stars, blame bad company, curse the devil, for their sins; still they miss the proper cause, their original apostacy, and corrupt beginning. Satan could not make men profane rebels, unless their unclean nature had first made them sinners. From this impure beginning comes all iniquity; for naturally the seeds of all sins are within us, and if corruption precede, eruption will easily follow. And God will smite him that sins, though (as Saul said) it be my son Jonathan. Indeed he smote his own Son Jesus for our sake, not for angels'. Christ's side was lanced, to let out our imposthume. It is his grace alone that reduceth us to our beginning; yea, to a far better beginning, such a one as shall never have ending.

2. Seeing the angels sinned, let him that thinks he standeth take heed lest he fall. No height of man can match the angels: if justice spared not sin in them, how will it forbear us? No strength of man can match the angels: if they were not able to resist the judgment, what can we do? Heaven is a great way farther from hell than is earth: if sin could tumble down angels, how much more easily

the sons of men, from so low and conterminat a place! Adam was excellent in Paradise, yet short of the angels in heaven; their beauty and glory was far greater; but if God punished sin in the angels, how will he dissemble it in men? The Jews thought it a high privilege to say, We are the sons of Abraham; yet Abraham was but a man. We go further, and say, We are the sons of God; but how? By creation only: so were the lost angels: we must have a better title than so, or else sin will confound us with the angels. God forbore not sin in those his selected and eldest sons on earth, the Israelites; not in his celestial children, the angels; yea, he is so far from sparing it in any, that to save some he spared not his own Son. What then is our title? In Christ; indeed there it is only good; a blessedness which was not granted to the lost angels. But then let us walk worthy of this Christ, that we may confirm an argument of comfort to our own souls.

"But cast them down into hell, and delivered." &c. I come to their penalty; the first branch whereof is their dejection; he "cast them down into hell." Herein is *locus a quo* implied, the place from which they were cast, heaven; and *locus ad quem* expressed, the place into which they were cast, hell; there is *pæna damni* in the former, *pæna sensus* in the latter. The one privative, a loss of all blessedness; the other positive, an infliction of all cursedness.

"Cast them down." This implies some place from whence they were cast; and that is heaven, the place of their creation, the seat of blessedness, the palace of glory, the eternal mansion of joy. Lift up your hearts awhile, to contemplate that place, from whence they fell, and whither we desire to rise.

First, take it generally; there is a heaven wheresoever God's gracious presence shineth. Yea, as the father said, I had rather be out of heaven with Christ, than in heaven without Christ; so we had better be on earth with God's favour, than in heaven without it. For as the sun makes a day, so the countenance of God makes a heaven, wheresoever it shineth. Absence of light causeth darkness; if God turn away his face, nothing remains but wretchedness. "In thy presence is fulness of joy," Psal. xvi. 11. If the fulness of joy be in his presence, then the fulness of sorrow is in his absence. "Thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled," Psal. xxx. 7. For the light of God's countenance David often praises; nothing was so terrible as the hiding of his face from him; especially if it be true what the French nightingale sung, That hell is every where, where God is not. If the king's favourite be for ever decourted, and banished the royal presence, this more afflicts him than those that never saw it. An unknown good is unearned for: many men little affect heaven, because they never apprehended the sweetness of it. But that which is retained with great sensible joy, cannot be lost without great sensible grief. Had these wicked angels never known the delectableness of God's presence, their own expulsion out of heaven had been less plague unto them. Now they may name all their thoughts, those children of their minds, Ichabods; for the glory is departed from them, 1 Sam. iv. 21. It was Absalom's extremest discontent to be kept from the court; therefore in passion he solicits Joab, "Let me see the king's face," 2 Sam. xiv. 32.

This is their eternal misery, never to see God's pleased countenance. Darkness is the more intolerable to them, because they were created children of light; their dismal plaints, extorted by flames, more irksome, because they once bore a part in the music of heaven, the melody of angels. As Elisha

said to that great lord, "Thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof," 2 Kings vii. 2. There is good cheer, and they for whom it was provided must never taste it: "None of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper," Luke xiv. 24. Thus miserable are they that live out of the orb of mercy, drawing their unhappy breath without repentance: upon whom fury and indignation waits, the length and breadth whereof cannot be measured; with a diligent train of insufferable plagues, that will never cease to punish so long as there is a will of God to bid them. It is a question whether the rich man's own positive and sensible torments more afflicted him, or the sight of his once despised Lazarus in the bosom of rest. "The wicked shall see it, and be grieved; he shall gnash with his teeth, and melt away," Psal. cxii. 10. What so vexeth him? The horn of the righteous exalted with honour. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you shall see the saints in the kingdom of God, and yourselves thrust out, Luke xiii. 28: when you shall see it.

We may also consider this point at home; and think how it afflicted our first parents to see that Paradise, out of which they were cast and kept with a flaming sword. Every earth was not fit for Adam, but a garden, a Paradise. Excellent pleasures have been found in gardens planted by men; yet is the least leaf, twig, or pile of grass past all men's making. When he that creates the matter undertakes the form, this must needs be transcendently perfect. No tree, herb, flower, was there wanting, that might be for ornament or use, for sight, scent, or taste. The bounty of God extended itself further than to necessity, even to delight and recreation. Yet for all this, if God's gracious presence had not shone there, no abundance could have made him blessed. Yet behold, God offered him all fruits there, and restrained but one; Satan offered him but one, and forbore all the rest; and man chose rather to be at Satan's finding, than at God's. Then did the justice of God turn him out of his gates with a curse: why should he feed a rebel at his own board? That God from whose face he fled with fear in the garden, now makes him fly with shame out of the garden. The angels that should have kept him, now keep Paradise against him. It was easy to have kept happiness, easier to lose it, but most hard to recover it. That very cause which drove man out of Paradise, hath also withdrawn Paradise from the world. Now as when man was toiling in the cursed and weedy earth, what a vexation must arise in his conscience, by the sight of his discharged Paradise! so terrible is it to the devils sailing in the air, to contemplate that heaven from which they are banished for ever.

Secondly, more specially, and in a stricter acceptance, heaven is the local receptacle of infinite and interminate joy. "In thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore," Psal. xvi. 11. For quality, they are pleasures; for quantity, fulness; for dignity, at God's right hand; for eternity, for evermore. There shall be no fear to have the eyes dimmed with tears, or the soul surprised by death, or the heart dejected with sorrow, or the ears disturbed with cries, or the senses distracted with pain. There are possessions without impeachments, kingdoms without cares, length of years with strength of delights, greatness of state without conscience of corruption, love of all without jealousy of any. There men shall be good and not persecuted, happy and not envied, rich and not robbed, kings and not flattered. The inhabitants are at the same instant ravished with seeing, satisfied with enjoying, and secured for retaining. There is the

glory of God, whose brightness they behold; safety from foes, whose ruin they rejoice at; ("The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance;" Psal. lvi. 10;) the company of saints, whose comforts they participate; the receipt of a kingdom, and with it the full possession of the fee-simple of life, the tenure whereof is inviolable. Joy so tempered, that it shall satisfy and not glut; persons so sublimed, that what makes them everlastingly happy, shall never make them weary. There is a river, and the spring the throne of God, the water crystal, the banks set with the trees of life. There is a city, the gates of it pearl, the streets of it gold, the walls of it precious stones, the temple in it God, the light of the Lamb, the vessels to it kings of the earth; the cheer joy, the exercise singing, the city praise, the subject God, the quire angels.

Such is heaven, which, alas, man's parvity is as far from comprehending, as his arms be from compassing. Heaven shall receive us, we cannot conceive heaven. Do you ask what death is? saith one: if I could show you, I were first dead. Do you ask what heaven is? when I meet you there I will tell you. Could this ear hear it, or this tongue utter it, or this heart conceive it, it must needs follow, that they were translated already thither. Howsoever, what hath been spoken may remonstrate this, how great an infelicity the privation of heaven is. One spake truly, that the tears of hell are not sufficient to bewail the loss of heaven. This fully appears by that judicatory sentence, Matt. xxv. 41; when the wicked shall haply reply, Though we may not ascend with thee unto glory, yet let us have thy presence on earth: let us be any where, so thou, O Christ be with us. No, depart from me; from peace, from joy, from comfort, from my presence, from my salvation, from my glory, for ever. Oh wretchedness, that disdains all comparison! if there were no hell, this were enough to wring out everlasting tears.

Application. Seeing both these angels, and also men, were cast out of their original and proper residence by sin, and God hath made ours recoverable by Christ, which is not granted to them, let us studiously seek an entrance into that eternal rest. We transgress daily, yet the Lord shutteth not heaven against us; we find more mercy than our forefather. His strength was worthy of severity, our weakness finds pity. We lost a paradise that cannot be found, but we may find a paradise that cannot be lost. Here is no fiery sword to keep us out; we care not to seek where that paradise is which we lost, but this we both care to seek and hope to find. As man is the image of God, so was that paradise the image of heaven: both the images are defaced, both the first patterns are eternal. The first Adam was in the first paradise, and stayed not; the second Adam is in the second paradise, and there abides. "This day shalt thou be with me in paradise," was his promise to the penitent malefactor. Paul was there, and heard and saw what he could not utter. By how much the third heaven exceeds the richest earth, by so much doth that paradise which Christ hath found exceed that which we have lost. Now if we desire to have our salvation perfected above, we must begin it below. The gate of heaven is opened on earth. The place where God manifested his favour, Jacob called Bethel, heaven gate; "This is the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven," Gen. xxviii. 17: as a man calls that the court, where he was first brought to the presence of the king. Now this is done by a holy expectance, hearty affection, patient forbearance,

prepared assurance, constant perseverance, and ravished exultance.

By a holy expectation, and a life expressive of such hope. He that looks to wear a crown, habituates himself to royal affections. "Our conversation is in heaven, whence we look," &c. Phil. iii. 20. They that hope to carry earth up to heaven, strive first to bring heaven down to earth.

By a hearty affection. If we cannot get in, yet let us get as near as we can, and keep about the gates of the city: where the faithful are congregated, there heaven itself is opened. Cain thought it not the least part of his curse, to be cast out from the face of God; from Adam's family, where the face of God was seen in his holy worship.

By a patient forbearance and withdrawing our affections from terrene things. This world is but an inn; and no man seeks for his inheritance in his inn.

By a prepared assurance armed for all encounters. No prisoner fears that gaoler, look he never so stern, who knows that his commission is but to bring him to the court safe. To the saints, death is not a penalty, but a remedy. It is not so much a death of nature, as of corruption and calamity.

By a constant perseverance, resolving, upon the worst disasters, not to turn back: knowing, that if the gospel take away riches, it will requite them; if it take away life, it will restore it better. Patience shall never be a loser by it.

Lastly, by a ravished exultance and joy, that ariseth from the meditation of heaven. Which so transports us, that for the time we think ourselves there; and conceive of former sorrows, as men awaked from a busy dream. What shall be the possession of that place, whereof the contemplation is so sweet! It is a pleasure to sit on the quiet and secure shore, and discourse of escaped wrecks. This is our true paradise; the lower remains as it is a place, not as it is a paradise. On earth we lost it, in heaven we shall find it. There faith shall be turned into beatifical vision, expectation lost in possession. There we shall know the truth of things we argue here below. How sweet now would the knowledge of some secrets be unto us! yet are many not worth the knowing: there those deep and glorious mysteries shall be made plain, and we shall discourse them one to another. Discourse them, I say; for now the souls in heaven have the language of intelligence, and when their bodies are joined they shall have the language of utterance. And because the perfection of all shall be a blest everlastingness. I will give you the kingdom of heaven, saith Christ; this disgraceth all earthly kingdoms. I will give you an incorruptible crown; this disgraceth all corruptible crowns. I will give you eternal joy; this disgraceth all momentary pleasures. Eternal life is the gift of God through Jesus Christ, Rom. vi. 23.

"Down to hell." This is *locus ul quem*, the next part of their punishment; a sensible pain, the position of intolerable and interminable plagues. In handling whereof consider three circumstances; that it is, what it is, where it is.

First, that there is a hell, is plain; for they could not be cast into a place that had no being. Yea, it is manifest that it had a being before sin; and God made it before he had present and actual use of it. It was constituted ere the angels fell, that it might receive them when they fell. Hell was made before sin was hatched, as heaven was formed and fitted before the inhabitant was produced. For we must observe that God created angels and men after his own image, wise, innocent, powerful. But withal he gave them a mutable condition, which had power

of standing, and possibility of falling. Power to stand was of God the Creator; possibility to fall was of themselves the creatures. To be unchangeably good is only proper to God. (August.) Augustine in his Confessions gives the reason. Because God created man of nothing, he left in him possibility to return unto nothing. If God had given them an immutable nature, he had created them gods, not creatures. (Basil.) Now out of the whole host of angels he kept some from falling; and when all mankind was fallen, he redeemed some by his own Son. And as he shows mercy upon some in their salvation, so it is fit he should show justice upon others in their just damnation. Now because there must be distinct places for the exercise of both these, which are in God equally infinite, by an irrevocable decree from the foundation of the world, a glorious habitation was ordained for the one, and a terrible dungeon for the other. "These shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal," Matt. xxv. 46. So certain are both these places, that they were of old prepared: "Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world," ver. 34. "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels," ver. 41. "Tophet is ordained of old," Isa. xxx. 33: neither about to be prepared, nor certain to be prepared, but prepared. Of old; for the Lord, that beholds all things, past, present, future, *uno actu, uno ictu*, at once, and at the same time; as he foresaw the different estates of men and angels, so he provided for them different places. That there is a hell.

First, the Scripture plentifully testifies, Mark ix. 43, &c. I know that many have wrangled against it; Damascus reckons up nineteen several sorts of heresies that denied it. But say what they will, the wicked would give much to be sure that the Scripture was not true. They will not believe, and yet they cannot choose but believe: their ease is fearful.

The heathen affirmed a hell and place of torment for bad men; they retained so much light, as to know of that future darkness. Some of them have been terrified with their own inventions, and distracted with horror of the torments described by their own pens. As Pygmalion doted on his own picture, so were they amazed with their own comments. How much more, if they had known those intolerable horrors as they are, not as they were described! *Par nulla figura Gehenna.*

Besides, many wicked men are punished, and many as wicked escape. Now it is fit that partners in sin should not be severed in torment. God doth not punish all here, that he may allow some space of repentance; nor doth he forbear all here, lest the world should deny his providence. He spares that he may punish, and he punisheth that he may spare. He afflicteth some in the suburbs of hell, that they might never come into the city itself. But *quos malos fert in cruciatus, refert cruciandos*. The evil he now suffers uncorrected, he refers to be condemned. Sin knows the doom; it must smart, either here or hereafter.

Further, in all things natural and supernatural, there is an opposition and contrariety. There is good, there is evil; light and darkness; sorrow and joy. Now as there be two ways, so there must be two ends: heaven, whither the good angels shall carry the saints; hell, whither the black and grisly spirits shall hurry the reprobates.

Again, all men naturally do honour the good, and punish the evil. The barbarians themselves have laws of castigation, and executions to cut off irregular persons. Shall the Lord in his justice come short of creatures, of barbarous creatures? The law

of nations requires that malefactors, if they escape with life, be banished for ever. And shall not God banish rebels on earth, from his glorious presence in heaven, into that fearful island of hell? If this were not, Nero was as good a man as Paul; Esau should still have his birthright in bliss, and Cain be a saint as well as Abel. As believers say, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable," 1 Cor. xv. 19; so might the wicked say, If in this life only we have sense of sorrow, we are of all men most happy.

Lastly, every prince is allowed this concurrence to his state; that as he hath a pleasant palace for himself and his servants, so he hath a gaol and prison for rebels and traitors. That heaven is glorious where the high King keeps his magnificent court, the outer side of whose pavements we delight to behold, and admire for beauty. So is that hell a dismal dungeon where he puts his enemies, the outside whereof men are not suffered to see, lest they should die with horror of the sight. They that have seen the flames and heard the roarings of Etna, now Monte Gibillo, the flashings of Vesuvius, the thunderings and burning flakes evaporating from marine rocks, have not yet seen the very glimmerings of hell. A painted fire is a better shadow of these, than these are of hell-torments.

I am sure I speak to no atheists; I could say, dost thou think there is no hell? What devil will so affirm? they know it, and feel it: Why art thou come to torment us before our time? Shall not men tremble to deny what the devils confess? (Chrysost.) What, eat, drink, and play, epicure; no pleasure after death? None indeed to reprobates; there is nothing but hell for them, and they shall find small pleasure in that. Believe it, and avoid it; by believing thou shalt avoid it. We are sure God hath made it; let us be but half so sure that we shall escape it. A good king having ordained positive laws by which he would govern, caused instruments of execution to be made, gibbets, wheels, racks, and such torturous engines. And being made, he commanded them to be brought forth, and exposed to open view; and upon every one was written, *Ne nocent, ne nocent*. That it may do no harm: observe it, that you may never feel it. So God admonisheth us of hell, *ne nocent*: he doth as it were show it us, that it may never hurt us. "Thou hast showed thy people hard things," Psal. lx. 3; but showed them, not inflicted them. By threatening us, he would save the labour of plugging us.

But shall God menace this, and we not be moved? Is the hand-writing on the wall, and Belshazzar still merry? God loves him that trembles at his word, Isa. lxvi. 2. Do we not tremble at it? how should we then escape it! We read of a bird of paradise, so called for her excellent beauty, that being taken in the fowler's net, she doth groan and weep night and day, and so languish away. We were once such birds of paradise, but by sin taken in Satan's nets; captived in wickedness, and condemnable to this hell of wretchedness. Oh how should we groan and weep till we get out of this prison where we are, into the liberty where we would be! Sin must have sorrow; either here by attrition ^{tes} *legis*, or contrition evangelical, or hereafter by destruction ^{no} *eterna*. Let us be as ready for repentance, as ever we have been for obedience. (Isidor.) It is too common for men ^{ate} to press others, and luxuriously riot themselves. ^{not} "My Lord delayeth his coming," Luke xii. 45. if it would be long before he be present, that is in place, at no time, absent. Whereas the shadow doth not more diligently wait upon the body, than doth

confusion upon sin. Therefore so live to-day, as if thou wert not to live to-morrow. Seeing for the wicked is prepared a hell, let us seek for heaven. Corrupt nature prepared us all for the former, let holy grace prepare us for the other. It is said of heaven, It is open to the prepared, shut to the unprepared. The contrary is true of hell; to the prepared it is shut, to the unprepared it is open. God showed the prophets many fearful visions, to their terror and astonishment; but withal he encouraged them, that the judgments should light upon others, and he would deliver their souls. Ezekiel's quaking and trembling was but for a sign, Ezek. xii. 18: Israel's should be in sense and anguish of heart. If we tremble at these torments while the wicked laugh and are jovial, we shall put off our fear to them, laugh and be merry when they tremble. As Daniel said to that monarch, "Let not the dream trouble thee; the dream be to them that hate thee, and the interpretation to thine enemies," Dan. iv. 19: let our hearts repent and believe, and let not this terror trouble us; the terror be to the devils that hate God, and to the reprobates his enemies. "His enemies will I clothe with shame; but upon himself shall his crown flourish," Psal. cxxxii. 18. For tormenting cares, we shall have flourishing crowns, in the communion of saints and angels.

The next question is, What is hell? It is that place where the justice of God confineth reprobates to their eternal punishments. The plagues thereof are internal, external, eternal. Internal, that consist in a plenary desertion of God; so that they are continual sinners and continual sufferers; two contrarieties being reconciled in them, extreme presumption and extreme desperation. Presumption, for with bitter malice and curst heart they shall perpetually blaspheme, and sin against the Holy Ghost, Rom. xvi. 11. Desperation, without all hope of mercy, or admitting one thought of peace. The one being a sin against God's justice, the other against his mercy. External, that consist, 1. In a deprivation of all comfort; that they do feel being not more bitter than the thought of that they cannot feel. (Chrysost.) A privative cause hath a positive effect. Tully banished from Italy, though it were into Greece, wept bitterly when he remembered Rome. Exiled Demosthenes, though he found much kindness amongst his enemies, yet would weep when he looked towards Athens. The captive Jews hung up their harps when they remembered Zion. Another laments that *Roma relinquenda est*; but when he considers, *Scythia est quo mittitur*, bursts out into tears. It is the most unhappy part of unhappiness to remember former welfare. *Dura satis miseris memoratio prisca bonorum.* 2. In a sensible passion of universal anguish; as a brand in a great fire, no part free from burning. Eternal, not determinable with time, for then time shall be no more: everlastingness shall make absolute their sorrows: man's arm may be weary of smiting, not God's. It is fabled of Jupiter, that if he should spend his artillery as fast as men sin, his quiver should soon be empty. Vulcan could not make his thunderbolts fast enough. But the damned are punished in hell, so long as there is a God in heaven.

The Scripture speaks sometimes of hell figuratively: Gehinnon, Tophet; which was a valley by Jerusalem, called Gehinnon, because it was in the gate of a man named Hinnom. (Aret.) There gathered the Jews, after the example of the Ammonites, sacrificed their children to Moloch in the fire. An idol which they worshipped for Mercury. (Montan.) Others say for Saturn, whom the poets feign a de-

vourer of his own children. It was of brass or copper, with hands stretched out to receive the infants that were to be sacrificed. His priests were called Chemmarim, because they were reeled or smoked with the incense offered to the idol. It was defaced and defiled by good King Josiah, 2 Kings xxiii. 10, and made a draught or common sewer for the filth of Jerusalem. The Chaldeans cast the slain Jews into that place, Jer. vii. 32. Therefore it was called, the mouth of hell, that could not be filled. For further description of hell, the Scripture useth three principal terms; the worm, outer darkness, and unquenchable fire, Mark ix. 44.

First, the worm. This we must not understand a corporal worm, which were terrible enough; for a man to live always dying, and die always living, with an adder sucking and stinging his vital parts. "The vengeance of the ungodly is fire and worms," Ecclus. vii. 17. But we must know that after the world's dissolution, there shall remain no mixed body, but only man's; no generation nor corruption in the revived bodies. Therefore the worm cannot be corporal, but spiritual; the stinging of a vexed conscience. As from the corruption of dead bodies breed the worms that devour them, so from the corruption of sin riseth this worm of conscience. Some understand it to be the memory of past sins, which shall so long gnaw their souls and bodies, like a vulture preying on their hearts, as the remembrance of committed iniquities continues, which will be for ever. *Object.* But if the memory be so perfected, then the recognition of former joys shall be some ease. An old soldier, after his exhausted strength, glories in the battles he hath won. *Ans.* Nay, this shall rather be matter of sorrow: to remember the evils they have done, bitter; the good they once had, more bitter; the good they might have had, most bitter. *Object.* The torments of hell are far beyond any pains of this world; but a man here, lying under some lethargical and stupifying pressure, cannot consider those intelligible conclusions, as he might being abstracted from his pain. *Ans.* The soul is here joined to a corruptible body, straitened by the organ; so that while the body is afflicted, the consideration of the soul is hindered. But there the soul cannot be inclined by an incorruptible body; but while the flesh suffers according to the capability thereof, the soul is prostrated to all the pains she can endure. *Object.* But the damned are the subjects of time, and time causeth forgetfulness. *Ans.* Time is the cause of forgetting, but only by accident; because motion, which is the measure of time, is the cause of transmutation. But after this world there shall be no more motion of the heavens; and even the soul that is now separated, is not changed from her disposition by the motion of heaven. "Son, remember," Luke xvi. 25: this is a gnawing worm: which if it hath made some acknowledge a hell on earth, what shall it be to their sense in hell itself? The eyes which sin hath shut damnation shall open. (Greg.)

Therefore it is good counsel now, Foresee with fear the evil that shall be hereafter, lest you remember with grief the good that hath been heretofore. Oh that our foresight were but half so sharp as our sense! Let us now consider seriously the pains that shall be, that we never be put to remember grievously the joys that have been.

Secondly, outer darkness: "Cast him into outer darkness," Matt. xxii. 13. But it is objected, that the sight of their misery shall aggravate the sense of their misery: but nothing can be seen without the light, therefore not outer darkness. Again, the damned shall have a visory power after the resump-

tion of their bodies, which were superfluous if they should see nothing with it. They shall see, and without light they cannot see; how then, outer darkness? *Ans.* Though that fire do not shine to any comfort, yet for their extremest vexation it shall give some light; so much, as to show their fellows their torments, and them the torments of their fellows. (Greg.) Basil in Psal. xxxix. 7, "The voice of the Lord divideth the flames of fire;" God's power shall separate the clarity of fire from the adustive virtue. That the clearness may delight the righteous, and the sharpness afflict the wicked. So Theodor. in Psal. xvi., The shining property shall be extracted to comfort the saints; the burning property remain to punish reprobates. But then vision itself is some delight: as Aristot. in his *Metaphys.*, The sight of the eyes is pleasant: and to the same purpose Solomon. Yet by accident it becomes afflictive: as when men are forced to see what they would not see. In hell there shall be nothing diaphanous, perspicuous, clear; but a shady, foggy vision, like a distracted dream. They shall see that, which to avoid they would wish themselves to have no eyes.

Let us therefore decline the works of darkness, as we desire to escape the place of darkness. Interior darkness must be doomed to inferior darkness. What is more just, than that they who refused the light when they might have it, should be denied the light when they desire it? Many now nuzzle themselves in ignorance, as if they meant to make their own beds in hell. Voluntary blindness shall be confined to necessary blindness; and they that might now see if they would open their eyes, shall there open their eyes and not see. Let us be children of the light, not of the night; and as we wish to see that glory without us which may make us happy, so let us strive to see that grace within us which may make us holy. Now the Father of lights defend us from that prince and place of darkness.

Lastly, fire, unquenchable fire. It hath been much controverted, whether in hell be true substantial fire, or only fire allegorical. Calvin is only for the allegory; and so some others, that give this reason: There is mention of wood and of worm, as well as of fire: now these are allegorical, why not therefore the fire? But in Scripture things spoken together are not always taken in the same nature and manner. Christ is called the Rock of our salvation: the rock is allegorical; is our salvation therefore allegorical? Ye shall "eat and drink at my table in my kingdom," Luke xxii. 30: eating and drinking is allegorical; is therefore the kingdom allegorical too? It is then to be concluded that there is true and substantial fire in hell. "The Lord will come with fire, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire," Isa. lxvi. 15. If he will judge them in fire, why not condemn them to fire.

Grant it substantial fire, then it is questioned whether it be material, corporeal, or spiritual. It is not material: that is fire nourished with fuel. Etna, and other places of the earth, burn continually without fuel; much more that infernal fire. He that makes the damned live without food, is able to maintain this fire without wood. Not spiritual: indeed Gregory calls it an incorporeal fire; but it passeth the nature of fire to be spiritual; and he that makes a spiritual only, goes about to make it no fire at all.

It is therefore a corporeal fire; but being so granted, there arise some exceptions. *Object.* If it be corporeal, how can it diversely torment divers reprobates? There is but one fire in hell, but it doth not cruciate all after one manner and measure: as every one hath been more wicked, he shall be more wretched. *Ans.* But we must know that this fire

is the instrument of the Divine justice: now no instrument works only by its own virtue, and after its own measure, but is regulated by the virtue of the principal mover. The fire in a furnace is increased or qualified according to the will of the kindler; so is this disposed by the power of God; "the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it," Isa. xxx. 33. We know that one and the same fire doth otherwise burn iron, than wood or straw. According to the nature of the incensed matter is the rage of the fire. All men on earth are under one sun, yet do not all equally feel the burning of that sun: one is hotter than another, a Moor than a Briton. So in that one fire there is not one manner of burning. That which is here wrought by the diversity of bodies is there by the diversity of sins. (Greg. Dial. lib. 4.) There may be a several degree of pain to every one, and yet one common fire to all.

Object. But if it be corporeal fire, it must be maintained with fuel, or else it will go out: but there is no fuel in hell. *Ans.* Yes, the bodies and souls of the damned shall be instead of fuel. And because those materials are everlasting, therefore it follows that hell-fire can never go out, for it is against the nature of fire to cease so long as it hath combustible matter to feed it. *Object.* But if it be corporeal, then is it of the same species with our fire; now man knows the nature of this, but not of that. *Ans.* Fire is found in two places and manners: either in the proper matter, as it is in its own orb or sphere; or in another matter, whether earthly, as appears in a coal, or airy, as appears in the flame. But howsoever or wheresoever it is found, it is always in respect of the nature in specie, fire. In the bodies which are the matter of the fire there may be difference: as burning wood and burning iron differ. Still is it fire, though diverse from ours in certain proprieties which are unknown to us; and may we never know them.

Gregory, upon Job xx. 26, "A fire not blown shall consume him," objects, that if it be corporeal fire, it needs fomentation. Indeed our elementary fire must be kindled and nourished, because it is brought artificially and by violence upon the combustible subject. But hell-fire needs not, because it either subsists in the proper matter, or in an alien subject, not by violence, but by nature a *principio intrinseco*. The wrath of God makes it unquenchable, so that it neither needs feeding nor wants raging. But our fire is corruptible, that eternal; how then of the same nature? So are the reprobate bodies now corruptible, then made incorruptible; therefore the same nature of fire shall become everlasting, to torment the same bodies become everlasting. *Object.* But the nature of our fire is to shine and give light, which hell-fire doth not: "The light of the wicked shall be put out, and the spark of his fire shall not shine," Job xviii. 5.

Ans. The fire doth not shine in the proper manner of existing: it shines not in its own orb, saith the philosopher. Besides, gross and foggy smokes, and thick darkness, may keep fire from giving lustre; yet still it remains fire. The conclusion then is for corporeal fire in hell; 1. Because there is not only the punishment of loss, which answers to the aversion from the Creator, but also the punishment of sense, which answers the conversion to the creature. Now what plague so terrible to the sense as fire? 2. "Wherewithal a man sinneth, by the same shall he be punished," Wisd. xi. 16: but by sensible things they sinned, therefore by sensible things punished.

But, lastly, if it be corporeal fire, then it torments only the body; for how can a corporeal fire work upon a spiritual substance? Bernard thus: There

is a double punishment, the worm, and fire. The one gnaws the conscience, the other burns the carcass. The one outwardly burning, the other internally corroding. And Meditat. cap. 4: *In carne cruciabantur per ignem, in spiritu per conscientie verement.* So Isidor. de Sum. Bon. lib. I. cap. 31: The pain of the damned is double: *Mentemurit tristitia, corpus flamma.* So Bed. in Marc. 9. lib. 3: *Ignis erit pœna extrinsecus sevens, vermis dolor intus occisans.* These seem to restrain that fire from working on the soul. But it is plain the fire is "prepared for the devil and his angels," Matt. xxv. 41. But the devil hath no body, yet he burns in fire. The rich man cried out, and shall cry for ever, "I am tormented in this flame," Luke xvi. 24; yet was his body in the grave, and his soul only in hell: neither is that altogether a parable; for then Christ would only have propounded the example, and concealed the name. He that denieth spirits to be tormented in fire, let him take heed lest his own spirit feel it. But how this corporeal fire shall torment devils and damned spirits, who knows? I do not doubt but that rich man was in the burning of pains, and the poor man in the refreshing of joys; but how to apprehend that flame of hell, that bosom of Abraham, that tongue of the rich and finger of the poor, that thirst of torment, that drop of comfort, shall hardly be found of them that seek humbly, never of them that seek curiously. It is more safe to doubt of that is secret, than to dispute of that is uncertain. It is miserable by seeking what God hath secreted, to lose what God hath granted. Seeing then this is substantial and corporeal fire, wherein differs it from our elementary fire? In five respects.

1. In regard of heat. The fire in a landscape which is painted fire, or their purgatory fire, which is fabled fire, is a better representation of elemental fire, than elemental fire of eternal fire. That furnace whose heat was septupled, and the flames licked up them for whom it was not meant, was raging, but not a glowing spark to hell.

2. In regard of light. Our fire comforts in shining, that is oppressed with horrible darkness. It retains the property of burning, it hath lost the property of shining. (Basil.) Therefore it is called *Hades sine sole domus*: Jude calls it the black darkness. The darkness of Egypt was strange and fearful, so thick that it was palpable; yet a mere holiday to hell. The poets described it by Cimmerian darkness; an Italian territory betwixt Baia and Cumæ, where the Cimmerii inhabit; so environed with hills, and overshadowed with supercilious and hanging promontories, that the sun never comes at it.

3. Elemental fire burns the body only, eternal also the soul. The passion of the body is but the body of passion; the soul of pain is the pain of the soul; yet if a consumable body be not able to endure burning flames for a day, how will an unwastable soul endure them for ever!

4. Elemental fire, as it burns, so it consumes; hell-fire rageth more and wasteth less. The reprobate shall have the punishment to be burned; not the happiness to be wasted. *Pœna gehennales puniunt, non finiunt corpora.* (Prosper.) Iron will hold burning long, yet consumeth; in hell there is neither cessation of fire burning nor of matter burned. It is a fire of consummation, not of consumption. If it were terminable, it might be tolerable; but being endless, it must be easeless.

5. Our elemental fire may be quenched, that never goes out. This is maintained with wood, and put out with water; that, as it hath nothing to maintain it, so nothing to extinguish it. There shall be weeping of eyes, no mitigation of flames: if there be any

tears, they shall rather be like oil to feed and nourish it, than like water to put it out.

These are three principal expressions of hell; but is there nothing of pain besides these? It seems they suffer nothing else but fire, because Christ dooms them only unto fire, Matt. xxv. 41. Indeed fire is the principal, but there are other accessories and concomitances. (Basil.) In the last purgation of the world there shall be a separation made in the elements. Whatsoever is pure, refined, sublimed, and perfect, shall remain above for the solace of the blessed. Whatsoever is feculent, sordid, and ignoble, shall be cast down to the punishment of the damned. That as every creature becomes matter of the saints' joy; so every creature be made matter of the reprobates' sorrow. "God shall make the creature his weapon for the revenge of his enemies; and the world shall fight with him against the unwise," Wisd. v. 17, 20. As they have departed from that one God, one good, by sin in many material things, which are various and vain; so that one justice shall by many material things confound them. But, *Ad calorem nimium transibit ab aquis mirum*, Job xxiv. 19; as the vulgar Latin reads. Now the variety and vicissitude of passions yields some refreshing; as when a man passeth from extreme cold to extreme heat, there is a mediate intermission: but there is no refreshing admitted in hell. *Ansui.* The damned may pass from extremity of cold to extremity of heat, without any refreshing, because the passing shall not be by any transmutation of the body from the former natural disposition, nor by reduction to any equality of temper, but sensible pains working upon the sensible parts; *secundum esse spirituale, non secundum esse materiale, in organum.* (Aquinas.) The sum is this: the torments of hell are comprised under fire, because that is most violent, vehement, and sharply afflictive. Water doth only kill; fire doth vex also, and torment; yea, which is worse, this fire doth never kill. It shall be so extreme, that the damned shall prize a cup of cold water above ten thousand worlds.

The use. As we desire to escape the fire of hell, let us avoid the fire of sin. There be certain fiery sins, which shall find fiery punishments; as Nadab both offered and suffered strange fire. There fire is properly neither burning nor shining, but only stinks and makes a smother: sin, a spiritual fire. There is fire both burning and shining; that we call elemental fire. There is fire shining and not burning, as the sun. There is fire burning and not shining, and that is the fire of hell. Thus Paul calls lust a burning; "It is better to marry than to burn," 1 Cor. vii. 9. Who then would burn in lust, that fears to burn in hell? I read of a man, that, when he was tempted to lust, would lay his hand on burning coals, concluding, If I cannot endure this for a while, how should I endure hell-fire for ever? Rage and malice are burning sins. The angry man beholds not the law, but the law beholds the angry man. Therefore is anger called a great heat. They that nourish that fire within them, are nourished for a worse fire without them. Blasphemy is a burning sin. The tongue is a fire that fireth the whole course of nature, and is fired of hell, Jam. iii. 6. Let them whose mouths flame with oaths fear these flaming torments. The rich man's tongue was tormented in fire, because it was used to spit fire against heaven. Drunkenness is a burning sin: too much wine is the oil of hell's own lamp. They inflame the reckoning, till they inflame their brains, inflame their bloods, inflame their bodies; buy as much sickness as will make up a burning fever, and as much sin as will serve to inflame their own hell. In the German proverb,

fire is of all the genders. *Hic ignis*, that is fire; *hæc ignis*, that is a harlot; *hoc ignis*, that is wine. The first chapter of John, verse 5, *Mundus positus est in maligno*, that is, in *igne malo*: all the world is on fire with sin, to make work for the fire of hell. "A fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell," Deut. xxxii. 22. "When his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that trust in him," Psal. ii. 12. "The coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame," Cant. viii. 6. Wild-fire may be tamed, streams of fire have been quenched; only that fire can never be extinguished in the subject it hath possessed. One thing only now can put it out, the water and blood that came out of Christ's own side. Only that water can quench the fire of lust in us, and that blood quench the fire of hell against us.

"Down to hell." Let me a little further enlarge this discourse of hell; wherein if you do not find a due method, know that the nature of the place denies it. Who can speak methodically and orderly of that, that knows no method, no order? If any expect an absolute description, I excuse myself. But as Pythagoras guessed at the stature and pitch of Hercules by the length of his foot, and we say in the proverb, *Ex ungue leonem*; so by shadow and resemblance we may a little conceive what it is in sufferance. This is a cup of the deadliest wine that ever was tasted; those deep graves in the Psalm, from whence there is no rising again. The gates of that infernal prison being kept from egress, as the gates of Paradise were warded from entrance; not by cherubims with a flaming sword, but by the angels of Satan, with all the instruments of death, and the seal of God's eternal decree set upon them. This is that outer darkness, to comprehend and wrap up the damned. Outer, because in extremity, without the limits of any mercy to be extended; where no light of sun, moon, or star, much less the face of God, shall ever shine; where the eyes shall distil like fountains, and the teeth clatter like armed men, and the mind muse on nothing but sad desperation. Many and fearful agonies have wrung and wrestled the spirit of man, since the spirit of life was first breathed into him; yet if all were put together, to answer the measure of hell-torments amongst them, the hand of Tophet hath an unmeasurable portion left behind to distribute to her children, an endless patrimony of howling and gnashing of teeth. Balance them together, and the least pain of hell is greater than the greatest of this world. (Aquinas.) Horrible torments have been inflicted on moral delinquents; they are all but ticklings to those torments. There is a threefold woe, Rev. viii. 13; woe for the bitterness, woe for the multitude, woe for the everlastingness of those pains. It had been better for that man never to have been born, Matt. xxvi. 24. A woe, ten thousand times more than can be imagined by any heart as deep as the sea. These are those waters of gall, vials of unmerciful plagues, pestilence and blood, and huge hailstones, fire and brimstone. Not such as fell upon Sodom, the witnesses whereof, for many succeeding ages, were heaps of ashes and clouds of pitch; but fire and brimstone from a bottomless mind, which burneth in the lake of death, and shall never be quenched.

Of all these torments there are two dire and dismal effects, "Weeping and gnashing of teeth," Matt. xiii. 42. *Fletus de ardore, stridor dentium de frigore*. (Rabens.) *Fletus ob ignem qui non extinguitur, stridor ob vermem qui non moritur*. *Fletus ex dolore, stridor ex furore*. (Bern.) They are cast into darkness, for the inordinateness of their concupiscible; weep, for the inordinateness of their irascible; gnash their teeth,

for the inordinateness of their irrational part. (Gorham.) This manifesteth two extremities in hell; incomparable cold, and intolerable heat. (Greg. in Matt. viii.)

"Weeping." Here are some questions moved, whether this be a corporeal weeping. Some affirm it; because the sorrow which is in pain shall answer the pleasure that was in sin. As she hath lived deliciously, give her so much torment and sorrow, Rev. xviii. 7. But reprobrates in their sinning had both an inward pleasure and an outward delighting; therefore they must have in punishment both an inward grief and an outward weeping. *Anse.* But then damnation being eternal, this effusion would also be eternal; and so the tears would make an inundation larger than the ocean, able in time to put out the fire of hell. Therefore we must distinguish; in corporeal weeping there are two things, a resolution of tears, and a commotion or perturbation of the head and eyes. This weeping is not the resolution of tears, because then the motion of the first mover ceasing, there is no generation, nor corruption, nor alteration of the body. But there must be a generation of that moisture which distils itself into tears, if that weeping were corporeal. Yet there shall remain a weeping, which ariseth from the perturbation of the soul, and anguish of the body. There may be here a howling like dragons, whenas yet no tears fall. It is observable that the expense of tears outwardly mitigates the sorrow within, and easeth the heart, the burden of indigestible grief emptying and venting itself at the eyes; but hell by eternal tears could never qualify eternal pains.

It is further objected, weeping is the effect of sorrowing, and sorrow of repenting; therefore it seems, if the damned weep in hell, that they repent in hell. "And they repenting, and groaning for anguish of spirit," Wisd. v. 3. So Aristot., They shall be grieved for that wherein they were delighted. *Anse.* To repent may be understood two ways; either in respect of sin, or of the punishment annexed to sin. To repent of sin for itself, is to hate it for no other cause but because it is sin and displeasing to God; thus they do not sorrow. To repent of it for the punishment bound to it, is a sorrow by accident; that ariseth not from their evil doing, but from their evil suffering. The will of the damned is never bettered by their torment. To wish they had not sinned, without further relation, were a good will; but a good will and they are everlasting strangers. The will of the devil is still invertible; nor doth he grieve for his pride, but for the punishment of his pride. Again, there shall be a greater perverseness of the damned in hell than is of sinners on earth; but divers sinners here, through blindness of mind and hardness of heart, do not repent of their sins; though the most savage beasts, through grief and pain, are restrained from their sensual pleasures. On earth there may be repenting without weeping, in hell there shall be weeping without repenting.

But is there no recovery of original good in hell? If the damned are sorry for their sins, this argues repentance. If they were readmitted to life they would spend their life in obedience; this argues a will to goodness. That rich man had some care of his living brethren; this argues charity. No, there is no repentance, no rectified will, no charity; haply some remnants of natural light, none of supernatural grace.

There is no repentance. They are scorched with heat, and blaspheme God's name; but repent not to give him glory, Rev. xvi. 9. They curse him for their pains and sores, but repent not of their deeds, ver. 11. True repentance ariseth from faith and hope; but there can be no faith or release

where is certain knowledge of eternal punishment : knowledge and sense exclude faith. There can be no hope of termination, where be chains of desperation. There shall be a desperate sorrow for pain, no penitent sorrow for sin. None are now saved but by the blood of the Lamb; but when the world is ended, that fountain is dried up. The worm of conscience shall gnaw them with this remorse, bringing to their minds the cause of their present calamities; how often they have been invited to heaven, how easily they might have escaped hell. They shall weep for the loss of the one and gain of the other, not for the cause of either, which were repentance.

There is no will to good, or at least no good will. As the will of the blessed is wholly set upon good, so the will of the damned is wholly set upon evil. Neither can the saints in heaven will that which is evil, nor the reprobates in hell will that which is good. This we perceive in the devils, who have been so long damned, yet even to this day their unchangeable will is totally bent to wickedness. But evil is altogether against the will; (Dionys.) if therefore they will any thing, it is good either in existence, or in appearance. *Ans.* There is a double will in them: natural, which is not of themselves, but of the Founder of nature: deliberative, that is of themselves; which being wholly averted from the supreme end of goodness, cannot but be evil. So that if naturally they could will good, yet the form of that will being so corrupted, it must necessarily be bad. Indeed evil as it is properly evil, moves not the will; but as it is an estimative good. Such is their malice, that they never will any thing but evil, though they esteem it good. So that if they were now repealed again to this world, they would neither repent their sins, nor amend their lives, nor glorify God, nor seek Jesus. Let us now labour to rectify our wills, and order them to the seeking of good; lest we there lose both the good itself, and the very will unto it. For *in inferno erit stimulus penitendinis, nulla tamen correctio voluntatis: ita culpabitur iniquitas sua, ut nullatenus possit diligi vel desiderari justitia.* (August.) They shall curse their own wickedness, yet neither love nor desire righteousness.

There is no charity; not so much as any love to God, the infinite good; much less to man. None to God. But goodness and beauty is every one's love; therefore much more God, the cause and fountain of it. Nay, they shall hate God; "Do not I hate them that hate thee?" *Psal.* cxxxix. 21. Indeed if God could be seen of them in his goodness, mercy, bounty, they could not hate him; but they no further apprehend him but by the sense of their own torments, the effects of his justice, and so hate him. They suffer, and they blaspheme; there is in them a furious malice against him; being cursed of him, they recuse him, *Rev.* xvi. 9, 11, 21. They curse him for making them, curse him for condemning them, curse him because, being adjudged to death, they can never find death. They curse his punishments, because they are so insufferable; curse his mercies, because they may never taste them; curse the blood of Christ shed on the cross, because it hath satisfied for thousands, and done their unbelieving souls no good; curse the angels and saints in heaven, because they see them in joy and themselves in torment. Cursings shall be their sins, blasphemies their prayers, tears their notes, lamentation all their harmony. These shall be their evening songs, their morning songs, their mourning songs for ever.

No charity to man; for they rather wish all damned with themselves, than any to be freed from their own prison. As in the blessed there is perfect charity, so in the damned perfect envy. Now nothing is

more repugnant to charity than malice and hatred. But it is objected, that inordinate affections are not taken away from the damned; therefore they would not have them condemned in hell, whom they inordinately affected upon earth. *Ans.* The love that is grounded upon virtue, is constant and durable; such charity we shall bear with us to heaven, and be made perfect in it. But the affection grounded upon lust and sinful passion, a disease that runs in the blood, doth quickly vanish; like fire in wet straw, that only makes a smother, and goes out in stench. Therefore the adulterer, though he so dotes on his mistress, that he is content to venture his soul for her embraces; yet having lost that soul, he doth as heartily wish her in the same bed of torment; that as they have been delighted together, so they might be afflicted together. *Object.* But as by the multitude of participants the joys of heaven are enlarged, so are the sorrows of hell increased: how then will they desire more company, when thereby they enhance their own penalty? *Ans.* Yet such is their unchangeable malice, that it contents them not to suffer their own singular torments; but had rather endure more grievous misery, to have a more numerous society. And for the rich man's prayer for his brethren, *Luke* xvi., it proceeded not from a charitable soul, but from fear and horror of more torments to be multiplied on himself; he desired not their salvation, but his own less damnation. He knew that, being the elder brother, his vicious example might draw on their greater disobedience; and as their sins increased, so he felt his own tortures enlarged. Therefore no grace in hell, but everlasting sin; no devotion, but extreme damnation.

The wicked in hell still remain sinners. So Christ saith, "All that came before me are thieves and robbers," *John* x. 8; are; in propriety of speech he should have said, they were thieves; no, they are still, they remain so. "Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity," *Luke* xiii. 27. Workers, in reference both to the act past, and present habit, (*Chrysost.*) For he doth not say, ye that have wrought, but workers. They that die sinners, remain sinners even dead; although they cannot sin, yet they retain the desire of sinning; and he that is a liar in purpose, ceaseth not to be a liar in practice. Death separates the soul from the flesh, it separates not sin from the soul.

Seeing the effect of those horrors is weeping which shall never be comforted, let us prevent them by weeping where we may be comforted. The time of living is the time of repenting. If a man dies without repentance, repentance is dead to him for ever. If we compare *Matt.* v. 4 with *Luke* vi. 25, we shall find, that the decree of God hath disposed weepers to laughing, and laughers to weeping.

"Gnashing of teeth." This is the effect of an inexpressible sorrow. A just and fit punishment, that they who once gnashed their teeth at others in contempt, should gnash their teeth at themselves in torment. The psalmist complains, They gnashed their teeth at me, *Psal.* xxxv. 16; and the Jews gnashed on Stephen with their teeth, *Acts* vii. 54. Therefore they shall gnaw their tongues for pain, *Rev.* xvi. 10: their tongues gnawed their neighbours, now they shall gnaw their own tongues. They showed their teeth in derision, they shall gnash their teeth in damnation. No part of the damned shall be free from anguish; the memory afflicted with pleasures past, the apprehension with terrors present, the understanding with torments to come and continue, the eye with darkness, the ear with hideous screechings, the smell with killing stench, the taste with gall of bitterness, the very teeth with such an anguish, that the extremest tooth-ache here is but a pleasure

to it. Such is the extremity, universality, and eternity of those pains: if they be so universal in all parts, oh that they were not so extreme! if so extreme, oh that not so universal! if both so universal and extreme, oh that not so everlasting; each torment caseless, endless, remediless! There be *ignita lachryma*, and *frigidi anhelitus*. Therefore called *Avernus*; *absque vera temperatura*, where the freezing cold shall not mitigate the scorching heat, nor the scorching heat qualify the freezing cold. *Avernus* is a lake in Italy, that *Cæsar* purged: evaporating such a mortal steam, that it killed the birds which flew over it. Therefore called *Avernus, quasi oribus adversus*. *Profundus sine fundo*: full of incomparable heat, intolerable stench, innumerable griefs.

*Vermis cum tenebris, flagellum, frigus, et ignis;
Dæmonis aspectus, scelera confusio, luctus.* (Hugo.)

From all these must needs arise the gnashing of teeth. Two things would seem to mitigate the terror of hell, patience and hope: this gnashing of teeth excludes them both.

For patience. Many grievous extremities have the saints of God digested on earth by patience, that universal antidote against future evils, and qualification of present severities. It hath blunted the edge of tyranny, and made the sufferers smile in the midst of those pangs, the very sight whereof hath astonished the beholders. Whatsoever the damned suffer, let them have but patience; nay, there shall be no patience in hell; this gnashing of teeth is the effect of a most impatient fury. Men commonly say, in necessitated sufferings, What remedy but patience? Patience therefore is a confessed remedy, but all remedy is denied to the reprobates there; even that poorest succour which the anguished heart can imagine, patience. Oh the universal privation in that dismal place! where every thing is present that may vex them, every thing absent that may comfort them; where they must suffer everlastingly, and cannot suffer patiently.

For hope, there is none. The proper object of hope is, saith the school, a difficult good. A good of difficulty, not of impossibility: where is no possibility can be no hope. There is no hope of good, no despair of evil. (Hugo.) Men say in extreme passions, If it were not for hope, the heart would burst: there is no hope, yet the heart must hold; the misery is, that it cannot burst, but lies (like a tormented malefactor) upon the wheel, ever dying, yet without all hope to die. There is no hope in hell, no hope with us on earth for them that are in hell. We cannot hope for the devils, they are condemned to hell and past hope; nor can we hope for the dead, because there is no purgatory. Indeed concerning the dead, there may be hope of their happy condition, but none of their permutation. This is a double torment; neither deliverance, nor hope of deliverance. Sad and heavy despair absolves their infelicity; comfort they neither feel, nor have hope to feel.

Seeing only hope is confined to this life, let us make much of it, that it may enrich us. "Hope maketh not ashamed," Rom. v. 5, because it is never disappointed; for if it could be illuded, it would be ashamed. The hope of life immortal, is the life of our life mortal. (August.) The poets feign, that all the gods and goddesses, that is, virtues and graces, did once dwell upon the earth; but finding all things so corrupt, and men so bad company, they all went up to heaven with justice; *terras Astræa reliquit*, all but only hope, and she stayed behind still. But now if we hope well, we must do well. He tempts God, does not hope in God, that hoping doth nothing for himself. (August.) Though there be hope of the

barren fig-tree, yet still the dresser labours in the manuring of it, Luke xiii. 8. It is in vain for a man to hope his children shall do well when he teacheth them ill. The means must be used, where hope is nourished. Hope is only for the present: the saints in heaven have no hope, for they are in full possession of joy; the damned in hell have no hope, for they are in full possession of torment. Only the living have hope, and in the living God is their hope; which himself bless and answer in Jesus Christ.

The last question is, What is the place of hell? My text says, it is downward. So doth the Scripture frequently. "Let them be cast into deep pits, that they rise not up again," Psal. cxl. 10. Bring them down into the pit of destruction. They are in the depths of hell, Prov. ix. 18. "The way of life is above to the wise, that he may depart from hell beneath," Prov. xv. 24. So the terms declare it, and the word describes it; *Sheol*, which is taken for a pit, grave, or hell; all downwards. *Mercur*, in Gen. xxxvii., says that *Sheol* signifies all places under the earth. It must be below, because it is every where opposed to heaven, which is highest of all. *Abyssus*, which is a great deep, a vast gulf under the earth, a bottomless pit: the devils entreated Christ not to send them to that place, into the abyss, Luke viii. 31. The apostles that preached to the Jews, used the word *Gehenna*; "It is set on fire of *Gehenna*, hell," Jam. iii. 6. They that preached to the Gentiles, used *Hades*; which they took to be a place under the earth ordained for punishment. The word here used is *Tartarus*. *Hesiod* affirms it to be so far under the earth, as heaven is above it. So the Rabbins held; *Sheol* is absolutely below, the very centre; "Hell from beneath is moved," Isa. xiv. 9. "It shall burn to the lowest hell," Deut. xxxii. 22. *Nic. de Lyr.* affirms it *Circa centrum terræ*. *Tertul.* in *Apologet.*, Hell is a subterranean treasure of hidden fire. The poets so took it;

*Facilis descensus Averni;
Sed revocare gradum, superasque evadere ad aras,
Hoc opus, hic labor est.*

All things perishing, sink downwards.

But against this it is objected, that Dives in hell saw Abraham and Lazarus; which he could not do, if hell was so deep and remote a bottom wherein he lay overwhelmed. And albeit hell is below and downward in respect of heaven, yet haply it is not so in regard of earth. "Woe to the inhabitants of the earth! for the devil is come down unto you," Rev. xii. 12; yet he was then cast no lower than the superficies of the earth. There be divers arguments on both sides. First, as they that live know not the state of the dead, so the dead know not the state of the living on earth, much less of the saints in heaven. (Greg.) So August. As the rich man had a care of his brethren living, yet he knew not what they did; so have men a care of their dead friends, yet know not how they speed. Against this is opposed, that if they in hell had not the sight of heaven, their own sufferings would less afflict them; for their most grievous torment shall arise from the vision of what joys they have lost. When they shall see it, "they shall be troubled with terrible fear," Wisd. v. 2, and be amazed at the saints' salvation. So *Bern.*, The faithful shall have a sight of hell, and the unfaithful a sight of heaven; that the one may be rejoiced, by seeing what horrors they have escaped; and the other may be afflicted, by seeing what comforts they have forfeited. "The wicked shall see it, and be grieved: he shall gnash with his teeth, and melt away," Psal. cxli. 10. Bar the sight of their eyes, and you ease the grief of their hearts. That weep-

ing and gnashing of teeth proceeds from sight; "when ye shall see Abraham, &c. in the kingdom of God," Luke xiii. 28. It is the exile from the presence of the Lamb, from the society of saints and angels, from the felicity and joys they see, that most bitterly scourgeth them. The not knowing of earthly affairs never troubles them; but heaven they must in part see and know, else they cannot be tormented with the loss. But on the other side it is said, that the sight of heaven is never afforded to saints in the flesh but as an inestimable favour. It was Paul's greatest grace, and that which had like to have endangered him unto pride, to be rapt up into the third heaven, and behold the life which the blessed live with God. But what extraordinary grace was this, if it be also granted to the reprobates? *Answe.* St. Paul saw it by tasting it; and hoped again to see it by possessing it. Such a sight is not permitted to the children of perdition; they only see it to the grief of their hearts, that they cannot enjoy it.

The school gives this conclusive sum, that the damned shall behold the glory of heaven before the day of judgment, but not after; neither shall they know it as it is in itself, but only by a kind of luscous and glimmering sight perceive it to be an invaluable glory. And this shall vex them, both that they can no better see it, and shall never taste it. Afterwards they shall be deprived of that vision, and shut up in everlasting night; neither shall the withdrawing of this vision diminish their tortures, because the remembrance of that once seen shall for ever stick by them. Hence they shall continually grieve, finding themselves unworthy, even to see those pleasures, which the godly are vouchsafed to inherit and inhabit for ever. But how could that rich man, or can the damned spirits, be said to see the glory of heaven, whenas they want those luminary organs of the body, the disposition of sight, besides the thick interposed darkness? *Answe.* This is no reason, for even spirits see, and have the eyes of intelligence and apprehension, able to distinguish between light and darkness. They apprehend this glory either universally or particularly. A universal apprehension they have, whereby they perceive the saints to be in great glory; in particular, what this glory is they know not. At a great feast, the beggar at the door sees in part the joy and cheer of the guests; but not so well as the guests themselves that are banqueting. And as this must needs grieve the beggar, to see it and not to taste it; so shall the damned vex, for envy both at others' plenty and their own want.

Thus if we grant that the damned shall see the glory of heaven, then it will probably follow that hell is in the air, only separated with an unpassable gulf. If they do not see it, then is it likely to be in the bowels of the earth. Howsoever, it is below, downwards, in the inferior parts of God's workmanship. But precisely to say where, whether in the air, water, on the face of the earth, or in the centre of the world's centre, we may safely be ignorant of it, we cannot but dangerously dispute it. Only, as just spirits dissolved from their bodies, presently ascend to the empyreal heaven; so the souls of the lost tarry below, confined to the inferior elements, there to be punished. If any ask further about the local place of hell, I answer with Socrates, I never was there myself, nor spoke with any that came from thence. When one demanded what the gods did and loved, Euclides answered, Whatsoever they do or love, I am sure they hate all curious examiners. Many doubt where it is; none can describe what it is; but all agree that it is.

Seeing hell is a descent, and a bottom downwards, let us keep ourselves as far as we can from it while we live, that it may never devour us when we die. Sin doth naturally sink downward, and separate from God who is above. A sinner ever descendeth till he come to the lowest that may be: his affections are downwards, and sure his hope and inheritance is not above. But as we bury dead flesh under the ground, so it is not unlikely of dead souls. And as the heaviest bodies draw to the centre of the earth, so do the saddest and heaviest spirits, which the mercy of God hath forsaken. We read of a woman bowed down with a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and could in nowise lift up herself, Luke xiii. 11. A woeful estate, noted by the evangelist: *Agritudinis manifestas, behold; ægrotantis fragilitas, a woman; miserie acerbitas, it was a spirit of infirmity; morbi diuturnitas, eighteen years; corporis curvitas, bowed together; elevandi impossibilitas, could not lift up herself.* Such is the estate of wicked sinners, that if their bodies were like their souls, they would grovel like beasts. And indeed *Bestior quam ipse bestia est homo, ratione vicens, et non ratione vivens.* They cast themselves down, and none but Jesus Christ can help them up. "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves," Luke x. 30. From Jerusalem down to Jericho: hell is down a hill. Jericho signifies the moon. (Hieron.) He that walks after the moon of this inconstant world, must needs fall among thieves. Sin brings a man easily down to Jericho:

*Sed revocare gradum, superasque evadere ad auras,
Hic labor, hoc opus est.*

The rule of philosophy is, that light things ascend upwards; yet is nothing lighter than vain thoughts, and they sink downwards: sin is hell's high-way. "If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above," Col. iii. 1.

First, understand the things, then undertake the search. Though we cannot thoroughly see them, yet let us thoroughly seek them. This is to be wise; but in audacious curiosity, to measure every foot in hell, and dispose every cabinet and chamber in heaven; this is to be wise beyond sobriety. "We walk by faith, not by sight," 2 Cor. v. 7. "Let us lift up our hearts with our hands unto God in the heavens," Lam. iii. 41. The Lord, in all our holy services, requires the heart; in his temple, at his table: "My son, give me thine heart," Prov. xxiii. 26. "Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my heart," Psal. xxi. 1. There was "a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars," Rev. xii. The head of the church is wrapped in the stars, and the world is under her feet. She forgets the land wherein she was born, and the home-stall wherein she was bred, and seeks Jerusalem above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. "If riches increase, set not your heart upon them," Psal. lxxii. 10; they are heavy things, and will sink you downwards. If our love be to things downward, our souls cannot rise to God upward. We never minister the blessed sacrament, but we tell you of a "Lift up your hearts;" you then answer us, "We lift them up;" but it is to be feared that many hearts are so heavy that they cannot be lift up. The philosopher being asked which was the heaviest part of the earth, answered, That which bears an ignorant person. How little a piece of flesh so ever a wicked heart be, a talent of lead is light unto it.

The merry wanton that dissolutely lives, being asked how he escapes sickness, lives so long and so jovial, answers, I have a light heart. But when this

man comes to feel the weight of his sins, let him tell me then whether he be light-hearted. Nabal could be drunk in his health; but when he is sick, his heart lies and dies in him like a stone; nothing in the world can lift it up. The heart cannot raise itself, it is the Lord that draws it up, John vi. 44. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me," John xii. 32. The apothecary hath no drugs so cordial, the sycophant no jest so jovial, the vintner no wine so sprightly, the musician no stroke so lusty, that it can lift up a sinful heart. Down, down it sinks, without the animation of God's Holy Spirit.

But if Christ be our delight, our hearts are with him. His body doth not descend down to us, we must ascend up to it. (August.) Indeed, if in so large a quantity it be presently real in the sacrament, as it was on the cross, in full dimensions, what need any man lift up his heart to that he holds in his hand? No, he is above, contained in the heavens, till the time of restitution; and if he be our joy, thither we also aspire. The finger points to the grief, the eye follows the pleasure, and the heart follows the treasure. God hath given us both a face to look, and a faith to climb upwards. Let us send up our hearts before, that our souls may follow after. (August.) How preposterous and mismatched is an erected countenance and a grovelling spirit!

Things nearest heaven take least care for earth: the fowls of the air neither plough, nor sow, nor carry into the barn. But men most love what they must leave, and think seldom or never of the place where they should be for ever. Some are too precise for public prayers, without a sermon; as if God were only to serve them, and they not bound to serve God. Are there not many that will bestow more upon a licence to eat flesh in Lent, than upon their souls all the year? and are their thoughts upward? The poorest piece of garment they wear, their hats, their cuffs, their shoes, their shoe-ties, cost them more than their souls: and are not their thoughts downwards? They will rather lose their inheritance in heaven, than let Christ have his inheritance on earth: and what, are their desires upward? Down, downwards they sink, like the trash that God disseth not; their minds buried in their coffers, as dead bodies are nailed up in their coffins. And when they have dejected themselves as low as they can, then must this bottomless bottom receive them, and overwhelm them with everlastings pressures. A material millstone hung about their necks, cannot sooner or surer carry them into the depth of the sea. For us, let our hearts be upward, that our souls may never sink downward. St. Bernard mentions four degrees of ascending: The first ascent is of knowledge, the second of faith, the third of love, the last of glory. Let us know God; this is the first step to blessedness: knowing, let us believe on him; that is the next; believing, let us love him; that is the third; and loving, we shall live with him; that is the height and perfection of eternal joy.

"And delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment." Here are two things: the measure of their present confusion, and the time of their future damnation: as a malefactor is first cast into a dungeon, at the assizes brought forth to judgment, and then led to execution. Now they are overwhelmed with the desertion of favour, then shall be a founded with imposition of plenary torture. To be chained in a black and confused vault, seems an insufferable plague to the delinquent; yet had he rather abide there still, than come forth to the light, when he is sure to be punished with death. Therefore they cry to the mountains and rocks, to fall on

them, and cover them, Rev. vi. 16: the reprobates rather desire the loads of rocks and pressure of mountains for concealment, than be summoned unto judgment. Their punishment is just; they broke God's bonds before, Psal. ii. 3, now they shall have chains to hold them. Lucifer's I will be like the Most High, hath made him lower than the lowest. The highest seat in heaven could not content him, the lowest bed in hell must contain him. Not pleased with the glorious light above, he is cast into the hideous darkness below.

He is delivered into the chains of darkness; where we must suppose God sitting as a just judge on his throne, and having summoned the revolting angels before him, doth here sentence them to present sufferings. Not but they shall also pass under another trial, at that day of universal retribution, when Christ shall sit on his tribunal, judging quick and dead. But as a justice finding a transgressor, makes his mittimus, and sends him to the gaol, there to lie in chains till the sessions; so we have here three answerable circumstances: The mittimus, He delivered them. The gaol, into chains of darkness. The sessions, To be reserved unto judgment.

He "delivered them;" but into whose hands? Indeed he delivers guilty mortals into the hands of guilty angels. He "delivered him to the tormentors," Matt. xviii. 34; that he might be their slave in suffering, whose subject he had been in sinning. This night they shall fetch away thy soul, Luke xii. 20: they to whom I have given commission to do it; devils. They shall require it, that did defile it. This was part of St. Paul's excommunication, "to deliver unto Satan," 1 Cor. v. 5, who is the hangman. So he writes of Hymeneus and Alexander, "Whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme," 1 Tim. i. 20: to Satan, that executioner of condemned souls. But to whom doth the Lord deliver Satan himself? Some answer, that themselves are the instruments to torture themselves. After a sort, every transgressor is his own tormentor; and wickedness is a vexation to itself. Ambition racks the aspiring; envy eats the marrow of his bones that envieth: the covetousness which would be most rich, keeps the afflicted with it most poor; chriety begets the head-ache; lust afflicts the body that nourisheth it; and we say of the prodigal, he is no man's foe but his own, therefore we grant that he is his own foe. It is a foolish powder, that thinks to blow up the house, and to escape itself from burning. If it were but so, that he delivered him over to himself, such is the power of God's justice, that without the least trouble to himself, he can make an offender his own affliator. How many impious wretches, after obstinate presumptions against God, have wrought desperate executions upon themselves!

How should this teach us to hate sin! We think ourselves certainly our own friends. No, by sin we become our own enemies. That which makes us at enmity with God, will make us at feud with ourselves. Though the Lord's hand should not touch us, nor were any malicious devil to rack us, nor any other creature to scourge us, we should thus punish ourselves. If God speak the word, the hand shall rebel and strike the head, the nails tear the skin, the teeth gnaw the flesh, the feet precipitate the shoulders, the stomach furnish the members. These that are made to take one another's part, and to assist the whole in a peaceable communion, shall become mutinous like the Midianites, and sheathe their swords in their fellow's bowels. It is a plague woeful enough, when God shall deliver a man over to himself. "Let me not fall into the hand of man," was David's desire, 2 Sam. xxiv. 14. No, as 1 am

man, not into mine own hand. There is not less mercy in all Nero's enemies, than in desperate Nero's own heart to himself. But every man will do good to himself? Yes, so long as he is his own man; but when he becomes God's instrument, let him fear himself. When the prophet had told Hazeal the tyrannous massacres he should do to Israel, he replies, Am I a dog, that I should do this? 2 Kings viii. 13. No, he was not yet a dog; but afterwards God forsook him, then he became a dog, and did it. *Libera me a malo homine*; that is, as Augustine glosseth it, a *meipso*. "Deliver me from the evil man, O Lord;" and because I am an evil man, and there is no worse, deliver me from myself. Such a delivery should have been to us all, but for another deliverance that came between: a *liberavit*, not a *tradidit*. He hath "delivered us out of the hands of our enemies," Luke i. 74. *Tradidit damnos, liberavit homines*. He delivered his own Son to death, that he might deliver us from death.

"Into chains of darkness." Into darkness, there is their misery. Into chains, there is their slavery. Darkness signifies the wrath of God, and is opposed to that favour of his, which is called the light of his countenance, Psal. iv. 6. There is true light where the Father of light shineth; and his absence causeth darkness. That city hath no need of the sun or moon to shine in it; for the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light of it, Rev. xxi. 23; such a glorious light, that the very sun is obscurity to it. Created lights, which now so comfort us, and which some worship for deities, shall then resign their honours. "The sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light," Matt. xxiv. 29. Shall not then the sun shine at that day? Yes, it is not darkened by loss of its own light, but by the comparison of a greater light; as a torch is of small benefit, when the sun appeareth. Otherwise, "the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days," Isa. xxx. 26. But then these lights shall be overshadowed; as the moon that rejoiceth travellers in the night, gives place when the sun riseth; and men do not mind a lord when the king appeareth. Therefore it is called a "light which no man" (in his mortality and sin) "can approach unto," 1 Tim. vi. 16. In heaven there is all light and no darkness, in hell all darkness and no light. As the joy of the saints and angels in heaven, so the wretchedness of the lost in hell, is so great that it cannot be enlarged.

This is an unspeakable terror, to be cooped up in everlasting night. If Job calls the grave a tetrical place because of this darkness, where the organ of seeing is not yet exercised; "A land of darkness and the shadow of death, where the light is as darkness," Job x. 22; how intolerable is the darkness of hell! But how agreeth this with other scriptures, that allow the devils to wander about the world, and to be conversant in the air? 1 Kings xxii. 22; Job i. 7; Luke viii. 31; Eph. ii. 2. "Shortly," Rom. xvi. 20, therefore not yet trodden down. How then are they shut up under darkness? *Anser*. It was the devil's curse to be cast into hell; yet so that before the day of judgment, the wisdom of God hath disposed a permissive egress into the world, and that for some of them; that as a great number of them are in hell, there tormenting the damned souls, so the rest wander in the world to tempt sinners. This is manifest, Rev. ix. 3, where the bottomless pit being opened, there came out of the smoke innumerable locusts upon the earth, and the purpose of their coming is sealed, that they might hurt those that had not the seal of God in their foreheads. So, Rev. xx. 2. Satan is bound for a thousand years, at the expiration

whereof it follows that he be loosed. Until the judgment day God doth lengthen his chains.

Let us love the light, that darkness may never swallow us. All sins are therefore called the works of darkness; not only because the evil-doer hates the light, but also because Satan, the prince of darkness, is the founder, and shall be the confounder of them. "They that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night," 1 Thess. v. 7. This was wont to be the custom, sin durst not show her ugly face by day. But now men are grown so impudent, that they make the works of darkness become the works of light, committing them in the sunshine. So Absalom had "a tent spread upon the top of the house, and went in unto his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel," 2 Sam. xvi. 22. Zimri brought a harlot to his tent in the sight of all Israel, even when they were weeping before the tabernacle, Numb. xxv. 6. Vice was once like the owl, only a night-bird; now, proud of her borrowed feathers, she dares outface virtue at noon-day. These be the strange Epiphanies of the time: as one observed on Matt. ii. 2, "We have seen his star, and are come to worship him," There were two blessed Epiphanies; a manifestation of Christ's star to them, and a manifestation of their piety to him. Instead of these, pride struts in pomp, homicide stands on terms of justification, drunkenness reels up and down the streets. "The works of the flesh are manifest," Gal. v. 19. These be monstrous Epiphanies; yet still the works of darkness, and precipitate into the place of darkness, to the enlargement of Satan's kingdom. The pope scatters his emissaries abroad, to augment idolaters, and augment his supremacy; the Turk amplifies his territories; and other princes expatiate their dominions; all these kingdoms are extended, but the kingdom of darkness surmounteth them all. For, though never was more light in men's brains, never more universal darkness in their hearts.

The stream of wickedness is so violent, that many (who had some inceptions of goodness) are even content to run with it, rather than swim against it, or especially reprove it. Usury and sacrilege scorn to be rephended, and he is taxed of indiscretion that meddles with them: whereupon some let all alone, resolving to sit down and hold their peace. A friar that had been for his boldness decourted, afterward admitted to preach to the king of Spain, told this fable: The lion was faulted by the lioness, that his breath stank. Being mad angry with this imputation, he traverseth the forest, to be more certainly informed. The first subject beast he met withal was an ass, and breathing upon him, he demanded the relish of his breath: the ass plainly told him that it was very unsavoury. Thou art too bitter, quoth the lion, and tore him in pieces. Next he met with the hound, and put the same question to him; who answered, It is very sweet. Thou art a flatterer, quoth the lion, and tore him in pieces. Last he lighted on the fox, and examining him concerning his breath, the subtle villain replied, Indeed I cannot tell whether it be sweet or sour, for I have caught such a cold that I cannot smell. If we should commend the times for devout and holy, you might justly condemn us for fawning flatterers. If we should say they are stark naught, full of impiety and darkness, then we are held too cynical and censorious. What then? shall we answer, We have caught a cold, and cannot smell or tell? No, we are bound to love our own souls better than you can love your own sins. In a word, let us receive the light of grace, that the light of glory may receive us.

"Into chain-." These cannot be understood liter-

ally, for material chains; but metaphorically; and so they are two; the powerfulness of Divine justice, and the guiltiness of their own conscience. The devils are bound, like madmen or bandogs, in the chains of eternal damnation. Wheresoever they are permitted to wander, their own guilty consciences are those chains which bind them over unto judgment. Such are the horrors of that place, that the damned are bound to insufferable torments; they must endure what they cannot endure, without being able to remove a foot. These chains shall so hamper them, that not one part of body, or faculty of soul, shall have the power of activity to gratify their owner withal. The mind is bound to contemplate nothing but endless infelicity, the memory bound to recount nothing but fearful sins, the fantasy bound to present nothing but horrid visions, the eyes bound to see nothing but offensive objects, the ears bound to hear nothing but howlings and roarings, the nostrils to smell nothing but the stench of brimstone, the hands to catch hold of nothing but flames, and the feet to walk no further than these chains will give them leave. "Delivered them into chains of darkness;" the collections and inferences here observable are divers.

1. Conclusion, that there is certainly a God, for how else should Satan be bound? He is that strong man, and therefore there must be a stronger than he to bind him, Luke xi. 21, 22. If there be a destroying power, without question there is a preserving power, superior to it, and correcting it; for if the devils were not curbed, they would confound us all in a moment. It is not more natural for fire to burn, nor for heaviness to sink downward, than for Satan to destroy. "He is a king over all the children of pride." Upon earth none can match him, Job xli. 33, 34; but there is one in heaven that chains him. If there be a roaring lion that would devour us, certainly there is a blessed power that preserves us.

Let this teach us to get as close as we can to God, that Satan may not reach us. The chickens be safe under the wings of their mother, and we under the providence of our Father. So long as we hold the tenor of obedience, we are the Lord's subjects; and if we serve him, he will preserve us. But when a man is fallen to the state of an outlaw or rebel, the law dispenseth with them that kill him, because the prince hath excluded him from the benefit of his protection. All the fear of Satan ariseth from the want of the due fear of God. The more a man fears God, the less he fears every thing else. "Fear God, honour the king;" he that fears God, doth but honour the king, he need not fear him. It would affright a weak Christian, to consider the presence and number, malice and power, of wicked spirits. But when, with the prophet's servant, he sees those good angels on his side, as present, as diligent, more able to help than the other to hurt, he takes heart again. He knows that God (most good) bounds the temptation of the one, and directs the protection of the other. Though there be many legions of devils, and every one stronger than many legions of men, and more malicious than strong; yet Christ's little flock lives and prospers. "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed," Mal. iii. 6. The devil would do it, and doth attempt it; but God's unchangeable mercy prevents it. That we here meet, pray, worship, is against the devil's will; only our gracious God maintains it. That every moment we perish not in the jaws of that lion, let our hearts acknowledge, and our tongues praise the Lord our Maker.

2. Conclusion, that Satan can do nothing but by

God's permission: he is bound in a tether, and cannot go one inch beyond his chain. Christ tells Peter, that Satan had desired to winnow him, Luke xxii. 31; desired: he must beg an ill turn before he can do it. Whatsoever he doth is by a limited power and by dispensation from God. He could not seduce a prophet, nor take one poor sheep from Job, nor enter a hog, without licence. It is an ethical error of our times, in strange accidents to give the honour of God to sorcerers and conjurers. If a tempest arise beyond common experience, presently, as if the God of heaven were fallen fast asleep, and minded nothing, the judgment is given, There is some conjuring: there must needs be a pestilent convention and stipulation betwixt men and devils; as if God were not able to raise as great a storm as the devil. Look upon the witches of Egypt: their cunning failed in the most contemptible creatures; and they are forced to cry, "This is the finger of God." Though the circuit of Satan be very large, even to compassing of the whole earth; yet he hath his days assigned to stand before the Lord for the renewing of his commission, and there is a chain tied to his power that he cannot move beyond his allowance. Yet hath he a little liberty to tempt; for the probation of some, for the reprobation of others, in all for the glory of God. He is the basest of all creatures, a slave, a scullion: now how is that person shamed, that is given up to a base slave to be corrected!

So little he fears to tempt us, that he ventured upon Christ himself, Matt. iv. As we read there was a great battle in heaven, Rev. xii. 7, so here was a monomachy or single combat on earth. It was a dainty sight to behold little David grappling with great Goliath, and great Goliath grovelling under little David; a lamb matched with the wolf, and the wolf overmatched by the lamb. First, the devil tempts him to diffidence. Art thou hungry? turn these stones into bread, ver. 3: not into quails, pheasants, dainties; but into bread, without which man could not live. Then to presumption, "If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down," ver. 6. That he might get credit to his ministry, he would have him show the people some strange device. Lastly, to apostacy, ver. 8; which was the sin that turned himself out of heaven: wherein first he propounds a promise, All these will I give thee; and indents a bargain, if falling down thou wilt worship me. He is like an old bitten cur, that being fleshed to the game, will not be staved off; hell's bandog, fed with the livers of God's east-aways. He tries all courses, like Balaam, or some superstitious gamester on the losing hand; shifts places, still in hope to win. He took him up into a mountain: Cyprian says, he went on foot with him; for Christ would not use him *pro vehiculo, quem novit precipitatore*. This opinion is not against the text, nor the text against it. For *παρὰ τοὺς αἵματι* doth not imply portage; no more than Matt. xvii. 1, Christ took them: it were gross to think that he carried them on his back. But that he carried him is the most received opinion, because it is said that he set him on the pinnacle. This was no disparagement to Christ; no more than to suffer apprehension, ligation, crucifixion of his enemies.

He reserves the old malice to all Christ's members. Why should any serve him? there is no goodness in him. He is the greatest sinner of all; for *quicquid efficit tale, ipsum magis est tale*. Wicked Pharisees may make their proselytes twofold more the children of hell than themselves; but the malice of the devil cannot be matched. He never gives man any thing, but as Michael was given to David, to insnare him, 1 Sam. xviii. 21. St. Peter calls him an adversary at law, 1 Pet. v. 8: he wrangles with

God against us. Augustine brings him in thus pleading: They were thine by creation, they are mine by prevarication: they were thine by redemption, they are mine by defection; they left thy sacraments, and accepted my allurements. He pleads many things against us, but we have one argument to confute him, our faith; "Whom resist stedfast in the faith," 1 Pet. v. 9: and all our defects are supplied by an Advocate in heaven, Jesus Christ the righteous. I know that God casteth his sometimes into the sieve for trial, but the Lord Jesus strengthens them.

Satan is called a lion, and that fitty; for he hath all the properties of a lion: as bold as a lion, as strong as a lion, as furious as a lion, as terrible as the roaring of a lion. Yea, worse: the lion wants subtlety and suspicion; herein the devil is beyond the lion. The lion will spare the prostrate, the devil spares none. The lion is full and forbears, the devil is full and devours. He seeks all: let not the simple say, He will take no notice of me: nor the subtle, He cannot overreach me; nor the noble say, He will not presume to meddle with me; nor the rich, He dares not contest with me; for he seeks to devour all. He is our common adversary, therefore let us cease all quarrels amongst ourselves, and fight with him.

Seeing the devil is bound with chains, and cannot range further than his bonds allow him, let us not come within his reach. The landog is tied up that he may not hurt the passenger: but how if the passenger will come within his compass? Give no place to the devil, Eph. iv. 27: for the devil hath no place unless we give it him. "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you," Jam. iv. 7. He cannot come in, except we open him the door. Now who would open the door to let in his enemy? Yet many do: by swearing, they open the door to let him in at their mouth; by lustful looks, they open the door to let him in at the eye. Pride admits him into our wardrobes, covetousness into our purses, adultery into our beds, schism into our studies, drunkenness into our stomachs, idolatry into our devotions, hypocrisy into our hearts. As if his chain were not long enough, wicked men put themselves in his way. Think when thou art about to commit a voluntary sin, Now I am running within the devil's chain. I durst not so venture within the chain of a lion, bear, or other savage beast, which can but tear my flesh. Hath God tied him up from me, and shall I run unto him? shall I trust his mercy, that is nothing else but malicious cruelty? O but the hand of God holds his chain. But say the hand of God let go his chain, for thy presumption? what remains then but ruin? As we hate the devil, let us hate those works that lengthen his chain? Do we pray to be delivered from the gates of hell, and yet frequent the gates of hell? We read of a beast that being too unwieldy to hunt for his prey, stands still and enticeth the rest unto him with his glorious spots and colours, and so devoureth them. But Satan is quick and nimble enough to pursue men, they need not wilfully run into their own ruin. "Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away and be at rest," Psal. lv. 6. Let us fly from him as fast as we can, and so far as he may never overtake us; which is done by turning to God with faithful repentance and devout obedience: so shall his chains be shortened, our souls delivered, our Creator glorified, and ourselves everlastingly saved, through the merits of Jesus Christ. Amen.

3. Observe, that Satan is punished everlastingly, without all hope of recovery; bound with chains, and, as St. Jude calls them, everlasting chains. There was no deliverance ever ordained for the devils; for

Christ took not the nature of angels, Heb. ii. 16; he took not their nature, therefore was not their Saviour. Now there are divers reasons why Christ should seek lost Adam, rather than the lost angels.

(1.) The angel sinned without instigation. As there was none to tempt him, so there is none to save him; "When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own," John viii. 44. He took sin of himself, no other suggested it to him. He fell alone, nothing east him down: he must rise alone, there is nothing to help him up. The wind blows out the torch, we light it again; but if the wind blow out itself, and cease moving, who shall raise it? If Satan hurt man, Christ heals him; but if Satan hurt himself, let him heal himself.

(2.) The devil was the party seducing, (man only seduced,) and still endeavours what he can to destroy all; therefore none stands up to preserve him. Because his hand is against all, therefore all hands are against him. Being thrown out from the presence of God, in spite he wounded his image, that he might do him all the mischief he could: therefore he periseth without redemption.

(3.) The angels were more excellent and glorious natures by creation, and nearer to God than men; more subtle, more powerful; their dwelling in the highest heaven. Whereas one half of man was but refined dust, and his mansion the earth, more remote from the glorious presence of God. The higher the angel was in glory, the deeper in misery. (August.) But man, the more frail he was by constitution, the more easy he is to redemption. Therefore God took pity on man, who was but dust; and pitied not the devils, because they had once been angels.

(4.) The whole human nature fell with Adam; "In Adam all die," 1 Cor. xv. 22. All mankind was lost, and unless the human nature had been repaired, man had been wholly frustrated of his end. But all the angels did not fall with Lucifer, but only some; and so none were partakers of his punishment, but such as had been partakers of his sin. Innumerable multitudes of angels stood in heaven, as well as a great company sunk to hell. "Thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him," Dan. vii. 10. Some of that nature stood by conservation, without redemption; for redemption presupposeth loss: but if our nature had not been redeemed, not one man could have been saved.

(5.) Man was distinguished into sexes, male and female; because they were to generate their like: as, "Adam begat a son in his own likeness," Gen. v. 3. But angels have no sexes; as Christ confuted the Sadducees: In heaven "they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God," Matt. xxii. 30. They cannot beget a generation of spirits. Every devil sinned in himself, and is punished in himself only. But Adam having sinned, and being to multiply his kind, must needs convey his sin to his seed. Therefore was the Lord Jesus made of his seed, that the guiltiness which Adam to all his seed had propagated, by one of his seed might be expiated.

(6.) Satan immediately upon his fall was cast into hell. "He abode not in the truth," John viii. 44. But so was not Adam; for howsoever he was cast out of Paradise, yet not out of the world, but had space and grace given him to repent. And albeit that menace, "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," Gen. ii. 17; yet God spared him nine hundred years. Indeed presently he became mortal, and fell into a consumption; as the original speech is, "dying thou shalt die." And for the second death, the Seed of the woman excused him; he died not that death at all. Indeed Augustine mentions

the Tatian heresy, which held that Adam was damned. But, "She preserved the first formed father of the world that was created alone, and brought him out of his fall," Wisd. x. 1. Which is agreeable to the scripture, Luke iii. 38, which saith that Adam was the son of God; therefore he was not the child of death and hell. God relieved him with a promised Messiah, a news that never came to the apostate angels.

(7.) If the whole human nature had perished, to what purpose had been this world? The world was made for man, not for angels: either heaven or hell was ordained for them, this middle walk for man. Now why should either the sun shine or the earth fructify for man, if he were not redeemed? Spirits have no use of these things, man hath the benefit; and man should not have the benefit of any creature, but for God's favour in Christ. For he did forfeit his patent, and none but a Saviour could renew it. But for the elect's sake, the rain should not fall, nor the earth stand. Therefore if man had perished, all this world had been in vain created. Man is the sum and abridgement of all creatures, and contains in him more generality than the angels. Stones have being, but not life; plants have being and life, but not sense; beasts have being, life, sense, but not understanding; angels have being, life, sense, and understanding. Now man participates with all these; a being with stones, a life with plants, a sense with beasts, an understanding with angels. He is the compendious index of God's great book in folio. "Preach the gospel to every creature," Mark xvi. 15: no creature hath part in the gospel; but only man is called every creature, as having in him the chief perfections of every creature. Some hold, that man bears the image and superscription of God more fully than the angels; and hath something more, an organical body united to his spirit, which the angels have not. He is the common end why this world was made; therefore, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given," Isa. ix. 6: to us, not to angels. To us is born a Saviour, Luke ii. 11: to us, not to the lost angels. There is enmity put between the Seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent, Gen. iii. 15; therefore the Seed which saves man shall be at enmity with the devil.

(8.) Lastly, the principal reason of all is the free mercy and gracious decree of God; who made both men and angels good in creation, and finding both men and angels lost in transgression, vouchsafed to men, not to angels, a redemption. What did we deserve at his hands, that he should pity us dust and ashes, passing by those celestial spirits? "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" Psal. viii. 4. For the wonder had been less to say, What is the angel, that thou art mindful of him? That we should find him a Saviour, whom they find a just Revenger; that we should be loosed from the chains of our sins, and they delivered into chains of plagues; that the same Christ should with his own blood free us, that shall with his word sentence them; that the same Almighty hand should lift us up to heaven, that casteth them down to hell! Oh the riches of that mercy, which even to taste will keep a man from ever being poor! Of all mixed creatures men are the best, for they have reason; of all men Christians are the best, for they have religion; of all Christians holy believers are the best, for they have salvation. In the sorest troubles, men have some hope, Christians have good hope, believers have sure hope. Let us bless God for making us men, but most of all for making us Christian men; for in that he gives us his Son, he gives us himself. He gave the water to fishes, the earth to beasts, the air to fowls, the heaven to angels; but he gave himself to man. Having

no greater to swear by, he swore by himself, Heb. vi. 13; so, having no greater to give, he gave himself. "Whom have I in heaven but thee?" saith that royal prophet, Psal. lxxiii. 25. The Romists in 88 cried out, whether maliciously or blasphemously, God shows himself a Lutheran, and the God of Lutherans; but indeed he shows himself a Christian, and the God of Christians. By how much we find more mercy than all creatures, let us be more thankful than all creatures. It is an harmonious sweetness, to have God's bounty and our gratitude meeting in that middle way, the hand of Jesus Christ; without whom neither could we receive his goodness, nor would he accept our goodness.

4. Observe that the punishments of hell are eternal: these chains can never be broken: were they of cords, of wreathed trees, of iron, they might be burst asunder, but the chains of vengeance never. "Bind him hand and foot, and cast him into outer darkness," Matt. xxii. 13. Now if a man were bound hand and foot, and thrown into a well five thousand fathom deep, what hope could he have of coming forth? But how doth this stand with God's justice, to punish temporal offences with eternal scourges? It was the rule of his own law, that *pœna non debet excedere culpam*, Deut. xxv. 3. *Ansue.* There is a double quantity considered in punishment; the one according to the intention of pain, the other according to the duration of time. In respect of the former, the quantity of punishment must be answerable to the quantity of sin. How much sin, so much sorrow, Rev. xviii. 7; the more pestilent iniquity, the more torturing fire. For the other, we must not think that the continuance of punishment is limited with the continuance of the fact. Among men, adultery is but a short pleasure, yet often pursued with a long penance. But the duration of torment respects the disposition of the delinquent. *Pœna singulorum inæquales intentione, pœna omnium æquales duratione.* (Aquin.) The pains of all are equal in continuance, unequal in grievance.

But a good judge will make his penalties medicines and corrections, rather than destructions. *Ansue.* So doth the Lord in all corrigible offenders; but those he cannot mend by chastising, his justice must satisfy itself by confounding. But God delights not in the death of a sinner, Ezek. xviii. 32. "What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit?" Psal. xxx. 9. The Lord hath no use of their eternal damnation. *Ansue.* Yes, as mercy hath had her place and day, so must justice have hers. Whom mercy saves, she saves for ever; though their works were short, and nothing unto God, Isa. xli. 29, yea, the very effects of his own grace. Therefore, whom justice condemns, she condemns for ever; not respecting so much the persons that have sinned, as the Person against whom they have sinned. (Greg.) Almighty God, as he is good, is not delighted with their torments; but as he is just, he is not satisfied without their torments. *Factus est malo dignus æterno, qui hoc in se peremit bonum, quod esse posset æternum.* (August.) He is justly plagued with an evil that is eternal, who hath corrupted in himself a good that might have been eternal.

But if God's justice must be satisfied upon those sinners for whom Christ satisfied not, why is not this rather in reducing them to nothing? Seeing the unthankful deserve to be deprived of all benefits; now one especial benefit is being; therefore let them not be. *Ansue.* It is true, the creature that disobeys the Creator, deserves to lose his being; but because it was given him to this purpose, that he should serve him, therefore it shall never be taken away. For God will have his homage and

service out of that being; whether of grace and salvation to the praise of his mercy, or of punishment and confusion to the praise of his justice.

But one would think, that the mercy of God should terminate their sorrows. "Thou hast mercy upon all," and "thou lovest all the things that are," Wisd. xi. 23, 24. "God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all," Rom. xi. 32. He hath also concluded the devils under sin. Neither will his goodness suffer that which he made for blessedness, to perish for ever in torment. These be the plausible conceits that over-merciful Origen hath brought for the recovery of lost spirits. And whereas Christ's doom is, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devils," he would have these words rather spoken by way of threatening than by way of truth. But the Scripture delivers it plainly and fully: The devil shall be tormented in the lake of fire day and night, for ever, Rev. xx. 10. Besides, his opinion, as it straineth, so it restraineth mercy. It extends it to the future deliverance of the damned, so it extenuates it in regard of the blessed. For if the lost be ever to be taken out of hell, then will it follow that the saints also are one day to be shut out of heaven. And so what the bad should gain, the good should lose; yea, the very mercy of God cannot get more glory by the one, than it shall lose by the other.

But though the devils be everlastingly chained, is there no mercy for reprobate men? shall they never get loose? "My spirit shall not always strive with man," Gen. vi. 3: therefore his indignation shall cease. Doth he not often threaten, and not do, as to Nineveh? *Ans.* God doth sometimes menace and not strike, because our repentance steps between; but when everlasting burning hath wasted all the moisture of repenting, will he do so then? Here indeed we may speed as well as Nineveh: We shall stand if our sins fall; but we shall fall if our sins stand. (August.) But at that day the date of repentance will be out. But such is the charity of the saints in this life, that they pray for their enemies: now this charity shall be more perfect in heaven, therefore they shall intercede for them in hell; and God hath promised that their prayers shall be heard. *Ans.* Here they pray for them that they may be converted; for if they knew that such were (in God's decree) reprobates, they would pray for them no more than they do for devils. Their present suit is, that they may be recovered out of the snare of the devil, Tit. ii. 26. Now they may be recovered, not hereafter; there may be present conversion, no future permutation. For that objected out of Psal. lxxvii. 7, "Will the Lord cast off for ever? will he be favourable no more?" there is meant only the temporary affliction of the church. Still as the joys of heaven, so the pains of hell, are eternal. Death is to men, as the fall was to angels: as lost angels after their apostasy, so lost men after their death, can never be recovered. Hell is made deep, Isa. xxx. 33; so deep, that there is no hope of crawling out. *Ex inferno nulla redemptio.* Therefore it is called *infernus, ab inferendo*, of casting in: for the wicked are so cast in, that they can never get forth. From earthly gaols and dungeons there may be some trick of escape; but hell is so deep, that nor earth nor heaven can help out one poor soul. That rich man, Luke xvi., solicited for his brethren: why did he not beg his own deliverance, who was able to have taught them by his own experience? O he saw a vast interposed gulf: he must let that alone for ever.

One deep calleth another: the depth of hell calls for our answerable humiliation. He that will not

be humbled for his sins here, must be tumbled into that depth hereafter. "Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord," Psal. cxxx. God will hear the voice that comes out of the depths. The deeper we have been in the law, the higher we are in the gospel; the deeper in hell, the higher in heaven. The deeper a bucket dives into the well, the more water it brings up; the lower a man is humbled with sorrow for sin, the higher he shall be exalted with the grace of salvation. Never came prayer, sigh, or groan from the depth of repentance, but it was heard in the height of mercies. Of David's propheticall imprecation against his enemies, ("Let them go down quick into hell," Psal. lv. 15.) we may make a good application for ourselves. Let us go down quick into hell by meditation, that we be never sent quick thither by condemnation. Let us descend every day while we live, that we never come there when we are dead.

5. Observe, that God punisheth sin wheresoever he finds it, though it be in the very angels. For all the men and angels in the world are not so dear to him as his own honour: and what dishonours him but sin? For this cause, 1. He made a law against it; "The law was added because of transgression," Gal. iii. 19. He could not have written the law with his own finger, if he had not so abhorred sin. 2. Gracious are the promises he hath made to obedience; grievous the plagues he hath to threaten disobedience. 3. His own hands have smitten it; the whole world is a bleeding witness thereof; and man may say, *Quorum pars magna fui*. The whole creature groaneth in expectation of his pacification. He hath drowned the world in a flood of waters, and he shall burn it in a flood of fire, because of sin. The sentence shall stand unchangeable, so long as heaven and earth endureth, "Tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil," Rom. ii. 9; be he Jew or Gentile, learned or simple, poor or peer; yea, man or angel. 4. So doth he hate sin, that he spared not his own Son, when he appeared in the similitude of sinful flesh. If the justice of God could ever have swallowed sin, or dismissed it with impunity, he would have forborne it in his own bowels. Yea, such a Son as never knew the least thought of disobedience; the Son of his love, the Son of his joy, the Son of his light, the Son of his delight; a Son fully as good and as great as his Father. Yea, because he stood in the place and bore the person of sinful man, he plagued him as the most deadly enemy that ever he had. That he might slay sin, he slew his Son.

How should this make us all hate sin! He doth hate, not love God, that loves what God hates. Let us be content to meet our afflictions, as Peter and Andrew met their crosses, as their dearest friends; embracing them in our arms, and saluting them with the kisses of peace. Or as the martyrs welcomed their deaths, running to the stakes as if they had run for a garland. But for sins, were they as dear to us as the sight of our eyes, the children of our bodies, the spouses of our bosoms, because they are traitors to our Father and Maker, let us deal with them as Abraham did with Hagar and Ishmael, put them out of our house for ever.

6. Observe, that great offenders meet with great punishments; and according to the condition of their place, is the nature and proportion of their fault. The more glorious the angels' excellency, the more damnable their apostasy. If the light become darkness, how great is that darkness! Matt. vi. 23. The more notable the person, the more notorious the corruption. The freshest summer's day doth soonest taint the loathsome carcass; and festered lilies smell

far worse than weeds. If virtue turn into vice, the shame is treble. For many Jews to deny Christ, was not so much as for one Peter; the adulteries of many Israelites less infamous than one David's. If all the cities of the world had done filthily, it were short of this wonder. The virgin daughter of Zion is become a harlot. If Judas become a traitor, how great is his treason! If Althophel prove a villain, how mischievous is his villany! If Absalom rebel, how unnatural is his rebellion! The least mote that flies in the sun, or between our eyes and the light, seems a greater substance than it is. Deep are the blows made by a mighty axe. Sin in a magistrate is not only sin, but subornation.

There is no dispensation for sin, no protection from judgment. Not the rich man's opulency, not Belshazzar's monarchy, not Adam's perfection, not the angels' glory, could countenance sin, nor ward punishment. No place, no robes, no riches, no excellency, can give it privilege. Clothe an ape in tissue, and the beauty of the robe adds but more scorn to the beast. The richer colours or bolder countenance is set on wickedness, the more ugly it appears. Therefore as they that govern well in high places, shall shine with a higher degree of glory in heaven, because they, being intrusted with the treasures of God, enrich his church; so they that are in good offices evil men, for the mischief of both their actions and examples, shall be cast deeper into hell. *Potentes potenter punientur.* "A sharp judgment shall be to them that are in high places," Wisd. vi. 5. Mercy may soon pardon the meanest, but mighty men shall be mightily tormented. "Tophet is ordained of old; yea, for the king it is prepared," Isa. xxx. 33. Kings are not exempted from judgments; *Pessimus in imperio, maximus in inferno.* What made the damned churl move for his brethren, but that every step they followed of his leading, he felt increasing the pile of his torments? "If ye do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both ye and your king," 1 Sam. xii. 25. For the Lord freeth none according to place, but according to grace; not for outward condition, but of his own free favour.

Nor yet let the poor and ignoble clap their wings, as if they were the only men that God loves. Not many rich, not many wise, not many noble, are called, 1 Cor. i. 26. Not many, but some; and not many after the flesh; but many wise, rich, noble, after the Spirit. The gate of heaven is narrow, and but few enter of any condition; yet certainly the noble sooner than the rabble; more wise men are admitted than fools: for morality is the first step to Christianity. And at the last dreadful day, it is the bond-man, as well as the great man, that calls upon the rocks to cover him, Rev. vi. 15. But do any of the rulers believe on him? John vii. 48. Yes, Christ had his church even in Caesar's family. They were the noble men and honourable women at Berea, which received the word, Acts xvii. 11; it was the people that persecuted it. There was one Lydia, a seller of purple, converted, Acts xvi. 14: God saved a purple seller; why not then a purple wearer? The poor that is murmuring against God, and seditious against the rich, is in more danger of judgment, than another that hath not more opulency than charity. Wealth doth not damn the rich, but when the getting or keeping of it doth damnify the poor. Rich Abraham is in heaven, not because he was rich, but because he was good. Poor Lazarus is there, not for his poverty, but for his piety. (August.) Howsoever, let them that must be patterns, be good patterns: the life that cannot be but exemplary, should not be but holy.

7. Lastly, infer, that if God spared not the angels,

so near to his own person, (a thing which the very children of God tremble to think,) how much less will he spare dust and ashes! He put no trust in his angels; "how much less in them that dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust!" Job iv. 18, 19. What is the manliest prowess on earth, when the loins be girded up with strength, and decked in the greatest glory, to encounter with the fortitude of God? "The lion hath roared, who will not fear?" Amos iii. 8. The Lord hath thundered from heaven, in casting down angels to hell; shall not flesh and blood quake for fear? The Scripture, as well acquainted with the pride of man's nature, hangs talents of lead at the heels to keep it down. The 8th Psalm, which is a circular Psalm, ending as it began; "O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!" that whithersoever we turn our eyes, we may see ourselves beset with his glory round about. How doth the prophet discountenance man, by his disdainful interrogation, "What is man?" Then still as the Psalms go in order, they grow in strength to deject the haughtiness of man. "Arise, Lord; let not man prevail: let the nations know themselves to be but men," Psal. ix. 19, 20. We are men, and the sons of men, not the generation of angels; to show our descent. Men in our knowledge, gross and dull-brained; not quick, free, subtle, and celestial spirits; the conscience of our own infirmity doth convince us. Men of the earth, not of the air, fire, stars, sun, heavens; much less of the substance of angels; but earth is the matter whereof we are framed. The disgrace is yet deeper; "I am a worm, and no man," Psal. xxii. 6. The prophet either in his own name, regarding his personal contempt; or in the name of Christ, whose figure he was; or in the representation of all mankind, as if it were a robbery and presumption to take upon him the name of man, he says, "I am a worm, and no man." Thus Abraham conferring with God, sifts himself to the coarsest bran; "I am but dust and ashes," Gen. xviii. 27. If any of the children of Abraham, had succeeded him in the faith, or any of the children of Adam, that succeed him in the flesh, think otherwise, their own catastrophe shall confute them.

Man is an excellent creature, if we compare him with the fairest flower of the garland, the tallest cedar of the forest, the stateliest beast in the wilderness. Nay, the sun and stars are not so excellent, for they want sense, and man hath reason; not one of them was formed after the image of God, there are no sparks of Divinity in them. But if we look up to the angels, there is a large and ample difference. We have bodies, and they are full of gross corruptions; so many diseases, that who is physician good enough to number them, I say not, to cure them? There is in the soul uncleanness, in the understanding blindness, in the will perverseness, in the affections wantonness, in the whole man sinfulness. The angelical nature is subject to none of these infirmities. If thou wert a sinful angel, thou shouldst be punished; therefore if a sinful man, what hope to be spared? It was the page's note to King Philip of Macedon every morning, Remember thou art a man: for in remembering this, we remember all unworthiness.

If any soul be humbled with this meditation, (and indeed who are fit for so precious seed but the tilled ground? comfort is well bestowed on a broken heart.) let this cheer them: God that spared not offending angels, neither hath spared offending men; but he punished one man for many men, he spared not the man Christ Jesus. All believing men have answered his justice in that one man; hence my faith is bold to say, Lord, thou art just, and hast not spared me; but thou art merciful, and hast not spared him for

me. Thou hast punished our sins through his sides.

"To be reserved unto judgment." This is their binding over to the assizes; the sum whereof is, That the fulness and extremity of their torments is not yet come, but there abideth a more fearful and final condemnation for them. They are now entered into divers degrees of penalty, but the plenary wrath of God is not poured on them till the last judgment. They are already damned, and they know it; "The devils believe, and tremble," Jam. ii. 19. It is so certain, that justice admits no revocation of it, nor do themselves study any evasion from it. And yet there is still a reservation of greater plagues. But they have no bodies, and therefore are not capable of receiving more by addition. *Ans.* Their punishment ariseth from the wrath of God, which then shall in a greater measure empty itself upon them. The hand of man, while he strikes, can make his blow heavier or lighter as himself pleaseth.

They are now suffered to tempt men, which is a pleasure to their malice, thinking themselves by this means somewhat revenged on God: as he that defaceth the picture of his enemy, when he cannot come at his person, easeth his spleen a little. So the dog gnaws the stone, that cannot reach the thrower. In a word, now they are suffered to wander abroad, then they shall be confined to their prison. The prisoner that is allowed to walk abroad, though with his keeper, is not so miserable as the duncioned. Now they contain their hell, then their hell also shall contain them. Now they seem to rejoice at our sinning, then they shall have enough to grieve at their own suffering. Now the bottomless pit hath been opened for the egress of those locusts, then it shall be locked up for ever with the eternal seal of justice. But he is judged already: "The prince of this world is judged," John xvi. 11. Yet still he is reserved to another judgment. There is a double judgment, one of discussion, another of retribution. For the discussive judgment, these bad angels come not under it, their rebellion is so apparent. What need a jury pass upon the malefactor, that confesseth his fault? For that of retribution, they shall then receive it in the view of the whole world; that the justice of God may universally be acknowledged, when he shall render to every one according to his works. "Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" 1 Cor. vi. 3. Good men shall have the honour to judge bad angels. For this they challenged Christ, that he came to torment them before the time, Matt. viii. 29. They confess that there is a time designed for the plenitude and perfection of their torments.

He is reserved; but till the judgment come, let us watch him, for he watcheth us. There is no corporeal enemy, but a man naturally fears; the spiritual foe appears less terrible, because we are less sensible of him. We talk of travellers that have seen the world over; none ever saw so much as he. He hath seen earth, seen the sea, seen hell, seen heaven. He compasseth; as the hunter that makes as though he would raise a mound about the deer to preserve them, when indeed he lays a toil to destroy them. Great conquerors have been chronicled for victories, and extension of their kingdoms; Satan is beyond them all. Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands; but Satan his millions. He that fights with an enemy, whom nothing but his blood can pacify, will give him no advantage. If we know that we have an adversary at the next door, that pries into all our courses, and upon the least error will sue us on an action of trespass, we will be circumspect to disable him of advantage. Satan no sooner spies our wanderings, but he presently runs

with a complaint to God, bills against us in the star-chamber of heaven; where the matter would go hard with us, but for the great Lord Chancellor of peace, our Advocate Jesus Christ. As God keeps all our tears in a bottle, and registereth the very groans of our holy passion in a book; so Satan keeps a record of our sins, and solicits justice against us. Were God like man, subject to passions, or incensible by the suggestions of the common barrator, we were us. But he will hear one son of truth before ten thousand fathers of lying. No matter what the plaintiff libelleth, when the judge acquitteth. We have forfeited our estates by treason, and the busy devil begs us; but there is one that steps in, and pleads a former grant, and that both by promise and purchase. "Lord, rescue my soul from destructions, my darling from the lions," Psal. xxxv. 17. Lord Jesus, challenge thine own; let not Satan enter upon by force or fraud, what thou hast bought with thine own blood.

Thus in general, the particulars here considerable are two (for 1 purpose no common-place of the day of judgment): First, the necessity of it, in that they are reserved to it. Then the severity of it, in that it is a judgment. These be inherent in the words; there be some short adherent circumstances which I shall salute as I pass; they may be within the circumference, these are in the heart and centre.

The necessity. As the creation was that beginning, which did produce things to their being; so judgment is that conclusion, which shall perduce things to their ending. There is a double operation of God: one that wrought the production of things, the institution of nature, and distinction of places; from this God rested the seventh day. Another of providential government, whereby he conserves and disposeth things; from this he resteth not. "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work," John v. 17. According to both these there is a double judgment: one at the departure out of this life, which answers to God's disposition; that they which kept not the appointed rule of their Maker, might undergo the justice of their Avenger. The other at the last day, when God to all things determines an end, as immediately of himself he gave them a beginning. But it is objected, Judgment shall not rise up a second time, Nah. i. 9: there is one judgment at the end of life, if there be another at the end of the world, then there is judgment a second time. I might answer, that the prophet speaks there of a temporal destruction, which shall make an utter end, that there shall be no need of a second blow; "Affliction shall not rise up the second time." But to take it in their reading: Every man must be considered as he is in an individual person, and with relation as he is part of mankind. So there is a double judgment proportioned; one at his death respecting the singularity of his person, the other at last respecting his partnership of the world: and thus as he is a member of the universe, his judgment must be in the universal.

But judgment is the determination of doubtful things, and every one before that day shall be put past doubting of his future estate. Yet there must be a general judgment, that the equity of every one's sentence may be approved, and the justice of God glorified. *Object.* But it is against the proper form of judgment, to let execution go before sentence. Now every soul, as she departs, receives her reward, and is presently possessed of joy or punished with sorrow; if therefore there be a future judgment, here is execution before sentence. *Ans.* The first is but the effect of the latter; by that they presently feel, they know what they shall eternally feel. Besides, but one part of man only passeth that censure,

the soul alone is blessed or cursed; therefore a general judgment must pass upon the reunited body; which as it hath served the soul in holiness or sin, so must accompany the soul in bliss or pain. *Object.* The body is but an instrument of the soul; so the philosophers; because the soul doth use it as an organ. Therefore it is for the soul alone to suffer: the body feels no pain when the soul is departed from it. *Answer.* Let it be but an instrument, yet was it a living instrument: as therefore the soul, being the mistress in sinning, shall be no less in suffering; yet the body must have its due share in being punished, as it had the full part in being delighted.

But, he that believeth not is already judged, John iii. 18: what need then any more judgments? *Answer.* He is judged by God's prescience, judged by his own conscience, not by the last sentence. There is a fivefold judgment. 1. The judgment of disposition; so all unbelievers are now judged. 2. The judgment of comparison: "The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it," Matt. xii. 41. Evil men shall thus judge them that be worse; not according to the opinion of the accuser, but according to the weight of the crime. So Jerusalem is said to justify Sodom, Ezek. xvi., yet were the Sodomites then in hell. 3. The judgment of approbation: so the saints shall judge the angels, 1 Cor. vi. 3; judge the nations, Wisd. iii. 8; judge the tribes of Israel, Matt. xix. 28; judge the whole world, 1 Cor. vi. 2. 4. The judgment of definition; so, "The Father hath committed all judgment unto the Son," John v. 22. 5. The judgment of remuneration, which shall reward every man according to his practice.

That there shall be a judgment, is universally granted: "I speak to them that know the law," Rom. vii. 1. Though there be a particular judgment precedent, this hinders not the general subsequent. Here the wicked condemn themselves, there God shall condemn them. As is their conscience, such shall be their sentence. "If our own heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart," 1 John iii. 20. Besides the common reasons that be given, 1. That the godly here suffer for well-doing, therefore shall be crowned for well-suffering. It is fit that they whom the world hath unjustly condemned, shall by the Lord be justly acquitted. If there be Judas to censure Mary, and not a Jesus to justify Mary, truth shall be utterly lost. 2. That many notorious sinners are punished here; which is but the little image and earnest of the general sessions hereafter. God strikes some, to save themselves; and some again, lest they should destroy others. Graceless sinners, imboldening themselves to riot by the remoteness of judgment, are often cut off beforehand. "Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment," 1 Tim. v. 24. They have not the patience to tarry so long for their own damnation. As when the desperate pirate, ransacking and rifling a bottom, was told by the master, that though no law could touch him for the present, he should answer it at the day of judgment; replied, Nay, if I may stay so long ere I come to it, I will take thee and thy vessel too. A conceit wherewith too many land-thieves, oppressors, flatter themselves in their hearts, though they dare not utter it with their lips. These God judgeth beforehand, as he did Herod immediately upon his elevation: the people called him a god, but the worms soon confuted their ridiculous deity. That as when Moses had powdered the calf, he might upbraid Israel, Behold your god; so when the angel had warned that idol, he might say, Behold your king. Beside these, and many other beaten arguments, I fasten upon two instances.

1. Many perverse sinners are forborne here: they transgress in health. They trouble others, tremble not themselves: all feel their plagues, no plagues do they feel, Psal. lxxiii. 5. They sink others' eyes into their heads with leanness, while their own eyes stand out with fatness, ver. 7. What shall they never be called to an account for this? Shall a man covet and take, take and keep, keep and devour, devour and never bring it up again? Shall an extortioner make every hour advantageous, laugh at the groans of the oppressed, dance to their tears, and yet escape? Every sin is sometimes suspended, saving only the user's: others sin by day only, or by night only, and the most violent ague of wickedness hath some intermission; but he sins day and night continually: and is there no day nor night of answer? Shall a man eat the bread of sacrilege, drink the wine of sacrilege, sleep in sacrilege, clothe his family with sacrilege, leave to his children an inheritance in sacrilege, and no reckoning? What though no judge, no court, no parliament question or medicine this disease; shall not the Judge of all condemn it?

Many sins have been punished, that are now forborne; because the Lord hath appointed a day to judge the world in righteousness, Acts xvii. 31. The wickedness of the old world is as abundant in the new world: yet is not the world drowned with water, because God hath ordained for it a deluge of fire. The sins of Sodom are practised every where; yet do the committers escape fire and brimstone on earth, because they are reserved to fire and brimstone in hell. Do not many persecute the church as violently as Pharaoh, with elarions and armies, who yet escape drowning? There is a reservation of a deeper and bottomless sea for them. Divers murmur at God who are not stung with fiery serpents, as the Israelites, because they are reserved to a fiery serpent in hell. Many take bribes, like Gehazi, without a leprosy, because of that eternal leprosy which waits for them. How many a deceitful trader says and swears, (with a little inversion of Ananias' lie, I sold it for so much,) It cost me so much, yet is not stricken with death temporal, because he is reserved to death eternal! Are not many monopolists amongst us, as bad as those Philipians, Acts xvi. 16, that got a patent of the very devil? It is plain that they did monopolize the damsel, and the damsel had monopolized the devil. Satan was wont to be a spirit latent; now he durst be a spirit patent: it is time that this patent devil were cast out.

But there is a reservation of all to judgment. Mercy now stretcheth out her wings like a hen; then justice shall stretch out her wings like an eagle. God's hands seem now so fraught with mercies, that judgment hath no room to be grasped in them. But shall wicked men live, sin, die, and there an end? No, the Lord hath sworn the contrary. He swears that unbelievers shall not enter into his rest, Heb. iii. 18. An oath among men is the end of all strife; and shall not faith be given to God when he swears? The less evil they feel, the more let them fear. If mercy allows a toleration, justice hath a reservation; there will come a day of reckoning.

2. To omit the demonstration of the prognostic symptom, forerunning this judgment: that same trumpet of war in every corner, the divulging of the gospel, not only by the antichristian seminaries, who at once have named it and shamed it; the revelation of antichrist, wherof all Christendom is a bleeding witness; the inerrigibility of sin, that it is even dangerous to be good, and God's reproofs do not weaken, yet, scarce waken sinners; the general

decay of nature assures us this judicial conclusion of the world. That which David said should be, now is: the world is waxed old like a garment; so old that most men are turned botchers, spending their times and studies to patch it. The lawyer talks of a tenure called a perpetuity; that is his patch. The usurper thinks to amplify his dominions by fire and sword; that is his patch. One says the world is naught, yet he aspires to be a great man in it; that is his patch. The covetous says, it is but transitory and short, yet he hoards as if it were everlasting; that is his patch. Another would dip it in new colours, make us believe it is an honest world; this is like painting of an old, withered, and worm-eaten face. Some, as old as this garment is, would still bestow lace and gauds upon it, as if they meant to make it a fool's coat: these are proud and haughty, who only seem to affect new clothes and new fashions; yet love the world, that is so old a garment, and quite out of fashion.

If we see a man whose eyes grow dim, his ears deaf, his face furrowed, his hairs white, his legs doubling under him; we say, his living date is almost expired. Such a dotage doth the world labour of, yet men covet as if there were a thousand generations to provide for. As a man that is dying hath many fantasies, so the declining world is troubled with many delirements and errors. In a surfeited body the corruption labours downwards, to the feet, and makes an issue there; so the putrefaction and turpitude of all times is sunk down to this latter age, and one extremity answers another. Faith is rare, though there be many Christians; and charity so cold, as if a continual February of indevotion had frozen it. There was lately a great frost, and we called it a hard time; the rivers were crusted, the teeming earth obstructed, and the conveyances of water locked up; yet it is thawed and dissolved by the imperious and friendly sun. But there is still a spiritual frost, a hardness of men's hearts, that extinguisheth the heat of zeal, the warmth of charity, the spark of faith. "Out of whose womb came the ice? and the hoary frost of heaven, who hath generated it?" Job xxxviii. 29. Out of whose womb comes this sinful ice, but the devil's? It is not a frost of heaven, but the hoary frost of hell. The fruits of piety are withered, the springs of grace dried up, and the waters of charity that should make glad our city of God, are congealed to covetousness. Who can loose these bands of Orion? Job xxxviii. 31. The sun of grace shineth, yet this frost melts not; it is reserved unto judgment, to be melted with the fire of hell.

Thus truly is the world grown an old man. 1. It stoops like an old man, as if the head were too heavy for the shoulders; sinks downward with ponderous cares. 2. It is full of raw humours like an old man; the stomach is so oppressed with crude and unwholesome vanities, that it is mortally feverish. 3. It is cold like an old man; that the blood cannot be warmed, no heat of zeal can be got into it. 4. It is testy like an old man, weary of his own desires, angry at the doing of that he commands to be done; desires, obtains, and then despises; nothing can please him. 5. Picking with the fingers like an old man; scratching all together into heaps, in defiance of any future dissipation. 6. It hath lost all the senses like an old man: his ears so deaf that he cannot hear the gospel, his eyes so blind that he cannot see the evil of his sins, his tongue so faltering that he cannot utter his prayers, his feet so lame that he halts with his best friend: even ready to close up his lights, the sun and moon be put out: the great spiritual court is breaking up, all officers

discharged; and he that takes their accounts, ready to appear in the clouds, the Judge of all, Jesus Christ. We see the necessity of this general judgment; it is necessary for the justice of God, necessary for the good of man, necessary for the glory of him that is both God and Man.

The severity of it follows; it is such a judgment, as shall leave nothing unexamined, unencensored. He that was the true Saviour will be a severe Judge; the God of the universe, the universal Judge. There are many gods, many kings, many priests, innumerable men. Now he that is God shall judge all those gods; he that is King, shall judge all those kings; he that is Priest, shall judge all those priests; he that is Man, shall judge all men. The apostle Jude calls it the great day. Great, for there shall be, 1. A great congregation; never did so many meet together before, never shall after. All shall be summoned, and all must appear, though they were resolved into dust many thousand years before; and this citation shall be made by the sound of a trumpet. 2. A great examination; when not only visible and actual works shall be revealed, but even the most secret thoughts, reserved intentions, and scarce born conceptions. Nothing is so hid, that it can be kept from his sapience, or escape his sentence. 3. A great judication, giving sentence of absolution unto the faithful, and sentence of condemnation upon the wicked. And this shall be done suddenly: no subornas to fetch in witnesses, they are all ready; no appeal, for there is no higher court; no tedious pleading, for then all sinners are struck dumb, Matt. xxii. 12; no demur, for the Judge is perfect in the law, it was of his own making; no writ of error, for he must needs judge wisely and truly, that is wisdom and truth itself; no reprieve, for there is no hope of pardon; no psalm of mercy, that day is past, this is the time of justice. 4. A great retribution; every man shall receive his reward according to his work; to the godly there is the free reward of life and glory, to the ungodly deserved death and torment. This king hath treasure enough for all; not one of the faithful shall want mercy, not one reprobate shall escape without penalty. Great was the lamentation of the drowning Egyptians, and no less the rejoicing of Israel safe on the shore: but oh the unspeakable joy of the sheep on Christ's right hand, and the unventable sorrow of the goats on his left; when both the songs of good men and angels, and the cries of bad men and devils, shall echo to the glory of one most holy God! 5. A great resignation, when Christ shall deliver up the kingdom to God the Father, 1 Cor. xv. 24; and cease to reign, not as God, for so he is equal with the Father, but as Mediator. For then all his redeemed ones are embraced with the everlasting arms of blessedness; and for the rest he shall never make intercession, for they had never part in his redemption. Up go the saints and angels in their eternal quire, down sink the reprobates and devils to their eternal fire, where the one shall live singing, and the other live burning, as long as there is a God in heaven.

Thus Power had her day in creation, Providence hath her day in preservation, Mercy had her day in redemption, and Justice must have her day in retribution. That great Sun of righteousness appeareth in four signs of his zodiac. In his conception he came through Virgo, he was born of a virgin. In his birth, through Gemini, two natures being united in one person. In his resurrection he was found in Leo, triumphing like a victorious lion over all his enemies. When he comes to judgment, he shall appear in Libra the Balance; justly weighing out to every man a portion of reward, according to the proportion of his work.

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his is his second coming; the first was of grace, this is of justice. The first was to propitiate, not to judge: God sent not his Son to condemn the world, but to save it, John iii. 17. The second shall be to judge, not to propitiate: "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son," John v. 22. In the first he came a Physician to heal, in the next an Avenger to punish those that would not be healed. Then a Lamb to suffer, now a Lion to triumph and conquer. His first coming was soft, as the dew upon the mown grass; his second shall be terrible, in lightning and fire.

Seeing there must be a judgment, and we must all be judged, let us prepare our souls for a good answer. Christ bade his disciples, when they were brought before men's judgment-seats, to study no answer; but let every one study an answer before he comes to this judgment-seat. Yet alas, what answer can be made? If God contend with us, we cannot answer him one of a thousand, Job ix. 3. Christ's word must stand. "What shall I do when God riseth up? and when he visiteth, what shall I answer him?" Job xxxi. 14. If great men honour themselves more than God, what shall they do? If covetous men love money more than Christ, what shall they do? If men have robbed the Lord of his patrimony, what shall they do? Here is a What shall they do for all? Men have now their colours, reasons, pretences, and qualifications; but then what shall they answer? The wicked shall plead to Christ, We are the work of thy hands; but he will reply, You have lost my image and superscription. But, Lord, remember thy passion. Yes, but this is no time of compassion. The sentence is terrible, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels," Matt. xxv. 41. When they shall cry, Lord, though we may not ascend with thee unto glory, yet let us abide still on the earth. Nay, go, depart. If we must go, let it not yet be far, not out of thy sight and gracious presence. Nay, depart from me. If we must go, and go from thee, yet let us have a blessing with us. Nay, depart, ye cursed. If we must go, and from thee, and with a curse, yet somewhat qualify thy anger, and let our curse be but easy. Nay, depart, ye cursed, into fire. If we must depart from thee, cursed, and into fire, yet let not that fire burn long, suffer it to be soon extinguished. Nay, but go into everlasting fire. If there be no remedy, but we must go from thee the God of glory, and with a curse, the character of infelicity, and into fire, torment in extremity, and that everlasting, without hope of recovery, yet let us have some pleasant and loving company. Nay, but the very devil and his angels. A heavy doom, which if we desire to evade, let us before the day of trial make sure of the Judge: if we can get him our friend, we shall speed well in the judgment.

VERSE 5.

And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly.

This is the apostle's second exemplary argument against the immunity of sin: his first instance was, how it sped in heaven; now he expresseth the mischief it did upon earth; after the expulsion of angels, the submersion of terrene creatures. The first judgment took hold on altitude, this prevails against mul-

titude: for sublimity, they were angels; for universality, this is a whole world. There God used his own immediate power, in the dejection of those revolting spirits; here is the same offended power working by a mediate instrument. The angels were above the elements, therefore no element was exercised in their punishment: here is element against element, water against earth; that man, who was of elements composed, and by elements preserved, might also by elements be destroyed. When man forsakes his own end, which is to glorify his Maker, the creatures also forsake their (less principal) end, which is to serve man their master. The elements rebel against man, when man rebels against God: becoming a traitor to his Creator, they owe him no more service; but instead of serving him, they serve God against him.

"Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of the waterspouts," Psal. xlii. 7: the deluge of sins called for a deluge of waters; deep iniquity, for deep calamity. The world was grown so foul, that God saw it was high time to wash it; yea, so was the uncleanness dyed in grain, that when the polluters were washed away, the pollution stuck on still; as the plague cleaves to the house, even when the infector of it is dead. And as a sordid cloth lies long a soaking before it be cleansed, so deeply had impiety sized itself into the earth, that God saw it meet to steep it long under the waters, even a hundred and fifty days, Gen. vii. 24.

God's blessing did not more multiply than Satan's curse; there came an Increase and multiply from them both. God spake it to his creatures, men: Satan to his creatures, men's sins. Mankind began but with one; yet he that saw the first man lived to see the earth peopled with a world of men. Men grew not half so fast as sins; "As they were increased, so they sinned against me," Hos. iv. 7. One man could soon multiply a thousand sins; never man had so many children; so that still the number of transgressions exceeded the number of persons. When the earth was scarce sprinkled with men, the whole world was filled with sins; so that the top of the conspiracy bore up to heaven, and carried ill news to the Maker of all. Whereat offended, he sent down a watery messenger of destruction; which as it came from heaven, so swelled up back again to heaven, with tidings that God's justice was now glorified on them, whose mercy would not be glorified by them. The corruption of the world is not less now, yea, more: it is past all purging by water, therefore hath God reserved it to fire. Only as the ark did save Noah in the day of water, so Christ will preserve us in the day of fire.

"And spared not the old world," &c. Here is a double act; of justice, of mercy: that of justice on a whole world, the other of mercy upon eight persons. It is often, God doth strike few to save many; here he strikes many and saves few. His judgments are sometimes particular, that his mercy may be general; here his judgments are general, and his mercy particular. So the whole may be distinguished into,

The vengeance, Spared not the old world.

The deliverance, Saved Noah the eighth person.

In the vengeance or execution of wrath consider,

The matter passive, Sinful world.

The instrument executive, The flood.

The subject suffering is described by,

The universality, The whole world.

The antiquity, The old world.

The impiety, The ungodly world.

For the penal instrument let us meditate,

1. Whence it proceeded.

2. How far it prevailed.

3. How long it continued.

In the deliverance are two special things ;

The manner implied, By the ark.

The number expressed, Eight persons.

Thus are our meditations fetched a great way backward, that our souls may be set somewhat further forward : let us consider the old world, that we may become the better for it in the new. History is delightful to all, and gives us means to travel former times ; that we may in some sort know what is done before us, though we cannot see what shall be done after us. In all this plentiful discourse, your good apprehension must be my best persuasion ; your capacity, my oratory. Secure we ourselves first in the ark, and then launch into this ocean of water : the Spirit of God direct us in our voyage, and bring our souls to the haven of eternal peace.

To begin with the vengeance : God was angry with the whole world because of sin : neither was this a slight or easy wrath, but a fire long a kindling. It repenteth me that I made man : here is a displeasure indeed, when the Lord shall repent his own work. The wrath of God came upon them to the uttermost, 1 Thess. ii. 16 : *εἰς τέλος*, that is, such a one as consumes either totally or finally. The wrath of God is either in resolution or execution. In resolution, it is either suppressed in his bosom, or expressed in his threatening. In execution, it is either temporal in body, or spiritual in soul : as Peter said, Behold two swords, or rather one sword with two edges. This *ἡ ὀργή*, the wrath : God hath armies of afflictions, but if the wicked escape them all, this same great wrath will surprise them. Neither must we think here God subject to passions ; what be affections in us, are perfections in him. But to the purblind one candle seems many. As God is said to have an arm, because the arm is the instrument of our power ; an eye, because he discerns all things ; a foot, because he is present every where, &c. And that he will preserve unharmed is called, "the apple of his eye," Zech. ii. 8. His essential substance is called his soul : *benephesh*, by his life, or soul, that is, by himself, Amos vi. 8. And, wicked men his soul hateth, Psal. xi. 5. Thus he is said to be angry, and to repent. But as man repents by retracting his purpose, so God by changing his sentence. When God is said to alter his will, that he becomes offended with the man, with whom he was formerly pleased, the man is changed, not the Lord. (August.) He repents not as man does, for he cannot delire and err as man does. He is not angry, but all his actions proceed from a perfect love of virtue and hate of vice. We cannot properly grieve the Spirit, nor crucify Christ ; but our sins do all that is possible to it ; and as much as in us lies, we bring melancholy into heaven, that court of joy. If the king lose a subject he is so much the weaker ; take a drop from the ocean, it hath the less ; but what is the loss of thee or thy harlot to God ? he is never the poorer, nor are they missed. But when he repents of all the generation of men, this shows sin to be exceeding heinous. In a word, man's is a passive repentance, God's is an operative repentance. Let this teach us,

1. To glorify God, lest he repent that he made us. "I am fearfully and wonderfully made ;" (all God's works are admirable, man wonderfully wonderful ;) "marvellous are thy works ; and that my soul knoweth right well." What infers he on all this ? Therefore "I will praise thee," Psal. cxxxix. 14. If we will not praise him that made us, will he not repent that he made us ? Oh that we knew what the saints do in heaven, and how the sweetness of that doth swallow up all earthly pleasures ! They sing honour

and glory to the Lord. Why ? Because he hath created all things, Rev. iv. 11. When we behold an exquisite piece of work, we presently inquire after him that made it, purposely to commend his skill ; and there is no greater disgrace to an artist, than having perfected a famous work, to find it neglected, no man minding it, or so much as casting an eye upon it. All the works of God are considerable, and man is bound to this contemplation : "When I consider the heavens," &c. I say, "What is man ?" Psal. viii. 3, 4. He admires the heavens, but his admiration reflects upon man ; *Quis homo ?* There is no workman but would have his instruments used, and used to that purpose for which they were made. The cutler hath made thee a knife ; to cut thy own meat, not thy neighbour's throat. If thou, like the envious man, will keep thy knife in thy hand, and swallow thy meat whole ; or, like the fool, cut another's meat, and thy own fingers : this is to abuse that instrument, and pervert the end for which it was framed. Man is set like a little world in the midst of the great, to glorify God ; this is the scope and end of his creation. If he shall apply himself to proud desires, base designs, covetous courses ; here God's meaning is misunderstood, his work misapplied. He is created for the service of God ; if he cannot be wrought and brought to that, he shall be beaten in pieces. As the potter turns and works a piece of clay ; frames it for such a vessel, it will not do ; then tries to make another fashion of it, yet it fadeth not ; till at last, after many eluded trials, he dasheth it against the walls. God's Spirit will not always strive with this world, more than it did with that ; but if we still strive against him, let us see who in the end shall have the worst of it. Ariosto going through the streets, and hearing a potter basely sing his odes, took a cudgel and broke his pots ; answering his complaint, Thou hast marred my verses, and I have marred thy vessels. If we abuse God's creatures, he will spoil our pleasures.

2. Let us repent of our sinning, lest God repent of our making. Oh that for want of a little sorrow, we should hazard the loss of such a joy, as the delight of our Creator ! When we sin, we give him cause to grieve at our doing, but while we continue impenitent, we give him cause to grieve at our being. Shall our Maker repent that we are, and we not repent that we are so evil ? Did he not make us of nothing ? and is he not able to reduce us to nothing, to worse than nothing ? and yet do we provoke him, and put him to it by our rebellions ? Repentance is a grace of continual use, because sin is a thing of continual practice. It is better going to the house of mourning, than of mirth, saith Solomon ; more expedient for the soul's health : through his own experience, he taught us this experience. In pride we patch our clothes, in repentance we rend them in pieces. It unmake a man that which sin made him : whereas impenitence keeps him for ever the same. They that lived unconverted sinners on earth, remain the same in hell. "All that came before me are thieves and robbers," John x. 8 : in congruity of speech he should have said, *acere* thieves : yes, not only were, but are so still. Saul is still a homicide ; you cannot say so of David, that he is still an adulterer, because he repented, and by that was renewed.

Our repentance is said to appease God : now appeasing presupposeth anger, and God's anger is twofold ; of a Judge, and of a Father. As he is a Judge, offended with his enemies, and this wrath is only appeased by Christ. As he is a Father, and so our repentance may please him in Christ ; not in respect of ourselves, but God's Spirit. Thus our repentance through Christ may pacify his paternal wrath. This

is an excellent remedy, but not so easy. The king of Nineveh and his people put on sackcloth, and fasted; but yet, "Who can tell" whether the Lord will turn to mercy? Jonah iii. 9: we are not sure of it, it may be so, but who can tell. Though the Jews rent their hearts, yet it is but "Who knoweth" whether God will return? Joel ii. 14. Though they gnaw their tongues for pain, yet they repent not of their deeds, Rev. xvi. 10, 11: so hard a task is repentance.

Neither is repentance without amendment, any more than continual pumping without mending the leak. The bird fighting with the serpent, ever anon flew to an herb, which was her medicine, and cured her of the poison; but at last, the herb being wasted, the bird died. Repentance is that herb, which, while opportunity lasts, will help the poison of sin; but that once gone, and it will not be ever present to presumptuous sinners, what remains but perishing? The medicine is made for the wound, not the wound for the medicine. The argument of our liberty is repentance; the bonds of servitude are broken with a broken heart. Is the mourning voice of that Dove, the Holy Ghost, heard in thy bosom? Demosthenes would not plead for his client, till he cried to him; and then answered his sorrow, Now I feel thy cause. Let our penitent contrition cry unto Christ, and then he will plead for us.

God "spared not the old world." Thus in general, now more specially to the parts. World hath divers significations: it is taken, 1. For this whole visible engine, the fabric of all things contained under heaven and earth. 2. For the vicious and miserable condition of it, contracted by sin, and inherent in all things. 3. For the noblest and most excellent part of it, man; and thus sometimes only for the saints: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself," 2 Cor. v. 19. Commonly for the wicked; "The whole world lieth in wickedness," 1 John v. 19. So the world is opposed generally, *vel numero vocatorum, vel numero electorum*. The first circumstance we light upon, is the universality of this destruction, which seizeth on a whole world. Wherein the answer to three questions may satisfy us.

1. Why the creatures were punished with man's ruin, that were not guilty of man's sin. This was just with God, 1. Because they were all made for man's use, and therefore man suffers in their loss. As a foul traitor being executed, hath his house fired, his very land harrowed with brambles, and sown with stones. 2. Seeing they were made for man's use, he being taken away, they were of no further use. The general being slain, the army perisheth; the head being cut off, the members die. (Chrysost.) 3. Such was the greatness of sin, that it brought destruction, not only upon the sinner, but on all that belonged to him. 4. Because brutish men had abused the creatures by their filthy riot and excess, therefore God saw it just to punish the instrument with the principal; so that there is not a creature which is not subject to some vanity, Rom. viii. 20. He that requites his prince's favours with treason, not only suffers in his own person, but every thing about him feels the smart. His followers are suspected, his favourites disgraced, his children disinherited, his friends discomfited, his house decayed, all things drop with him; his gardens are overrun with weeds, his orchards lie uncouth, man and beast is made sensible of his judgment. Adam, that was beholden to God for his very self, apostatizing into treason, his house grew out of fashion to him, his pleasures were turned to thorns, the arms of his nobility were defaced; and he that was made a master of living bodies, breaking his allegiance with God, became despised of his own servants, some of them shaking

off the yoke of our government when we shook off our Maker's. Especially the greatest and the smallest of them: the greatest, as lions, tigers, panthers, are hardly tamed; but the least, as bees and gnats, not at all. In a general destruction, when the enemy triumphs, not only men, women, and children lose their lives; but the houses are fired, the trees cut down, the walls razed, the horses slain in flight, the cattle burnt in the stalls: as Saul had his charge for Amalek, Spare neither man nor beast, 1 Sam. xv. 3. Are there not rots of cattle, and murrains of beasts, as well as mortalities of men? In a spoiling war or plague, who remains to fill the empty crib or manger? Do they not suffer with their masters? Do not the very beasts of the rich fare the better for the prosperity of their owners; whereas the poor man's cattle partake of the poor man's want?

I do not think that all manner of creatures perished in the waters; for besides them preserved in the ark, the fish escaped. The rabbins conceited, that the fish also perished, growing hot in the flood, as in a caldron; but Moses confines this destruction to things on the dry land, Gen. vii. 22. The fishes were spared. 1. Man had not so abused them, as the other kinds: and herein our sinfulness exceeds theirs; for not only the delicacies of the land, but neither can the rarities of the sea, satisfy our riot. They were then more separate from man's sin, therefore from his punishment. But in the fiery deluge, to show that even thither our excess hath reached, the very fishes shall not escape. 2. They lived in that element wherewith God purposed to overthrow the world; so that the same thing that was ordained for subversion, was to them rather for preservation. 3. They were not partakers of the earth: now the earth was cursed, not the sea; because Adam did unlawfully eat the fruit of the earth, not of the sea. 4. Such was the good pleasure of God, that among other creatures he would then spare the fishes: then, I say, for at other times he hath both threatened and destroyed them also; he "slew their fish," Hos. iv. 3; Psal. cv. 29.

Further, from the number of those preserved in the ark, divines have probably exempted, 1. Those creatures that live as well in the water as on the land; as otters, sea-wolves, water-serpents, and water-fowls. 2. Such as come of corruption, and do not breed by generation: as worms of dung, moths of putrified herbs, &c. 3. Such as are of a mixed kind, engendered by male and female of diverse kinds; as the mule cometh of the horse and ass: these needed not come into the ark, it was enough that the breeders of them were there. (August.) Some of the rabbins have conceited, that the seeds of herbs and plants were kept in the ark; but they might by God's providence grow in the earth, under the waters; as did the olive which the dove found at the sinking of the deluge. Yea, some of them, more ridiculously, amongst the living things preserved, would thrust in the spirits of the air to the ark. But neither are they male and female, nor subject to the submersion of waters; and it were better for man to have that kind destroyed than conserved. For the phoenix, amongst many ambiguities, I yield to their persuasion, who think there is none; and that by the disagreements of her most justifying reporters. For her country, some make her of Arabia, others of India. For her life, some five hundred years, others six hundred and sixty. For her death, some say she sings and dies; others, that with the motion of her wings she sets her nest a fire. Pliny, and Pompon. Mela, write, that of her ashes comes a worm, and of the worm another phoenix; which

takes the bones of the old phenix with her nest, and carries it to Heliopolis, the city of the sun in Egypt; there laying it on the altar, and solemnizing the funeral. But who would not smile at the nonsense of this fiction? For if the phenix be burnt to ashes, where are her bones left for this transportation? But one, say they; and what creature is without sex, among beasts, fishes, or fowls? God's "Increase and multiply" had been a vain and superfluous charge to her. If there were but one before, then certainly that perished in the flood; for none were preserved in the ark but by pairs and couples. So that if formerly but one, now consequently there is none. The saying of St. Ambrose is objected: *Phoenix cum mortua sit, reviviscit: solos non credimus homines resuscitari*. We answer, he doth not deliver his opinion, that the phenix being dead reviveth; but by that which the heathen affirmed, out of their own grounds, he proves the resurrection which they denied. Let not this first question pass without a double meditation.

It instructs our understanding what the horror of sin is, whose contagion hath infected all the creatures that belong to us. Cursed be the earth for thy sake: the earth thou treadest on, the earth meriting no curse, the earth made before thee, made for thee, and thou made of it; cursed be this earth for thy sake. What have the poor creatures done? We are not content with their rule, without their min: though they be *ad usum et esum nostrum*, yet we tyrannize over them, and are scarce satisfied with their spoil. Oh that the guilty should thus dare to domineer over the innocent; and hold himself more absolute lord over his beast, than he thinks God over himself! He that shows no mercy to his beast, (which yet is not his creature, but bought with his money,) teacheth God how to deal with him, who is his creature, and bought with his Son's blood. The prophets, when the Lord hath been angry, and the plague heavy, and no excuse for the people's iniquity, not knowing what to say for themselves, ashamed in their own name to crave pardon, have put him in mind of the brute creatures: "How do the beasts groan," &c. Joel i. 18. Not that God is more respectful of beasts than of men: Hath God care of oxen? 1 Cor. ix. 9; but when men become bruter than beasts, God will pity beasts sooner than men. The penitent Ninevites imposed a fast upon their very flocks and herds with themselves, Jonah iii. 7. Hath God care of beasts, or have beasts care of God? Are they not without religion, yea, without reason? O pardon repentance, a greater absurdity than this! It was a glass to reflect their own estate; the bellying of half-famished cattle puts them in mind how themselves ought to be starved. Such a use was of the Levitical sacrifices: to see them slain, their blood exhausted, their flesh burnt to ashes, might well strike them at heart with the survey of their own demerits. It teacheth the young lion obedience, when he sees the dog whom he loves and plays withal, edged before him. When the prince's garment is beaten, he soon conceives himself blameworthy by that representation. The moan and misery of the dumb thing schools us, as stripes on our garments, to tell us we have parts in that bargain. That which wants reason is punished, that we who have reason might be humbled. We are little better than beasts, if we find no other use of beasts than to serve our own riot: they may teach us as well as serve us. The looking-glass is an insensible thing, yet it reflects to a man his own form. This is the first lesson.

It also informs us to moderate our affections, and not to surfeit on this world which we have made so

corrupt by our sins. What creature is there, on which our impiety hath not stuck some blemish? what do we use, whereon we read not engraven the characters of our own obliquities? Our apparel is but the cover of our shame; by our bravest accoutrements we may take measure of our delinquencies. Adam was more glorious without raiment, than all his posterity can be by it: neither can the glory we seek in our clothing, conceal or countervail the ignominy that came by our sinning. For our meat, is not our life maintained by the death of other creatures, our preservation by their destruction? Sin brought this necessity; without that no creature should have lost his life to become our food. This was not from the creation, creatures were not made to this end. Innocency would have preserved all to a higher and more excellent use. We should have had meat far sweeter, and such as should have cost no creature its life. Let my soul thus meditate; This creature dieth not for itself, but for me; not for its own fault, but mine: if I had my desert, I should rather die than it. Do we not read our steaming and sordid lusts in the infected air; our blasphemies in the blemished moon, glimmering stars, and blushing sun; our oppressions in the harrowed and wounded earth; our impieties in the groaning of all creatures? If a rich man should heap all his wealth together, and then set his house on fire, hath he cause of joy to see this? There is an ataxy and disorder in all the world wrought by our sins; the trees must fall under the wounding axe, the bowels of the earth be rent, to build us a dwelling; and shall not this move us? Can we glory in our shame, with that insulting monarch, This is my Babel? Dan. iv. 30. We had a better mansion once, without any of this violence, Paradise. Thus as he that rifled the poor scholar, robbed ten men at once, he having borrowed of one his horse, of another his spurs, &c.; or as when Esop's jay was stripped of her brave plumes, there were twenty birds undone, that had lent her their feathers; so when death deprives man of his life, he finds many creatures to have spent their bloods and beings towards his maintenance. Our comfort be it, that our patent is renewed in Christ; the Second Adam regretting what the former had lost. And he that was content to become a creature, and to proffer his blood to us, thinks now no creature too dear for us. For his sake they are our servants, let us become his servants: to us the use, to him the thanks and glory for ever.

2. In the next place we are to examine, whether no other creatures escaped the deluge besides the fore-mentioned. The waters prevailed, until "all the high hills that were under the whole heaven were covered," Gen. vii. 19. Yes, saith Cajetan, those under the airy heaven: nay, saith Moses, under the whole heaven. Some have wrangled about the mountains; as Athao in Macedonia, so high, that it casteth the shadow to Myrinum, a town in Lemnos, eighty-six miles off. Atlas is said to have a top higher than the clouds; and Tabor, to rise up thirty furlongs; Caucasus, to be lightened with the sun above, when day-light is shut in below. (Joseph.) But Moses affirms expressly, that all these high mountains were surmounted, and covered by the waters. Cajetan excepts the mountain of Paradise from this inundation; but where doth he find that Paradise was situate on a mountain? Out of Eden went a river to water the garden, Gen. ii. 10; but rivers do not use to run upon hills. His vain fear was, lest then Enoch should have been drowned in the flood, whom he supposeth to be in Paradise. But indeed Enoch was taken up into heaven, a higher paradise, where no flood could reach him.

Bellarmino thinks that all the mountains were not overflowed, but only those where the wicked dwelt. And Josephus reports a hill in Armenia, where all that fled thither for succour were saved from the deluge. But what speak we of fantastical dreams, against evident scriptures? Thus the Hebrews' fable, that Og the king of Bashan, who lived till Moses' time, was one of those giants before the flood. When I read in Pliny of a giant's body found in Crete forty-six cubits in length, I believe it as I do the ballad of Gargantua. The waters being fifteen cubits above the greatest mountains, those giants must needs be of incredible height that escaped.

But then, say they, the flood seemed to ascend unto the middle region of the air: for it was so many cubits higher than the mountains, and some mountain-tops ascend to the middle region, yea, above the clouds. As Olympus, which Zenagoras by mathematical instruments found to be ten stadia high; inasmuch that the ashes remaining of the sacrifices, are neither dispersed by the wind, nor dissolved by the rain. So the waters should seem to rise higher than the place where the rain is engendered. *Answer.* The report of Olympus is found to be untrue, by the testimony of Philadelphius, who went up the hill on purpose to make experiment. (Ludovicius Vives.) Besides, no hill is above four miles in height; and the middle region is at least fifty miles from the earth. Again, divers inhabited those places, who are said to live half as long again as other men. This showed it to be a wholesome site for air, which could not be the middle region, full of clouds and foggy mists.

The conclusion then goes strong for the universality: a whole world perished, save only what the ark preserved. The day of vengeance is come, the guests are entered their wooden castle, the door of the ark shut, and the windows of heaven opened. Now those deriders, seeing the violence of the waters, some rising up, other coming down, both joining their forces to drown the earth, come wading middle deep, and bitterly crying out for safety in that vessel floating, which they had flouted in making. But now they are justly rejected, and find no room in God's mercy, whose word could find no room in their hearts. Others hope to outrun the destruction; and being clambered up to the tops of the highest mountains, they look down upon the waters with some transient dattery of hope. Still the waters rise, and their hills appear to them like floating islands. They give many a look when the heavens will clear up, and those bottles of rain be exhausted. Oh how would one hour's sunshine have cheered their hearts! And yet suppose it should cease spouting down, where was the provision which should keep life and soul together, till the channels of the sea, veins and hollow ventricles of the earth, should suck up that inundation? The beasts and fowls hovering in those mountains, were rather ready to prey upon their carcasses than become their food: hunger will make those devourers of men, which before yielded to be devoured by men. There were wolves howling, dogs barking, lions roaring, owls screeching, cranes chattering, serpents hissing; men, women, children crying; all in one forlorn place.

Still their death comes nearer, and overtakes the refugees of their confidence. Then from the drowning hills they climb up to the highest trees, and there with paleness and horror behold their threatening death, which they would strive to avoid, and know they cannot. From the tops of all they desert afar off the ark floating on the waves: and now look on that with envy, which they formerly beheld with

scorn: cursing their impenitent hearts, which God must needs kill ere he could waken.

But in vain they flee whom God pursues: there is no mountain so high but his hand can reach it; no depth so low, but his eye sees it, and power rules it. There is no way to escape him, but by coming to him. At last their destruction surpriseth them, poor miserable creatures, half dead with fear and hunger, and now wholly dead with water. Lo here the full conquest of justice, and the whole world overwhelmed with a universal ruin. God hath fetched back again all that life, which he had given to his unworthy creatures; and the world was reduced to that form wherein it stood in the third day of the creation, waters being over the face of the whole earth.

Let this contemplation be useful to us: the season of repentance is before the beginning of vengeance; but if judgment be gone out, men cry too late. While the gospel moves us, the doors of the ark are open: if we now neglect it, we may seek it with tears, and not find it. Mercy to impenitence would be injury to justice. Let every soul take this very time to redeem the time; for he is so fugitive, that he will not tarry the pleading of his own cause.

3. Lastly, we are to examine how in all this the righteousness of God may be justified. What, all the world? might it not have been satisfied with a family, as the monstrous children of Lamech? or with a city, as Sodom? or with a country, as Canaan? or with a fourth part of the world, as Europe? but all? Because a man's garden, that hath been fruitful, is overrun with cankers, will he therefore destroy it? Doth not God threaten only the barren tree, such a one as cumber the ground, Luke xiii. 7; not the whole vineyard? The husbandman feels not all his green and unripe corn, because some weeds are grown up in it: yea, Christ himself forbids it, with a "Let both grow together," Matt. xiii. 30. Nor because a man's servants have abused his house, and left it sluttishly noisome, will he therefore straight pull it down; but rather see it cleansed and aired, the rubbish swept out, and the uncleanness washed away. The Lord doth no more here; he punisheth the defilers with due destruction, washeth and scoureth this great house of the world, but then lets it stand: he makes it clean, he doth not make it nothing. But to clear this point, two subordinate questions must be scanned.

1. Whether all that were temporally destroyed, also everlastingly perished. If so, then Abraham could object. Far be it from thee to destroy the righteous with the wicked: shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? Gen. xviii. 25. Shall infants and innocents share in the same confusion with obstinates? 1. Some say, that all were temporally punished, that they might be eternally saved; as St. Hierome of the Sodomites, They received in this life their full punishments. But if probates might escape thus, hell would not be so full. 2. Some extenuate their sin, as Cajetan; that they were not wholly void of faith, but believed not Noah in this particular. But it is not safe for man to extenuate what the Lord does aggravate, that the whole "earth was filled with violence, and all flesh had corrupted his way," Gen. vi. 11, 12. They were not only full of incredulity, but foul with all manner of impiety. 3. Others say, that they were condemned to hell, yet redeemed thence by Christ's descension; who went and preached to the spirits in prison, which were disobedient in the days of Noah, 1 Pet. iii. 19, 20. Thus the pontificians have conceived that Plato, at Christ's preaching in hell, believed; and was, with many others, delivered: as the soul of Falconilla, by the prayers of St. Tecla, and Trajan's, at the intercession of Gregory. But these imaginations

cross God's determinations, who hath interposed a great gulf, Luke xvi. 26: their worm never dieth, and out of hell there is no redemption. 4. Others, that they were not cast into hell, but many of them into purgatory, and from thence delivered by Christ's descending. But to answer both these errors, so falsely grounded on the apostle's words, Being quickened in spirit, he went, &c.: Christ's soul could not be said to be quickened, for his soul never died: therefore by his soul he did not preach either in hell or purgatory. Christ hath two spirits, one as man, another as God; so the Holy Ghost is called the Spirit of Christ. But the Spirit here is properly neither of these, but his Divine power; by which he preached in Noah, in all the prophets before him, and the apostles after him. But if it be not meant of purgatory, what is then this prison? Augustine says, this prison was the body; and the men were called spirits from the better part; but we seldom find living men called spirits. Montanus says, this prison was the ark; but then there had been in the prison too few spirits, for in the ark were but eight. Some will have this prison to be ignorance, according to that prophecy of Christ, that he was sent to preach "liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound," Isa. lxi. 1. But to those Christ could not be said to preach in spirit, but in person. Some would have this prison the grave; but then souls should lie in graves by that consequent. Others, to be hell; and that is indeed a prison, without light, without liberty, without comfort. Let us keep ourselves free-men, and beware of multiplying our debts, that we be never cast into this prison. But certainly there is no preaching in hell, because there is no repenting in hell: Shall thy loving-kindness be declared in hell, &c.? Psal. lxxxviii. 11. To conclude: the Scripture never called the receptacle of believing souls a prison: to think, therefore, that first they were condemned, and afterward redeemed, is a point of contradiction. The same Christ that came in his flesh, and preached the gospel to the world, came to them in the days of Noah by his Spirit, and in Noah preached repentance to those unbelievers; who because they repented not, but continued in disobedience, are now damned spirits in hell. This I take to be the true sense and orthodox exposition.

Charity may seem to except from everlasting ruin, innocents and ignorants. Innocents, as infants, that were not capable of faith and repentance. Ignorants, such as did not hear of the forewarned vengeance. The one could not believe for want of discretion; the other, not be called unbelievers if they had no premonition: on these our charity hopes there was mercy. In the first judgment, when the angels fell: in the last judgment, when Christ shall come; only the elect shall be saved, and only the reprobate condemned. In this middle and intervenient judgment, some were preserved, that were not elected, as Ham, cursed of his father: so we think, some were drowned, which yet were saved. Our probable reasons are four.

1. It is not likely that the whole posterity of Methuselah and Enoch, and of other holy patriarchs, were condemned; for the Lord hath promised to be good to the children for their fathers' sakes.

2. Howsoever they believed not Noah at the first, but thought him a fantastical fellow; yet when they saw the event answering his prediction, and death climbing up to their latest refuges, their souls might be humbled to repentance. Many having learned that godliness in one day's misery, which many years' prosperity could not teach them.

3. The apostle resembles baptism to the ark. 1 Pet.

iii. 21; but as all dying without baptism are not damned, so neither all that were without the ark eternally perished. They might be drowned in the deluge on earth, yet escape the abyss of hell.

4. If God had meant to destroy their souls with the confusion of their bodies, he would not so have lingered the execution. It was forty days a coming, Gen. vii. 4, whereas God could have despatched it in four hours: that by degrees their hearts might be softened with sorrows, as the earth was soaked with waters.

But if they repented, why is it not recorded in Scripture? So neither is Adam's repentance, nor Solomon's: it expressly says they sinned, not expressly they repented; though of their repentance there is no question to be made. But it is concealed to deter us from the like rebellion, lest it become so doubtful of our conversion. But if they did repent, why then were they not saved from the deluge? Because they repented not in time, at Noah's preaching. Repentance is never too late to save the soul, but it may be too late to deliver the body.

Let us repent betimes, before the judgment come; for if it be once come, we may save our souls, but our bodies must perish. They that were even akin to Noah, because they repented not at the preaching of Noah, could not be saved with Noah; but losing this opportunity, they too late wish themselves in the ark: albeit mercy shall never be denied to true repentance, yet, speed well their souls, they must lose their lives. When the Lord strikes a city with his pestilence, many sinners begin then to relent, and bleed in contrition for their offences: this shall happily deliver them from hell and the wrath of God, yet this exempts them not from death of that plague. Men commonly fear God's temporal blows more than his eternal, yet of both they neglect the antidote and prevention. This will make him strike, if not home. A wise man will not be drunk, if only for the head-ache; nor a good man sin, if only to avoid the heart-ache. If we have not repented so early, but that he will punish us; yet let us not repent so late, but that he may save us.

How was this just, to punish the infants and innocents for the sins of their parents? Doth not God say, "The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father?" Ezek. xviii. 20. Doth not he make this to the enraged prophet an argument of sparing Nineveh; the many thousand little ones, "that cannot discern between their right hand and their left?" Jonah iv. 11; that cannot speak, cannot help themselves; that stick to their mothers' breasts, as apples to the tree; if you pluck them away, they perish. Is this the babes' welcome into the world, the milk to feed them; when they cry, to quiet them with death? Is this the nursing of their tender and ungrown limbs, to wrap them up in waves of swaddling cloths, and to rock them asleep with pitiless destruction? Whose ears can endure the lamentable and confused cry of so many infants, and not cry for company? The midwives of Egypt had more mercy; Pharaoh's daughter was moved to take up weeping Moses. It is the property of a cruel nation, not to show favour to the little ones, Deut. xxviii. 50. When the prophet foretold Hazael of this cruelty, in dashing infants against the stones, he asked if he thought him a dog, 2 Kings viii. 12, 13: so brutish he held such a villain. Men have more years and sins, but what have infants done? The Scripture hath many circumlocutions of their ignorance and simplicity. God gave a special charge concerning them, in the bloodiest victory of war, unless for some nations which he had accursed, Deut. xx. 14-16. Christ took them up in his arms, blessed them, and

placed one in the midst; proposing them as patterns for the imitation of riper years. Whose eyes can behold the shrinking of their soft members at every pull of grief, their limbs sprawling on the ground, their flesh scorched with heat as a scroll of parchment, or sinking on the waters, without pity?

Thus justly, concerning little ones, doth God expostulate with men; but men may not thus expostulate with God; for to him alone they are not innocent. Man's rule is to punish him only that offends, and not to put the children to death for the fathers, Deut. xxiv. 16. Yet so far as afflictions go untouched life, children oft suffer for their parents; being deprived of liberty, goods, honours; as in cases of treason. The Lord threatens to visit the sins of the fathers upon the children, even unto the fourth generation. Exod. xx. 5; so long, that (by the course of nature) their parents may live to see their wickedness plagued in their posterity: yet if the son repent, the same God hath promised that he shall escape. And howsoever this judgment be not always verified, yet it is enough to terrify us all. But it never misseeth, where the parents' sins are become the children's by imitation. They are then called their fathers' sins; because they were by their age the founders, by their example the teachers, and in their own persons the beginners of those sins: as it is commonly said, We may know what house such come of, by some tricks of their ancestors.

Jew and Gentile have excepted against the Divine justice for this. Bion took on against the gods, that the parents' demerits were devolved and translated upon the progeny; which he scornfully matched as if a physician for the father's disease should minister physic to the son. The Jews had such an ungracious proverb, "The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge," Jer. xxxi. 29. But the Lord answers them, "Plead with your mother," Hos. ii. 2: for the husband may lawfully put away his prostituted wife, and her adulterous brood, because they are none of his children. "All souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine," Ezek. xviii. 4. If it were as Horace sung to his friend; *Delicta majorum inmeritis tuis*: but who can say, My heart is clean? Is it possible to be born Morians, and to have none of their tawny and swarthy complexions? Again, is it not just with God to punish our fond indulgence, in the very object of our idolatry? We hope these young plants shall succour us with their fruits, when we are grown sapless; but doth not the staff we so nourish to bear us, become often a cudgel to beat us? David cursed the wicked both ways: in their descent; Let his children be vagabonds, and beg their bread in desolate places, Psal. cix. 10. In their ascent; Let the iniquity of his father be had in remembrance, and let not the sin of his mother be blotted out, ver. 14. We have seen the blood of the church exhausted by sacrilegious parents, required at the hands of their posterity with ruin; God so cursing their generations, that we might read the nature and quality of the sin, in the visible characters of the punishment. The whole world was so foul, that the very fruit of their bodies (without contraction of actual sins) seemed odious to God; and in his justice he punished those innocent babes with a death temporal, whom he might yet deliver from the wrath eternal.

But some haply were not so heinous transgressors, but would have believed had they been informed; why should they suffer? They had all sin enough to drown them in one deep, if some found the mercy to save them from the other deep. God doth not punish many for the sins of some; but all men are sinners. Although one be not principal in respect

of the fact presently inquired, as David was in numbering the people; yet none fall but for their own offending. He may be necessary in consenting, or concealing: if he be neither principal nor necessary in that, yet he may be culpable in a thousand others; secret, perhaps, to men, but known to God. The serpent hath a sting, though he doth not always put it forth; and man hath malice, though he show it not.

Who then can say, I have paid the things that I never took? Jonah is the offender, the whole ship is in danger; but he that had not sinned with the prophet, had sinned in somewhat else. They had all offended at sundry times; what wrong is it if they were all whipped at once? Here is all the difference, their faults had several places, their punishment shall have but one. All Israel smarts with David, not for David's, but their own, disobedience. The Lord need not beat his brains, or break his sleep, to invent an accusation against us. We have no thought, word, work, but yields him cause and matter enough. It cannot be denied, but the sins we sever in our conceits, according to the distance of time or place; some of old, some late; some in one quarter of the world, some in another; these the knowledge of God unites, and views all at once. In France one hath followed incontinence; may not that country disease overtake him in England for it? A young man is a voluptuous rioter; shall not his old age rue it? Will any time or place exempt him from diseases incident to that sin? Thou art the same person still, unless repentance have made thee new.

It is true that some are more noxious than others; as Bias said to a savage crew in a dangerous storm, when they cried to their gods, Do not speak so loud, lest the gods should hear you. Intimating them so wicked, that it was the hazard of a worse vengeance to have them taken notice of. But the best of all have sins enough; and *optimus ille est qui minimis urgetur*. Thieves are brought out of divers quarters, have trespassed at sundry times, committed several offences; yet are all imprisoned in one goal, punished in one day, hanged upon one and the same tree. A company of men makes a body, and the whole body is punished for the fault of one member. The tongue talks treason, the whole man is plagued for it. In felony (which is *contractatio rei alienæ invito domino, animo furandi*, as the law defines it) the hand only takes, and bears away; but the feet are clapped in iron, the belly pinched with famine, the bones lie hard, and the neck is in danger. The eye may be sore, and a vein pricked in the arm to cure it. The hoof of the beast is tender and weak, the top of the horn anointed for remedy. Besides, God hath several intentions in one judgment. The principal he plagues, the same punishment shall teach a second obedience, try the patience of a third, prevent some grievous sin in a fourth, humble another, call home another to grace and repentance. In all, he judgeth some, bettereth others, honoureth himself, and gets glory to his blessed name. But to conclude the generality of this ruin:

Universal sin brings universal punishment. If all flesh be corrupted, all flesh must be destroyed. Find me one just man in the city, saith God, and I will spare it, Jer. v. 1. How great had been this mercy, if there had not been a general apostasy! Sodom had been spared for ten, Jerusalem for one; and yet he might rather have looked for ten in Jerusalem, than for one in Sodom. By swearing, &c. they break out, till blood toucheth blood, Hos. iv. 2: their sins were rounded into a ring, no room for piety to get in amongst them. Therefore the whole land shall mourn, and every one therein languish, ver. 3: universally wicked, universally punished. If the Lord

should make such a judicial scrutiny, and strict inquisition for sinners, as Jehu did for true worshippers, 2 Kings x. 23, who could plead, Not guilty? Lactantius reports a prophecy of Sibylla, The fisher's hook shall take the Roman empire. If they mean by the empire, all the souls in the empire, I could wish that St. Peter's net had caught and brought more to heaven than it hath. But if by empire they intend the imperial dignity, titles, privileges, honours, and royal augusteity, I could wish for their own sakes (that now usurp that office) they had caught less than they have. For when the majesty of a prince came in, the piety of a priest went out. But will you hear the hook that hath caught them and all; the hook of covetousness, baited with riches. Doubtless there are some elect, otherwise the world could not stand; but the greater part drowns the better part. Is the fear of God amongst men? Who would ask such a question? But if we fear God, we will serve him; if we love him, we will obey him. Now the question grows bitterer and bitterer, from wormwood to gall. The devout man is even flouted out of his holiness, and zeal counted an irregularity. Hypocrisy is the world's apparel, malice his diet, pride his wife, greediness his dog; and thus he solaceth himself in a wilful rebellion. We have all run into a præmunire against our high Sovereign, and deserve confiscation of all we have, of all we are.

But I am willing to leave this sptial of incurable sinners; for who can endure to look long upon ulcers? Therefore to touch at the way to cure universal wickedness, is by universal repentance. We may perceive how willing God is to save us; for all this while we forbore not sinning, yet he forbore plaguing. None can be so bad as God is good. Sin reigning in men is a tyrant; Satan's possessing them, worse: Christ threw them out both. Man may be willing to forgive a mite, the Lord a million: three hundred pence, and ten thousand talents, are all one to his mercy. Satan hopes well of our sins, but let Christ hope better of our repentance. Let us all disappoint Satan, and answer the gracious mercy of our Redeemer. He made us in the world, he made us not for the world, but chose us before the world, and came himself into the world, to call us out of the world, that we might not perish with the world, but live after the world, in a blessed and glorious world, his own immortal kingdom in heaven. This for the universality, the next the antiquity of it.

"The old world." Old? It rather seemed to be the young world, and this the old; according to David's prophecy, "They shall wax old as doth a garment," Psal. cii. 26. A man of twenty is young; he of eighty, old. The world of a thousand years standing, is young in respect of the same world grown up to five thousand years. The more time upon the back, the more aged a thing is. That then seemed to be the world's infancy, this the veteity; that the nonage, this the dotage. The world then brought forth giants; now, in comparison, dwarfs; and it is the youth of a woman that makes her bear the goodlier children. In age the womb faileth, and brings fruit of a less stature, 2 Esd. v. 54.

Old is like Janus, and looks two ways; to the time long since passed, and long hence to come. So *clim*, among the Latins, extends both to past and future times. That which has been, is called old, as done of old; that which shall be hereafter, is said, in older days. It is used both ways, Psal. cii. "Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth," ver. 25: where old signifies a thing done long ago. "They shall wax old like a garment," ver. 26; where old is a quality hereafter to be fulfilled. If we take the world in respect of the matter and structure of

it; that was the young world, this is the old. If for the men who are daily born into it, that was the old world, this is the young. This is as clear, as that the child is younger than the father. From those that were in the ark, is the whole world of men descended; therefore it is so called the old world. Which gives us three observations.

1. That antiquity, if found in impiety, is no privilege of impunity. Indeed the arguments of commendation are often derived from ancientness; and men commonly love the things wherewith time hath made them long acquainted. It commendeth rivers, as in Deborah's song; "That ancient river, the river Kishon," Judg. v. 21. It commendeth customs; "Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set," Prov. xxii. 28. It commendeth friends; "Thy own friend, and thy father's friend, forsake not," Prov. xxvii. 10. "Forsake not an old friend, for the new is not comparable to him," Eccles. ix. 10. It commendeth wine; "No man having drunk old wine desireth new: for he saith, The old is better," Luke x. 39. It commendeth an inheritance; "The Lord forbid that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee," 1 Kings xxi. 3. It commendeth wisdom; "Rehoboam forsook the counsel of the old men," 1 Kings xii. 8, and that turned to his ruin. *Concilia senum, hæstæ juvenum*. It commendeth truth; "Seek out the wisdom of the ancient," Eccles. xxxix. 1; and, Inquire for the old way, Jer. vi. 16. It commendeth service in the field; as Clitus to Alexander, Despise not the soldiers of thy father Philip? Hast thou forgotten, that unless this old Atharicus had called back the young men refusing to fight, we had yet stuck at Halicarnassus.

Yet if age be blended with naughtiness, the older the worse. An old river without water quenleth not our thirst. An old custom without warrant of goodness is as authenthical for practice, as an old tattered garment is for handsomeness, or an old cough for wholesomeness. An old friend that hath lost his honesty, is worse than an old picture that hath lost the colour. Old wine no man commends; when it is turned to vinegar, let them take it that like it. An old house is no safe harbour, when it is ready to fall on the inhabitant's head. An old man that hath lost his experience, is like a boulder; much good flour hath gone through it, but there is nothing left in it but bran. "Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom," saith Elihu, Job xxxii. 7. But "great men are not always wise, neither do the aged understand judgment," ver. 9. Gravity should speak first, but if it speak worst, better hold the peace. "Better is a poor and wise child than an old and foolish king," Eccl. iv. 13, who will no more be admonished. If an old man speak lies with the same confidence as known truths, and so vehemently praise former customs that are ridiculous, and teach the younger as scornfully as he would do a dog to fetch; here age hath lost the credit. The hoary head is only then a crown of glory, when it is found in the way of righteousness, Prov. xvi. 31.

Custom is a second nature; an old habit is not easily forgotten. Nature endures no sudden alterations, say physicians. Therefore for a man to grow old with his errors, is to be dead to all virtues. And he will find it as hard to become good, as to re-enter the womb, and be new-born. An old dog bites sore, an old ulcer is hardly cured, and an old vice within a degree of impossible to be amended. Age therefore hath no privilege. Look back upon Shiloh, saith God, Jer. vii. 12. Shiloh's antiquity could not countenance Shiloh's iniquity. Indeed with us, grey

hairs require reverence, though mixed with some infirmities; "Thou shalt honour the face of the old man, and fear thy God," Lev. xix. 32. And they are wretched days, when "the child shall behave himself proudly against the ancient," Isa. iii. 5. Yet no wonder if the children despise the parents, when the parents despise God. That world might say to the Lord, as Esau to Isaac, "I am thy first-born," Gen. xxvii. 32. Like a tree, it grew crooked from the first planting, no art could straighten it, therefore the axe must hew it down. But whether we the younger children, or that world the eldest, Cain and Lamech the first-born, all have sinned; and all must have perished, but for the sufferings of the First-begotten of God.

2. In this glass we may behold the state of the world before us. Even the former times abounded with sins; they had their aberrations and deliriums as well as we. It is the fashion of people to admire former days. "What is the cause that the former days were better than these?" Eccl. vii. 10. But Solomon taxeth that inquiry of folly. Because we feel not our forefathers' evils, therefore we think they had no evils at all. The deluge of popery in this land is still commended by divers Rome-affected, Rome-infected spirits. Why? O then men lived neighbourly together, without quarrels and suits of contention. Did they so, and is the gospel the cause why men do not so now? Is it not the gospel of peace, teaching us to love others as ourselves? Shall men be litigious furies, and lay the fault on God's mercies? Hath the Lord opened our eyes for no other purpose, but to see to scratch and wound one another? But then were men merry and jovial, and not troubled with melancholy cares. If they rejoiced in their riches, and not in their graces, it was a mirth for the devil. If it were in the Lord, doth the gospel sad us? The statutes of the Lord rejoice the heart, Psal. xix. 8. Is any mirth like the meditation of our peace made by Christ? Cannot we answer the jovial world, (as the grave musician, being called into company that sang wanton catches, and expostulated why he did not bear his part,) I am as merry as they that sing? It is God that puts more gladness in our hearts, than all their abundance can fill them withal, Psal. iv. 7. Shall men bate of their mirth, because God is near them in his favours? or a man be afraid to walk abroad, because it is fair weather?

Pleasure is not gone, when sin is gone: it is not Isaac which is sacrificed, that is, our laughter and mirth; but the ram, that is, the brutishness of it. (August.) Yea, rather let us count it our chief delight, that we have lost our former delight. Because our forefathers sat uncontrollably at the pot, and had priests without more virtue than to take up differences at the ale-house, were those the better times? But then, say they, was more plenty of all things, to demonstrate that God loved us: corn was cheap, and men were charitable, they kept good houses; and well fare the religion that made us fare so well. As if God had no better blessings in store for us than acorns. This was the argument of the apostate Jews. We had plenty of victuals, and were well, when we burnt incense to the queen of heaven; but since we ceased that sacrifice, we have wanted all things, Jer. xlv. 17, 18. Part of their reason's strength they fetch from antiquity. Thus did our fathers; part from their own prosperity. Thus spake we. But how easily doth the prophet evade and dissolve this ridiculous sophistry! "Therefore," for this cause, "is your land a desolation, and a curse, without an inhabitant," Jer. 22. Did this bring you a blessing? No, rather a curse and ruin. Our

fathers bestowed their cakes on the queen of heaven, but did not the King of heaven plague them for it? Say he fed their bodies with quails, did he not put leanness into their souls? Shall we call Nabal's sheep-shearing a blessing? All their superstitious peace was no better than the very revels of Bacchus, and an holy-day to the devil. Shall we seek Christ no further than among the loaves? John vi. 26. Jesus was in the ship, yet, We have no bread, Matt. xvi. 7: Jesus was at the marriage, yet, We want wine, John ii. 3. We may want bread and wine, and yet have Christ's company. If food fail, it is because manna is to come. If wine be absent, yet grace and salvation are present. If God take away flesh, and give manna; deny sun and moon, and give himself, Rev. xxi. 23; he does us no wrong. As the Israelites repined for a king, when the Lord was their King; so our ancestors refused Christ for their head, and chose the pope. But God answered, I gave them a head in mine anger, Hos. xiii. 11. He fulfilled on them what was written, 1 Sam. viii. 13, &c. This head took away their fields and vineyards, and gave them to his servants, monks and friars: he took away the tenth of their sheep and seed, and put their goodliest young men to his work, and made them all his servants; that they were forced to cry out because of their king which they had chosen. Such have they found their Romish heads; that, like ill physicians, have purged away the good humours, and left the bad behind them.

Lo now the praise of antiquity, when it hath swerved from the rule of piety! Where is now the validity of that pontifical argument, concerning the ancientness of their church? This plea might the Jews still make, We are the sons of Abraham; but Christ told them of another father. As much say the Turks, We are the sons of Abraham by Sara, so called Saracens: but they were none of Sara's sons. It hath been unanswerably proved, that the fundamental heads of the present Romish faith, had their several births, some two hundred, some four hundred, some eight hundred, some a thousand, some a thousand and four hundred years after Christ. But say they were old; yet wanting the warrant of sacred truth, they are no better an argument of purity, than the old world was of innocence. Truth is not to be rejected for mere novelty; for old truths may come newly to light, and God is not tied to his times for the gift of illumination. Yet is this the foundation, whereon they rear their Babel, their babble; whose top must reach up to the firmament, and command not earth only, but heaven itself: and thus they mean to make them a name, lest they be scattered abroad, Gen. xi. 4. The world was good when God framed it, must it therefore be good when he drowned it? Isaac was strong when he married Rebekah, must he therefore retain the same corporal strength when he blessed Jacob? The cathedral church of St. Paul two hundred years ago might haply be in good case, may it not therefore now want reparation? The church of Rome was pure when Paul planted it, must it now be so when antichrist hath corrupted it? Show us the same integrity that Rome then had, and we are of the same faith that Rome then was. Otherwise, not how old a thing is, but how good it is, should be the inquiry of Christians. The old man is corrupted and lost; he must become new that will be saved.

3. If that was an old world, how old is it now? Have not the accession of so many hundred years made it somewhat weaker? Yes, the world is sick at the heart; not only in some superfluities, as warts and swellings, but in the integral and essential parts. The air, like a prodigious mother, produceth strange and abortive births. She was lately delivered of a

burning child, a portentful comet; which divers have took the altitude of, but God only knows what it meant. The springs, instead of nourishing the young plants, prove sepulchres to bury them. Nature is so preposterous, as if her brains were turned, and she knew not what she did. But the God of nature knows, and tells us by these tokens, that the world is old. As a tree, it was green in the spring, yellow in summer, white in the autumn, is now stark and cold in the winter of his age. As man, which is the little world, so the world, which is a great man, had his infancy, youth, middle age, old age. From Adam to Noah was the world's infancy; from Noah to Abraham, the childhood; from Abraham to David, the youth; from David to the captivity, the middle age; from that to Christ, the old age; from him to the end of all things, the dotage. (August.)

God hath made man's life shorter, that his sins might be fewer. From nine hundred it is fallen to seventy; and how few see half those! Methuselah lived not one day to God; he saw not a thousand years, which with God is as one day; but we scarce live one hour in respect of his day. Of nine hundred and sixty, our eighty is but as the twelfth part. If a man live to the tenth part of Methuselah's age, he is a child again; when the light is sent to his windows, and the glasses there chambered cannot receive it; when the hollow receptacles of sounds are shut up, and the faltering discourse is interrupted with harsh parentheses, coughs. We are now old in as short time as they were scarce past children. "We are but of yesterday," Job viii. 9. And as our lives are abridged from a fathom to a span, so are our bodies contracted. When the age was long, the proportion was great; that a man could grapple with a savage beast on some terms of equality: as Samson coped with a lion, David with a bear, and came off with victory. These were bred in the world's prime and youthfulness; we now in the withered and decrepit age. We are scarce the shadows of our forefathers, whether in length or strength of life, whether in stature or force of nature. We are not sooner grown up to be men, but straight we are none; death makes as quick a riddance of us, as it will do of all things. The world's stomach being old, is weak of retention; and the crudities of sin are so hard of digestion, that the vessel must soon be broken. Magistrates are the arms of the world, counsellors the brains, lawyers the tongues, the rich the stomachs, the poor the backs, merchants the feet, officers the hands, and divines the hearts. Now there is a general corruption in all these, (let it not be understood, all of every kind, but every kind of all,) this epidemical distemper witnesseth it is old, and near the dissolution.

Now the greater the corruption, the vaster the destruction. Some think that the fiery deluge shall ascend no higher than did the watery. It may be the earth shall be burned, that is the worst guest at the table, the common sewer of all other creatures; but shall the heavens pass away? It may be the airy heaven; but shall the starry heaven, where God hath printed such figures of his glory? "Yes, *cælum, elementum, terra*, when *ignis ubique ferox raptis regnabit habentis*. The former deluge is called the world's winter, the next the world's summer. The one was with a cold and moist element; the other shall be with an element hot and dry. But what then shall become of the saints? They shall be delivered out of all; walking like those three servants in the midst of that great furnace, the burning world, and not be scorched, because there is one among them, to deliver them, "the Son of God," Dan. iii. 25, their Redeemer. But shall all quite perish?

No, there is rather a mutation than an abolition of their substance. Thou shalt change them, and they shall be changed, Psal. cii. 26: changed, not abolished. The concupiscence shall pass, not the essence; the form, not the nature. In the altering of an old garment, we destroy it not, but trim it, refresh it, and make it seem new. They pass, they do not perish; the dross is purged, the metal stays. The corrupt quality shall be renewed, and all things restored to that original beauty wherein they were created. "The end of all things is at hand," 1 Pet. iv. 7: an end of us, an end of our days, an end of our ways, an end of our thoughts. If a man could say as Job's messenger, I alone am escaped, it were somewhat; or might find an ark with Noah. But there is no ark to defend from that heat, but only the bosom of Jesus Christ. "I have seen an end of all perfection," Psal. cxix. 96: if perfection on earth have an end, imperfection cannot long continue. There shall be an end of our eating, an end of our building, an end of our covetous scraping, an end of our works, and end of ourselves, but no end of our souls; and if we be found in the faith, no end of our blessedness, for then begins a world without end. Of these three observations, I desire to make three applications.

1. Let us turn good with all the speed we can, for how far off soever the general end may be, our particular end is near. I know that long life was God's promise to his servants; but when long life ceaseth to be prosperous, it ceaseth to be his promise. He shortens our life, 1. That we be not afflicted with evils; the righteous are prevented of the evil to come, Isa. lviii. 1. 2. That we be not infected with evils, corrupted by the times, as Joseph was caught with the Egyptian oath. 3. Their memory lives though they die. If the good name be preserved, a man is alive though he be dead. 4. If God takes away temporal, and gives eternal life for it, there is no hurt done us. He that promised ten pieces of silver, and gives ten pieces of gold, breaks no promise. When Herod promised half his kingdom, if he had given it all he had broke no promise. God's promise shall stand, when the mines of India shall fail. All men's lives are short, why should I think mine long? "Our end is near, our days are fulfilled; for our end is come," Lam. iv. 18.

Oh then let not the end of our days and the strength of our sins come near together! It is said of St. Chrysostom, that he made an end of nothing but of sin. Let it not be said of us, that we have put an end to all things except our sins. A man hath begun to build, he would fain end; begun to travel, he would fain come to his journey's end; commenced a suit, he desires an end. Before all, let us strive to end our sins: if we end them by repentance, though the end of our lives prevent the end of our other businesses, we shall never find cause of sorrow. It is a saying in schools, From evil seeds come evil plants. The body "is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory," 1 Cor. xv. 43. If we would reap a glorious body, let us sow a gracious body. Let us not be of their number, whose end is a destruction without end. Let repentance make an end of our sins, before death make an end of our days; and then our end is not properly an end, but a better beginning. Seeing the world must be changed, let us that have corrupted it, first change ourselves. If fire must purge the elements, let us get that celestial fire of the Spirit to purge us; that when all the dross and feculency of the world shall be on a light fire, we may be found pure, and presented clear at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

2. As this teacheth all this old world, so it specially directs itself to all that be old in the world. I know

that age is subject to infirmities, and hath endangered even saints to a relapse. If all must once err, error falls less unhappily in youth than in age. Covetousness, pettishness, sluggishness, pride, are incident to old years. This David knew, when he prayed so earnestly, "Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when I am grey-headed," Psal. lxxi. 9, 18. Some strive to keep themselves from any need of that prayer; either by artificial tinctures, dyeing their hairs into other colours. So though they cannot make white black, yet they can make it appear black. They study *colorare capillos mendacio*, as a father speaks. Or by lewd and wanton lusts they prevent the baldness of age, and leave themselves not so much as one hair of an honest man.

Apostacy in old age is fearful. He that climbs almost to the top of a tower, then slipping back, hath the greater fall. The patient almost recovered, is more deadly sick by a relapse. There were stars struck from heaven by the dragon's tail, Rev. xii. 4; they had better never have perched so high. The place where the Israelites fell into that great folly with the daughters of Moab, was in the plain, within the prospect of the Holy Land; they saw their inheritance, and yet fell short of it. So wretched is it for old men to fall near to their very entry of heaven: as old Eli in his indulgence, 1 Sam. ii.; old Judah in his incest, Gen. xxxviii.; old David with Bathsheba; old Asa trusting in the physicians more than in God, 2 Chron. xvi. 12; and old Solomon built the high places. Some have walked like cherubs in the midst of the stones of fire, yet been cast as profane out of God's mountain, Ezek. xxviii. 14, 16. Thus the seaman passeth all the main, and suffers wreck in the haven. The corn often promiseth a plenteous harvest in the blade, and shrinks in the ear. You have trees laden with blossoms, yet in the season of expectation, no fruit. A comedy that holds well many scenes, and goes lamely off in the last act, finds no applause. "Remember Lot's wife," Luke xvii. 32; think on that pillar of salt, that it may season thee.

Old age is best in three respects: 1. Because it hath passed the follies and disorders of youth, which Job calls bitter things to the memory, Job xiii. 26. 2. Because the inconveniences of it, albeit numerous, are but corporeal; commonly bettered with the good estate of the mind. 3. Because it is nearest to dissolution; within a short step of blessedness. Yet of all, it is then most miserable, when it desires to spin out a longer thread; when it is far from Elijah's mind. Let me die, I am no better than my fathers, 1 Kings xix. 4. There is nothing more pitiable, than an old man that for his pleasure's sake would be young again. We can scarce say of such a one, that he hath been a man in his days. Art thou young? look forward, propound goodness to thy life. Art thou old? look backward, be sorrowful for sins past. Art thou middle-aged? look both forward and backward; repent the past, amend the present, be armed for the future.

Let the life of man be distinguished into three ages, the last is fully in proof, then good or never. First, all is in hope: a woman hath an embryo in her womb; will it be born living? she hopes so. It hath life; will it have proportion? she hopes so. It hath proportion; will it have the exercise of reason and understanding? she hopes so. In process of growing, reason appears; will he have grace and faith? she hopes so. He professeth; is his profession sound at the heart? she hopes so. He hath all these; will he live long? she hopes so: all is in hope. Now middle age is half in proof, and half in hope: in proof, how good it is; in hope, how much better it may be. Old age is all in proof, it is then

seen what good a man hath; what interest in heaven, what contempt of the world is in him. Let us beware of tergiversation in our old age. "Ye did run well; who did hinder you?" Gal. v. 7. Let our alpha and omega be good, our first and last alike gracious; that we may come with joy to him, who is Alpha and Omega, first and last, the beginning and end of all comfort, Jesus Christ.

3. Let the terror of this parallel destruction humble us all. Lord, what a terrible day will it be, when Christ shall appear in the clouds, all the world rise out of their graves, and the whole heaven and earth burning with flames! If ever earth could sample it with a day, it was the intended gunpowder treason day, Nov. 5. Gunpowder, invented by a monk, taught by the devil, that great master of fire-works. It hath been said, that Africa brings forth every year a new monster: it never brought forth such a one as this, to which *nihil nisi nomina desunt*. Herod slew all the children of Bethlehem, yet there was some mercy in that, for the men escaped. Haman's plot was damnable enough, even the ruin of Israel; yet they had a month's day of preparation. But this was worse; with suddenness it would have prevented doomsday, and sent up bodies before the resurrection. It was cross to all other kinds of death: that at other times sends the soul upwards, the body downwards; this would have sent the soul downward, and the body upward. Let the memory of it live to their shame and our thankfulness. Shame, said I? Alas, they make it their glory! O but the papists condemn it, and call the plotters "unfortunate gentlemen." Unfortunate, because the fortune did not succeed as they would have it. It is the success they blame, not the villany. But the papal chair never approved it; and who can say the papal chair ever disliked it? The actors are seen, however the poet lies hid; and the pope hath not to this day judicially condemned the powder treason. It should have been a dead day, let it be a red day in our calendar. Their rage was without measure, so let our thankfulness be without end.

That was a little image or figure of the general fiery deluge to come. If the horror of the former be able to shake us with the remembrance; thinking how fearful it had been, by a sudden blast to have our souls sent upward with our bodies, and perhaps both to come down again with the weight of unrepented sins, which then was no thought or time to retract; how should the meditation of this other make us tremble; which as it shall be more sudden for the time, so more universal for the ruin! Shall we still slumber in our old security? The apostles said of Lazarus, "Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well," John xi. 12; but, Lord, if we sleep we shall do very ill. Worldly men are like Nicodemus; they would fain come to Christ, but they are loth to go till it be night; that is, till death sends them. But, The repentance that is wrung out by death, we may fear it will be dead sooner than he that lies sick. (August.) Now, now let us break off our sins, by the contrition of our souls; for now repentance is a superseedas to discharge all the bonds of sin. And lay hold upon Jesus, who as he saved Noah in the day of water, is able to preserve us in the day of fire. Samson found honey out of that lion which himself had killed. Our sins have killed the Lion of Judah; oh let our faithful prayers suck honey out of him! there is no honey so sweet as his mercy.

Thus having considered the universality, that it was a whole world; the antiquity, that it was the old world; I come in the next place to the impiety, that it was an ungodly world.

"The world of the ungodly." The sins of that

world were very grievous, and too heavy for the supportation of the earth: *nec medium in malo, nec remedium a malo*. These sins began to multiply with the multiplication of men: the seeds of this mischief were sown before the birth of Noah's sons; at their birth, like ill weeds, they sprung abundantly: at last they were so rank and ripe, that God could forbear them no longer. But it seemeth that the great defection was about the seventh age: then Lamech, of Cain's race, fell to bigamy; then was Enoch translated, that his soul might be no longer grieved with the wickedness of the times. Then the righteous abhorring the filthiness of Cain's posterity, separated themselves, and began to call on God. At length the very righteous seed declined, by falling to folly with the daughters of the wicked.

Some Hebrews think that this pregnancy of sin began with the increase of women; whose number gave more occasion of lust, Gen. vi. 1. But this argues no special multiplying of that sex more than the other; but when both were increased together, both were corrupted together. If any ask how the world could be so soon peopled; I reply, how was it after the flood? Ninus king of Assyria, who reigned some two hundred and thirty years after the deluge, is reported to have in his army seven hundred thousand footmen, and two hundred thousand horsemen. The earth was corrupt with their filthy sins; and they are said to be all flesh, Gen. vi. 11, 12: not only their bodies, for that is common to all, but even their souls were carnal. For flesh is taken either according to nature, or according to sin. Man is called flesh, when he is subdued to carnal sense; all the imaginations of his heart continually evil. Wickedness is enlarged by these respects. 1. For generality; all flesh was corrupt: so Adam's sin did spread over all. 2. For continuance; they were exercised in it a thousand years. Continual habit had made it so alimental, so elemental to them, that they could not live without it. 3. For adhesion; as covetousness cleaves to a man, even while he sleeps, or wakes, or walks, or works, or lives; waxing younger, when all other sins decay with age. 4. For abundance; not only addicted to some special vices, but to all wickedness which their profane hearts could conceive. If their fancies could but imagine it, their hands were ready to do it. 5. For supine carelessness: let Noah preach what he will, and build as he will, let it rain how it will, they are the same men still. 6. For shamelessness: they were grown to such presumption, that they durst sin God in the face: "They declare their sin as Sodom, they hide it not," Isa. iii. 9. Therefore their corruption is said to be "before God," Gen. vi. 11. Thus in general, now for the particulars.

The first act of degeneration was unlawful marriages: "The sons of God saw the daughters of men," &c. Gen. vi. 2. Some think these sons of God were angels, and that they fell for their intemperance with women. But, 1. God destroyed the world, not for the angels' sin, but man's. "My spirit shall not always strive" (he says not, with angels, but) "with man," ver. 3. 2. "The devil was a murderer from the beginning," John viii. 44: but if the angels had fallen for the love of women, then they had not sinned until a thousand years after the creation. (Chrysost.) 3. In heaven "they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God," Matt. xxii. 30; therefore angels are not subject to carnal lusts. Some have thought these were devils, who, companying with women, begat giants. But this is ridiculous, for the devils have not generative faculties; and if they could have, yet they are none of the sons of God. We read of a whole legion, six thousand devils in one man, Luke viii. 30; this could not be,

if they were corporeal. If elemental was their nature, then were they subject to mutability, to mortality: as Plutarch writes of the death of Pan, a famous devil among the pagans. And how should man's soul be immortal, if these more subtle spirits were mortal? Others think that they were *incubi*, who assuming airy bodies, in the act of generation are called *succubi*; and so they imagine that Merlin was begotten of a spirit. Indeed spirits may assume male and female shapes, but are not true bodies. They appear so to the eye, not to the feeling; visible, not palpable. "Handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones," Luke xxiv. 39. But it is objected, that Abraham washed the angels' feet, and discerned them not. For answer, this is the difference between the apparitions of good and bad angels. Unto the good God gave the use of true bodies during that ministry; so that they did eat and drink. The other are not so allowed, therefore are called phantasms, visions, fancies.

Others think that these sons of God were men tall, and of a great stature; as things excellent in their kind are ascribed to God. Great cities, the cities of God; tall cedars, the trees of God, Psal. civ. 16. But indeed, they were called the sons of God, because they were of the righteous seed; and the other, the daughters of men, because they descended of lewd parents. Even the wicked are the sons of God according to nature, according to their works they are not.

Now see the issue of this unhappy conjunction, giants; which as they were men of monstrous stature, so of a fierce and tyrannous nature. Thus they were called Nephilim, mighty oppressors: Enim, terrible; because of their pride, Anakim, as it were, in chains of gold; for their strength, Gibborim; for their naughtiness, Zanzummim. Such were Goliath, Ishibibonoh, and Og, Deut. iii. 11. Here they are called Nephilim, or falling; both because of their terror, they made men fall to the ground; and for their error, falling themselves from virtue and goodness. These were not from the commixtion of spirits with women, but procreated of men; which is no more against nature, than for dwarfs to come from well-constituted parents, who are as admirable for their smallness, as the other for their tallness. Nor were all thus, but only those born by this unlawful conjunction. For as the root, so was the branch; the marriage impious, and the issue ungracious.

That which was the first occasion of sin, was the occasion of the increase of sin. A woman seduced Adam, women betray these sons of God. The beauty of the apple betrayed the woman, the beauty of these women betrayed the holy seed. Eve saw and lusted, so did they; this was also a forbidden fruit. They looked, liked, lusted, tasted, sinned, died. Sins first creep in at the eyes; except we have made a covenant with them, there is no safety for our souls. This marriage did not beget men so fast as wickedness.

Consider here how dangerous it is for the believer to unite himself to an ungracious spouse. I know that marriage is honourable. The wife before man sinned, was for his society; after he had sinned, for a remedy. Man in himself was only but begun, in woman he was perfected and made up: till then a great part of himself he had in vain and useless. And they that have placed the chief glory in virginity, could never find any fault in matrimony. Man and wife are the original match of all others. All other relative pairs and couples, as father and son, master and servant, king and subject, come from this. When God made Adam, he made only one. When he made Eve, he made not only her, but in her all the world to come. While man was alone, and had both sexes in himself, what could he do to fill the

earth? Therefore in his body he bred a she-man; Adam being the mother of Eve, as Eve is the mother of us all. Therefore she is called the mother of the living, because she is a means to continue a kind of immortality among the mortal sons of men; and in some measure to shadow out that immortality which is in heaven. Families, cities, countries, the whole habitable world, the militant, yea, triumphant church, no small part of the kingdom of heaven, ariseth from marriage. St. Hierome himself praiseth marriage, because it begets virgins: The wife being no virgin, is the mother of virgins that be no wives. No marriage, no saints; no generation, no regeneration; no increasing below, no multiplying above: if the earth be not replenished with men, how should heaven be so furnished with saints?

But as the blessings that come by good marriage are innumerable; so be the curses by ill matches many and mischievous. For marriage is a new foundation, whereon men build the future state of their mortality. A man cannot choose himself, he may choose his wife; and in her choice it lies much to mend or mar himself, and, which is more, even his posterity. "Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers," 2 Cor. vi. 14. From hence follow an flood of evils, and the whole infelicity of life; when matches are made of such as match not: when planets are set together of an unhappy conjunction, malevolent effects must needs issue from them. But it is objected, that the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the believing wife, and the wife by the husband; and "what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? and, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?" 1 Cor. vii. 14, 16. This may be, and was not in those times a sufficient cause of divorce. But are not the good perverted by the bad, sooner than the bad converted by the good? Often have you heard how much a superstitious wife, by her certain lectures, hath wrought upon her Christian husband; when did you hear a believing husband prevail with his misbelieving wife? Marry not thy son to a Canaanite's daughter, for she will turn away his heart from following the Lord, Deut. xii. 14: he is not so likely to turn her.

This hath been full in examples: the Israelites were won by these forbidden matches, to serve other gods, Judg. iii. 6. When Ahab sold himself to wickedness, it was Jezebel his wife that stirred him up, 1 Kings xxi. 25. Thus was Samson the strongest, Judg. xvi., and Solomon the wisest, beguiled: "his wives turned away his heart after other gods," 1 Kings xi. 4. This was Jehoram's ruin; his wife, the daughter of Ahab, undid him, 2 Chron. xxi. 6. When water and earth are tempered together, they make but mire and dirt. What crueler tyrant was ever begotten than Mahomet, who was yet the son of a Christian lady? As the sons of Jacob said of Dinah, We cannot give our sister to one that is uncircumcised, Gen. xxxiv. 14: so let parents say, We may not give our daughter to a person unchristened. Albeit irreligion be not a cause of divorce, yet it is of restraint. We may not marry with all those with whom we must live being married. If adultery may separate a marriage consummated, may not idolatry hinder a marriage not begun? Let no man separate whom God joins; so let no man join whom God separates. We would not have our children marry without our will and consent; and shall they marry without the will, liking, and consent of our Father in heaven?

This was Rebekah's care; "If Jacob take a wife of the daughters of Heth, what good shall my life do me?" Gen. xxvii. 46. Manah's for Samson; Is there not a wife among thine own people, but thou must go to the Philistines? Judg. xiv. 3. Is there

no friend but an enemy? no tree but the forbidden? no helper but a tempter? no wife but the Canaanite? can none please us, but such as displease God? He that is married to such a wife, earth more to please her than God, 1 Cor. vii. 33. Of all the guests bidden to the great feast, he that was married (likely to such a wife) desired not to be excused, but impudently protests, that he cannot come. If from *ish*, and *isha*, you cast out *jod* and *he*, there remains to that couple nothing but fire, say the rabbins. So wretched is it to couple without God; when the eye makes the match for beauty, or the ear by hearsay, taking a wife upon trust or the hand for money; marrying (though not by picture, yet) for pictures. Themistocles being consulted, whether it were better for a man to marry his daughter to an honest poor man, or to a rich of small virtue and goodness; answered, I had rather have a man that wants money, than money that wants a man. How base is that love, which hath no other weight than riches! How do parents breed an ague in the bones of their children, that shall shake them to their very graves, when the tie of their loves is either portion or proportion only, without regard of either religion or conscience! One said truly, He that weds for state or face, buys a horse to lose a race. There is Cæsar's stamp, and God's stamp: most men marry for Cæsar's stamp; and these are worse than the old world, for they married for Adam's stamp. God's stamp is grace, Cæsar's money, Adam's beauty.

The motive of the old world to this unfortunate conjunction, was beauty; they saw that the daughters of men were fair. This is the common attractive; men place their loves upon Adam's image in the face, rather than upon God's image in the soul. Yet what is that same goodly frame of flesh and blood, but only a natural colour which the Creator hath laid upon dust and ashes; but the effect of well-digested sustenance, not much above that we behold in pictures: a thin, weak veil drawn over a corruptible body; a transient delight of the eye; a glory that fades with life, yea, often before life: a piece of fine glass, that sickness or old age will soon break? Yet is this the snare that hath caught many souls: to enjoy this, David lost his peace for a while, Samson lost his eyes for ever. Thus the Midianites entraped Israel with their dancing whirligigs; and the wisest king was wrought to folly. I do not lay the fault on beauty, God's admirable workmanship upon clay; for who blames a clear and crystal river, because some melancholy, distracted man drowns himself in it? And when this outward ornament is joined with inward lustre, it graceth all actions. But it is the mind's beauty that keeps the other sweet and delectable; a fixed and constant goodness, which, as it disdains all the tinctures of painted hypocrisy, so is far beyond the ruin of time, sickness, or any other mutability: like heaven, which is fair outwardly to our mortal eyes, but shall appear fairer within to our immortal souls. Without this, all affection is ill-placed, and will soon perish. He that loves for no other end but to please his senses, hath a sensual love, little better than brutish.

It is the soul that requires love; and for that only cause which makes it lovely, virtue. The outward worth of beauty is nothing, it is the soul within that makes it precious. When grace and holiness have beautified the principal, then admit the other circumstances and additions, as beauty, birth, or wealth. For these indifferents, by goodness are made good, as fire turns all the objects into itself. The love built upon beauty without this, is not long-lived; but running mad with extravagant desires, rests still unsatisfied. Hence it comes, that God and the

church put them together; the devil and lust put them asunder. "He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver," Eccl. v. 10: so nor he that loveth women, for one is not lust's limits. He that affecteth many, shall be satisfied with none. One God hath ordained one woman for one man. One is love's number: he which trespasseth upon plurality, and loseth that content, may be all his life seeking it, but shall never find it. To the reproof and reproach of them be it, that walk the streets, yea, frequent the church, for no other purpose but to feed their eye with such spectacles. When a gallant had the name of a brave soldier, one observed how still in his walking he would turn about to gaze upon women; concluding, that that man could not have a valiant and constant mind, whose head every weak woman could turn and writhe about with her very look. Let this breed in our hearts an abhorring of carnal lusts, a sin the very devil does not commit: pride he knows, malice he knows, flattery, hypocrisy, murder, treason he knows; but incontinence of flesh he wonders at. Let no beauty that sticks upon mortal cheek so far prevail over our affections, as to prostrate those bodies to the service of harlots, that are the dear-bought members of Jesus Christ.

The next apostasy of the old world, was by sensuality: "They did eat, they drank, they married," &c. Luke xvii. 27. But were these sins, or matter of reprehension? Nature hath made them necessary, discretion voluntary, and only some circumstances arbitrary. Did God drown them for this? No, but their sensuality and security in these brought destruction. "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; eat, drink, and be merry," Luke xii. 19. This was not his fault, that he thought he had enough, but that he meant to lie down and wallow in it. Lawful actions depraved by bad circumstances, become damnable sins. Is this a time to receive money, and garments, and vineyards? saith the prophet to his servant, 2 Kings v. 26; all which at another time, and in another manner, had been approved. Things beneficial in their use, are dangerous in their abuse or miscarriage. Without a wooden conveyance we cannot cross the seas; yet if that vessel sink, all the passengers are lost. That worldly things are good, is easily perceived by our care to get them: that their abuse is deadly, many souls feel, that cannot return to complain. It is easier for a camel to enter a needle's eye, than a rich man to enter heaven's gate, Matt. xix. 24. It is not certain, it is not easy, it is not likely, and (it may so fall out, that) it is not possible for a rich man to be saved. Riches commonly cool all heavenly heats, force away the divine meditations of spiritual causes, as too melancholy fits; and bring a man to such a fool's paradise, as one among Penelope's suitors, that went so oft with his friend, till he was caught himself.

It is likely, that more go to hell for abusing lawful things, than for using things simply unlawful. Gross sins appear in their own ugly forms, terrible as deformities and devils; but who suspects his eating, his drinking, his common discourse? Who fears that his building should be laid in the foundation of sin? or that his marrying a wife should unsolder his conjunction with Christ? But there is nothing better for a man, than that he should eat and drink, and let his soul enjoy good in his labour, Eccl. ii. 24. And doth not St. Paul call the forbidding of meats and marriage, the doctrine of devils? 1 Tim. iv. 1, 3. We grant it; neither would we have any man make the way to heaven harder and more rugged than God himself hath made it. This is the liberty (and indeed of whom else, but) of Christians.

Pleasures have their allowance, with two limits.

The one of quality, they must be good and lawful; for God that hath given leave to be merry, hath not given leave to be mad. There is a good mirth, if men could hit on it, called, to be merry and wise. It is no praise to be sparing of a vicious delight, for the very taste is deadly. Admit the serpent's head, his body will ask no leave. The other of quantity: for measure, God hath hedged in man's appetite, like that foaming element; if he break over those dams, the inundation is perilous. As delights have their warrants, so also their terms; and it is no hard matter to fault in this indulgence. Is the work of our salvation effected, our common duties performed? We may then eat, drink, and be merry. We are not born for play; but for labour, as the sparks fly upward. Our recreations should be like our physick, not our diet: the latter we take when we are well, to keep us so; the other when we are sick, to make us well.

Some things are to be avoided, not because they are ill, but near to ill: it is good to leave something that we may take, for fear of taking that we should leave. There should be difference betwixt a beast, that devoneth all within his tether; and a man, to whom God hath given reason to rule his appetite. It is sin's policy, to steal in by the law; when men range in the borders and extremities of their freedom; and even from that takes an argument for us to allow it, which was made on purpose to condemn it. The Jews might give forty stripes: yet St. Paul confesseth he received but nine and thirty; their reason of forbearing the full number, was lest their fingers should itch to give another. What folly is it, when a man hath field-room enough, to ride on the brink of a river! The note that comes too near in the margin, will skip into the text at the next impression. It is a dangerous query, how near a man may go to hell, and yet escape the devil. Will any wise man try how near he may come to the infected house, and yet escape the plague? or holding by the rotten rails of a turret, presumptuously vault over, in a proud glory of his venturousness? Israel had room enough in the plains of Moab; but venturing too far, they were snared with Midian. Let no man cast with himself, how old he may be before he needs return, lest he reckon without his host. If I forget Jerusalem in my mirth, &c. Psal. cxxxvii. 5. It is easy to forget heaven in our mirth. If God allow a handful, men are apt to fathom an armful. Pleasures are like the popish relics, the interest is more than the principal.

Through all creatures let us look to their Maker; through all delights, to their Giver. "Rejoice in the Lord alway," Phil. iv. 4: then in the midst of all the changes and chances of worldly contents, there will be an immutability of joy in God. There are two sorts reprehensible.

First, they that avoid all lawful delights for fear of sin. As if it were not possible for a Christian to separate the gold from the dross, but he must needs cast away the ore. Will any simple Jew condemn the clear streams of Jordan, because they run into the Dead Sea? We see some proud of their fantastical clothes, dressed up like children's puppets, or anties in a pageant; must we therefore go naked? Some are drunk with wine, may not therefore a sober man drink it? Is there no physick but opium? must we either be sensually wicked or senselessly stupid? Why did God place man in Paradise, but to solace himself? why hath he given us such variety of creatures, but for use? Doth the Lord invite us to this feast, and we depart (like sullen guests) from so rich a table hungry? This pretence of mortified strictness doth injury, both to our liberty, and our Maker's

liberality. Every good gift comes from above; there is nothing but good from heaven: he that rejects the gifts, wrongs the Giver. God cannot abide such a discontented answer, Keep thy rewards to thyself, and give thy gifts to another, Dan. v. 17. Many great kings have been blessed saints: they could not have been kings without a number of earthly pleasures; they could not have been saints with earthly affections. If God therefore have mingled us a pleasant cup, let us cheerfully drink it, and give thanks to Jesus Christ. Charity is not strait-laced, but yields much latitude to the lawful use of indifferent things: these are fit for those that are fit for them.

Next, they are to be blamed, that with neglect of better things, settle and fix themselves upon these. It is the heart that makes all evil, when that lying speech of Satan is borrowed. All these are mine, Christ teacheth us, first to seek the kingdom of heaven, then shall the rest be cast upon us. When the bargain is made for salvation, the rest come in like lumber. When you have fed heartily on the body of your Saviour, and gotten assurance to drink the wine of heaven, then eat, drink, and be merry. First marry thy son's soul to Christ, then his body to a virtuous wife. The factor employed in foreign parts, first despatcheth his master's business, then his own. How preposterous is it, to omit that only thing in this world for which we came into the world, to serve our Maker!

The last sin of the old world, was seculrity. The Lord's forbearance did so little stir them, that they were scarce waked with his vengeance. The savagest creatures, lions, tigers, bears, by God's instinct came to seek succour in the ark: men did not seek it. Even brutishness is more sensible than corrupted reason. The Sybarites, that no disturbance might come near their beds of violets, banished all cocks and clocks: the former must not break their sleeps, nor the other vex them with report of the fugitive time. Epimenides the Cretan slept fourscore years in a cave; some say but forty, and that was enough in conscience; beyond a miracle, and doubtless beyond the truth. But the old world slept a hundred and twenty years, and all Noah's hammering about the ark wakened them not. Oh that the conscience of man, in the midst of so many sins provoking God, so many temptations assailing his own soul, so many enemies against him, so many dangers about him, should still be secure! She is observed by her own eye, when none else mark her; chased by her own foot, when none else follow her; hath a thousand witnesses within her, when there is no outward stir against her: and yet the wicked sleep.

Satan, like Jael to Sisera, or Judith to Holofernes, watcheth till a man be asleep, and then kills him. Preachers cry, but sinners will not waken; and as in places of judicature they often determine to hear causes, but do not hear to determine causes: so men commonly remember to hear, but do not hear to remember. Pliny writes of some bears so sleepy, that they are hardly roused with blows and wounds. Many discourse of religion, as men talk in their dreams; they speak wonders of goodness, yet are no such manner of men, neither the one working, nor the other waking. "This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of love and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy," James iii. 15—17.

Let us take the apostle's caution, Be sober and

watch. Be sober; for ebriety is a drink-offering to the devil. And watch; for security is a porpoise before a tempest: keep your souls waking, then shall your bodies sleep in quiet. As there may be a corporeal watching when the mind sleeps, so there may be a spiritual watching when the body sleeps. Temptations, like Delilah, tell us a fair tale, but their end is to bring us asleep, and pluck out our eyes. But if in all our earthly business we still carry a heavenly mind, the judgment of God shall not, as it did the old world, ever take us napping. The house doth every day get some dust, therefore let it every day be swept: the soul contracts some sins, the besom to sweep it is made of examination and repentance. At night, ere we shut our eyes, let us open our hearts, and cleanse our consciences: before we shut the door let us cast out the dust. He never breaks his sleep for debt, that pays as he takes up. Let us watch in righteousness, this is the way to sleep in peace. When the stomach is obstructed, the body takes but ill rest, and the slumbers are broken off with distracted dreams. If the conscience be oppressed, in vain the soul looks for quiet. If hardness of heart, like opium, shall conspurcate it, that sleep is mortal. The shepherds were watching over their flocks by night, Luke ii. 8. As Christ found the shepherds watching over their flocks at his first coming, so may he find us all watching over our souls at his second coming, in the glory of his kingdom.

I conclude. In this glass let us see the present state of this world. Certainly we may vie sins with them, and stand upon comparisons, without bating them one ace for heinousness. If the world were then foul, it is now foulness itself. Some things are so clear, that they refuse trial; and some so filthy, that they abhor purgation. Nor do I confine this corruption to some parts of it; as there be national sins, peculiar to age, to country, to constitution; *mores sequuntur humores*. But all the world is sick and rotten: paganism possessing a great moiety of the whole, and heresy perverting the half of that is left. We may say of it, as Tully to Antony, It is wretched if it feel it, more wretched if it feel it not. Men perish because they are ignorant of their perishing; yea, they more perish, because they are ignorant of their not knowing.

Let us hear St. Paul delivering the state of our old world, and see how our experience accords with his prophecy, 2 Tim. iii. 2—4. "Men shall be lovers of their own selves." Have we not seen this self-love stalking in the garb of impudence, vomiting disgraces against all men, and arrogating to itself fly-blowing good things to deter others, that himself might devour them? "Covetous." O they swarm like the frogs in Egypt; that, as a shrewd censurer said, stand where you will, and of every ten men that pass by, nine and three-quarters are covetous. When the uplander wondered to see a white crow, the fen-man answered, In our country we wonder to see any black ones. It is no marvel to see one covetous, it is marvel to see one not covetous. "Boasters;" a great rabble. Some boast their portion, others their proportion: rather than want matter of ostentation, they will boast their vices: as if one should be proud of his scabs, or make a scarf of his halter. "Proud;" a universal disease: the rich display it in their wearing, the poor in their swearing. I will not tell you, that this idol goes in strange and fantastical dress; that is indeed an inseparable sign, yet but one; you shall have her sit as pertly under a broad felt pulled down to the eyes, as under a beaver; and find her as soon in a little Geneva-set, as in a great Spanish ruff.

"Blasphemers." Men have sworn themselves

hoarse with oaths. There is a word that is clothed about with death, Eccles. xxiii. 12; and that word is too frequent in the jaws of men, till the fearful name of God be made as vile as common air. "Disobedient to parents." This is so arrogated to the young, and so tolerated by the old, that for this cause God shortens their days, and sets parents a weeping for the loss of their children's bodies, that regarded not the loss of their souls. "Unthankful." This vice hath usurped a propriety of that which is only borrowed: customary fruition hath made men scarce think themselves beholden to God. Otherwise, why do not rich men abound in praises, as God hath made them abound in riches? Perhaps they do not think their riches came in God's name, and therefore cannot with a good conscience thank him for them. "Unholy" or profane. God hath made all us, and all ours; he reserves but the tenth of our goods, and the seventh of our time, but our whole selves. We are his peculiar, Tit. ii. 14: now shall we make that virgin common, prostituted to every base gipsy, pride, lust, avarice, which the Lord hath redeemed, and required holy and peculiar to himself?

"Without natural affection." When men wilfully transgress against grace, God suffers them to sin even against nature. They that have lost the love of their Father, shall lose the love of their children. It is just, that for being false to their best Friend in heaven, they should neglect their friends on earth, and be neglected of both. "Truce-breakers." There is a faith that knits us in a covenant with God, and a faithfulness that ties us in a covenant with man. We are truce-breakers in both; have broke the vow made in our baptism, and are so full of levity, that there is more credit given to the print of our seals than to the faith of our souls. If any nation break truce with us, who wonders, when we have broken truce with God? "False accusers." This was wont to be the devil's own office only; but now, as if men grudged Satan the honour of calumination, they monopolize it into their own hands. The makebate runs from house to house, and carries the burning coals of contention, till he sets them all a-flame, and then warms his own fingers at the fire. "Incontinent." The devil hopes that this vice in the next age will be held a virtue, for it is gotten already out of the disreputation of a sin. Drunken houses and brothels vie for number; in every part of this great metropolis you may see both these snares. "Fierce." The violences of former times were courtesies to ours. Then it was a friendly imposition, You shall stay and eat with me: now it is a friendly enforcement, You shall stay and drink with me: and if there be any failing in the quantity, they are as fierce as tigers. "Despisers of those that are good." It is the honest man's commendation, to condemn a vile person, but to honour them that fear the Lord, Psal. xv. 4. And David's delight was in the saints, and such as excel in virtue, Psal. xvi. 3. To honour virtue: to honour virtue in rags, and to loathe vice though in a robe of state. But now let in the jester; *his Homere foras*; they like him worse, that goes about to make them better. "Traitors;" who because they cannot warp a prince's justice to their own humours, will strike at that sacred blood. If the former world had any actors to do it, this world hath more, even patrons to defend it. "Heady;" that whereas God hath made man's reason to go foremost, his hand after it; these do first, and think afterwards; and then beat their wits to make good what their wills have made necessary. "High-minded;" that are like chimneys; they overlook all the house, yet are the foulest part of it. They think that neither God nor man knows their worth, nor rewards them to their merits. "Lovers of pleasures more

than lovers of God." After this long catalogue of particulars, as if the apostle were weary of the enumeration, he gives you this, the sum of all profaneness. God did form them, pleasures deform them; God would save them, pleasures would destroy them; they are madmen to love pleasures more than God.

Thus I have showed you some representation of these evil times; the works of the old world, the works of the old man. They are old in your practice, old in your remembrance; oh that so old, that they were dead in your performance! *Novus annus, novus animus*: let me tell you of a new lesson; indeed more truly old than the other: for goodness was before sin, truth ancients than falsehood; but new to your relish, new to your apprehension, new to your approbation, new to your practice. " whatsoever things are true," that do not savour of hypocrisy; "honest," not of vanity; "just," not of iniquity; "pure," not of obliquity; "lovely," not of deformity; "of a good report," not of infamy; if virtue hath given them worth and weight; and praise, an ornament of grace and beauty; receive, hear, learn, think, do these things, "and the God of peace shall be with you," Phil. iv. 8, 9.

Such is the fearful estate of the world by reason of sin. Oh that we might see an end of these things, before we see an end of all things! "Help, Lord, for the godly fail from among the children of men," Psal. xii. 1. When ungodliness so reigns, that piety is almost quite lost, it is high time to cry, Help, Lord: and indeed, *Quid jam nisi vota supersunt?* Oh may the virtue of that blood, which is able to buy off all our sins, mortify sin in us, and purge sin from us; that our remaining days may be spent in a due preparation for our great audit, at the second appearing of Jesus Christ. Amen.

"Bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly." The eyes of all things look up unto thee, O Lord, Psal. cxlv. 15: not only expecting their conservation by thy providence, but also attending thy direction for their obedience. The winds from their caves, the rain from their bottles, the waters from their channels, all answer the Lord, as the Israelites did Joshua, "All that thou commandest us we will do, and whithersoever thou sendest us we will go." Josh. i. 16. We are ready to be charged; what shall we do? He saith, Clouds, pour down, seas, break loose, smite the world, drown it. Lo, how they concur in their ready execution, and unite their forces to a universal flood. The points I insist upon are three; how this deluge was caused, how far it prevailed, how long it continued; with some useful observations derived from them.

First, how it was caused. It was a work of Almighty power, which also used the concurrence of some natural means. "All the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened," Gen. vii. 11. The Hebrews have called fountains, *gataim*, which signifieth an eye; eyes being like fountains to distil tears. This eruption of the great deep, was not the Tartarean waters about the centre of the earth: they could not surge so high. But either the sea, which some think to be higher than the earth, and restrained only by God's providence from overflowing it: "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed," Job xxxviii. 11. In nature it is acknowledged, that the place of waters is above the earth: therefore Aristotle calls it a strange thing, that a light thing should be placed below a heavy. Indeed the waters were created higher, but depressed by God's command. At first thou didst cover the earth with the deep as with a garment; and the waters stood above the mountains. But at thy re-

like they fled: at the voice of thy thunder they hasted away. They go up by the mountains, and down by the valleys, into the place which thou hast founded for them. Thou hast set a bound which they shall not pass over, nor turn again to cover the earth. Psal. civ. 6—9. The sand is this bound by "a perpetual decree," Jer. v. 22: though they toss and roar, they shall not prevail. And it is fondly imagined, that the sea is now higher than the earth. "They that go down to the sea in ships," Psal. cxvii. 23: down, therefore not higher. Thou hast "founded the earth upon the seas, and established it upon the floods," Psal. xxiv. 2: upon the seas, therefore not under them: and so founded, not so only forced. He stretcheth out the earth above the waters. Psal. cxxxvi. 6; therefore not the waters above the earth. "All the rivers run into the sea," Eccl. i. 7: but the natural course of the waters is downward. But how then find we springs in the tops of mountains? Not by miracles, but natural; God so disposing them to exercise their natural motions. Not that they come of some vaporous sweat or distillation of the earth: for then they could not so vehemently boil up. Nor by the transcendent height of the sea; as a spring rising in a hill, and conveyed in pipes, will force the ascent to the same height it bears at the fountain. But the sea doth so violently rush into those receptacles of the earth, which she finds hollow, that it forth springs even upon mountains. Most interpreters by this "deep," understand the deep heads and springs of waters within the earth, which were opened and enlarged to this inundation: those "waters under the earth," Exod. xx. 4. the rivers and deep gulf gushing forth.

"The windows of heaven." This signifies not an eruption of any waters in the crystal heavens, as they call that above the starry sky. Some have conceived waters to be above the firmament to mitigate the heat of the stars. But, 1. The waters are a heavy substance, and should be kept there against nature. 2. If these waters had come from thence, there must have been a dissolution of the starry heaven. 3. The watery heaven should then be a vacant place. 4. The celestial bodies have no need to be refrigerated: for they are of no fiery and elemental nature, they admit no qualities: the sun itself not being hot really, but in effect. But it is objected, "Ye waters that be above the heavens," Psal. cxlviii. 4. By heaven is understood there the lower region of the air. So it is said, "The Lord thundered in the heavens, hailstones and coals of fire," Psal. xviii. 13: but thunder, lightning, and hail, come not properly from heaven, but from the air. There be three heavens: *aereum*; so we called the fowls of heaven, that is, of the air: *sydereum*; so the firmament is called heaven: *empyreum*, the fiery heaven; so called, not for the heat, but for the glory. If the air be so comfortable, that is but lightened with the sun, what is the heaven, where the sun itself is! If that be so refulgent, how glorious is the heaven where God himself dwells!

This opening of the windows is the breaking of the clouds, wherein the waters are contained. "He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds: and the cloud is not rent under them," Job xxvi. 8. Here he unbound those vessels, and made vents for the rain like windows. Seneca writing of the general deluge, which he thinks not past but to come, gives these reasons: 1. The swelling and overflowing of the seas. 2. The earth itself putrifying and resolving into waters. 3. The conjunction of celestial bodies: as the world shall be drowned, saith he, when such stars concur in Cancer; so it shall be burned when the same company meet in Capricorn. But, indeed

these seem to be true causes: 1. The issuing forth of waters from the earth. 2. The violent eruption of the seas. 3. The continual rain from the clouds. 4. Which were increased by the liquefaction and distilling of the air into water.

But the principal Agent here was the Lord: "I will cause it to rain upon the earth," Gen. vii. 4. It was his special work, by the ministry of angels, after no ordinary manner. There was no fatal necessity in it; for seeing God created the world in such wisdom and order, that one part should concur to the preservation, not to the destruction, of another, it is vainly imputed to the constellation of the stars; for they can have no general operation over all the earth, but only in that place where their influence worketh.

The instruction we collect is this, that all God's creatures are at his beck, even the greatest lions on earth, whales in the sea, devils in hell. What is greater than the heaven? Yet this ever-wheeling body shall suspend its swift diurnal motion at his command, to do service to his servants: "Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon: and thou, moon, in the valley of Ajalon," Josh. x. 12. The sun cometh forth as a bridegroom out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race, Psal. xix. 5: yet to confirm the faith of Hezekiah, he shall fly back as a coward, ten degrees at once in the dial of Abaz, Isa. xxxviii. 8. What is more huge, firm, and unfit to be dealt withal, than the earth? yet he makes it tremble, and open the jaws to devour his enemies: if he touch the hills, they smoke for it, Psal. civ. 32. The whale wallows up and down the sea like a mountain, yet was he tamed to become the prophet's chariot, and bring him to land, Jonah ii. 10. The famished lions forbear Daniel, they dare not touch the dish which God had reserved for himself. And for Jonah, how he should lie in the bowels of that leviathan three days, not concocted and stilled, is no wonder to them that contemplate the power of God. The belly of the fish could not be hotter to the prophet, than the fiery furnace was to the three servants: neither is it more to bring a living man after three days from a fish, than to raise a dead man after four days from the grave.

The angels are of a powerful nature: yet the good are made ministering spirits for the heirs of salvation. Heb. i. 14: the bad God ties in chains, and muzzles their malicious forces. Those that had prepared themselves to slay the third part of men, were bound up in the great river Euphrates, till he loose them, Rev. ix. 14, 15. He needs not the posts of Persia, which Haman used, nor the dromedaries of Egypt, to signify his will: but "his word runneth very swiftly," Psal. cxlvii. 15. The day is his, and the night is his; the open place and the secret; the very wings of the wind shall carry his precepts. The sea had a charge for the prophet, as the prophet had a charge for Nineveh, Jonah i. God said to the one, Arise and go, and he went not: he speaks to the other, Arise and go, and it went; fulfilling its Maker's command with all diligence. Thus all creatures have arms and legs, when God bids them go; spirit and life is put into them, activity to use them, wisdom to direct them, when they should punish. The mariners were tying a chain of delays, with a number of shifts, desirous to save or reprove the guilty, Jonah i. 13: but in vain they labour to evade the counsel of God. While the men are in advice, the winds and seas are in action: the men are backward, the other go forward with their service: the men lose time, the other admit no dilation.

It is the Lord of hosts to whom all these obey; "fire and hail, snow and vapour, stormy wind and

tempest, fulfilling his word." Psal. cxlviii. 8. There is no Neptune, admiral of the seas, nor Æolus, master of the winds, nor Mars, general of the wars, nor Jupiter, king of thunders; but only the Lord. Who divided and diverted Jordan? This retrogress was no ordinary thing: we might well say, "What ailed thee, O Jordan, that thou wast driven back?" Psal. cxiv. 5. Many being crossed by the creatures, fall to blaspheming them; but let us reprove them, as the prophet did Sennacherib; "Whom hast thou blasphemed? and against whom hast thou exalted thy voice? even against the Holy One of Israel," 2 Kings xix. 22. Whom are you angry withal? Do the rain and waters displease you? Alas, they are servants; if their Master bid smite, they must not forbear. They may say truly, what Rabshakeh usurped, Are we come without the Lord? he said, Go and chastise them, Isa. xxxvi. 10. Thus was it in this deluge; the Lord brought the flood. "The waters saw thee, O God, the waters saw thee," Psal. lxxvii. 16; they heard thy voice, and came streaming out of their cells. We are placed on the earth, as in the midst betwixt two swallowing pits; the waters of the sea below us, and the waters of the firmament above us; if the one were not kept down, and the other held up, by the power of God, they would drown us every moment. But if it be easy for him to alter the course of nature for the destruction of his enemies, he can with more ease keep the course of nature for the preservation of his friends.

The next circumstance is, how far it prevailed. This was even to the overwhelming of the whole earth; that not the tallest cedars, nor loftiest buildings, nor highest mountains could appear; even fifteen cubits upwards. Some mountains are said to be of an exceeding height; therefore cavillers find impossibility in these natural causes, for the waters to transcend them fifteen cubits. So neither the gapings of the sea, nor the sluices of the earth, nor the cataracts of heaven, with the help of all those signs which they call watery; as Cancer, Pisces, Pleiades, Orion; and among the planets, Venus and Luna, could do it. We need not here answer, that the superior and inferior waters did meet together; as the mists, which are waters above, and the springs, which are waters below, meet often on the tops of mountains. But what need arguments from natural causes, when every believer of the Scriptures perceives here the supernatural finger of God? So he commanded, so the creatures obeyed, and so the wicked were destroyed. From hence we may collect four meditations.

1. That no power of man is able to withstand the will of God; it must be accomplished, though a whole world perish. It shall stand firmer than the firmament; "Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in heaven, in earth, in the seas, and all deep places," Psal. cxxxv. 6. What can a fly do against a bulwark? or man against God? unless he could fee and corrupt the heavens, with all that therein is; the earth and sea, with all that therein is; there is no rescuing of that which the Lord will smite. This the damned prove in hell by woeful experience; always willing what is and shall be ever absent, and always nilling what is and shall be ever present. In eternity they shall not obtain what they wish, and shall sustain what they do not wish. (Bern.) The men rowed hard to deliver the prophet, but the sea was tempestuous against them, Jonah i. 13. Man roweth, and God bloweth; there be arms for the one, winds for the other; which is likeliest to prevail? How much against how little! The ocean with his fury, against one wooden vessel; great waves against small strokes. Such are all de-

vices and endeavours against the Lord. In the proverb, Oenus weaves a rope, and an ass stands by and bites it off.

How impossible will it be for the wicked to stand in the day of judgment! If all the sinners on the earth, with all the devils in hell, oppose the Judge, it is less than for one unarmed man to set upon a legion of well-appointed soldiers. There is no fortification against, no evasion from, the Lord. Fugitive Jonah gotten to Joppa, and thence to sea, might think all safe; but lo, presently a pursuivant is despatched from heaven to attach him; vengeance is shipped in a whirlwind, and sails aloft in the air, to overtake him. If a still spirit cannot charm sinners, God hath a turbulent spirit, which is a more severe master, to enforce them. "There be spirits that are created for vengeance, which in their fury lay on sore strokes, to appease the wrath of him that made them," Eccles. xxxix. 28. If they deny appearance in his court of justice, there be pursuivants enough to fetch them in: his writ of attachment must be served. There is no dealing with God, but by prayers and peace-offerings. How vain were their shifts in this deluge! could they have laid mountain on mountain, and upon the top of all erected a tower higher than Babel was ever meant; yet He that sitteth in the heavens would laugh, the Lord would have them in derision, Psal. ii. 4; and smiling at their folly make an end of their ruin.

2. That strange sins meet with strange punishments. The monstrous and giantly sins of those monstrous giants we have heard; they were wonderful, yet the plague is of no less wonder. A continued rain of forty days, a prevailing deluge of fifteen cubits; this was without example before it, nor shall any match be after it, but the deluge of fire at the last. Sodom was guilty of a strange and unnatural sin, therefore destroyed with a strange and unnatural plague; hell out of heaven. Nadab offers strange fire, and suffers strange fire. Cain committed a strange murder, in killing his brother, the fourth part of the world; and strange was his punishment, to be a runaway in his own land; till he finds that he killed himself more than his brother. Oh how bitter is the end of sin, yea, without end bitter! Jonah admitted a wonderful neglect; the chastisement comes little short of wonder. Pursued by a tempest, discovered by a lot, condemned by himself, thrown overboard by his friends, wrapped in weeds, in the bottom of a depth, devoured by a whale; without light, without food, without company, without comfort; drowned, and not drowned; devoured, but not digested; alive, and yet as dead; so terrified in conscience, as if a reprobate; his soul in a swoon, his life at the last cast, the gasps and pangs of death upon him, the very throbs of desperation oppugning him, that his hope of eternal life was in his sense exiled: here was a punishment to the admiration of all the world.

The monstrous sin of this land, drunkenness, (and we may so call it, for it turns men into monsters,) is answered by as strange a punishment. What living man ever saw such a summer? (Anno 1621.) All eyes behold, all tongues confess, that it hath been strange weather for the season; but their hearts consider not how strange the sin is that procured it. There was a universal dearth, and it came to pass in the days of Claudius Cæsar, Acts xi. 28. The world's emperor bred the world's estate. The vices of princes infect the people, that *qualis rex, talis grex*. This Claudius was an insatiate drinker; his own mother called him a monster, a work of nature begun, not finished. No marvel if dearth comes in the days of Claudius; if God deny fruits to a drunken

generation. We may justly fear a famine, and expect (not as Christ said, The harvest is great, and the labourers are few; but) that the harvest should be small, and the labourers many. If the Lord thus forbear to smite us, it is not to reward our repentance, but from the good pleasure of his grace. Howsoever, let us abhor the sin, whereupon follow so many mischiefs. As murder and outrage; *violencia in violentia*. Poverty: the children come to weep for bread, because their prodigal fathers have drunk it. Scandals: the honours of the noble are trifled, while the drunkard sits like a Caesar, taxing all the world. Blasphemies: for such are the graces that come by the inspiration of the pot. Impudent demeanours: for sumptuous potations inflame presumptuous actions. Uncleanliness: Baelus is but a pander to Venus. Discovery of secrets: Noah being drunken revealed those secrets that lay hid six hundred years. Wicked fellowships: for such a trick or quality of insatiate drinking, the devil himself was once called Robin Good-fellow. There was a street in Rome called the sober street, because there was never a drinking house in it; find such a street in London, and chronicle it. I have no thought of invective against the creature; drink wine *ad mensam, sed ad mensuram*. Only let me tell you of better wine, out of God's own cellar, Cant. ii. 5. There be incriminated, Psal. xxxvi. 8. *O felix et paucis nota voluptas!* Christ hath begun to us, let us pledge him a health indeed, Psal. cxvi. 13; a saving health unto all nations, Psal. lxxvii. 2.

3. God's favour and anger changeth the use of the creatures. The ruin from above, and the fountains below, are things we cannot lack; yet did his wrath make these the instruments of the world's desolation. He can turn principal helps to principal plagues. The wind is a fan to purge the air, as the lungs lie by the heart to do it good; it is the only means of sailing; yet how often hath it brought the vessel to ruin! Children, the dearest jewels of love, the living pictures of their parents, are often made their heaviest scourges. The wife, one half of man's self, the best of temporal blessings, becomes not seldom the fearfullest cross. The quails, so dainty flesh, were Israel's ratsbane; and the children of the prophets died by a bitter herb in the pot ordained for their sustenance. Fire, so unspeakable an element, consumeth a whole city in God's anger. The earth, that firmly supports us, hath swallowed the wicked; the bread, that nourisheth, choked them. All which should make us fearful of offending, lest our comforts become our corrosives; the delight of our eyes, our eyesores; our tables a snare, and that which should have been for our wealth, an occasion of falling, Psal. lxxxix. 22. God's displeasure upon our sin, is able to turn nature upside down, that, like Sennacherib, we become the spoil of our own bowels.

There is no confidence to be put in worldly things; for if the earth itself be destroyed, what shall become of the temporalities it beareth? The foundation being ruined, the building cannot stand. What became of all that gold and silver, which in hoards and heaps the covetous had gathered? what became of their houses so stately and sumptuous? what, of the curious gardens, delightful arbours, the spacious bounds of oppression extorted from the poor? Who was the richest man, when all found one swallowing grave? The trees grow different in the forest; some greater, some straighter, some lroader, some taller, some younger, some older, some fruitfuller, some dotted. But when they are hewn down by the axe, and cast into the fire, who can distinguish them by their ashes, and say, This was an oak, that a cedar, the other a poplar? So in death

and dust, who can say, This was the skull of a king; that of a lawyer, this of a client; that of a politician, this of a fool; that of an officer, this of a beggar? Such a one is rich, but he owes much: tarry till he hath paid all his debts, what is he then? As a man that hath his house of cedar, but owes for his fire and rent. Worldly riches are like the rivers in Job, chap. vi. 16, 17. In winter there is water enough in them, when there is no need of it. In summer, when we expect it, and should use it to quench our thirst, they are dry.

The devil, like the pope, forgeth a donation: All is delivered unto me, all is mine, Luke iv. 6. But question him like a thief at the bar: How is it thine? Delivered to me. But by whom? Nay, by whom he cannot tell; the time he remembers not, the place he hath forgotten; as much as to say, they are none of his. "Riches make themselves wings, they fly away as an eagle toward heaven," Prov. xxiii. 5. All riches have wings, and fly away: the evil-gotten, like Noah's raven, come back no more; the good and well-gotten, like Noah's dove, return with an olive-branch of peace. They are called riches of this world; would you have them go out of the world, and follow you past the grave? The dog will go with you so long as you go with his master; but if you leave him, he will leave you. They are seldom profitable, often pernicious, always dangerous. All those he good arguments, which are from the proper cause to the proper effect; yet they may fail by the intervention of a miracle. It is proper unto fire to burn, yet that vehement fire did not burn the three servants of God. It is proper to the sea to drown those that be cast into it, yet it did not drown the prophet in the very depth of it. It is proper to the sun to move, yet it stood still at the prayer of Joshua. Proper for it to go from east to west, yet for Hezekiah's confirmation it went from west to east. This was proper to them, and that they did not produce such effects, it was by miracle. So it is proper to worldly riches to ensnare souls; if they do not, it is by miracle. They that worship the world, will flatter the devil.

Let this teach us to condemn the world, which we are sure shall be destroyed. Indeed, we may desire temporal things, according to our condition and requisite measure; but still with the saints' estimation of them, that threw them down at the apostle's feet, Acts iv. 35. St. Peter forsook all, yet the pope in his right engrosseth all. The rabbins say, that Moses, being a child, had Pharaoh's crown given him to play withal, and he cast it down to the ground, and kicked it about: as it were a sign of his future vili-pending temporal things, that he should esteem "the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt," Heb. xi. 26. Christ's counsel is, Sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, Luke xviii. 22; sell it, or if no man will buy it, give it; or if no man will take it, leave it; it is not worth thy keeping, especially not worth thy carking: do thou part from it, rather than it should part thee from Christ. He that impoverisheth his soul to enrich his body, is more mad than he that kills his horse to lose his money at a race. But, alas, "how are the things of Esau searched out!" Obad. 6; the things of this world sought after, by oppression, fraud, usury: as if this were the only end of getting, to have. But when all the poor members of Christ are clothed and filled, then put thy money to the bank. Howsoever the covetous, for one scruple of gold, will make no scruple of conscience; yet let us love temporal things, as poor people beg, for God's sake. Thus in the destruction of the world by fire, as it was once by water, when the wicked shall lose all, we shall

lose nothing; because we reserve what we had, the favour of God, the kingdom of heaven, and the glorious riches laid up for us in Jesus Christ.

The last circumstance is, how long this flood continued. The exact time hath much puzzled interpreters: I will not perplex you with it. Only the plain text saith thus: It rained forty days, the waters prevailed a hundred and fifty days; then they began to abate, but so slowly, that it was the tenth month before the very tops of the mountains did appear. In all, the continuance seemeth to be upon a full year. Divines observe, that it began in the spring, the second month, which answereth to our May. 1. The world is then supposed to have taken its beginning; the plants then sprouting, beasts engendering, the ground aptest for tilling. Now that this was the time of the overflowing appears, because from the creation to the flood are reckoned just 1656 even years. 2. The first month being Nisan, which answereth to part of our March, part of April, and this being the second, proves clearly that it fell out in the spring. Howsoever this reckoning was discontinued in Egypt, for the Egyptians began their year from the month Ptho, which answers to our September,) yet Moses here makes no new institution, but reneweth the old account. 3. That this flood might not be imputed to any natural causes, but only to God's power; the waters increasing in summer, which is a time for drought, and decreasing in winter, when naturally they do swell and rise. 4. That it might be more grief to the wicked, to perish in the midst of their pleasure and abundance; eating and drinking, making marriages and merriments, Matt. xxiv. 38: they were taken away in the height of their jollity. At this time the flood ceased; for in the eleventh month after the flood, the dove brought an olive leaf, the sign of the spring. And at the coming forth of the ark they presently began to multiply: now the aptest season for engendering is the spring, especially for fowls. Besides, if it had not then been a growing time, herbs and plants putting forth, where had been food for their sustentation?

Thus long it continued: at last in the midst of wrath God remembers mercy; and as he corrected with his rod of affliction, so he upholdeth with his staff of consolation, Psal. xxiii. 4. As in the ark he kept some seed alive to replenish the earth, when the rest perished; so he ceased the deluge, and at last delivered them out. "God remembered Noah, and every living thing," Gen. viii. 1; he remembered the very beast. "O Lord, thou preservest man and beast," Psal. xxxvi. 6. Xenocrates a heathen philosopher is commended for his pitiful heart, who succoured in his bosom a poor sparrow, that being pursued by a hawk came flying to him; and afterward let her go, saying, that he had not betrayed his poor suppliant.

Thus God sustained Noah and the rest for his sake, in a dark place, a whole year; being even then his light and comfort. "Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness," Psal. cxli. 4: a light shined to Peter, when he lay bound at midnight. Indeed what darkness can there be, where the Father of lights shineth? Now he delivers them again to their long-desired air, and causeth his sun to send forth comfortable beams upon them. It was time for a renovation to succeed this destruction; to have continued this inundation long, had been to punish Noah who was righteous. After forty days therefore the heavens clear up, after one hundred and fifty days the waters sink down. How soon is God weary of punishing, that is never weary of blessing! The ark, though it were Noah's fort against the waters, yet was it also his prison: he was safe in it, but pent

up. Now therefore the Lord, that gave him life by it, thinks it time to give him liberty out of it. The justice of God is satisfied, the wicked punished, the waters diminished, the creatures delivered, the world again revived. After so long a storm there comes a calm; that He, who for his judgments ought to be feared, might also for his mercy be magnified. This world is as strait a prison in regard of heaven, as the ark was in respect of the world; and our preservation is as wonderful, if we could see it. Desire we therefore (in fear and faith) that day: that as they went out of the ark into the world, so we may go out of the world into that blessed kingdom of Jesus Christ.

"But saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness." What a wonder of mercy was this! one poor family called out of a whole world; eight grains of corn fanned from a whole barnful of chaff; eight lilies growing amongst a whole forest of thorns! For these few was the earth still preserved under the waters, and all kinds of creatures upon the waters; which otherwise had all perished. Still the world stands for the elect's sake, for whom it was made and preserved; else the last fire should consume that, which the former water could not purify.

Here, first, let us consider the person saved, Noah: and him both by his condition, that he was a preacher; and by his conversation, which was in righteousness: for in that centre both his doctrine and practice met; both verbally and actually he preached. He was ordained into this ministry by the Lord: and as his whole life was an actual sermon, that taught obedience by precedent; so he continually incited the people to repentance, and forewarned them of the threatened vengeance. The observations are manifold.

1. That Noah had his calling immediately from God; whereas we are mediately ordained by the imposition of hands; which is a most reverend symbol in the church. For no man taketh this honour to himself uncalled, Heb. v. 4. Christ is said to be a Priest after the order of Melchisedec, ver. 6: but we have priests without any order at all; refusing to be ordered. What warrant have they that they are sent? I know there be different sorts and places: as Bishop Jewel, or the jewel of bishops, observes, All have *idem ministerium*, though *diversam potestatem*. A bishop and an archbishop differ not in *potestate ordinis*, sed in *potestate regiminis*. Nor doth a bishop differ from a minister, *quoad potentiam sacerdotii*, sed *quoad potentiam jurisdictionis*. Indeed the apostles, as they were immediately sent by Christ, so it was their prerogative royal, ministerially to give the Holy Ghost by imposition of hands; which power died with them. Yet still the ministry is an indelible character: and the bishop may suspend from execution of his office, but not put him out of the ministry, whom God hath put in. Christ breathed on them, and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," John xx. 22. The furniture and provision for the ministers, is the Holy Ghost. We hear in every place the hissing of the old serpent; let the world hear from us the groaning of that Turtle, the Spirit of God.

2. That the Lord honoured Noah in conferring this office upon him. When he made him a preacher, he gave him this dignity, that he should be saved himself, and all those whom his ministry converted; that he might say, Here am I, and the children that God hath given me, Heb. ii. 13. I will but transiently touch at the honour due to preachers.

Certainly, a minister's life is full of honour here and hereafter too: so it is full of danger here and hereafter too. We believe physicians, when they

give us prescripts; we believe lawyers, when they give us counsel; we believe even carpenters, in their rules: we believe not divines, though they bring nothing of their own invention; but may say of their sermon, as Jacob did of his venison, The Lord hath brought it to our hand, Gen. xxvii. 20: sit down and eat, that your souls may bless us, yea, bless God for us. Yet is every brain full of distraction about us, every mouth full of detraction against us, every hand full of retraction from us.

Men are so sick of preaching, that not the best and most honest divine can escape malignant tongues; and rather than the ungodly will be saved, their very exceptions against the preachers shall be their colour for going on in the ways of hell. Men suck their milk, like mules, and then kick them with their heels. Cominans says, he that would be a king's favourite, must not have a hard name: that so he may easily be remembered when preferments are a dealing. It seems that preachers have hard names, for few remember them in the point of honour or benefit. The world regards them as poor folks do their children; they would be loth to have any more, because they are troubled to maintain them they have. In Jeroboam's time, the lowest of the people were made priests, and now priests are made the lowest of the people. A lay-man, like a mathematical line, runs on *ad infinitum*; only the preacher is bound to his competency, thus much, and no more. Never let him be rich, lest he be too bold, and tell us home of our faults. If he stoop not at the pulpit door, to take measure of the people's feet, let him fast when he comes down; they will soon shorten his commons. Therefore, the gentry to the court, and the country to the cart, and the university is universally despised. We ask not secular honours and eminent places; the minister, like the fig-tree, will not lose his sweetness to be preferred over the trees, Judg. ix. 11. Only find we honour in your consciences; we are ambitious of no preferment, but to be instruments of your salvation. "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?" 1 Thess. ii. 19. Yes, ye are our joy and glory.

3. That Noah faithfully executed this calling, and continued preaching a hundred years. In all which space, he declared to men the future judgments of God, reproved their iniquities, persuaded them to repentance, and upon their amendment of life, prophetically assured them of mercy and forgiveness. And this he performed, not only by verbal, but by actual preaching: the very building of the ark daily preached to the world. So that both in his doctrinal instructions, and exemplary life, he was a preacher of righteousness. Such is a minister's office: *ὁποροποιεῖν*, and *ὁποροδοεῖν*; as they deliver their sermons with what brevity they can, and with what fidelity they ought; so to order their conversation, that their society may delight the good, and their very absence convince the lewd. Christ gave Peter a threefold charge of feeding; and those three kinds are distinguished into precept, pattern, and beneficence. We do *pascere verba*, we should *pascere exemplo*, we are not able *pascere subsidio*. We are fain to eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel, only we desire to live with you, Isa. lv. 1: we spend our own means, only let us preach to you.

What Solon told Cressus, of one of the happiest men living, *Pauper et justus, in tuguriolo, &c. sic mortuus*, is true of the preacher: no notice taken of him. They are truly called ministers or servants; not only Christ's servants, but even yours for Christ's sake. One of their titles is *Diaconus*, a minister of

speedy labour: as a page runs by his lord, or as Elijah girded up himself and ran by Ahab; like Ahimaaz, so fast that you cannot see him for the dust. He is indeed a minister, for he doth not work for himself, but for another. But as he is a servant, so he hath some special place in the house among the servants of God: a faithful and wise steward, whom his Lord maketh ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season, Luke xii. 42. He is a servant, but none of the inferior; a steward. He hath a petty dominion over the rest of the family, his Lord hath made him a ruler. This is for his dignity: now for his duty. First, he must give meat to all the servants, young and old, rich and poor, weak and strong. Secondly, in due season, that is, when their appetites call for it; yea, he must not evermore stay till they desire it. Thirdly, he must do it with his own hands: he is but a deputy, and therefore must not always do it by a deputy. Yet the Lord doth, and the people must, allow him some vacation. He is an ill fisher, that never mends his net; a bad mower, that never whets his scythe. Yet such is the madness of the multitude, that they think his body to be of iron, and his spirit of angelical nature; that he can preach as easily and often as they would have him. And are in a hot anger, with Saul, who because David would not come at him, lying sick; "Bring him," saith he, "to me in the bed, that I may slay him." 1 Sam. xix. 15. Such is their pity to the minister: Bring him, though he lie sick on his bed; spare him not, though his heat and heart be spent. Yea, would it please God that our lives were made such a sacrifice, so they might be instruments of his glory, and your salvation.

4. That he had not such happy success of his preaching, as his own soul desired, and he might in reason have expected. A man may be lawfully called by God and his church, and yet not turn many souls. Let him never so plainly denounce the judgment of God against sinners, tell them that the ark was made to preserve believers, when all out of it should be drowned; though he wrought that with his hand which he taught with his tongue, yet still they believed not. Appears it not strange, that in a hundred and twenty years he should not convert one: not only of the wicked race, but not one of the righteous seed? O, it is the Lord only that speaks to the conscience! He is that Alexanimous Preacher, whose pulpit is in heaven. Christ is the Physician, we are the apothecaries; and as we do not put into the compound one dram more than his prescript and allowance, so we cannot cure one soul, but he must do it. He is "the author of eternal salvation to all that obey him," Heb. v. 9. We have no power of ourselves to move a heart: *Non omnis qui dicta audit, et audita credit, continuo illa faciendo obtemperat*: God makes a minister to have more sorrow in bringing forth a Christian unto the world to come, than a woman hath in her travail of bringing forth a child into this world, John xvi. 21. "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again, till Christ be formed in you," Gal. iv. 19. Who can express the throbs and throes he endures? they are only known to the anguish of his own sensible heart. Yet after all pains, he is glad at last that the child of grace is born: this so sweetens all, that he forgets his sorrow. Thus, like Jacob, he catcheth a maim, but a blessing withal. But, alas! it is brought unto the birth, and there is no strength to bring forth, Isa. xxxvii. 3.

If they came to Noah while he was building the ark, and demanded of him, as the Jews did of the prophet, Wilt thou not tell us what these things mean? Ezek. xxiv. 19; lo, the voice of his tongue

interpreted the work of his hand, and the work of his hand expounded the voice of his tongue; yet they repented not. When God is pleased to convert, he can do it by the weakest means. For illumination of the mind, he often lights a great lamp of the sanctuary by a little wax candle; as he did Paul by Ananias. And for moving affections, he often by a puff of wind stirs up the waves of the ocean-sea. In the meanest book, a deep judgment shall find somewhat it hath not formerly seen, though it see not all it hath formerly found. God is not straitened according to the smallness of the organ. And when he withholdeth his contemned grace, Paul himself cannot move a soul. I know that nothing is more discomfortable to a good minister than this; yet hath it been the lot of many holy prophets, Isa. vi. 10; xlix. 4; Ezek. iii. 7; Acts xxviii. 24. This is fearful; when preachers sent for men's salvation, shall become means of their deeper confusion. There is nothing so humbles and abaseth them as this, 2 Cor. xii. 21: but whether in them that are saved, or in them that perish, we are still unto God a sweet savour of Christ, chap. ii. 15.

It is the measure, not the success, that God looks to: our reward shall be according to our works, not according to the fruit of our works; which is our comfort. Though we cannot convert men, yet we have laboured their conversion; and our labour (however fruitless among men) shall never be in vain with the Lord, 1 Cor. xv. 58. St. Paul doth not say, I did more good than the rest, but, I took more pains than the rest; "I laboured more abundantly than they all," ver. 10. If we should have no reward but according to the number of the souls we have turned, woe were us! For men's hearts are so yoked with their own wilfulness, that they will believe no preacher in the world further than their own fancies. But this must not discourage us; it is enough that we would have cured Babel, though she would not be cured; and "if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost," 2 Cor. iv. 3. If the Lord should examine us, what soul we have converted, where should we point him? "Charge them that are rich," &c. 1 Tim. vi. 17. It was God's charge to Paul, and Paul's to Timothy, and Timothy's to the people. Command implies obedience, but we may command and go without. We have the keys, and they do not rust upon our hands; but the power is lost in the people's hearts. Men have picklocks of their own forging, presumption and security; with these they can open heaven-gates, albeit double-locked by our censures. The father could have brought out the best robe himself, or sent his son into the wardrobe; but he commands his servants, "Bring forth the robe, and put it on him," Luke xv. 22; wherein he did grace the means, and bring that into credit. The Lord will have his sons beholden to his servants for their glory. It is a bold truth, you shall never wear that long garment of honour, unless it be brought and put on by the minister. He that can save you without us, will not save you but by us. If our words have lost the power in men, they have lost their right of heaven. But though we cannot save you, yet our desire to do it shall save us. We give God what we have, he desires no more; this is enough to honour him, and crown us.

This should teach all with faith and fear to submit themselves to the power of God's word, lest every sermon become one day a bill of indictment against them. There is no dallying with it; if it cannot save, it kills; like fire, what it may not soften, it will harden. This is enough to make the wicked tremble, who have gone away from so many feasts with hungry souls; heard so much, and practised so little. As

every good turn aggravates the unthankful man's plague, so every good instruction enhanceth the reprobate's torment. O now let us redeem the time, hear to learn, learn to do, and do to live for ever.

5. Lastly, observe that so long as Noah preached, the world was warned. God needed not to have given them any warning of his judgments, they gave him no warning of their sins, no respite. Yet, that he might approve his mercy even to those upon whom he meant to glorify his justice, he gives them long warning that they might have space enough of repenting. Oh how loth is he to strike, that threatens so long before he executes! He that takes pleasure in revenge, suddenly surpriseth his adversary, and apprehends the speediest advantage; but the Lord is pleased they should be often warned, to show how willing he is to be prevented. God is so patient, that if sinners were not desperate, they should never smart. He doth first summon a parley, proclaim peace, Deut. xx. 10; hang out his white colours of pity, before the red streamers of blood be seen. He useth the commination of hell, as well as the promise of heaven; and both equally commend his goodness. The sharpness of the one, and sweetness of the other, working together like oil and wine, make men wise to salvation. Nineveh had not stood, if the prophet had forbore to say, It shall not stand. The message of their overthrow overthrew the message; the prophecy fell, and the city fell not, because her fall was prophesied. The denunciation of death wrought life; the sentence of destruction made a nullity in the sentence. They heard that their houses should fall; and they forsook not their houses but themselves, and both themselves and their houses stood.

Thus let us take the warnings of death, and turn them into inspirations of life. When it is threatened, we shall die in our sins, let this make us live to righteousness. If the summons of vengeance shall waken us to repentance, we shall no sooner change our minds, but God will change his sentence. If a nature and reverent consideration of those fearful judgments, plagues, death, dearth, hell, terrors of conscience, can truly humble us, we shall hear an angel sing, Grace, mercy, and peace, favour and eternal blessedness in heaven to us. God deals not with us as one did with Diogenes, who first broke his head, and then bade him take heed; but he beats his drum before he draws his sword. He does not as the cannon, first kill, and then make the report. But admonisheth us to repent, or else he will come against us, Rev. ii. 5.

There is not a soul among us, but hath been often warned: happy they, that can find this assurance in their souls that they have repented! Let not God continually lose his labour. Would we have him do nothing but premonish us? We are bound to take hold of every caution, to make use of all motions and monitions; he is not bound to follow us up and down with unregarded solicitings. Once warned should be always cautious. As Solomon to Shimei, Did not I forbid thee to go over Kedron on pain of death? 1 Kings ii. 41; so God hath warned us to keep home, confined us to Jerusalem, the city of obedience. If we pass the brook Kedron, the limits he hath set us, to seek our straggling servants, riches or pleasures, as did Shimei, he may justly punish us, and answer all our expostulations, Did I not give you warning? This seemed to be the rich man's care in hell, for his brethren on earth, that one might be sent from the dead to give them warning, Luke xvi. 28. We have warnings every way; Lord, let some of thy admonitions bring us to repentance; let thy commandment work us to amendment; that hearing what thou teachest, fearing what thou threatenest, and believing

what thou promisest, we may find thy eternal mercies.

"But saved Noah." God's judgments are never so universal but some he spareth. Though Israel be reduced to a tenth, yet God will not lose his tithe. Though they be as the scattering grapes after the vintage, yet destruction shall leave here and there a berry. Though he have few names in Sardis, yet he hath some. In every loss that Job had, one still escaped to bring him news. Noah finds grace, when the world found perdition. He that was dead to the world, shall not die with the world: as he consented not to their sin, so he partook not of their punishment. No streams of water shall drown him, whom the deluge of sin hath not overwhelmed. Now because the Lord hath set him forth as a precedent to after-times, that he who will escape as Noah did must be such a one as Noah was, let us contemplate his righteousness in these four passages: The warrant of his practice. His faith in this warrant. The perfection of this faith. The issue, event, or success of all.

1. The warrant or ground of his obedience, was the word of God. He was "warned of God of things not seen as yet," Heb. xi. 7. This revelation came not by a prophet, (we find none at that time but Noah's self,) but either by the ministry of an angel, or immediately from the Lord himself. "God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me," Gen. vi. 13. Thus doth he single out the righteous, and acquaint them with his own counsels. "Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?" Gen. xviii. 17. The Sodomites lie sucking in the air of security, but Abraham knew the nearness of their calamity. "Surely the Lord will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets," Amos iii. 7. Neither is this the prerogative of the prophets only; but, "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will show them his covenant," Psal. cxxv. 14. We dote on nothing more than secrets; all are sick of an Athenian humour; yet is there no secret which carnal desires affect, worth the knowing. Would we participate that secret, which no affordment of nature, no mystery of art, no secretary of state, no wit of man, no cunning of devil, can find? Let us fear God: this is the key to open those supernal and supernatural secrets, which shall fill the heart with unexpressible, unexhaustible joy. Christ calls us more than servants: "for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doth;" even friends, because he hath made known to us the things of his Father, John xv. 15. God makes all his friends of his counsel, and communicates all things conducing to their blessedness, as one friend inparts his mind to another.

"His secret is with the righteous," Prov. iii. 32: the just man shall be ignorant of nothing that concerns his salvation. But in our times there are no such revelations; therefore the state of the church before Christ seems to be better than this. No; for albeit God do not now reveal particular and personal events, yet the assurance of salvation, the comfort of remission, the very feeling of reconciliation, these he declares to us, which are infinitely sweeter. Why should I inquire, Lord, what shall he do? John xxi. 21: it is enough for me to know what shall become of myself. Besides, we are requited in the complete Scriptures, we have the substance of their shadows, the performance of their promises. How should this encourage us all to become God's faithful servants; for we serve not such a Lord as is strange and austere to us, one that will not give us a good look or a fair word. Yea, he is so far from denying us these favours, that he calls us to his holy counsel,

makes known to us his secrets, and communicates himself to us by his blessed Spirit.

This is a sweet comfort, if we apply it; especially considering the different estate of the wicked; who seeing, cannot perceive; and hearing, cannot understand, Matt. xiii. 13: as Zebul mistook armies of men for shadows of mountains. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit," 1 Cor. ii. 14. Nature is not here the schoolmaster, but grace: nor Athens the school, but Jerusalem. They are hid to the wise of the world, and revealed to babes, Matt. xi. 25. It is revealed to us, that God is our Father, the church our mother, Christ our Brother, the Holy Ghost our Comforter, angels our attendants, all other creatures our subjects, the whole world our inn, and heaven our everlasting home. That the joys of the wicked do scarce ever begin; and when they do, their end borders on their beginning: one hour sees them both merry and miserable. But our pleasures are eternal, millions of years being not a minute to everlastingness, and this house of the world a mere cottage to heaven. These things as God reveals, so we must seek. When the Shunammite would needs go to the prophet, her husband questioned her: "Wherefore to-day? it is neither new moon nor sabbath," 2 Kings iv. 23. It seems that at least on those days they consulted the prophets. O let not us neglect God's clearer revealings in the gospel, nor be strangers to the business of our own salvation.

2. His faith in this warrant: the things that God revealed, and he believed, were these three. 1. The great and just wrath of God against the sinful world. This he sincerely preached, and this they scornfully derided. But as the frantic laughs, when the physician weeps, and knows his end is near; so the wicked contain the righteous, yet to them is known their miserable state. 2. That God would save him and his family: and this he believed, not only in the principal object of faith, his salvation by the Messias; but even in the inferior and particular, his personal deliverance from this inundation. 3. The means of his preservation: by an ark which himself must make; that every stroke might put him in mind of the gracious promise, and still as that was builded, his faith might be confirmed.

This faith wrought in him a fear; being moved with fear, he prepared the ark, Heb. xi. 7. Yet carnal reason might object, What cause is there either to believe or fear? 1. The judgment was far off, one hundred and twenty years to come; and who would fear so remote a thing? 2. The world was full of wise and mighty men; they all heard of this, not one of them feared. Shall Noah, being one single man against all those strong examples, expose himself to derision by a needless fear? 3. The judgment was of such a nature, as it had no precedent; for would any man in common reason think, that God would drown all the world with water? That by water, an element so easily avoidable; and of such a quantity and measure as to overwhelm the whole world.

But lo here the invincible power of faith! it is fixed on God's word, and though heaven thunder, and earth shake, and hell roar, it will not be removed; spite of all contradictions Noah believes that he shall be saved; why he above all the rest? even this he believed with fear. "With thee, O Lord, is mercy, that thou mayest be feared," Psal. cxxx. 4. Even the mercy of a father makes a reverent son. He might say with David, Lord, thou hast spoken good concerning me and my house, for a great while to come. What am I, and what is my house, that thou hast done thus for me? 2 Sam. xvii. 19. That the Lord hath led us out of spiritual Egypt, first by a

child, then by a woman, saved us in the deluge of superstitution, gives us just cause to say, What are we, what are our people, that he should be so favourable to us?

It was strange enough, that God would take so weak an element as water, to drown those mighty giants. Strange enough, that he would save Noah by an ark: why not take him up into heaven, as Enoch; or build him a house on the top of some promontory? By an ark! alas, what safety is here? may not the tempests cast it on the hard rocks, or dash it upon the giants' castles, and break it in pieces? No; Noah must lie and swim on the waters, and yet the ark must save him from the waters. Thus shall he be safe in the sight of dying sinners; when they are expecting death on the tops of the mountains, they behold him secure to their greater vexation: as the pains of hell are aggravated upon the damned, by seeing their once despised brethren in the joys of heaven: when the rich that have run away from the poor in coaches, shall see the poor carried from them by angels. All this God delivered, Noah believed and feared.

Let this teach us to believe God's judgments, and fear them. "My flesh trembleth for fear of thee; and I am afraid of thy judgments," Psal. exix. 120. God foretold of a flood, and Noah looked for it a hundred and twenty years after. There is no man living, but within less than a hundred and twenty years he is sure to die, and to be in danger of a flood of wrath: for *quales egredimur, tales præsentamur, et dilatio proves often dilatio supplicii*: the deferring of punishment is the enlarging of punishment. Yet who trembles at it? who sends this holy fear to his heart, that his heart may send forth prayers for mercy? If men cry, Fire, fire; we stir, run, tremble: but let the fire of God's wrath, and the fire of hell, be cried, we move not, care not, fear not; as if this were a thing quite unconcerning us. And as the fantastical musician was so transported with his own raptures, that when the people cried to him, that his house was on fire, he returned them no other answer, but that either they should hold their peace, or cry in tune. So when preachers forewarn men of these judgments, they think that we are quite out of tune.

There is no judgment comes, but naturians will find out other causes for it than God. All weather is from the clouds, famines from ill weather, plagues from famines, or ill airs, or by apparent infection from other places: as if they concluded, as that scoffler subscribed on Adrian's college, God hath here nothing to do. But cannot nature have her place, unless she have God's place? He overthrows not natural means, why should natural means overthrow him? Shall we give the soldier's honour to his sword? Certainly, if men believed God, they could not think, nor speak, nor look upon his works, but with reverence.

And as our fear of God is, so is our faith: little fear, little faith; no fear at all, no faith at all. Judgment may be threatened; but the stubborn soldier Marius will not hear the laws for the clattering of armour. The great things of the law are drowned in some clamour; Satan, that cunning silversmith, raising an uproar more agreeable to men's humours, "Great is Diana." The shriekings of Moloch, and the pitiful lamentation of burning infants, were not heard, because they deafened themselves with the instruments of music. After the massacre of many Christian virtues, steps in conscience, in the phrase of Job's messenger, I am alone escaped to tell thee. We like not the message, and imprison the bringer; and if the subsidiary grace of God come to succour and relieve this crying and dying

conscience, men study to stupify their own hearts. Thus "the children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth," Isa. xxxvii. 3. Strength enough, but it is to strangle the birth, not to bring it forth. The midwives of Egypt feared God, and preserved the children alive; but the still-born motions of God's Spirit may often testify to our faces, that we are bloody midwives. The frowns of men we fear, as ducks use to dip at every stone thrown into the water: we fear an ague, an enemy, a danger; yet not the Lord, who commands all these. Let us fear God more, and we shall fear all other things less; if we could turn all our fear into the fear of God, we should then turn all our works unto the praise of God; and he will honour them that honour him.

3. The integrity of his faith: for this he is said to be righteous; "A just man, and perfect in his generations," Gen. vi. 9. Not in respect of God's justice, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God," Rom. iii. 23; and if he mark iniquity, who shall stand? Psal. cxxx. 3. Nor in respect of that perfection which is appropriated to the saints in heaven, Phil. iii. 12: this no mortal man hath attained. Nor yet so perfect, that he was without sin; "For there is not a just man upon the earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not," Eccl. vii. 20. Nor for supererogating, and going beyond his duty; in not only obeying the legal rules, but also in observing the evangelical counsels; as say the Rhemists. But either *comparative*, compared with others; therefore it is added, "in his generations." Or *inchoative*, which rather consists in the desire of perfection, than in the perfection of his desires. Or *reputative*, so esteemed, because he was without scandal to the world. But especially *imputative*, by way of imputation; he "found grace in the eyes of the Lord," Gen. vi. 8: and this is the perfection of faith, which clothes the person with the righteousness of Christ.

There is a legal perfection, such as was in Adam, is in Christ: none are thus perfect. "Though I were perfect, yet would I despise my life," saith Job, chap. ix. 21. "Though 'I know nothing by myself, yet am I not hereby justified," saith Paul, 1 Cor. iv. 4. They durst not trust themselves upon God's judgment. There is also an evangelical perfection; and this is twofold. It consists partly in the apprehension of Christ's righteousness, which is our justification; partly in the holiness of life, which is our sanctification. The former is absolutely perfect, for our justification admits no latitude; the latter is not so, for sanctification is perfected by degrees, and is here but partial, as in a child are all the parts of a man, though it want growth, stature, and maturity. The difference is not in the truth of being, but in the measure, degree, and quantity. There is to be perfect in all points; so are none here below. And to be perfect in all good endeavour, and in some good measure. Man is indeed bound to keep all the law, (and all those for whom Christ did not fulfil it, shall have it fulfilled on themselves in the penalty,) and that for good reason. A man in a rich estate borrows a sum of money; he is then able to repay it: but afterwards by his riotous living he grows unable; now shall his present and wilfully contracted poverty excuse his non-payment? Adam was of sufficient strength to keep the law: if he would forfeit that grace and natural sufficiency, shall his self-incurred weakness excuse his disobedience?

Perfection, now, consists not in a justifiable goodness of our own; and that we can attain, is not in great learning, but good living. Paul was perfect *expectatione muneris*, imperfect *fatigatione certaminis*. It is said of Chrysostom, He perfected nothing but

the mortification of sin. The inner man may be perfect, not the whole: but then here is the comfort, what we have, is accepted; what we have not, is pardoned. (August.) That which is perfect, both justifies itself, and shames all imperfection. He that will be perfect, must have understanding, what to do; will, how to do it; memory, when to do it. This is a Christian perfect: First, in purpose of heart, as Abraham is said to offer up his son Isaac, because he had a mind and resolution to do it. Secondly, in inchoation. Solomon "began to build the house of the Lord," 1 Kings vi. 1: the original is, he built: the beginning is called the performance. Thirdly, in comparison, weighed with the condition of others; as Prov. xi. 3, where integrity is opposed to perverseness. "Walk before me, and be thou perfect," saith the Lord, Gen. xvii. 1. The way to be perfect, is to walk before God. This was Hezekiah's comfort, "I have walked before thee in truth," Isa. xxxviii. 3. Look that the inside be not rotten, this is the way to have a perfect heart.

Now because Noah's faith was the thing that wrapped up his soul in the favour of God, the ground of all his perfection and righteousness, the virtue whereby he lived, when all the world was drowned; how precious should this jewel be to us, without which we can neither live in this valley of tears, nor escape in the day of flames! There is no life but in the Son, and "he that hath the Son hath life," 1 John v. 12, and he that hath faith hath the Son. *Justus ex fide vivit*: faith, like Eve, is the mother of all that live. God himself is content to divide his praises with faith; whereas she can do nothing but by him, she shall do any thing with him. She can work wonders: subduing kingdoms, strangling lions, quenching violent fires, with handfuls conquering huge armies, Heb. xi. 33, 34, dividing seas, turning back streams, yea, commanding mountains to remove, overcoming the world: what call you these but wonders? Such wonders can faith do. Yea, God is pleased to do nothing for us without her, that doth all things of himself. True faith is not less than miraculous in the sphere of her activity, and with the warrant of God's truth. It is no premonition, nor offence to God's crown and dignity, to say, it is his own arm to the saving of men. There is a kind of omnipotence in faith, when it shall say to the sun and moon, Stand still, and be obeyed. But as Christ could do no miracle in Capernaum, because they had no faith: so where men want faith, it must be a miracle, yea, beyond a miracle, if they be saved. I know it is easy to say, I believe: there is a titular faith, but it shall never save any, until saying, Be filled, gives a man his dinner; or, Be warmed, makes him hot. But he that can believe, with Noah, in a storm of indignation, in a deluge of destruction, when the arrows of vengeance fly about, and the Lord raineth coals of fire like hailstones, in flaming trials, and strongest temptations; then to believe, shall bring a glorious crown in the day of Jesus Christ.

4. The event or success of all; which was Noah's building of the ark. God that decreed to save him, ordained also the means of his preservation. Now the end of building it was double: one for the further conviction of the world, the other for the saving of him and his family. For the world, the Lord did not only give them time, but a faithful and righteous teacher. It is happy for him that teacheth others, to be himself righteous. It is absurd in him that stammers, to teach others to speak plain. Great learning and good living are a fair couple, a fit match; it is pity to part them. Let the mountains of learning so preach, that the little hills and valleys may receive benefit.

Noah's hand taught them, no less than his tongue: his business in building the ark was a real sermon to the world. For this cause God set him a building sixscore years before the flood. Why so, when he might have done it in three or four years? But because the Lord would give them space to repent, every stroke on the ark for all that long time being a loud sermon of repentance to them. Thus do the saints judge the world. 1 Cor. vi. 2, not only by their faith, but by their fact: the examples of holy men, are bills of indictment against the wicked. Thus the Ninevites are said to judge the unrepentant Jews, and the queen of Sheba those unbelieving children of Abraham. Noah being told of a miraculous thing, and believing it; being commanded an unreasonable thing, and obeying it: condemns all them that will not believe God's ordinary promises, nor obey his known precepts. Many despise those that sincerely profess Christ; but their sincere profession shall be the despisers' condemnation.

Haply those monstrous sons of Lamech came to Noah, and asked him what he intended by that strange work: whether he meant to sail upon the dry land: to whom he relates God's purpose, and his own. They go laughing away at his idleness, and tell one another in sport, that too much holiness hath made him mad: that instead of a palace, he was building a prison; and because other men delighted in castles of stone, he (to be cross to the world) would have a house of wood. Yet cannot all this flout Noah out of his faith: still he preaches, and builds, and finishes. And when all they, like ghastly wretches, lay sprawling on the merciless waves, he lies safe at the anchor of hope and peace. The faith of the righteous cannot be so much derided, as their success is magnified. How securely doth he ride out of this universal uproar, of heavens, earth, waters, elements! He hears the pouring down of the rain above his head; the shrieking of men, women, and children, roaring and bellowing of beasts on every side; the rage of the waves under him: he saw the miserable shifts of the distressed unbelievers; and now, in the midst of all, sits quietly in his dry cabin, not feeling evil. He knew that the great Master of the world, whose judgments now overflowed the earth, would steer him in these deep waters; and that the same hand which shut him up, would preserve him.

Let me here again commend to you the blessedness of faith: what a sweet security and heavenly peace doth it work in the soul, in the midst of all the inundations of evils! This is the adamant which nothing will break; the palm that sinks not under the weightiest burden: the oil that ever over-swims the greatest quantity of water can be poured on it; the sheet-anchor that holds when all other tacklings break. The day of fire shall be more terrible and universal than was the day of water; this defaced earth, that shall melt the heavens. Yet still faith finds an ark, not of combustible wood, but of indissoluble strength; it is the open side of Jesus Christ. There, when the earth is burning under her, heaven above her, the elements about her, reprobrates shrieking beside her, death and hell trembling below her, she shall find assurance and peace; and at last be metamorphosed into that blessed vision, and eternal fruition of such joys, to which his mercy bring us, that they then may be known unto us. Amen.

"But saved Noah the eighth person." "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help," Psal. cxxi. 1. From the mountains, not of the mountains, but of "the Lord, which hath made heaven and earth." While the justice of God was decreeing confusion to the world, his mercy was contriving a safety for his servant. And as his majesty

was glorious in so weak an element for the ruin : so was his mercy, in so weak an instrument for the preservation. Here was omnipotency in both : he speaks to the creatures ; Clouds, make rain, and let that rain make a flood, and let that flood drown the world. He speaks to Noah, Make thee an ark, and I will make that ark save thee ; do thou as I bid thee, and I will do as I promised thee.

Generally two things occur to our consideration ; the building of the ark, and the preservation by it ; the vessel itself, and the freight. For the former, my purpose is not to declare the matter, measure, proportion, or fashion of the ark ; but to borrow so much of the story as is pertinent and instructive to us. This summarily consists in two things ; Noah's trial, and God's disposal. For his trial, God in building the ark did exercise three virtues in him ; his patience, his confidence, and his obedience : let us consider them.

1. For his patience. Why did God set him about it a hundred and twenty years, when a small time might have finished it ? This was for the trial of his patience. Thus he led the Israelites in the deserts of Arabia forty years ; whereas a man may travel from Ramesis in Egypt to any part of Canaan in forty days. This God did to prove them, that he might know what was in their heart, Deut. viii. 2. He promised Abraham a son in whom he should be blessed ; this he performed not of thirty years after. He gave David the kingdom, and anointed him by Samuel ; yet was he not possessed of it in many years ; inasmuch that he said, " Mine eyes fail for thy word," Psal. cxix. 82. Joseph hath a promise that the sun and moon should do him reverence ; but first he must lie bound in the dungeon. This God doth to try us, for in these exigents we show ourselves and our dispositions. Thus did he leave Hezekiah in the business of Babylon, to know his heart, 2 Chron. xxxii. 31. When he had made such a probation of Abraham, in the sacrifice of his son, he concluded, " Now I know that thou fearest God," Gen. xxii. 12. Did not God know before ? Yes, he knows the very thoughts of men. It is not for his instruction, but ours. The Lord knows all, but thus he would have us to know our own hearts. " The heart of man is deceitful above all things," Jer. xvii. 9. The worldling knows his own house, his own horse, his own garment ; he knows not his own heart. " Though I were perfect, yet would I not know mine own soul," saith Job, chap. ix. 21. " Cleanse thou me from secret faults," Psal. xix. 12. Ye know not of what spirit you are, saith Christ even to his apostles, Luke ix. 55.

We know not what patience we have, what courage, what zeal, till we be put to it. A man is that he is when he is tempted. Some presume more than they can ; so did Peter, Though I should die with thee, I will not deny thee ; alas, he knew not his own weakness. Others doubt of that they can, as Naaman ; God be merciful to me when I come into the house of Rimmon : here I can serve God constantly, but when I wait on my master to the idolatrous temple, what shall I do then ? Lord, be merciful to me in this. Go in peace, saith the prophet ; God will strengthen thee. Every cock-boat can swim in a river, every sculler sail in a calm ; every man of a patient temper or cheerly disposition, can hold up his head in ordinary gusts. But when a black storm rises, a tenth wave flows, deep calls unto deep, nature yields, spirit faints, heart fails ; here is the trial, how dost thou now ? When our hopes are adjourned, our expectation delayed, and instead of pleasing contents we find bitter sorrows ; this will discover our hearts. If then faith prevail above sense, and hope

against all natural reason and fear, our graces shall shine like orient pearls, in true and perfect beauty. After all the prerogatives of promised ease, still to stand erect and triumph ; here is the assurance of faith, that hath the word for compass, Christ at the helm, and the voyage is salvation.

2. For his confidence. Many obstacles might seem to stop him in the course of his proceeding, and to keep him from attempting this strange edifice.

1. The great quantity of the ark, amounting to many thousand cubits ; a work of great labour, and no small charges. If this had been imposed on the sluggard : What, shall I spend all my days in building ? As Florus, an idle fellow, would evermore say, I would not be Caesar, always marching in armour : to whom Caesar replied, I would not be Florus, always drinking in a tavern. Or on the covetous ; he would have answered, It is too chargeable ; shall I exhaust my estate to set up a fantastical house ? he will not do it, to have a house in heaven. 2. The length of his labour ; it was to have lasted sixscore years : now it is tedious to man's nature, to be always doing, and never to have done. 3. The building of it was a matter of mockery to the world ; for it signified to the rebellious destruction, to himself preservation. Now that either the world could possibly be drowned, or that he should separately be saved, this they laughed at.

Lastly, it was a thing most harsh to natural reason. 1. It had no precedent ; and to credit new and strange things, requires a new and strange faith. 2. It seemed not likely that God's mercy should be so wholly swallowed up of his justice. 3. To live in the ark, as in a close prison, without light, without fresh air, and comfort of liberty, among beasts of all sorts, and that he knew not how long ! Reason might say, It is better to die with men, than to live with beasts ; better to die a free-man, than to live a prisoner ; better to die with company, than to live alone. That if God had purposed to save him, he could have devised means more direct, more easy, more safe than this ; therefore his deliverance was to be doubted of. Thus, indeed, he might make himself a derision, and ridiculous story of the world, all this while ; and if the wicked should alter their practice, God would alter his purpose, and so there would be no flood. If there were, yet the ark might dash against the mountains, and so he perish with the rest ; and then he might with the same success have saved all this labour : therefore the best course is to let all alone, and to take my venture with the world.

All these had been strong persuasions in a natural man ; but faith dissolves these impediments, as the sun doth dews ; with resolute courage it breaketh through all difficulties, and flies over these carnal objections with celestial wings. As Abraham begat Isaac, so faith begets hope ; and as Isaac begat Jacob, so hope begets obedience : he believes, hopes, and builds. It is grounded on the knowledge of God's nature ; knowledge is the root of faith. Presumption ariseth from the ignorance of God's nature, that he is just ; desperation from the ignorance of his nature, that he is merciful. Some are of the error, that God will not be so cruel as to damn his creature, but he will not be so kind to the wicked, as to be unjust to himself.

Let this teach us to fortify our faith : doctrines that are plausible to our natural affections, we can formally obey ; but that which is above our reason, beyond our apprehension, or against our disposition, we call that into question. The Scripture saith, that Christ is in the sacrament really exhibited to the soul of a Christian : carnal senses deny this. Reason asks with the Capernaïtes, Will he give us his flesh

to eat? Faith believeth this, and the soul findeth it with unspeakable comfort. God saith, that a poor good man is in better case than a rich sinner; reason and sensual experience deny it, but faith believes it, and feels it. For never did the poorest child of God wish to change his estate with the wealthiest worldling upon earth. God saith, our bodies shall rise again, how strange dissolutions or how many alterations soever they suffer: this is a wonder to nature, an amazement to reason; but the faith of a Christian rests upon it, and the soul of a Christian shall have comfort in it.

3. For his obedience. Though Noah understood by direct revelation that he should be saved, yet he used the means, he made an ark. He might have said, God hath bound himself by covenant to preserve me; his word is his word, and he will stand to it: let me labour or lie still, his will cannot be altered; though I be false, he will be true; though I omit what belongs to me, he will not forget what belongs to him; let me therefore spare the pains of so much labour, ease, derision. No, Noah is of another mind; the promise of safety, and the means of safety, be to him inseparable: he dares not but believe that God will do it, he dares not but use the means whereby he will do it. The pontificians think to flout us with our assurance of salvation: if we be sure of it, what need we then so trouble ourselves about it? I answer, though we be sure of it, not only in the certainty of faith, but, if it could be, by immediate revelation from God; yet still let us work out our salvation with fear and trembling. If God should say to a man by his very name, Thou shalt be saved; it is no more than here was said to Noah for his temporal deliverance. Yet Noah concludes, If I make not the ark, I am to look for no preservation; this was Noah's divinity. And for those that think they know a shorter cut to heaven, let them take heed they be not ent short of heaven. If we be elected, no matter how we live: desperate presumption! Noah would not trust his mortal life upon those terms, and shall secure men thus venture their souls? No, God hath decreed the means unto the end, and hath promised the end unto the means; and those things which God hath joined together, let no man put asunder.

Rebekah had God's oracle for Jacob's life, yet she sent him away out of Esau's reach. It was impossible for Herod to hurt the child Jesus, yet he must flee into Egypt. The Lord hath promised his children supply of all good things, yet they must use the means of impetration; by prayer. "Call upon me in the day of trouble," Psal. l. 15. He feeds the young ravens when they call upon him, Psal. cxlvii. 9. He feeds the young ravens, but first they call upon him. God withholdeth from them that ask not, lest he should give to them that desire not. (August.) David was confident, that by God's power he should spring over a wall; yet not without putting his own strength and agility to it. Those things we pray for, we must work for. (August.) The carter in Isidore, when his cart was overthrown, would needs have his god Hercules come down from heaven, to help him up with it. But whilst he forbore to set his own shoulder to it, his cart lay still. Abraham was as rich as any of our aldermen, David as valiant as any of our gentlemen, Solomon as wise as any of our deepest naturalists, Susanna as fair as any of our painted pieces. Yet none of them thought that their riches, valour, policy, beauty, or excellent parts could save them; but they stirred the sparks of grace, and bestirred themselves in pious works. And this is our means, if our meaning be to be saved.

Thus for Noah's trial, now for God's disposal.

And herein we must consider two things: his direction, and selection: he was both the Pilot of the vessel, and the chooser of those that should be in the vessel.

For his direction. The vessel was great and huge; resembling a ship, yet so unlike it, that it is called an ark; capacious of all kinds of living creatures, with sufficient provision for them. This must float above the water, be laden with a heavy burden, without stern to guide her, without anchor to stay her, without mast to poise her, without master to govern her. Noah was a husbandman, a preacher, but (without question) he had no skill to be a sailor; the art of navigation being not then found out. Therefore this unwieldy vessel must, in all reason, be cast upon hills and rocks, by the violence of tempests, and so split in pieces. No, but when heaven and earth seem to conspire against it, it shall preserve him. How so? Because God himself was the Master and Steersman of it, his providence was with it. It was indeed too vast a bulk to be governed by human skill; therefore, when by no man's art it could be set afloat, it was lifted up by the waters, and left to be guided, not by human prudence, but by Divine Providence. (August.)

As the Lord ordained it, so he directed and disposed it: "The Lord shut him in," Gen. vii. 16. He himself shut the door of the ark upon Noah, and made it fast after him, that no waters might get in unto him. God was his Porter to shut him in, Keeper to preserve him, and great Master of the vessel during that whole voyage. Such is his presence and providence over his children in all distresses. He for gets nothing that he hath made, but his special eye is over his elect: as the master of a family hath an eye over his meanest servant, yea, over his very cattle, but his care night and day is for his children. They are beset with no danger of water or fire, but there is one among them, in the form of the Son of God, Dan. iii. 25, to deliver them. When Israel was in so hard a strait, as either to be drowned in the sea, or slain by the sword, how miraculously did God provide an evasion! When Noah was to enter the ark, and to have the door shut after him, here was a hard exigent. It was so large that camels and elephants might enter into it; therefore shut it himself he could not, or at least not sufficiently close it up against the waters. Nor would any of the world do it for him, they did not owe him so much love and service, but rather laughed at his vain endeavours. Himself could not, others would not, the Lord with his own hand shut it for him. Being thus closed up, he was in danger to be thrown upon the rocks, having no anchor, no stern, no pilot: lo, God was all these unto him.

In the deepest destitution of all earthly comforts, so powerful is his hand, so loving his eye, to those that serve him! Elisha had a host of men sent against him. How should one man escape from a whole army? His man cried, the master believed, the Lord protected, 2 Kings vi. 17. When men refuse to help Noah, the angels are ready. When the whole world expected him to perish with themselves, then the Lord is his Pilot, and the last thing their eyes must see, is Noah safe. "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?" Psal. cxvii. 1. David found God to be his Vice-Admiral, and to carry the light before him, in the darkest storms and most violent waves of his trouble. There is no calamity so potent as is our Deliverer. Therefore as the legend moralizeth of St. Christopher, that he would serve none but the greatest that was, and still as he found one more powerful than he would change his master; till at last from man to

man, and from man to the devil, he came from the devil to Christ, who was the strongest of all. So if any thing in the world, yea, the whole world, were more potent than God, there were some colour for demurring upon our choice. But seeing that he only doth what he pleaseth, in heaven, earth, sea, all places, Psal. cxxxv. 6; and what he will do, all the rest must do; and that his majesty is not more infinite than his mercy, that he is not so ready to strike the obstinate as to spare the prostrate; Lord, let us love thee above all things that be, that thou mayst deliver us from all things that be hurtful.

In that the Lord was here Master and Pilot of the ark, we may observe the antiquity and dignity of mariners and sailors. For antiquity: it is as old as Noah, older than the second world. The dignity is great; for God himself was the first author and first practiser of it. First author; for Noah made not this ark of his own head, but the Lord instructed him. First practiser; for he performed all those offices unto Noah, else it had not saved him. This is one of those few callings, which may say, God himself was the first deviser and exerciser of it: all callings cannot say so. Why then do seafarers forget that Master whom they succeed? There is now no vocation so abused and abused as it is, lighting into the hands of the most lewd and licentious persons; no generation of men more notoriously dissolute. How little do they remember that God made the first ship, that he was the first Master, the first Mariner, the first Pilot of it; that their dispositions are so utterly unlike to his! The strange things of the sea they behold; but those monsters are rather their play-fellows, than occasions of their fear and piety. Although their very sleeps be but so many revivals of their dangers, and when they awake they know not whether they shall ever sleep again, save in death, yet they are not mortified. There is nothing but extreme danger, or extreme hunger, can soften them. That tottering vessel is more safe at sea, than many of them are on land; for that hath a helm to guide her, but these have cast off not only religion, that makes them good men, but even reason, that makes them men; and saving only on the sea, they live without all compass. As their ship on the water, so they on the land, "reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man," Psal. cxi. 27. One would think, that the terrors of the ocean, the wonders of God in the deep, should melt their very soul, and humble them, ver. 26; where the winds domineer, and the waves roar, *voluntur ut aequora montes*: where they lie,

Digitis a morte remoti

Quatuor aut septem;

where no mercy is to be hoped. He that hath not learned to pray, let him learn to sail. Yes, haply they will pray and cry too, while the tempest beats; cast up their eyes, and send their prayers to the offended heavens: but is not their piety blown over with their misery? Yes, the God of their supplications is on land become the object of their blasphemies; and they seldom think of him, but when they borrow his name to swear by. The Lord is our preserver by sea and land, there be dangers enough in every place; therefore by sea and land, in every place, let us humbly serve, and confidently trust in him.

Thus for God's direction and providence, over this vessel; we come to his election of the company for it. The whole world being his, and he absolute Lord of all, made choice according to his divine and inscrutable pleasure. In the most general judgments, those that fear God find deliverance. When Sodom

must be destroyed, Lot and his family are singled out; the angels can do nothing till he be safe. When Jerusalem must bleed, the mourners are sealed to redemption. When the destroying angel rides circuit in Egypt, the doors sprinkled with the blood of the lamb are passed over. The deluge of wrath will one day come; what shall we do then? Sprinkle our hearts beforehand with the sacred blood of the Lamb: then thousands shall fall on our left hand, and ten thousands beside us, and the Lord shall provide one way or other an ark of safety and deliverance for us.

The number preserved, consisted both of reasonable and unreasonable creatures; of unreasonable, for man's sake; of reasonable, for God's own sake. First, let us look upon his election in the accessory, the irrational living creatures.

The Lord that would have seed kept alive on the earth, took into his preservation beasts both clean and unclean. Some were even at that time unclean, Gen. vii. 2; for Moses wrote not this by anticipation, as respecting the time wherein he wrote, the law having then distinguished them; but respecting the time when the flood came. Certainly this difference was known to the patriarchs by Divine revelation, and continued to their posterity by tradition; as was the use of sacrifice, offering of tithes, and observation of the sabbath, before the law. Now they were not unclean by their own nature and creation, for God made all good; nor in respect of man's use only, some being more fit for food; but by God's institution, some being more fit for sacrifice, therefore called clean. Of the clean God chose seven; of the unclean but two; he would have the former to multiply, and replenish the earth by a speedy increase; that man might have sustenance, and himself sacrifice. The other, he knew, would annoy them with their multitude; and albeit he would have the kind of hurtful beasts preserved, even for the punishment of sinful man, for the noisome beast is one of his four great plagues, Ezek. xiv. 21; yet would he have their number abridged, that they might not grow too fast upon him. These would hurt him, the other enrich him; therefore the merciful God provides most of them whereof we have most use.

But why seven? Three male, three female, and the odd one for sacrifice. Not that we conclude with their canon, that the double number is not good, because the unclean came in by two; and that the odd number is good, because the odd was for sacrifice. For this is false. First, because both clean and unclean came in by pairs and couples; how many or how few soever, every male had his female, Gen. vii. 9. Secondly, they are not said to be unclean for their number, but for their kind. Thirdly, then Noah and his sons had been unclean, because they and their wives went into the ark by couples. But seven, that God, who created seven days in the week, and chose one of them for himself, did here preserve of seven clean beasts one for himself, for sacrifice. He gives us six for one in worldly things, in spiritual things let us give him all. Here are two things observable.

1. God is pleased that some noxious creatures should be reserved, for the correction and exercise of man. He hath use even of those fierce and cruel beasts, and glory by them. They being created for man, must live by him, though to his castigation and punishment. The Manichees object against God's goodness, that he made many things pernicious, as some evil weeds and venomous serpents; and many things superfluous, whereof we have no use; how then were all good? (August.) It is answered: First, God made nothing superfluous, though we know not

the use thereof: as in an artificer's shop, we being ignorant of the tools and instruments, condemn them not, though by our meddling they cut our fingers. Secondly, we have no cause to complain; for whether they be profitable, they do us good; or superfluous, they do us no hurt, if we let them alone. Thirdly, the harm of any creature ariseth from ourselves: if man had not offended God, nothing should have offended him. Fourthly, they are not altogether fruitless, for even those things that are not fit for food, have their use for medicine. Venom itself, well qualified, hath been physical to our recovery. Fifthly, even by those that are hurtful, we are either corrected to humble us, or exercised to try us, or terrified to work in us the fear of God. Therefore use the creatures commodious, beware the pernicious, forbear those thou thinkest superfluous. In all things where our knowledge ends, let our admiration begin: though we cannot understand the creature, let us glorify the Creator.

2. Though man's sovereignty be abridged, yet he exerciseth still a lordship over the creatures. For, first, there is a natural instinct of obedience in them, especially those that are for man's use, as ox and horse. Though his authority extend not to the absolute command over those wild and savage creatures, lions and tigers; yet the more necessary and serviceable ones stoop to his yoke. Secondly, man sometimes by his strength subdueth the fiercest beast, as Samson the lion, and David the bear. And when strength faileth, his wit and policy often prevaileth. Every kind of beasts, birds, serpents, sea-inhabitants, hath been tamed of mankind, Jam. iii. 7. All other have been tamed of man, himself is tamed of none but God. (August.)

3. Though this dominion be lost by Adam, it is restored by Christ: Thou shalt be at peace with the beasts of the field, Job v. 23. But lastly and especially, this is done by the miraculous power of God: for besides the strange reports of Plutarch and Herodotus, concerning their Hesiod and Arion, Evalus and the virgin, borne upon dolphins' backs, and brought safe to shore; and Hierome relates, or some one under his name, how a Christian, being pursued by his heathen master, fled into a cave where was hid a lioness and her whelps, which never harmed him: but when the pagan came in with his other servant, she devoured them both; we know that Daniel was preserved in the lion's den, Jonah in the belly of a fish, and the viper had no power to hurt Paul. So here, the cruellest beasts come tame unto Noah; they offer and submit themselves to their preserver, renewing that obedience to the repairer of the world, which before sin they yielded to the first storer of the world. He that shut them into the ark when they were entered, did also shut their mouths while they were entering. The fierce lions fawn upon Noah and Daniel: what heart cannot the Maker of them mollify! Let us fear him that commands all, and no created power shall be ever able to harm us. "Fear not; the very hairs of your head are all numbered," Luke xii. 7. They were solicitous about their souls, Christ secures them of the very hairs of their head. Lord, we will fear no danger so long as thou undertakest to be our Keeper. Now to him that keepeth us from evil, and evil from us; that keepeth heaven for us, and us for himself; be praise for ever.

In the next place, let us meditate farther of God's election, and the freight of souls preserved in the ark: eight persons. It was a family of four men and four women: not men alone, nor women alone, but both, and consisting of as many women as men. The beginning of the first world was by one man and one woman; of the second world, by four men and four

women; but always equal. This is the fundamental term of all mankind, hence began the world; man was made of dust, the woman of his rib, the world of this woman. Woman takes her being from man, man takes his well-being from woman: therefore Eve was at the first created a wife; no sooner a woman, but presently a wife; and the first vocation of man was to be a husband. Therefore the Hebrews have a proverb, He who has not a wife is not a man. And for woman, as at first she took her essence, so she takes the perfection of her essence, from man.

But to reduce the manifold observations here offering themselves unto some head, we must consider two things: the quality of the persons, and the quantity of the number. For quality of the persons, they were all male and female, husband and wife: and God so disposed it for three causes; society, propriety, parity.

1. For society. It had been uncomfortable for man to have lived there alone: "It is not good that man should be alone: I will make him an help meet for him," Gen. ii. 18. Marriage is called a yoke, too heavy for one alone to bear; therefore each had a mutual help, a wife. In the participation of good, compassion of evil, in health the best delight, in sickness the best comfort: the sole companion to whom we may communicate our joys, and into whose bosom we unload our sorrows: thus are our griefs lessened, our joys enlarged, our hearts solaced. "A friend and companion never meet amiss; but above both is a wife with her husband," Eccles. xl. 23. One in body and soul, as the stock and the grass are but one tree. God when he made man, made but one; when woman out of him, he made two of one; when marriage, he made one of two. Two parties and but one love, two souls compacted into one body; both one in affection while they live, both one in their posterity when they die. Where is conjugal faith, an indissoluble covenant, an unalterable affection; here is a blessed match, not to be matched by all the treasures of nature. The fair take no pleasure in the beauty of their own face, but by the reflection of that which others derive from it. Our eyes are not set to behold our own countenances, nor can our lips take delight in their own kisses, nor our arms in their own embraces; but in the society of a wife, by exchange, they have their use and perfection. She is man's similitude; so like him, as bone to bone, flesh to flesh, *isha* to *ish*: where face answereth face, as did the cherubim, both looking to the mercy-seat; and heart answereth heart, as a glass that returns upon a man his own image. Himself before himself, another that is himself, his adopted self; that loves what he loves, wills what he wills; that, as she wills his love, so loves his will: there is no society on earth that affords the like comfort.

2. The propriety: Noah and his wife. Every man had his own wife. Not one woman for many men, nor many women for one man; as wicked Lamech had before. This is the Lord's combination. Take thy wife; not to take and leave, contract and divorce, put on and off like a garment; but one woman for one man, no more, no fewer, no other. In the creation, God made them male and female: not both males, or both females; then had they been unfit for generation; not male and females, nor female and males, much less adulterer and harlot; but two in one flesh: two, not three or four. Every wife should be to her husband, as Eve was to Adam, the whole world of women. For this cause God gave her to man, as the centre wherein his desires might rest. Lust is a runagate, as if it had Cain's curse to be a vagabond upon earth; it runs like a mathematical line, *ad infinitum*; still covets, and still remains un-

satisfied. Nor is it confined within the bounds of wife, but of womankind; that which should be for physic to cure it, increaseth the disease. The delight is transient, the guilt everlasting: before the sense can sit down, and say, it is pleased; the conscience riseth up, and says, it is afflicted. Marriage is therefore ordained to qualify desire; as fire is appeased with fuel, a medicine of the same doth mitigate; nor doth it forbid, but rectify man's affection. But lust, because it cannot be stinted on earth, the justice of God confineth to hell.

3. The equality or parity. That men may learn to forbear despising of that weaker sex, behold here as many women saved as men. Not one man more, not one woman less; of the eight, women make up the just half; yea, whereas one of the four men was a hypocrite, and after cursed, the Scripture speaks no such matter of any woman among them. Howsoever poets in their satires, songsters in their drunken rhymes, and too many men in their unrelishing jests, spend their wits in invectives against that sex; yet the Lord loveth them equally with men, and Jesus Christ shed his blood, and by his blood (I am persuaded) saveth as many women as men. As she is "the wife of thy covenant," Mal. ii. 14, so she is the child of God's covenant; the daughter of Sarah, as well as thou art a son of Abraham. St. Peter says, they are co-heirs of the same grace, 1 Pet. iii. 7; and St. Paul, they are co-heirs of the same glory.

If the body of either sex be made of the better material, it is the woman's; Adam's was made of dead dust, Eve's of living flesh. She came out of man's side, and God hath made her cleave to his side, Gen. ii. 24. By such a derivation, he fitted such an adhesion; that she might not be a movable, to be departed from. From taking a bone from man, who had a bone too much, he closed it up with flesh, to mollify his nature. And this bone he added to the woman, to strengthen her that was too soft. Thus he made a sweet temper between them, like harmony in music, fit for concord. This bone was taken out of the midst of man, a rib, a bone of his side. Not a superior part, as the head; the wife is not made to govern: not of an inferior part, the foot; she is not a servant to be trod upon: not of an anterior part, as the breast; she is not to be preferred before the man: not of a posterior part, the back; she is not to be set behind in contempt: but of the side, a middle and indifferent part, ordained to be his companion and equal; they that walk side to side, are fellows. She was fetched from under his arm, that he should defend her; not far from his heart, that he should love her. A vine by the sides of his house, Psal. cxxviii. 3. Not on the roof, nor on the floor: the one is too high, she is no ruler; the other too low, she is no slave: but in the sides, an equal place between both.

Neither must this imbolden the wife to usurp: she was taken from the left side, showing that she stands in need of both protection and direction from her husband. By God's ordinance, man hath the pre-eminence. Thy very desire shall be subject to him, Gen. iii. 16. The husband is the head, 1 Cor. xi. 3; therefore if a woman murder her husband, she is judged by the civil law a parricide: by the statutes of the land, a traitor. The man had power to allow or disannul his wife's vows, Numb. xxx. 13. The edict of Ahasuerus differs not from the law of nature; "That every man should bear rule in his own house," Esth. i. 20. 22. *Ubi tu Catus, ego Caius*, was some equality among the Gentiles: but, I am mistress, and will rule all, is posterous among Christians. Cardinal Wolsey's style, "I and my king," was intolerable in the politics; so the wife's. I and my husband, is insufferable in the economics. The blessed Virgin had a more humble ear-

riage towards her husband Joseph; as St. Augustine notes from the order of the words, "Thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing," Luke ii. 48. Not, I and thy father; but, thy father and I. The wife must give place to her Joseph on earth that will have place with Mary in heaven.

"Eight persons." Thus much for the quality of the persons, now for the quantity of the number, eight. Wherein we must consider, first, why so many as eight, then, why so few as eight. Why so many? for the speedier increase of mankind. Why so few? because this was the whole number of the righteous and believers.

"Eight." This was one cause why God reserved so many, that they might fructify to the multiplication of mankind. But why were not Noah and his wife sufficient for that end? No, they were old, for Noah was six hundred years old when the flood came; and though he lived three hundred years after, yet we read not of any more children he had. But the first world was begun and peopled by two and no more; why then were so many to begin the second world? I answer, 1. God did so at the first, to show that all mankind came of one blood, Acts xvii. 26, and that there was no original difference betwixt man and man. Neither is this unobserved in the second beginning: for though the world was multiplied by three men, yet were they all brethren, and the sons of one man. In effect, as at first by Adam and Eve, so by Noah and his wife, came all men in the world. 2. To begin the second world there were requisite more lines than one; because now the blessed Seed was promised, and his line and kindred must be kept distinct from all other till his incarnation. 3. There was more cause why the world should be more speedily replenished, than at first. For the earth had some beauty and glory left it after the former curse, so that (though far short of Paradise, yet) it was still to Adam a delightful and pleasant habitation. But this second curse in the flood washed off all the remaining beauty, and made it a rude and unpollished desert. Nor was only the surface of it thus maimed, but the virtue almost quite perished, as land by long sugging under the waters hath the heart of it eaten out. Therefore it is said, that the earth was divided among the three sons of Noah: they lived not all together, but overspread the earth, Gen. ix. 19; for it required many hands and much labour to the recovery of it. 4. Otherwise the beasts, which were then many, would have overgrown the world, if it had not been speedily replenished by their lords.

For this cause were four pairs admitted into the ark: not that Noah and his wife did there company together. Ambrose notes that they were not noted together in the going in, but in their coming out. But indeed, that was a time of sorrow and abstinence: as the Hebrews note, that Joseph in Egypt had not his children in the years of famine, but before.

Here then we see the end of marriage, which is issue, to people the earth, which is the means to people heaven. Therefore it is called matrimony, because the married proposed to themselves the titles of father and mother. Man is but a part of time, and therefore should not die till he hath left the world some in his room. He who has no children is as good as dead in the Hebrew proverb. Man's best art can only make dead things; there is no work of his head or hand, whereinto he can put a life, saving only in this, when he begets a son in his own image, he is then said to make a living creature. Herein he doth not only supply a place in God's church militant while he lives, but he also provides a soldier for the same field against he dies. Our bodies have no eternity on this earth, but only in respect of those fruit-

they produce. The Thracians used to rejoice at the death, and to weep at the birth, of their children; but God teacheth us to rejoice when a child is born, John xvi. 21; Gen. v. 29; xxi. 6. Leah bare one son, and called his name Reuben; a second, and called him Simeon; a third, and called him Levi; but when above expectation she bare the fourth, she purposely calls his name Judah, and expressly protesteth, "Now will I praise the Lord," Gen. xxix. 32—35.

It is the most perfect work of all living things, to bring forth their like; to leave a seed behind, to preserve their species, to continue their name and posterity upon earth, and to shadow out in some sort immortality itself, by perpetuating life from the father to the son, and son's son, for many generations to come. We can scarce say that man is dead, that hath left his image behind him. A reverend divine compares those two trees in the 128th Psalm, the vine and olive, to the two trees in Paradise; the vine is the wife, the olive-plants the children. The one as the tree of knowledge of good and evil, for both these be in marriage; the other as the tree of life, for a man liveth in his children. *Quid dulcius in humanis quam gignere sibi similem, quid beatius in terris quam antos videre uterum?* (Æn. Sylv.) A wreath of children about the board, like a round of stars about the north pole, or a garland of courtiers about the throne. They are the walking pictures and speaking images of their parents; the wealth of the poor man, the honour of the rich. It is said of the ostrich, "She is hardened against her young ones, as though they were not hers," Job xxxix. 16. Parents unnatural to their children, want the mercy of sea-monsters, who draw their breasts, and give suck to their young ones, Lam. iv. 3. Grant it true, that children be certain cares, uncertain comforts; and that the poor man calls them his bills of expenses; yet the trouble of infants are sweet injuries to the mother; injuries, but sweet. *Deo et parenti non redditur aquivalens.* (Hierome.) They are *vincula*, the bonds and pledges to ratify and confirm love betwixt man and woman. Alcibiades asked Socrates, how he could endure the scolding of his wife Xantippe. Socrates asked him, how he could endure the cackling of his hens. Because, saith Alcibiades, mine hens bring me forth chickens. But, saith Socrates, my wife brings me forth children: this makes amends for all.

"Eight persons." We have heard the reason why so many as eight were preserved; now consider why so few. Even all Noah's family, for Noah's sake. The righteous man procureth blessings, not only to himself, but on all that belong to him. In the destruction of Sodom, ten had saved ten thousand, Gen. xviii. 32. Potiphar was a heathen, yet his house shall be blessed, because Joseph is there, Gen. xxxix. 5. The angels promise Lot, whomsoever he brought out should escape for his sake. Among two hundred threescore and sixteen souls there was but one Paul; yet, lo, "God hath given thee all that sail with thee," Acts xvii. 24. Zachæus alone believed, yet this brought salvation to his whole house, Luke xix. 9.

I make no doubt, but Noah's family were more orderly and religious than the common inhabitants of the world. For he that was a preacher to the whole earth, would not omit this duty to his own house; and they that come into the perfumer's shop, shall (though against their wills) bear away some of the scent on their clothes. He that was careful to provide an ark for the preserving of their bodies, would not neglect the provision of grace for the saving of their souls. Indeed carnal parents, to show that they begat not their children's souls, but their bodies, provide usually for their bodies, not for their souls. But as he that provides not for their

temporal estate, is worse than any infidel, 1 Tim. v. 8; so he that provides not for their eternal state, is little better than a devil. When a great portion is readied for them, divers parents think they have done enough, and so they may turn them off. Indeed the world may take them thus, but the Lord will not take them thus, at their hands. Joseph and Mary brought Christ to the temple when he was but a little one. Augustine professeth of his mother Monica, that with greater pangs of care she had laboured of him in her spirit, than in her body. She travailed of him in her flesh, to bring him unto this light temporal; in her soul, to bring him unto the light eternal. Such mothers as Monica will make such sons as Augustine. The Africans did present their children, in their early years, before serpents; if with their sight they scared away the serpents, they held them legitimate; if not, bastards. Too many parents trust their children with such impious society, that, like serpents, suck out their souls without scarring their skins. Zeuxis having artfully painted a boy carrying grapes in a hand-basket, and set it abroad; the birds came and pecked at them, as if they had been true grapes. Whereat he being angry with himself and his art, said, If I had drawn the boy, which was the principal of my work, as well as the grapes, which were but a by-accident, the birds durst not have been so bold with them. Were parents as careful to form their children's manners, as to fill their purses, those ravenous harpies, the foul spirits of the air, could not so violently seize on them. I say to every father, as Paul to Timothy, Look to thy child, the pledge of God's goodness, thy comfortablest image in life, and best monument after death. I commend guarding their persons, and regarding their estates; but howsoever those things succeed, let me so love my children's bodies on earth, that I may one day meet their souls in heaven.

"Eight." Among all these there was not one servant. What, none of Noah's servants? Some think he had none; and that the simplicity of those times required no attendance, but every man waited on himself. This they collect from God's charge to Noah, "Come thou and all thy house into the ark," Gen. vii. 1; and because not a servant entered, therefore conclude, that he had none in his house. But here is the wonder, that Noah's own servants would not believe his preaching. They will rather sin and die with the world, than repent and be saved with their master. Perhaps they did Noah service, and he might think well of them, because he could not discern the heart; but they served not God, and were therefore lost. It is the good man's will, that all which serve him should truly serve the Lord. The faithful shall dwell with me, and the upright shall serve me. He that worketh deceit shall not dwell in my house, Psal. ci. 6, 7. It is an ill mixture in a family, when God shall have the parlour, and Satan the hall; when saints pray in the chamber, and ruffians swear in the cellar; when Noah is calling upon God, and his family doing sacrifice to Bacchus. I confess, that governors are but men; they have but two eyes, and cannot see into all places. But when their care is that God be honoured, their houses well ordered, and all Christian offices solemnly performed; though the success answer not their endeavours, in bringing their servants to heaven, yet their own souls shall be saved in the day of Jesus Christ.

"Eight." What then became of those that built this vessel? Certainly, as Noah was no sailor to guide it, so no carpenter to build it. The smith, the carpenter, and many cunning workmen, were hired to frame it; nor smith, nor carpenter, nor any other

workman was saved by it. It must be exceeding labour to bring in sufficient provision for the innumerable kinds of creatures there reserved, Gen. vi. 21; and not a few were employed in this service; not one of them tasted this provision. More hands went to this work than Noah's: many wrought on the ark, that found no safety by the ark. Outward works cannot deliver us, without our faith: men may help to save others, and perish themselves. And as divers hearers are like the pinnacles on the belfry; when men begin to ring, they begin to quake; but continue ringing, they stand as still as stones, their fear is past. So some preachers may be like the bells, that ring others to church, and come themselves no nearer than the steeple. Or like high spires and pinnacles, that point upward, and poise downward. God will shut up believing Noahs in that ark which others have built; who are like foolish porters, that have the keys, and open the gates to let in others, and never mind going in themselves. It is happy so to build up Zion, that we may dwell in Zion; so to set others forward to heaven, that we be not behind ourselves. As Theodosius said, he had rather be a true member of the church, than head of the empire; it is better to be one of the eight saved in the ark, than one of the hundreds commended for their admirable skill in building it.

"Eight." Among these few there was one hypocrite, Ham; yet was he preserved with the rest for Noah's sake. Such is the mercy of God, that not one good man shall perish with the bad, yet one bad man shall be spared with the good. The righteous shall never be swept away for company, yet the unrighteous are often forborne for company. The ship may be in danger because Judas is there, but Judas shall escape because Jesus is there. Oh that of a perishing world but eight should be selected, and that one of those eight should prove a wicked man! that Ham after all this should so profanely offend! that neither the wrath of God in destroying the world should humble him, nor the mercy of God in his deliverance should better him! There is nothing to be said, but the Lord chooseth whom he will; and when the unrighteous perish, yet Thou remainest holy, O thou worship of Israel.

"Eight." Of the whole world, no more saved? a miserable spectacle! See what sin can do; bring many millions to eight persons in a short time. Though Israel were as the stars in Solomon's days, yet brought to a tenth, Isa. vi. 13. David would number them, but the Lord soon decreased them. Let us never glory in our multitudes, for if our sins provoke him, God can easily make us few enough. Though our streets were sown with men, and our children grew up like young plants, or grapes in unnumbered clusters; yet the Lord can melt them as snow in the sun, now down the flowers, empty the land of fathers, and leave no widows to make lamentation for them; so that a man shall be more precious than the gold of Ophir, Isa. xiii. 12. But if we fail in our numbers, yet we hope for supply from our neighbours? No, let not our adherence with man endanger our conjunction with God. He can reduce many thousands to few, as he did to Gideon, Judg. vii. 4, that the glory might be his. He that could narrow up a whole world to eight, can bring a kingdom to two, to one, to none. If thousands run on the course of disobedience, they shall quickly enough be diminished.

"Eight." Lastly, here is figured out to us the paucity of souls that shall be saved. Many are called, few chosen. The gate of bliss is narrow, and few enter into it. My flock is a little flock; little in respect of the number drowned in the deluge of sin.

Questionless, as small as it is, every one hopes well of himself; and if Noah had foretold this definite number to that world, all would have presumed, I am one of the eight. When black and ravenous ruin spreads her dismal wings to sweep away the wicked, few tremble; for they conceit themselves to be none of the forlorn crew. Yet what is the common religion of the world? To say the creed is all their faith; to pay what they must needs, all their equity; to say Be filled, all their charity; to take their own, all their mercy; to give fair words, all their bounty; to carry a formal profession, all their piety; to cry God mercy, all their penitence; and to come to church, all their conscience: but will all this bring them unto the number of eight? None belong to the ark, but the members of Christ; none are his members, but they be in the body of his church; none are of his body, but they live by his Spirit; none have that life, but they walk after the Spirit; none so walk, but their consciences be cleansed; none are thus pure, but they have repented; none have repented, unless they forsake their sins; and none forsake their sins, but they must needs have amended lives.

Haply each thinks, I am in as good case as others, I shall speed as well as my neighbours: so might the old world tell their fellows; and they all sped alike indeed, in one common destruction. But it is not good to venture all our estate in one uncertain bottom, to hazard our eternal being upon the exemplary practice of the multitude. Noah believed alone, when all the world contested against him; and Noah was saved alone, when all the world perished without him. Who would not rather assy God's word with one singular Noah, than be incredulous with the whole world, and perish? Sinners so swarm, that there is scarce elbow-room for the righteous. But "if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" 1 Pet. iv. 18. The righteous are scarce, and even their salvation is scarce; and shall not sinners tremble? Strive to enter in at the strait gate, Matt. vii. 13. There is a difficulty, it is strait; but a possibility, it is a gate; and a gate was made for entrance. O then let us get assurance to our consciences, that we are some of those few. Do we groan and bleed for our errors? do we strive to rectify our lives? do we resolutely detest our sins? do we implore grace by our prayers? do we consecrate to God our hearts? do we rest upon Christ by our faiths? do we follow after holiness with our endeavours, and love the Lord with all our souls? We shall then feel, what no tongue of man can express, the sweet testimony of the Holy Ghost to our consciences, that we are wrapped up in the bundle of life, sealed to the day of redemption; and how few soever escape destruction, we are of the number that shall find salvation, through the mercies and merits of Jesus Christ.

THE MYSTERY OF NOAH'S ARK.

THIS miraculous preservation hath also a mystical sense, and serves for the instruction and consolation of the militant church unto the world's end. There is in a text, as in a tree, the bud, blossom, fruit; a literal, a spiritual, and a moral sense. "Awake, O north wind, and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out. Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits," Cant. iv. 16. In a literal sense, Solomon's queen desires a pleasant garden to delight her husband. In a spiritual sense, the church entreats the Holy Ghost, that wind which blows where he pleaseth, to blow upon and enlarge her graces, that

Christ, *er* Husband, may take pleasure in her. In a moral sense, she would have all her children bring forth store of fruits, good works, that they might be blessed of their Father. "O daughter, forget thine own people, and thy father's house," Psal. xlv. 10. Literally, it is spoken to Pharaoh's daughter, to forget Egypt wherein she was bred and born, and to adhere to her husband Solomon. Mystically, it speaks to the church, to forget this world, wherein she was born an Egyptian, black with sins; and cleave faithfully to her beloved Christ, who had now with his own blood washed her fair, and greatly desired her beauty. So that under the title of Pharaoh's daughter, hear what the Spirit speaketh to the church. "Thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck," Cant. iv. 9. Literally, corporeal beauty is commended: chains, jewels, ornaments allowed; spiritually, graces, the beauties of the soul, and good works, the beauty of graces, are required. Only here is the difference between other trees and the tree of life. They first bud, then blossom, then send forth fruit; but the tree of life hath all these at once, Rev. xxii. 2. Yea, further, as in a tree there is the bark and the pith; so in a text are some things that lie on the upper face, and some things in the bowels of it. Thus Noah's ark literally served for the temporal deliverance of their bodies; spiritually it taught them the eternal deliverance of their souls; mystically it pre-signifies to us the deliverance of both our bodies and souls from the vengeance due to our sins. As a musician, therefore, first tries the sound of his instrument, before he plays the lesson; so now having delivered the literal sound, I come to the mystical sense.

Herein let us observe first what it taught them, next what it must teach us. It instructed them in two things.

First, it was a pledge of God's love to their souls; for he that was so careful to save their bodies from the flood of water, gave them certain hope that he would save their souls from the fire of hell. The preservation of that which was mortal and inferior, was a strong argument that the other should be safe, which was immortal and far more precious. When a house is on fire, he that redeemeth the cabinet, will not lose the jewel in it. Let it be granted, that God doth sometimes relieve the wicked from temporal plagues, and binds them over to the general session; yet is David's inference good, "By this I know that thou favour'st me, because mine enemy doth not triumph over me," Psal. xli. 11: from mercy to his body, he argues grace to his soul. We cannot conclude by inversion, that whom God doth not free from temporal judgments, he will not free from eternal: none are to be judged for outward misery. "Let her alone, for her soul is troubled, and the Lord hath hid it from me," 2 Kings iv. 27. The cause of their troubles is hid from us. "If your soul were in my soul's stead, I could heap up words against you, and shake my head at you," Job xvi. 4. I could, but I would not. But from a less benefit to a greater, is a good collection of faith. When the faithful of Israel saw the Lord's arm in delivering them from Egypt, they believed that he would bring them into Canaan. He that hath freed us from superstition, certainly means us to salvation.

Secondly, it was a confirmation of their faith and obedience. Without obedience in building the vessel, without faith in believing the promise, they saw no hope of preservation. This taught them for afterwards, what precept soever was imposed, to obey it; what promise soever was made, to trust upon it. And what could be strange to their confidence, that

had of miraculous mercy so late an experience? Some profess they believe the pardon of their sins; yet fear the want of bread, or sink under some light burden of sorrow. Is any load so heavy as the pressure of sin? Oh the weight of one sin is too much for the supportation of one man. Now hath Christ borne the talent, and can he not bear the dram? Shall we trust him with our wounds, and not with our medicines? Hath he given us the bread of life, and can he not give us the bread of earth? Shall we say with the lusting Jews, He gave us streams from the rock, but can he give flesh to his people? Psal. lxxviii. 20. Consider, will Christ deny flesh to our bodies, that hath given his own flesh to our souls? Hath he performed such sovereign pieces of gold, and will he stick at farthing tokens? He that spared not his own Son for us, what good thing will he deny us? Rom. viii. 32. Do we trust in the Lord for the remission of our sins, the resurrection of our bodies, and the everlasting salvation of our souls; and distrust him in a fever, in a scandal, in a fit of want? Certainly if he have vouchsafed us that great mercy to make us his own, he hath given the whole army of afflictions more inviolable charge concerning us, than David gave his host concerning Absalom; See ye do the young man, my son Absalom, no harm: look you never hurt them whom I have adopted.

Thus for them, now for ourselves. This ark hath also a symbolical sense, a spiritual use. It was a type and figure of Christ's church; out of which there is no hope of salvation, as out of the ark was inevitable destruction. Examine we the resemblances.

1. All that were preserved, were within the ark: all that shall be saved, must be of the church. In that great deluge, when *Omnia pontus erat, decrant quoque littore ponto*, there was no other possibility of escaping: in the huge pond and vast sea of this world, there is no hope of redemption but by Jesus Christ. Either we must be incorporate into Christ, or reprobate with the world. "The Lord adds to the church daily such as shall be saved," Acts ii. 47: to the church militant, all souls that shall be crowned in the church triumphant. As for them that were out of the ark, no gold could buy their preservation; no holes could hide them, no hills help them, no houses hold them, nothing in the world, not the world itself, could save them. So for them that be out of Christ, no riches can bestead them, no honours secure them, no policy can deliver them, no refuges can shelter them, no friends, no favour can do them good; but they must perish in the flood of God's eternal vengeance. What succour had they by the mountains, or by taking hold on the highest cedars, whom the ark received not? Such help shall men find in those worldly things wherein they have trusted, when God shall find them out of his church. What relief in their honours, upon whose foreheads the sun of promotion wantonly plays? as if that arm should never ache, that wears a silken sleeve: nay, as if the highest hills were not most subject to the lightning flashes. For the covetous, that like a spider eviscerates herself, spends her own bowels in making a web to catch a fly: how foolish is his confidence in that, which he knows will never fail him but when he hath most need! Alas, he cannot buy Christ with it; and therefore must expect Simon Magus's doom, Thou and thy money perish together. There is no other name given to men under heaven, to be saved by, but the name of Jesus, Acts iv. 12: nothing in nature, nothing in art, nothing in the world, no other creature, no other name. In vain they think to sail in their cock-boats, or swim with their windy bladders: every heresy is a little bark by itself, and while it is not troubled, it goes on

with proud sails like a merchant's ship; but vexed, you shall find it a man of war. Every factious and discontented humour is like a bladder, which the peevish refractory puts under his arm, and he will not be beholden to the ark for passage, he can swim to shore. Let such sullen spirits hear and fear: as a man will not admit that person to his house who loves not his family, so they that forsake the church must be forsaken of Christ.

2. As God was the Pilot of the ark, so Christ is the Governor of the church. The superstitious Romanists have their several saints for several services; for the teeth, Apollonia; for soldiers, St. Maurice; for seamen, St. Nicholas. As those gross idolaters in heathen times marshalled their gods into several ranks; allotting heaven for Jupiter, hell for Pluto, and the sea for Neptune. But the Lord is all in all to us, our Pilot on the sea, our Captain on the land. We tender not our petitions to the no gods of the Gentiles, or to the moe gods of the papists; we do not trouble the blessed virgin for every thing, as if her Son Jesus were still a babe, and not able to help us; but we go to Christ for all. That same ship in the prophet, every man calling upon his god, *Jonah i. 5*, is a map or model of Rome; one calling on St. Francis, another on St. Anthony, &c. But if we love learning, the Lord is our Gregory, the God of wisdom; if soldiers, he is our Mars and Maurice, the Lord of hosts; if mariners, he is our Neptune and Nicholas, that commands the winds and seas, and they obey him, *Matt. viii. 27*. As Cæsar said to the trembling mariner, *Confide nauta, Cæsarem rehis*, Be not afraid, thou earnest Cæsar: so, O church, be comforted; he that is in thee, for thee, with thee, that guides thee, that will save thee, is the invincible King, Jesus Christ.

3. The matter of the ark was not every kind of wood, but the pine: nor is every one admitted into the church, but such as the Lord hath chosen; which are not born of blood, nor will of the flesh, but of the will of God, *John i. 13*. The Lord often leaves the lofty cedar, that overlooks the rest with an imperious top; and the sturdy oak, him that will not stoop to his word; the melancholy yew, the hollow-hearted elder, the intractable thorn, the hypocritical ivy, that by embracing the tree sucks out the heart of it. He chooseth the vine for his orchard, the pine for his ark: he first hews us out of the wilderness of sin, takes away the ruggedness of our nature, and having planed us by grace, puts us into his church, where we fit with the rest in unanimous obedience. (*Epiph.*)

4. The ark consisted of many pieces of wood joined together: and the church doth not consist of one man, or one sort of men; but of every nation and kindred, language and people, *Rev. vii. 9*. Many souls compacted into one body, many Christians into one communion of saints. And all these make but one ark, one church. One world shows that there is but one God; one God, that there is but one church: one church, that there is but one truth. Therefore is it called *columna veritatis*, and *columba unitatis*: The sweetest music consists of many well-tuned voices: if there be any jarring and contentious spirit, he is out of tune, none of the Christian concert. Let us live as we sing, and our hearts go with our voices; this is the concert of the church. God doth seldom divide his graces among divided spirits; if we will not be at one with ourselves, he will not be at one with us. A shevelled thread is hardly got through the needle's eye. The Spirit is one, and said to speak by the mouth of all the prophets, *Luke i. 70*: not *per ora*, sed *per os*: as if all the prophets had but one mouth; to show the singular harmony of

their concord. That Spirit which came in a dove will not come but upon a dove. When we delight in discord, our assemblings are dissemblings, our convocations provocations, every man vultuous, wedded to a wife that foels him, self-will: here is as little argument of a Christian congregation, as the confusion of Babel was like the harmony of the temple. An unsquared stone, a warping board, a jarring spirit, must not be put into the building of Christ.

5. The ark was pitched within and without, the better to keep out the water. So must every Christian be joined into the body, with profession and sincerity; sound-habited without, sound-hearted within. Nor profession, nor sincerity, are sufficient asunder; both do well together. Jericho was pleasant of situation, but the springs were naught, *2 Kings ii. 19*: many men's profession is fair, but the fountain, the heart, is infected. Laish was a barren turf, but the heart of the ground was good, had it been tilled: so some have a little religion hid in their consciences, but for want of husbanding their graces it perisheth. But God cannot abide a wanton Christian: a wanton Jew, Turk, pagan, is bad enough; but none so intolerable as a wanton Christian. As in many things we sin all, so in some things we may obey all; but one line makes no geometry, nor doth one act put Christianity. Neither the timber rotten at the heart, how fair soever to the eye, nor the timber crooked and ill-favoured to the eye, how sound soever at the heart, shall be put into Christ's ark. To be good, and not to appear; to appear good, and not to be; is not the way to glorify God, or for him to glorify us.

6. In the ark were divers rooms, so in the church are divers places and gifts, as in heaven there be divers mansions. Many distinct offices in a ship, the pilot, captain, boatswain, mariners, concur all in one care for the preservation of the vessel. In the church be apostles, prophets, pastors, teachers; yet all tend to the edification of the body of Christ, *1 Cor. xii. 28*; *Eph. iv. 11, 12*. There is nothing more endangers confusion, than for one to intrude into another's room; displacing the members from their proper faculties and functions: when the rude hind will be a counsellor of state, the ignorant secretary be made a bishop, and Jack Cade a justice of peace. It is no easy wisdom, rightly to distinguish our own office: all parts have their several functions; and *tractant fabrilis fabri*. The foot must not usurp the office of the hand, nor the hand intrude upon the office of the head. *Alud plectrum, alud septrum*. So look to others' vineyards, that thou be sure to keep thine own, *Cant. i. 6*. If we be Christ's faithful soldiers, let us keep our station, and fight it out with victorious courage. What room in the ship soever is assigned us, let us make that good. In God's arithmetic there be no ciphers: we must be something on earth, or we shall be nothing in heaven.

7. In the ark were beasts clean and unclean; in the church are sinners blended among the righteous. The Lord did sow good seed in his field, whence then hath it tares? *Matt. xiii. 27*. The devil hath no ground of his own, but he soweth in God's field, and upon God's seed: so the corruption of the good is the generation of the bad. These tares are not of God's sowing; it is none of his fault; all that he made was exceeding good, *Gen. i. 31*. The church militant is a heaven, but on earth; therefore not without the firebrands of hell. Let no man leave God's floor because there is some chaff, nor break his net because there is some baggage, nor run out of his field because there is some cockle, nor depart from his house because there be some vessels of dishonour. God would have spared a city for ten good

ones, Gen. xviii. 32, and shall we refuse a church for ten bad ones? I avoid the chaff, lest I become chaff; I keep the floor, lest I become nothing. (August.) This their accusation of the church is vain; if men cannot prove it, they shame themselves; if they do prove it, they deny Christ; for his clear answer was, "Let both grow together until the harvest." Either because the bad may turn good; God can make a Luther of a monk, a St. Augustine of a Manichee; or because the good are exercised and tried by the bad. If Arius had not held a trinity of substances with a trinity of persons; and Sabellius, a unity of persons with a unity of essence; the mysteries of the Trinity had not been so clearly explained by those great lights of the church. If Rome had not so violently obtruded her merits, the doctrine of justification by faith in Christ only might have been less digested in men's hearts. We may say here, as Augustine doth of Carthage and Rome, *Magis nocuit Romanis Carthago tam cito eversa, quam prius nocebat tam diu adersa*. If some enemies had not contested against the church, it might have gone worse with the church. But let them bear the rack of their own fancies, whose schismatical torn opinions are stitched together with a skein of sisters' thread, and rounded with the bobbin-lace and selvage of reformation. Critical quarrels argue hypocritical hearts; and if they prevent it not by humility and unity, the ark holds none so unclean as themselves.

8. The ark was tossed of the waves, and all the storms of the world spent their furies upon it, yet could it not be overwhelmed. When the winds, waters, weathers, had done their worst, still Noah's preservation was sure. The more the water rose against it, the more the ark rose above it; and the higher it was raised by the flood, the safer it was from the danger of hills and rocks. In the midst of water it was saved from water, and the danger itself was made a defence against the danger. Thus sure of salvation is every one in Christ, nothing can cross it. The deluge of calamities may assault us, but they shall exalt us. The more they seek to press us down, the more they shall lift us up; the nearer they would sink us to hell, the higher they shall advance us to heaven. Through all the gusts of temptations, and floods of afflictions, we shall be borne safe in Christ's ark. Nothing shall pluck them out of my hand, John x. 28. Satan cannot, he is cast out; tyrants cannot, for if we suffer, we conquer; sin cannot, for grace abounds above sin; sickness cannot, God is strongest when we are weakest; death cannot, that serpent hath lost the sting. Indeed all our voyage is a tempestuous navigation: the shore from which we launch, is our nativity; the port whither we are bound, supernal felicity; the sea we must pass, full of raging calamity; the ship wherein we sail, full of sweet security. There will be cross winds, but let us rest in the ark, the church, and trust in the Pilot, Christ, and our danger is not half so sure as our deliverance; we may fall of grievous afflictions upon earth, we shall not fail of glorious salvation in heaven.

9. Noah's body being entered into the ark, seemed there a dead man; that vessel being a grave or tomb unto him, wherein he was buried. Yet was that, by God's appointment, the means to save him, which in all reason seemed to bury him. And if Noah will be safe, he must go into this sepulchre, and be buried in the ark, as the ark in the water. So must there be in us a mortification of lusts, and burial of our corruptions; and there is no way to everlasting life but thus. The soul cannot live while the sin doth live: one of the two must die, the corruption or the person. Thus is death the way to life; and mortifica-

tion of lust, to the resurrection of bliss. He that thus dieth not, never lives; and he that is not thus buried, never riseth again with comfort.

In how wretched an estate then are many, that scarce know what mortification means; unless it be to mortify grace, and to bury all holiness! The old man reigns, and the new man serves; corruption lives, and grace is dead. To mortify goodness by our sins, this is common; but to mortify our sins by goodness, this is rare. What a preposterous change is this! Christ should live in us, and we crucify him again; sin should be crucified in us, and that liveth. But this is a true saying, He that will live when he is dead, must die while he is alive. Proceed we then, after this spiritual death, to the burial of our sins. It was the manner of the Jews, to bury their dead with odours: bury we sin with the incense of our prayers against it, that it may never return upon us. Only two things let us avoid in the burial of our sins, which we observe in the burial of our friends. 1. When we bury our friends, we do it with mourning, to testify our loves, that we are loth to part with them. Our sins must not be so buried; no sorrow at their departure: no man weeps to lose an enemy, nor grieves to be rid of a tyrant. Shall we sorrow to lose the proper cause of our sorrow? It was good news for Israel, that Sisera was dead in the tent of Jael; and Deborah sings, So perish all thine enemies, O Lord. Let them be buried with joy, that cannot be kept without danger. 2. When we inter the bodies of our friends, it is done in hope that they shall rise again: by no means so bury we our sins; let there be no desire of their resurrection; wrong not the sepulchres of the dead, let them sleep for ever. Otherwise, like Judas, and Demas, and such hypocrites, they bury them not in their forgotten graves, but in their own hearts. And so their sins shall rise with their bodies, and go with them to judgment.

Lastly, the apostle compares it to baptism: that which was Noah's ark to them, the same is baptism to us; the ark saved them, baptism saveth us. "The like figure whereunto," &c. 1 Pet. iii. 21. The particular instance, or point of reference, is baptism; the general, is the church. For baptism no otherwise saveth us, than as it is a seal of our admission into the church, and incorporating into Christ. Therefore it is a synecdochical speech, the part for the whole, the door for the house, baptism for the church.

Baptism is the door of entrance into this ark; therefore the sacred font is commonly placed near the temple door. As in Solomon's temple were three rooms, the porch, the body, and the holy of holies; and they must pass through the one into the other: so in Christianity, we cannot enter the holiest of all, but by the church; nor into the church, but by the porch of baptism. There must first be shipping, then sailing, last of all arriving: we must be shipped with Christ by baptism, sail with him in the pinnace of the church, or else not arrive at the coast of eternal blessedness.

The end of baptism is double; principal, and less principal. The principal is to assure us of two things. First, the remission of our sins; "Be baptized in the name of Jesus, for the remission of sins," Acts ii. 38. And next, that we are within God's covenant, partakers of his grace here, and of his glory hereafter. The less principal consists in three things. 1. To note a distinction between Christians and infidels; a cognizance or livery, to tell the world whose servants we are; the colours of that General under whom we fight. 2. To be the bond of Christian society. "Keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond

of peace." Why? Because there is "one faith, one baptism," Eph. iv. 3, 5. We are all baptized into one Christ: the remembrance of our baptism is enough to stay contention. 3. It is a profession of homage to that God, even those three Persons, in whose name we are baptized. And it is a holy memorial of Christ's baptizing in the sea of his Father's wrath for us.

Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into heaven, John iii. 5. As the Spirit is an inward necessary cause, so baptismal water is an outward necessary means, of our regeneration. It incorporates us to Christ; so that the body of the baptized is become the flesh of him that was crucified. The day of the infant's baptizing, is the day of his marriage, wherein he is made the spouse of Christ by the union of the Spirit. As Christ was made our flesh by being born, so we are made his flesh by being new-born: the Spirit being in the new birth instead of a father, and water instead of a mother.

As there is a long antiquity of sacraments, so a special necessity. For antiquity: in Paradise was a tree of knowledge and a tree of life; both sacramental trees. For necessity: as a man consists of two parts, one visible, the other invisible; so respondent be the means to draw him to heaven, the word and sacraments: and a father calls the sacrament, a visible word, (August.) We fell from God to Satan by visible things; God brings us back from Satan to himself by visible things. Wherein we may see the infirmity of our natures; the Lord is fain to stay us up by many helps, the word for our ears, the sacraments for our eyes. If we see a house held up by props, pins, columns, and supporters, we say, it is certainly old, sore, and weak of itself.

I do not enforce an absolute necessity of this, as if God could not save us without it. Of its own virtue it hath no such power to salvation; water of itself being readier to drown than to save; especially the infant being dipped into it. No man concludes the innocents out of the ark to be damned and cast into hell; so nor the infants of Christians that die unbaptized. It pleaseth the Lord to admit infants to baptism, though they be not able to answer for themselves. And as it was in his justice to impute my sin to my child, to make it guilty; so it pleaseth his mercy to take my faith for my child, to make it holy.

"Open thy mouth for the dumb in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction," Prov. xxxi. 8. Still the Lord requires our speech for those speechless little ones, whom the bloody papists appoint to destruction. They cannot answer for themselves; but the Lord Jesus, when he was on earth, spake for them; and he hath sent us to plead their cause. They have those great dukes and peers of heaven for their patrons, the angels, Matt. xviii. 10; and shall we be silent?

Parents love to hear well of their children's states in this life, much more should they inquire of their state to come. The greater their joy in them, the greater their sorrow for them; especially when they fall sick in the field, and die at home, as the Shunammite's son, 2 Kings iv. 20; but more especially if, like David's son, 2 Sam. xii. 18, they die without the sacrament. Then their ignorance and distrust put them into a hopeless grief; as if they were of the stock of Ishmael, and not the seed of Israel. And even those that will not keep their hours with God and the church, in respect of state and outward compliment; yet take on with God and man if their children miss baptism. I would they did think of that woman's speech to Elijah, "Art thou come to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son?"

1 Kings xvii. 18; that God in slaying their sons, brings to remembrance their sins. But that good Lord, who punisheth our neglect, shows mercy to those little ones. They often vanish from us in a night, before we have scarce looked on their faces; but the God of compassion, who pities them in Ashur and Nineveh, will he forget the seed of Christians? We miss them in our arms; behold, they are in the arms of God. They are plucked from the mother's bosom, but unto Abraham's bosom; translated from a cradle below, to a throne of immortality above. How oft doth a friend among men, take a babe from the poor feeble mother, and bring it up as his own; as Pharaoh's daughter did Moses! And shall not God take a child from the womb, or wean it from the breast, to have it nursed in heaven, lest it should find ill bringing up here?

Let this comfort parents against that unmerciful doctrine of Rome; teaching that if children die on earth without baptism, they must die hereafter without mercy. That infants who cannot speak or do ill, whose flesh is but new-quickened in the womb, or bones scarce gristled out of the womb, should pass from the darkness of the womb, to outer darkness for ever; this is the voice of the dragon gored with blood. The Lamb of God speaks better things, and gives his blood to these little lambs. David grieved for the child sick, but desired not respite of life for circumcision; and though the child died on the seventh day, (which had been terrible, if the want of a day had lost it for ever,) yet he then ceased mourning.

The children of Israel forbore circumcision forty years, during all their journey in the wilderness, Josh. v. 5: will they pronounce damnatory sentence on all them? If not, why then on ours? Hath the state of the gospel less mercy and pity than the law? Goes it harder with the infants under Christ, than under Moses? They had a set day for circumcision, the eighth; we have none defined: hath not the Lord in this left it freer? Those infant martyrs, to whose memory they observe a feast as to saints, desired nor baptism, nor their friends for them; much less that baptism of blood; but their hearts rather bled for it; yet are they glorious in heaven. John Baptist seems not to have been baptized himself, by his answer to Christ, "I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" Matt. iii. 14. God's love is no fancy that the want of baptism may break off. It were heavy for the poor child to be lost for the parent's or minister's negligence.

To say that baptism, even the most ritually and formally administered, saveth of itself, is to deify it, and to make a god of the water, with the Gentiles. But the Lord saveth, and when he pleaseth, without that. "This day is salvation come to this house; he also is a son of Abraham," saith Christ of Zaccheus, Luke xix. 9. This day, and yet that was not the day of his baptism: he was made the son of Abraham, yet was not washed in Jordan. The eunuch by faith, Cornelius by devotion, Lydia by obedience, received grace before baptism. Mary Magdalene, that scoured on to sin as if seven devils drove her, with tide, wind, and sail, found mercy before baptism; "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace," Luke vii. 50: thy faith, not thy baptism.

True sanctification may be without the visible sign, as the visible sign may be without true sanctification. One of their side saith, necessity is twofold. 1. Absolute, as meat is for life. 2. Or convenient, as a horse is for a journey. (Alzime.) Baptism is necessary this last way. Yea, a great peal of their own voices doth repeat that merciless sentence, which, like Herod, hath sent out a decree against

young infants, who because they enjoy but a little of this life, must lose all the next. Indeed, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved;" but it is added withal, "He that believeth not," whether baptized or no, "shall be damned," Mark xvi. 16.

To conclude, let us make a double use of this; the one for obedience, the other for faith. The former is a direction for our obedience, that we use the appointed means, baptism. The other for our faith, that we build not our salvation upon baptism, but upon God's election and grace.

1. For obedience. Baptism cannot be wilfully neglected without great sin. Let us neither with the papists make it absolutely necessary; nor with the Manichees, wholly unnecessary; nor inconvenient with the Anabaptists, because they are children and cannot profess. But seeing children have sin, they ought to be washed; and seeing they belong to God, they ought to be sealed. Seeing the Lord hath commanded it, let us perform it. Seeing he hath promised the washing away of sin, by pouring on of water; let us pour on water for the washing away of sin. Otherwise we despise not the minister of the sign, but the God of both sign and minister: and for those that refuse the sign, it is a sign they refuse the grace; and deserve the reproof of Ahaz. Is it a small thing to grieve men, but will you grieve God also? Isa. vii. 13. This was the condemnation of the Pharisees and lawyers; they "rejected the counsel of God against themselves," in this very point of not being baptized of John, Luke vii. 30. It is not only the bare element, but the power of God with it, his wisdom to establish it, his constancy to maintain it, his holiness to sanctify it, and his mercy to bless it.

When time, place, minister, all things concur, let not us be wanting. They are young flowers, soon nipped by death's cold hand. Perhaps some human additions we dislike, yet know that this overthrow is not the ordinance of God. The foundation is sure, what stable soever be built upon it: fire shall purge that, God's institution shall save thee. If thou mayst have it pure and uncompounded, so take it; if otherwise, do not refuse it: let no ceremony of man prejudice the ordinance of God.

And as we honour the sacrament, so let us honour the word; for that must go with the element, to make a sacrament. The word hath saved some without baptism; what men hath baptism saved without the word? The promise of the gospel is the writing, baptism the seal. The certainty of the writing is from the seal, but the validity of the seal is from the writing. Indeed, neither writing nor seal can save, without the Holy Ghost to apply them. In baptism, as in Bethesda, if the Spirit move on the face of the waters, then there is healing, John v. 4. The serpent prevaileth against us in *sicca*, in the dry ground; but in *aqua*, in the water, he loseth all his venom. (Cyprian.) Satan's malicious power is lost in the sacramental waters.

2. For faith, depend we upon the election of God, which shall stand with means, if he afford it; without means, if he deny it. Among men, first the conditions are agreed upon, then the seal is annexed; so God first receiveth into covenant, and then sealeth. Men first possess their sheep, then mark them; first we muster up soldiers, then levy out some, and give them press-money. The father being a good landlord, after the grant of a tenement to a poor man, dies without sealing it. Yet the right dies not, seeing an honest son cometh in place, who will be a confirmation to his father's promise, a seal to his grant. God the Father hath granted a covenant of grace to the believer and his seed, promised them an estate of life in his Son Jesus: though haply the young seed

be prevented of this outward seal, baptism: yet the good Son Christ will perform to them his Father's promise, and seal them up to eternal life. The claim of the proprietary is good, albeit no actual mark be set upon his goods. The mark of God is invisible; "The Lord knoweth them that are his," 2 Tim. ii. 19; and, "My sheep shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand," John x. 28. Not a sheep, not the least lamb of a day old, yea, not that which is scarce yeaned and brought into the world. "The dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born;" he watched upon the very birth, yet the "child was caught up unto God, and to his throne," Rev. xii. 4. 5. If the sin of the first Adam could bring an everlasting taint upon them, why cannot the blood of the Second Adam wipe it out for ever? The infant cannot reason, yet hath it the seed of reason; it hath a soul, though it know not so much; why then may it not have faith? Children must come to Christ. What children? Little ones, that have but little reason; yet theirs is the kingdom of heaven, Matt. xix. 14. If so, then are they clean, for no unclean thing shall enter that holy city, Rev. xxi. 27: now what cleanseth but faith? This faith then they have after a miraculous inspiration, by that blessed wind that bloweth itself pleaseth where, and gets in no man knows how, John iii. 8. Draco's laws altogether concluded in death; death for this, death for that, nothing but the fatal noise of death. But Christ is no dragon, he is rather a Lamb that takes away the sins of the world, a world of sins; much more will he heal these little lambs of his flock. The blood of Abel crieth for vengeance, but Christ crieth with a stronger and more gracious voice, Heb. xii. 24; My blood for all blood, my body for all sin, even of mine enemies. If he were a Herod in his butcherly doom, Rachel might weep and make lamentation for her little ones, and refuse comfort, because they are not. If the grave and hell, those ministers of vengeance, were to devour those unbaptized little ones; then every mother and father, sister and friend, might howl and mourn, answering one another with doleful plaints and remediless moanings, and have no comfort, because they are not; yea, which is worse, because they are, that is, they are in endless sorrow. But blessed be God, that hath sealed us a better covenant: praised be he, that hath given us better assurance and comfort, through the Son of his love, Jesus Christ.

VERSE 6.

And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly.

This is the third instance of God's severity and mercy; severity to the obstinate, mercy to the penitent. First, he confounded the apostate angels, and preserved the obedient. Secondly, he drowned the secure world, and saved the faithful Noah. Here he burned the ungodly cities, and delivered the just Lot. He begun with honour and sublimity, casting down angels; to show that no exaltation can privilege rebellion against his will. He went on with multitude and universality, drowning a whole world; to show that no numbers, legions, or armies of sinners can prevail against his justice. He concludes with opulency and worldly estate, in this overthrow of Sodom; to

show that no riches and prosperity can avail in the day of wrath.

Sodom was a second Eden, the garden of the world; yet he that for transgression did throw Adam out of Paradise, did also for the same reason overthrow Sodom with all her pleasures. There only eight were saved out of the whole world, and here are but half eight delivered from this ruin. And as one of those eight was after cursed by his father, and became a precedent for all rebellious children; so one of these four was punished by the Father of all, and for her tergiversation, or retrospedition rather, was turned into a pillar of salt, and became a monument of apostacy to all succeeding ages: this was Lot's wife.

Only this latter exceeded the former destruction in some things. 1. For generality; it was more universal and impartial: eight there escaped, here but four. 2. In regard of the instrument; that was by water, this by fire, an element of greater fury and torment. 3. For the suddenness; the water drowned them by degrees, so that by the continued ascending it might soften them to repentance. The fire consumed all those quickly, without giving them leisure to think of their sins, save with a desperate consideration. 4. The water choked their corporeal lives, and killed only that was mortal: there is hope that some of their souls escaped. But here the elementary fire sent them to eternal fire, and their destruction was followed with damnation.

Two principals in the verse:

The punishment, Turning the cities, &c.

The monument, Made them an ensample.

The punishment is described by three terms, which are,

Burning.

Overthrowing.

Condemning.

Some would have them all signify one thing, as if they were divers characters of the same destruction: but this doth not sufficiently honour the pen of the Holy Ghost. We may better resolve it thus; referring the burning to the devastation of their cities, the overthrowing to the spilling of their lives, and the condemning to the perdition of their souls. Their cities were burned, their bodies subverted, their souls condemned. Wherein the Lord, like some angry warrior, not only contents himself to ransack the houses of their goods, but fires their cities; nor is so pacified, but puts all to the sword: as Saul had a charge for Amalek. Utterly destroy all they have, slay man and woman, infant and beast, 1 Sam. xv. 3. Yea, he goes further than any mortal conqueror; for they can punish but temporally and corporally, but the Lord eternally; they suffer "the vengeance of eternal fire," Jude 7.

The monument hath two things in it:

What, An ensample,

To whom, To those, &c.

So that if we avoid their sins, we shall escape their plagues. Here are various observations deducible.

First, the number of the cities; but two are mentioned in the text, but certainly more were involved in the ruin. "All the plain," Gen. xix. 25: likely that more cities on that plain than two. It was a great circuit of ground, as appeareth by the Dead Sea there, which Josephus, who was brought up in the country, gives to be threescore and twelve miles in length, and nineteen miles broad. The number of them is most like to be four, so many rehearsed by Moses, "Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim," Deut. xxix. 23. But it is objected, that the fire fell down upon the five cities, Wisd. x. 6: therefore five. Some think that Zoar also perished, though

for a time it was preserved by the intercession of Lot. But this supposition is false, for it was known by the name of Zoar in Isaiah's time; "His fugitives shall flee unto Zoar," Isa. xv. 5. Before it was called Bela; now, as Lot changed the name, so God changed the condition: little in quantity, great in the favour of mercy. And for that of the five cities, the word is Pentapolis, that is the place where those five cities stood. Two more cities perished, but Sodom and Gomorrah are only mentioned, because they were the capital cities, and metropolises both in the sin and punishment. Where observe,

The force of example prevaileth strongly to produce the likeness of manners. The authority of greatness doth often corrupt the integrity of goodness. The bad conditions of popular persons are like Jacob's speckled rods, which make he sheep, the beasts of the people, bring forth the party-coloured actions. The ill custom of an eminent place is drawn up like some pestilent exhalation, and corrupteth the air round about. The proverb speaks of bad customs, bad opinions, and bad servants; that they are better to hang than to hold. If Jeroboam worship calves, how easily will most Israelites become such beasts! We may say of an exemplary sin, as Joab of Rabbah, it will be called after the founder's own name. A stone thrown into the water, makes of itself but one circle, but that one begets a hundred. Though few men will confess their sins, yet many men's sins will confess their masters. To beget a precedent of vice, is like the setting a man's own house on fire; it burns many of his neighbours', and he shall answer for all the ruins. A sick head makes a disordered body, a blind eye endangers all the members. A ruler's unrighteousness, like the late blazing star, it hath a long tail, draws a train of mischiefs after it, and is ominous to the whole land. Whereas piety in a prince, like Aaron's ointment, runs down to the skirts of his garments, blesseth all his subjects.

An exemplary offender is like a maleficious man sick of the plague, that runs into the throng to disperse his infection. Sodom's filthiness is not confined at home, but runs, like Nilus, over all the plain; not a village but glories in the imitation. When a public person is tempted to sin, he should answer as Nehemiah, when he was tempted to flee: "Should such a man as I flee?" Neh. vi. 11. Should such a man as I thus grossly offend? To sin before the face of God, is to dishonour him; but withal to sin before the face of men, is doubly to dishonour him. Many an Israelite committed fornication, and yet upon repentance got pardon: but Zimri, that would wilfully do it in the face of God and man, was sure to perish. This aggravated David's error, that it made the enemies of God to blaspheme.

Such a bitter root shall answer for itself, and for all the corrupt branches: as sin that is done abroad, ceaseth to be single, it is many sins in one. Let us therefore give good example: when Christ told that noble petitioner, Thy son liveth, at the first hearing he believed; but when he came home, and weighed the matter, not only himself, but, by his means, the whole household believed, John iv. 50, 53. And for those that take advantage to sin by precedent, *Tutum est peccare auctoribus illis*, let this be their terror. Other cities followed Sodom's lust, and they were all consumed with Sodom's fire. It is a common plea, Our fathers did thus before us, and the whole world doth thus about us. But what comfort is it, to fulfil the measure of our forefathers, or to perish with our neighbours? The high priest's servants can make Peter deny his Master. Let Korah kindle a fire of conspiracy, two hundred and fifty

captains will bring wood to increase it. A lewd man draws vengeance on others, by the punishment of his sin, or by the infection of it.

Secondly, the matter: they were cities; not hamlets or villages, but populous and walled cities. Famous cities, not less than kingdoms: "The king of Sodom," &c. Gen. xiv. 8. Fruitful cities, as the garden of God, Gen. xiii. 10. Cities lent to men, but better beseming the majesty of God: so glorious that they tempted a saint. Lot seeing the goodly plains of Jordan, the commodious springs, delightful rivers, richness of the soil, situation of the towns, without inquiring further, is in love with Sodom. Observe,

1. That the strongest cities are not shot-proof against the arrows of God; but even things ordained for refuge, are by his justice made destructive. There is nothing peaceable where God is an enemy. The wind is a meteor whereby in some sort we live, a fan in the Lord's hand to purge the air: yet how often doth he make it carry infection on the wings, and ruin buildings with violence! Children are comfortable fruits; yet was David scourged, and Sennacherib butchered, by their own bowels. Samson is betrayed by the wife of his bosom: and the Israelites die of quails provided for their sustenance. In vain we build, unless the Lord lay the first stone; or plant, unless he say, Let it grow. Blessed is the city whose gates God barreth up with his power, and openeth again with his mercy, Psal. cxlviii. 13. There is nothing can defend where his justice will strike: and there is nothing can offend where his goodness will preserve.

2. Sin can bring down the most magnific cities, and lay them even with the ground. Can Sodom's pomp of state, confluence of pleasures, abundance of riches, pride of inhabitants, secure her life? It was God's challenge to Nineveh, "Art thou better than No?" Nah. iii. 8. Let it be a challenge to London, Art thou richer than Sodom? It is written of Tyros, that her merchants were princes, and her traffickers the honourable men of the earth; yet God makes disport at her overthrow, "Is this your joyous city," &c.? Isa. xxiii. 7. Babylon, a little world in itself; Jerusalem, the pride of the whole earth; both found wickedness to undo their composition. Rome, styled that eternal city, shall feel the immortality of her soul, supremacy over kings, trodden under feet. Greatness of sin will shake the foundation of the greatest cities, though their heads stood among the clouds, and lay their honour in the dust.

3. None of these wicked cities escaped. Strabo thinks that some fled away; but men, women, children, houses, plants, monuments, all that grew on the earth, were destroyed, Gen. xix. 25. And who will wonder that their ungodliness brought destruction upon the harmless creatures, that considers, how we noent wretches caused innocence itself to be crucified for us? Not only were the plants and herbs smitten for the time, but cursed into everlasting barrenness, Psal. cxvii. 34: see Isa. xxxiv. 9, and Wisd. x. 7. There now runs the Salt and Dead Sea, whose bitterness is such, that no fish can live in it. (Arist.) Others that have viewed the country affirm, that no grass growth there, and that it still smoketh: that the fruit appeareth fair; but within, it is nothing but embers and rottenness. (Joseph.) Inasmuch, that the proverb makes a Sodom apple the emblem of a hypocrite. So universal was their corruption, that some think they brought up their children to their own beastly conditions. Young and old, a concourse of all the city, Gen. xix. 4. With fury, envy, and lust provoked, they dare attempt that in troops, which to act single had been too detestable; to imagine, un-

natural. Continuance in evil makes wicked men worse; but company in evil, worst of all.

Therefore God destroyed them all; the community of their sin preceded the universality of their ruin. Here is the difference betwixt God's people and idolaters: the latter are destroyed utterly, but of his church the Lord always leaves a number, some seeds to increase his harvest. "Except the Lord had left us a seed, we should have been as Sodom, and like unto Gomorrah," Isa. i. 9. In this we shall not be like Sodom; which is our special comfort: though this whole land groan under sins, and all the foundations be out of course; yet there are some that fear God in sincerity of heart, and Christ hath his number of elect among us. And so long as that number remains, we shall not be made as Sodom, the matter of fire and brimstone, a stink to our neighbours about us, and a scorn to all succeeding generations. But disclaim we our own merits, and honour the true cause of all our happiness, the mercy of God, whose compassions fail not, Lam. iii. 22.

5. Great is the danger of living in opulent and delightful places. That Sodom abounded with all variety of pleasures, it is plain: being watered with the river Jordan, as Paradise with Euphrates, and Egypt with Nilus; yea, Egypt was watered with more difficulty: as appears, Deut. xi. 10. Jordan was the noblest of all rivers, rising out of two fountains, Jor, and Dan: from both the heads, united in the valley, it was called Jordan. It was famous for four occasions. 1. For the passing of the Israelites over it, the waters being miraculously divided, and a monument set up in the midst of it, Josh. iv. 18. 2. For the parting of the stream again by Elisha, after that Elijah was by the same river taken up in a fiery chariot, 2 Kings ii. 14. 3. For the healing of Naaman the Syrian of his leprosy: he thought as well of Abana and Pharpar; but the Lord was with Jordan, 2 Kings v. 12. 4. For the baptizing of our blessed Saviour, Matt. iii. 13: above all other waters he seemed to honour Jordan.

This noble river serving so ignoble a country, made it fruitful, that Lot's heart was fixed on it. Outward appearances are deceitful guides, and it is no hard thing for the affection to cozen the judgment. He is worthy to be deceived, that values things as they seem. He pays dear for his rashness; war spoileth Sodom, and Lot is taken prisoner with all his substance. Now that Abraham, whom he forsook, must rescue him; and that wealth which made him leave his uncle, is become a prey to merciless heathens. The place which his eye covetously chose, betrays his life and goods. How easy is it for men, while they look at gain, to lose themselves!

Such was the richness of Sodom, full of magnificent buildings, gardens, vineyards, pastures, a concurrence of all earthly commodities; therefore the more likely to run into all licentiousness. The people of Laish, because they wanted nothing, would have business with no man, Judg. xviii. 7. Where is no want is much wantonness; and to be rich in temporals hastens poverty in spirituals. What should humble them, that do not find themselves to stand in need of God? Cyrus would not suffer his Persians to change a barren soil for a fruitful; because dainty habitations make dainty inhabitants. If we consider Silaris, and Campania; the storehouse of Rome, Sicily; the stove of luxury, Capua; where can we look, that the rankness of the soil hath not betrayed itself in the rankness of sin? Men have natural inclinations according to the genius of their country; and it is rare to find God's piety where is God's plenty. In a scantiness, the things themselves do stint and restrain our appetites; but where is abundance, and the measure is left to our own discretion,

our discretion is too often deceived. "The fat valleys of them that are overcome with wine," 1-a. xxviii. 1. They that live in fat valleys are soon overcome with wine. To apply it.

Islands are the richest soils, therefore islanders are held the most riotous people. We lie at the dugs of a most fruitful mother, repose ourselves in her indulgent bosom; we live in as dangerous a place for prosperity as Sodom; and as the fattest earth is most slippery for footing, we had need of special grace at every turn, and urgent cause to pray for that grace, that in the midst of all abundance we may not want temperance. Agur's prayer is no paradox, "Give me neither poverty nor riches," Prov. xxx. 8: both extremes are dangerous, but the greater peril is in the excess than defect. Let us pray with St. Paul, that we may know how to want; but especially that we may know how to be full and abound in all things, Phil. iv. 12. The prayers of our church have it, let our understandings mark it, and our hearts implore it; "In all time of our wealth, good Lord, deliver us." When God himself tells us, how hard it is to be made happy by being made wealthy; and we see by experience, how common a precipice it is to destruction; we find cause to redouble that petition, "In all time of our wealth, good Lord, deliver us."

The pride of apparel, excess of cheer, and superabundance of ebriety, are the effects of an opulent kingdom. Have we not seen them that make artificial conveyances of sin to posterity, that labour to purchase vice a perpetuity, that have leisure to study arguments for the justification of evil? Thrice happy he that can be chaste in Sodom, that can be temperate in England. Thus high are we grown in prosperity and iniquity. Let us all look back upon Sodom: methinks we should rather wish to learn at the charges and by the stripes of others, than that the doctrine of destruction should come to our own doors. We see great cities, mighty kingdoms, and the fairest flowers of all histories, trampled under foot: they should learn us to beware. Peace we have, and the God of peace continue it, to his glory and our good. The bees may hive themselves in our helmets, and our horses of war have little use, save to draw our coaches up and down the streets. It is the eyesore of our enemies, and let envy look herself blind. Yet let not all this secure us, lest we be forced unto that forlorn cry, Oh that our fear had looked forward to the prevention, before our sorrow constrains us to look backward upon this desolation! Let repentance cure our sins, and procure mercy to our souls, and bring us to that city above; where is plenty of riches, plenty of honours, plenty of pleasures, plenty of knowledge, love, joy; plenty of all blessings, without all abuse of plenty.

5. We are sent to the Author of this dire overthrow, the Lord, He turned the cities, &c. "The Lord rained brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven," Gen. xix. 24. It is not enough to say, the Lord rained from himself; nor doth it only signify a miraculous rain, beside the course of nature: but well have the fathers urged this place to prove the eternity of Christ, to whom the Father hath committed all judgment: the Lord Christ did rain, from Jehovah the Lord his Father.

Those wonderful events, which the ignorant ascribe to fortune, the atheist to nature, the superstitious to their idols, the politician to his plots, the proud to his own power, too many to second causes; in all these the servants of God look higher, resolving all such effects to their first principle, the finger of God. The fame of Alexander, the renown of Caesar, have been much applauded for their victorious triumphs; Ulysses for policy, Hector for valour. The best of

them have their matches in the book of God. Joshua fought as magnanimously, as successfully; yet (when he had conquered five kings and kingdoms) the glory is the Lord's, "God fought for Israel," Josh. x. 42. The Ethiopian army was a thousand thousand; Asa vanquished them; yet said, "The Lord smote the Ethiopians," 2 Chron. xiv. 12. Hushai was politic, and taught the traitor a trick to overthrow himself; yet is it said, The Lord destroyed the counsel of Ahithophel, 2 Sam. xvii. 14. Solomon was magnified for his wisdom; yet in that admirable proof, the decision betwixt the two harlots, it is called "the wisdom of God," 1 Kings iii. 28. It will suffer no glory to cleave unto earthen vessels: let the principal and first mover have it; The Lord did it.

The Lord is known by executing judgment, Psal. ix. 16; upon Sodom and all the world. If Pharaoh will not know him at Moses' mouth, he shall feel him to his cost in the bottom of the sea. If Herod will not know to honour him, he shall be loathed of his flatterers: they ran to him as a deity, they shall run from him as carrion. If Sodom will not know God by Lot's preaching, they shall know him by the fire about their ears. God is known by his judgments: his almightiness is known by the creation, his mercy by our redemption, his wisdom and goodness by the world's conservation; so his justice is known by the wicked's destruction.

That this is the Lord's doing appears, in that he spares others that have been as guilty; for his mercy every where matcheth his justice. He confounded Sodom, yet he hath converted many as wicked as they; his free grace hath brought those to heaven, who have deserved as deep a place in hell. Manasseh broke his covenant with God, yet his repentance found mercy. As therefore we should fear to sin, lest we perish as Sodom; so turn we to God in hope of favour, for he hath spared some as sinful as Sodom. Hear the word, ye princes of Sodom, and people of Gomorrah, Isa. i. 10. They are compared to Sodom, yet mercy is offered, if it be penitently and faithfully accepted, ver. 18.

6. Lastly, yet more to justify this judgment of God, that is, to make it appear just; as sinful as Sodom was, yet the Lord destroyed it not without premonition. First, he sent among them a bloody war; which, whom it left not dead on the earth, it took alive into bondage. Here was one warning; yet in how few years hath Sodom forgot that she was spoiled and led captive! Had she been warned by the sword, she had escaped the fire. Yet did not that ill success either make Lot leave Sodom, or Sodom leave sin; he still loves his commodity, and she her impicity. Wicked men grow worse after afflictions, as water grows more cold after a heat.

This was not all, but according to the stinless viciousness of their sins, God follows them with a succession of plagues. Yet after all these warnings, they become worse; so bad, that there were not ten good men to be found in five cities. This heap must needs be fit for the fire, that was all chaff. Besides, God is said to come down from heaven about this examination, Gen. xviii. 21. Which is a figurative speech; for he that filleth all things, neither goeth nor cometh; and he that knoweth all things, needs not inquire: but to show that he does not proceed in the extremity of justice, without such a precedent scrutiny as may leave them without excuse.

Lot continually preached to them, by his persuasion to holiness, by his regular and exemplary life: here was still further warning. He had fire in his tongue, but they had a sea of water in their hearts to quench it. His conversation was as great a vexation to them, as theirs was to him. He re-

proved them the very night before their ruin: but such as bent upon villany, are more exasperated by dissuasions: like violent streams, that, when they are resisted by flood-gates, swell over the banks. Not being able to reclaim the multitude, he singles out some; and when the rest of the night was short and dangerous, he being sought for by the Sodomites, and newly pulled in by the angels, yet he ventures abroad to seek his sons-in-law. They were but betrothed to his daughters, yet such was his clarity, that he hazards his own safety to preserve theirs. Faith would never be saved alone, but win all she can. He did admonish them like a prophet, and advise them like a father; but both in vain. He seemed to them as one that mocked, and they did more than seem to mock him again. Why should to-morrow differ from other days? Who ever saw it rain fire? No almanac ever spake of such weather. Or how should brimstone be engendered, or exhaled into the air? The clouds are bottles of waters, not of flames. Or if such a shower should fall, why must it not burn all the earth, as well as the valley? Why not as universal as was the deluge? Or grant it do come, yet it cannot be so sudden, but we shall have time to call for mercy; it will be as long a despatching us, as the flood was a drowning them. Thus carnal men count preaching foolishness, devotion idleness, and prophets madmen. Certainly these men's unbelief was as worthy of the fire, as the others' unlearnedness: "He that believeth not is condemned already," John iii. 18.

Lastly, in the attempt of that horrid impiety, the angels smote them with blindness, Gen. xix. 11: now this being so miraculous and immediate a work, might have warned them enough, that the business they undertook was damnable. They smote not the medium, which was the air; nor the object, which was the door; but their sight with such a blindness, that they could not discern one thing from another: as the Aramites, that they could not descry the prophet, nor the way, nor the city. Both their outward and inward discerning faculty was dazzled. Yet doth not this sensible warning better them: they go groping up and down the streets, cursing those men whom they could not find; and yet they bethink not themselves, that vengeance must needs be near them. All this while Lot and the angels be in light, and see them stumbling, and foresee them burning. God first struck them with blindness, whom he will after consume with fire; it is his use to besot them he means to destroy. This darkness was a forerunner of eternal darkness, as the next morning's flame was an entrance to their ever-burning fire in hell.

Let this teach us to admire God's patience, that will not destroy a Sodom without some warning and forbearance. If we worms and dust should be so used of men, as God is used of us, we should quickly show our corrupted stomachs. We have vengeance in our will, but not in our power: God hath vengeance in his power, but forbears it in his will. We are commanded while we breathe to pray the Lord's prayer, "Forgive us our trespasses;" which teacheth us that there is mercy in God without weariness. Sodom cracked the earth with the weight of her sins, and made the air stink with her loathsomeness; yet the Lord was long patient. And will that God be furious and hasty against that soul that groans, weeps, bleeds for her offences? If it were not for this, how could we escape being sacrificed to destruction, to expiate his justice?

God chargeth Israel, that they had seen his glory, yet provoked him ten times, Numb. xiv. 22. How often would I have gathered you! Luke xiii. 34: his mercies exceed all numeration. We have been a

provocation to him ever since we were made, as Jerusalem was ever since it was built, Jer. xxxii. 31. But though the Lord be pleased at some times, and to some sinners, to enlarge his patience; let not us be bold to enlarge our disobedience. He punished the angels in heaven for one fault, Achan for one sacrilege, Miriam for one slander, Moses for one unbelief, Ananias for one lie: he may be as quick against our offences. How often soever he knocks, our safest course is to rise at the first call. Many are prevented by his justice, their spirits departing from them, as Jacob from Laban, or Israel from the Egyptians, without taking leave, carrying away their jewels and dearest treasures. Let us fear the price of angering so dreadful a Majesty, and abusing so rich a patience: he now looks for our fruit, or we must look for his fire.

Next, be we taught here to take the hint of God's warning; and not to let him that is the breath of the Father and the Son, spend his breath upon us in vain. He deals with sinners, as David with Saul, who took away his spear, and his water-pot, and sometimes a piece of his cloak; as it were snatches and remembrances, to let us understand that we are in his hands, and, if we take not warning, he will further punish us. We call, and he hears; we ask, and he grants; we knock, and he opens: cannot all this prevail with us to deal so with him? Which of us can say, he hath not been warned? It is God's charge to his prophets, Tell my people, Matt. xxi. 5. We have told them; we have showed his people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins, Isa. lviii. 1. Hath death given us no warning? did we never find stitch and convulsion? did the head never ache, the stomach never refuse nourishment? All these are warnings of death, as death is a citation to judgment.

There is scarce any thing in the world, but it may serve for a monitor to us: as the messengers of Job came one after another, to inform him of his unhappiness; every one saying, "I only am escaped." To what purpose? "To tell thee." Some of the Jews are delivered from that raging destruction. To what end? To declare their abominations among the heathen, that they may know the Lord, Ezek. xii. 16. But many are like the Sodomites, hardened by the warnings of God. Instead of embracing the counsel, they rage at the counsellor. But when men are grown to that pass, that they are not better by afflictions, yea, worse with admonitions, God finds it high time to strike. Now they have done sinning God begins to plague. Wickedness hath but a time; the punishment of wickedness is beyond all time. Even the good angels shall be the executioners of this judgment; and having first delivered Lot in Sodom, then from Sodom, they let drive at Sodom. There cannot be a more noble act, than to do justice upon obstinate malefactors. God doth not often punish for impurity, but impendency.

Thus far we have walked in generals, such useful observations as the story affords us; now to the particulars, wherein consider principally two things; the measure, and the manner. The measure was a total ruin; the manner, by fire. First, for the measure.

Overthrew them. It was a plenary and universal destruction. Their outward happiness was so great, that like rotten fruit they could no longer cleave to the tree. It is said of the wicked, "They are not in trouble as other men," Psal. lxxxi. 5. No misfortune now therefore all at once. It is not good to be too happy for this world; there is danger in being without dangers. The very heathen were loth to surfeit on pleasures, and took it an introduction to further mischiefs. When Philip heard that his army had

got the conquest, that his son Alexander was born, and that his chariots won the prize at Olympus, all in one day, he called on fortune to spice his joys with a little bitterness, lest he should forget himself. The Egyptian king blest himself from Polierates, because he was over-fortunate; when he would try an experiment in despite of fortune, throwing a rich jewel into the sea, and finding it at his house in the bowels of a fish. It was a heathen curse, to wish all good luck to their very enemies. It is not good for a man to engross prosperity, lest, like a wasted candle, *Extremum occupet fumus, fœtor, et caligo*. Belshazzar had no sooner drunk his voluptuous health in the cup of the temple, but a new cup was reached unto him, the cup of vengeance, and he must drink off that too.

Here was a sudden alteration: this hour a land flowing with all delights and riches, whithersoever they look beholding nothing but pleasures; and a few minutes have determined all this. Now nothing is visible but ruin, not a house, not a tree, not a plant, not a pile of grass standing; smoke and sulphur, had and stench and barrenness, possessing all the plain. When Amalek was destroyed, the trees stood; when Jericho was burnt, the gold was preserved; though the foundations of Troy cannot be seen, yet grass grows in the streets: but here, silver and gold, plants and trees, grass and beasts, houses and monuments, all consumed. 'This is such an overthrow, as the like never went before it, nor shall ever any match come after it, but that one universal combustion of heaven and earth. Therefore the Scripture, when it speaks of an utter overthrow, points at Sodom, Amos iv. 11. She might have endured many plagues, yet still stood upon her foundations; but this is such a ruin as admits of no reparation; such a one, as Sodom did only bear it, and may it please God that none but Sodom may ever feel it.

"Condemned them." The spoiling of their houses was much; yet, had only their cities been demolished, they might have built others, or lived in caves, or fled into foreign countries. The spoil of their goods was more: yet grass that is trodden down may grow again; the world hath more wealth. The maiming of their limbs had been greater: yet life is sweet, and their coaches, and couches, and crutches, artificial legs, and hospitals; charity is not quite dead. The killing of their bodies, and consuming their lives, yet nearer; the merchant will lose his provision, lose his wares, lose his vessel, to save his life: yet if life be lost, is there not a day of reviving? Let death crumble the body to dust, shall not the resurrection restore it whole? Or if they must perish, yet let it not be by fire, the extremest of all torments: but what if fire turn the body to ashes, may not the soul ascend the heavens, and live in peace? O but what ransom shall a man give for his soul? He "condemned them;" this is the most insupportable burden.

To turn such goodly buildings into ashes; will not this satisfy his justice? To slay the beasts, wither the plants; not this? To sluice out the bloods and lives of so many thousands; mothers having no leisure to cry for their infants, because it is their own turns to suffer: not all this? No, the soul must answer for the soul's offences; he "condemned them." The traveller yields to the thief; Take my purse, my horse, my garments; only spare my life. And man beseecheth God; Take goods, and pleasures, and honours, and liberty, and life; only spare my soul; let not that be a prey to Satan. Miserable wretches! if they knew the worth of their souls, they would bespeak destruction, as the king of Sodom did Abraham, Give us our souls, take all the

rest, Gen. xiv. 21. Let us save our houses, if we can, and save our goods, and save our lives; but howsoever, let us save our souls, though we lose houses, and goods, and lives.

All was sharp enough; but, as our Saviour said to the man sick eight and thirty years, (a long and hopeless torment,) "Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee," John v. 14, there is a worse behind: all extremities are light and slight to condemnation. Innumerable are the curses of God against sinners; but the last is the worst, comprehending and transcending all the rest; a condemning sentence. The Sodomites felt a dismal judgment; fire and brimstone scalding their bloods to death; but what a slight spark do they judge it to that they now feel in the furnace of hell! This is the Lord's final sword, when all his rods be worn out, and the wicked never the better. A smart blow comes, and the sinner is sensible, cries out for ease, and hath it granted: now he thinks this punishment hath pacified God's wrath, and he hath paid his own debt. Another judgment comes, and he bears it with impatient sorrow, humbles himself, like Ahab: that once removed, he hopes now God hath done with him. A third succeeds: now he grumbles under the load, thinks that God doth him wrong; that he takes more than he should, and plagues him beyond his desert: but all this doth not better him. At last the Lord comes with his Condemn him; and then if all his riches, all his pleasures, the oblation of his son for his sin, the racking of his joints, tearing of his flesh, the burning of his body for the ransom of his soul, could serve, he would make a joyful tender of them all; but then they will not be accepted. If any thing but damnation could excuse the reproaches, their condition were not so fearful: but this condemning to hell, is the perfection of all wretchedness.

Let us prevent God's justice, by doing to ourselves what he threatens to do unto sinners. Let us overthrow our sins, that he may not overthrow our houses: condemn ourselves, that he may not condemn our souls: turn our iniquities to ashes, that his fire may spare our cities. As Nineveh, by taking to heart the message of their overthrow, did overthrow the message. Their walls and buildings stood, by letting their transgressions fall. They turned to deprecation and repentance, and God turned to commiseration and forbearance. The subversion was threatened, the conversion effected. Thus let us save God a labour, that when he comes to correct us, he may find it done to his hand. Let us be self-afflictors, as we have been self-tempters; and set repentance to do what God threateneth. Have we sinned in intemperance, let us punish ourselves with abstinence; then God will not inflict on us famine. If in uncleanness, chastise we the flesh by contrition, and cleanse it with resolution against all unchastity; so may we escape the diseases both of body and conscience. Let us break off our covetousness by mercy to the poor; so, instead of being impoverished on earth, we shall find riches in heaven. If in anger, let us return to patience; so when the Lord comes in anger against us, we shall move him to be patient toward us. If in pride, come we down to humility; when he looks to find us in the chair of presumption, let him see us in the humble dust; then instead of casting us down to hell, he will lift us up to heaven. Thus with the fire of grace from God's altar, let us consume our natural, unnatural corruptions; that the fire of vengeance may never touch our houses, nor bodies, nor souls. Lord, overthrow our sins, and let ourselves stand: teach us to condemn our errors, that thou mayst never condemn us. That so serving

thee with pureness of heart, we may be brought to the brightness of thy glory, through the greatness of thy mercy.

"Turning the cities into ashes." I come to the manner of their destruction, which was by fire; wherein consider four circumstances; the strangeness, the sharpness, the suddenness, the destructiveness.

1. The strangeness. It was a miraculous rain; brimstone mingled with the fire, as a fit matter to disperse it; and, it is very likely, salt too; it shall burn with brimstone and salt, Deut. xxix. 23. Yea, and that water was poured down also, from which was gathered the Dead Sea remaining to this day. This rain came from heaven, the upper region of the air, the place for fiery meteors. And haply the nature of the soil being full of pitch, slime, and other combustible matter, did much increase the burning. "The vale of Siddim was full of slime-pits, and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fell there," Gen. xiv. 10. This was strange indeed, that fire and brimstone, the materials of hell, should come down from heaven; or that floods of water should grapple with streams of fire; and that all, as water does set lime a burning, should help rather to inflame. Upon the wicked shall the Lord rain fire and brimstone, and stormy tempest, Psal. xi. 6. That brimstone, a mineral of the earth, should be found in the air, drawn up by an extraordinary exhalation, to be sent down after an unexampled confusion! But this was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous to our thoughts.

2. The sharpness. It is said of fire, that it is the best friend, the worst enemy; no element is more noble when it is our friend, none more terrible when our foe. God himself is a consuming fire; and he maketh his angels a flame of fire. As the fire lies hid in the hard flint, so God is in every thing: it is quick and shining, like the Trinity. Fire consumeth wood, and purgeth gold; so doth the Lord's grace consume our creature, and refine his own creature. We desire not to be too far off from the fire, lest we be too cold; nor too near, lest it burn us. If we be too far off from God by our apostacy, we soon perish with cold death. If we dare come too near him by our presumption, we are swallowed up with his infinite and inaccessible glory.

There was holy fire in the temple: that holy fire went out in the captivity; but some of the Jews say, it was hid in a pit. The Holy Ghost came down upon the apostles in the shape of fire. The fire concurs to the generation of things with the other elements, yet is itself childless, it hath no fruit of its own. So doth the Spirit work with the other Persons in our redemption, yet hath no person proceeding from him.

Thus excellent is fire while at peace with us; it heats, purges, enlignens, consumes: so doth grace heat our hearts, enlighten our minds, purge our affections, consume our corruptions. But when it is at war with us, the rage is terrible: things most beneficial in their use, are most pestilent in their enmity. There is a grave to swallow Korah, water to drown the old world, a sword to fall upon Joab, a plague to slay Israel, a scourge for the back of fools; but nothing so sharp as fire. The heathen have worshipped it for a god: for which choice being reproved, they demanded any thing that could overcome fire, and they would adore that. An image was made by a cunning artist, the substance whereof was clay, full of holes, which were so done up with some liquid matter that they were not seen. The invincible god of fire was put under this image; which quickly hardened the clay, and was put out by the melting liquor. But here was a stupid ignorance, to slip out of one idolatry to another: and instead of a natural element,

to give over themselves to an artificial idol. Fire hath over-mastered stronger images than ever were made of clay, and left their ruins shameful reproaches to all their superstitious idolaters.

There is no element in the extremest fury more afflictive to the sense, than fire. Water doth only drown, and soon choke the breath by stopping the passages of respiration; so Pharaoh's destruction was in this respect far short of Sodom's. The air doth only stifle the spirits, and by infecting the blood, doth no more than a pleurisy or plague, despatching if not with like speed, yet with less torture: thus the Israelites in the plains of Midian sped not so ill as the Sodomites in the plain of Jordan. The swallowing earth that opens her jaws with a quaking motion, devours men alive, but it soon with a falling closure makes them dead: thus Korah and his confederates suffered easier than Sodom and her inhabitants. But fire killeth not only with the rest, but tormenteth above them all; scorching the limbs, puckering the skin, inflaming the blood, enraging the sense, torturing the whole man. The sword is a sharp executioner, armed with hostility, it hath unprisoned millions of souls. The teeth of wild beasts roaring for their prey, are merciless; as the enemies of Daniel felt. The nearest of all plagues that comes to the torment of fire, is famine; and the very anguish of famine ends in a kind of fire; when for want of vivid moisture the radical heat is inflamed, and burns up the vital spirits. Gunpowder, the most damnable mineral that ever hell begat, or Rome made use of, (for those worshippers of the successor of St. Peter found much employment for saltpetre, Nov. 5.) yet can do nothing without fire: it is but a speeding messenger that fire sendeth.

All manner of death's murders have in them some more mercy, or at least less cruelty, than his fiery massacres. It is reserved in human justice for the most horrible offenders; murderers, witches, deniers of Christ, atheists; of which last number we have too many, but that the cunning devil dares not be so bold as to profess it. But there is another fire for them, which shall quickly burn out atheism; for they shall feel eternally that there is a God; and their flame must be so much the hotter, because they would not believe in their offered Saviour. This is the incomparable torture of fire, so powerful, that no other element shall have the honour of purging heaven and earth, but fire; none able to burn this universal machine, but fire; none other ordained to be the special matter of the reprobate's torment in hell, but fire: whether in figure to shadow, or in reality to perform, the extremest tortures, fire must do it. That hath the most searching property, and can only refine what is substantially good, and consume what is qualitatively evil.

Beside all these expressions comparatively, the sharpness of this punishment by fire, is aggravated by three gradations.

(1.) By the quality: it was not only fire, but a deluge of fire. The Lord rained fire, Gen. xix. 24: not sprinkled by drops, like a gentle shower, but rained, as it were whole sheets of fire; the flashes of lightning are nothing to it; but flakes and streams of fire; "The Highest gave his thunder; hailstones and coals of fire," Psal. xviii. 13. Not a little kindled, as fire in a house, that gathers force by degrees, and from small sparks riseth to a violent combustion; but the very beginning was a rain of fire. They had rained on the earth great cataracts of sins, and heaven rained on them great cataclysms of flames.

(2.) By their indispossession to bear it: men quite destitute of the grace of God, and forfeited to all discomfort. Flesh and blood, in either valour or despe-

rateness, have endured many strange torments in this world; lancements, scarrings, rackings, all to protract a miserable life. Divers martyrs have leaped into their beds of flames, as beds of down. But the sense of the torment hath been qualified by God's assistance and their patience. But he that could cool the burning furnace by the will of his mercy, Dan. iii. 27, did inflame this fire by the breath of his fury. There was fire for doing well, here is fire for doing ill. There was the fire of man against the love of God, here the fire of God against the lust of man. There was grace to allay it, here was sin to enrage it. The punishment was the more sensible, as the patients were more sensual.

(3.) By the addition and mixture of it: not fire alone, but fire mingled with brimstone; a matter fit not to allay it, but increase it. The perplexing properties of brimstone are three; to burn darkly, sharply, loathsomely. Darkly, to grieve the sight; sharply, to afflict the sense; loathsomely, to offend the smell. The Scripture, to describe the extreme tortures of fire, adds often brimstone, Ezek. xxxviii. 22; Psal. xi. 6; Rev. xix. 20. "Fire and much wood; the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it," Isa. xxx. 33. Where is both a prosopœia in the "breath," and a topographicalia in the "brimstone:" both figures to express the furious indignation of the author, and fierce severity of the act. For the allegory of breath; to denote the rage of Saul against the lambs of Christ, he is said to breathe out slaughter, Acts ix. 1. To signify the Lord's wrath against sinners, he is said to breathe out fire. For brimstone, it makes fire more terrible; darkening the splendour of it to the sight, sharpening the fervour of it to the sense, and augmenting the stench of it to the smell.

This discovers to us the nature of sin, how stinking and loathsome it is to God, that burning brimstone is not more offensive to us. No perfumes are more pleasant to the sinner, no dunghills more noisome to the Lord. Absalom thought his pride sweet. Zimri his adultery, Nabal his wealth sweet: the usurer's gold, the lascivious man's harlot, the defrauder's gain, all fragrant smells to them, because they breathe no other air but such pestilent corruptions. And the very scent of goodness would set them hard, as fen-men are sick with a subtle air, or the soil-man swooned when he passed through Bucklersbury. But if their hearts were unstopped, and cleared from the cold and congealed catarrhs of sin, they would be sensible of the stench; and there is no work of darkness but they would smell brimstone in it. Our blessed Saviour feedeth among the lilies, lodgeth in the beds of spices, the sweet graces of his church: let not us, like dorrers, love the dunghills; or, like scarabees, pass over all beauties, to light upon sores and ulcers. Oh that we could but discern sin as it is in itself! how should we then hate our lusts, our lies, our oaths, our covetous desires and practices, smelling the stink of brimstone in them all! Indeed we are all unsavoury of ourselves, odious to that God, who hath pure eyes and pure nostrils: only our hope and comfort is, to be sweetened with the perfume of Jesus Christ, Eph. v. 2.

3. The suddenness. The fire was not long a despatching them; but as it fell before their expectation, so it destroyed them before their recollection. When the sun did rise, then began the rain to fall; now this was just at Lot's entering into Zoar: at break of day he went out of Sodom, at sun-rising he came into Zoar, Gen. xix. 15, 23; between which spaces a man may go four miles, say the Hebrews. Now Abraham rose up early in the morning, yet he saw not the falling of the fire, but the rising up of the

smoke only, Gen. xix. 27, 28. This must needs be done suddenly: in all likelihood, less than half an hour determined all the glory of Sodom. The prophet says, in a moment; Sodom was destroyed in a moment, Lam. iv. 6. Why then should not men believe the same power of the last fire to consume the world, and our changing even in a moment? "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump," 1 Cor. xv. 52. That fire gave the Sodomites no time of remembrance, nor shall the last fire give the world any time of repentance: that may come suddenly, which we know will come certainly. We have no more patent of forbearance than had Sodom: it is said of the wicked, In a moment they go down to hell. Death doth not always creep upon a man by degrees, like Ezekiel's waters; from the ankles to the knees, from the knees to the loins, and so to the heart, Ezek. xlvii. 3, 4; but swallows some ere they can swallow their spite. "The Judge standeth before the door," Jam. v. 9. Would the thief break into the house, if he knew the judge stood at the door? We may say of our sinning and dying, as physicians of their critical days; the first is an index, the second a judge. Our sin shows we shall die, our death judgeth us for our sin. But betwixt both these there is a gracious help, the intervention of our reasonable amendment, and applying the satisfaction of Jesus Christ.

4. The destructiveness; Turned them to ashes. It is a fearful degree in punishment, to be reduced to ashes. God went far with Israel, when they were a brand snatched out of the burning, Amos iv. 11. He proceeded farther, when he set the whole forest of his people on fire; yet still a remnant was preserved; some did escape, even through the fire. The prophet, by the dry bones, Ezek. xxxvii., shadows out a desperate estate. A man is sick, there is danger; panting for life, great fear; dead, no hope; buried, despair; the flesh consumed, nothing but bones left, here is the utmost extent, saving only his wholly mouldering to ashes. "There is hope of a tree if it be cut down, that it will sprout again," Job xiv. 7; but cut down, cast into the fire, and converted to ashes, no hope.

Yet is this the end of all flesh. The innumerable army of Xerxes, all become ashes. Herod, that was honoured as a god by men, was proved to be a man by worms; turned to ashes. The Roman palace, the Spanish Escorial, all the glorious cities and buildings of the earth, shall meet in this catastrophe: be turned to ashes. Solomon from his royalty, Antiochus from his policy, Cæsar from his monarchy, Plato from his philosophy, even Moses from his humility, all good men from their sanctity, all bad men from their impiety, must descend to make ashes. Death is that impartial metamorphoser, that turneth all secular glory into ashes. Where are they that erected this temple wherein we pray, that built those houses wherein we dwell, that founded the city wherein we live, that begun those societies whereof we are? Ye know; all turned to ashes. Not turned to birds and beasts, as the poets feigned, much less to stars; neither to plants nor planets; least of all to celestial angels; but to dust and ashes.

There is difference of estates while we live, in the grave there is none. "Ye are gods," Psal. lxxxii. 6; there he considered their pomp and dignity: "but ye shall die like men," ver. 7; there he minds their end, that with the change of his note they might also change countenance. He tells them their honour, but withal their lot. In power, wealth, train, titles, friends, they differ from others; in death they differ not from others. They are cold when winter comes, withered with age, weak with sickness, and

melt away with death, as the meanest: all to ashes. "All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower," 1 Pet. i. 24: the glory, that is, the best of it, but a flower. No great difference, the flower shows fairer, the grass stands longer, one scythe cuts down both. Beasts fat and lean feed in several pasture, killed in one slaughter. The prince in his lofty palace, the beggar in his humble cottage, have double difference, local and ceremonial height and lowness: et meet at the grave, and be mingled in ashes. We walk in this world, as a man in a field of snow; all the way appears smooth, yet cannot we be sure of any step. All are like actors on a stage, some have one part and some another, death is still busy amongst us: here drops one of the players, we bury him with sorrow, and to our scene again: then falls another, yea all, one after another, till death be left alone upon the stage. Death is that damp, which puts out all the dim lights of vanity. Yet man is easier to believe that all the world shall die, than to suspect himself. Though we be older than those we follow to the grave, yet still we hope for a longer reprieve. If any thing could have hired death to spare, our forefathers would have kept our possessions from us. But ashes must to ashes; dust was our composition, and to dust must be our dissolution; only we look for a better resurrection.

From all this observe the fit proportion of the punishment to the sin. They which burned with the fire of lust, are consumed with the fire of vengeance. They sinned against the rule of nature, and they perish against the course of nature. They had conjured up hell to earth, and God sent hell out of heaven. For their unnatural lust, unnatural fire: there is a loathsome stench in their wickedness, and there was the stink of brimstone in their confusion. Such is the justice of God, not only to strike for offending; but also the wisdom of God, to strike according to the manner of offending. The Lord is known by executing judgment, Psal. ix. 16; making their sword enter into their own heart, Psal. xxxvii. 15. The gibbet which Haman built for Mordecai, shall hang himself. Pharaoh made away the Hebrew males, and was requited with the death of his first-born. Herod slew the infants of Bethlehem, and was punished by the murder of his own children. Hildebrand snubbed a villain, with a great stone on the church's roof to brain Frederick the emperor doing his devotions after his wonted manner; and the same traitor tumbled down, and was quashed in pieces with the same stone. Thus was Alexander the Sixth poisoned with the same liquor which he had ordained to make away some of his cardinals. Three of those fiery conspirators were maimed and disfigured by the firing of powder at Holbeck in Worcestershire, who had meant by powder to blow up a whole state. Let all these examples terrify the wicked: God will meet with them in their own kinds, and fill them a cup with their own tempering. As their tongues have walked against heaven, so they shall be confined to hell: for drunkenness, want of a drop of water; for covetousness, everlasting poverty of comfort.

Two things are yet further to be looked into. 1. How the justice of God may be justified in this universal confusion of the Sodomites. 2. What was the utmost extent, or what followed the ruin.

For the former; it is the atheist's exception against the justice of God, that he confounded the innocent with the guilty. The men indeed were given over to licentiousness, but no such thing is testified of the women; and if the women were also sinful, yet the infants were not capable nor culpable of such faults. For answer, first let us hold this undeniable tenet, The judgments of God are often secret, always just.

He will show mercy to whom he will, and he does us undeserved favour. He will execute judgment on whom he will, and he does us no wrong. That he saves any, the cause is in himself; that he condemns many, the cause is in them.

God is absolute Lord over all his creatures; and as it was his only pleasure to give life, so also to take it away. Neither are we more to demand a reason of the latter, than we are able to conceive a reason of the former. Whether he gives, or he takes, still blessed be the name of the Lord.

Children are parts of their parents, and therefore may be justly infolded in their fathers' punishments. They are guilty of original sin, a filthiness that they have by propagation from their parents; for their souls were infected as soon as ever they were infused. Before the justice of God there are none innocent. They that have sinned from their parents, may justly be enrolled with their parents. Though they be not guilty of their fathers' actuals, yet they have by nature so much corruption, as may deserve sharp correction. How frequently hath God chastised the children for the father's offences! David's child begotten in adultery must die. "Who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?" John ix. 2. This the apostles could easily see, howsoever they undesiretly asked. But "the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father," Ezek. xviii. 20; a good son shall not answer for a bad father. But the child is a sinner, even an infant; and when it hath the father's sin with its own, it is punished for its own sin, not for the father's.

Thus do many children suffer for their parents, being conceived in offence, and deriving their diseases from their birth: there is hereditary disease, as physicians speak. "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" Job xiv. 4. Both the trees and fruit were corrupt, the spring and channels unclean, therefore involved in one general ruin. So fully did the justice of God triumph over them, that he left none remaining, but even the very seed and offspring of the Sodomites perished. Unless the Lord had left us a remnant, we had been as Sodom, Isa. i. 9; they had no remnant left; the very little ones, infected with their parents' sins, were wrapped up in their parents' flames.

Nor only fell those Sodomites for the present, but for ever; "suffering the vengeance of eternal fire," Jude 7: a judgment so fearful and singular, that it is able to strike a horror into our hearts with the very thought. This God did, 1. To show his perfect detestation of that wicked people; so apostate from all goodness, that their very seed was accursed. Because the fathers blasphemed against heaven, the children go to hell. 2. To increase their sorrow and torment in seeing the destruction of their children: for if nature were not quite extinct, and they had but as much affection as beasts to their young, it must needs wound their hearts to see the lamentable ruin of their children. Who can hear the confused cry of so many infants, and not cry for company? To see their tender and ungrown limbs wrapped up in flames of fire, as swathe-bands; the shrinking of their soft nerves at every pull of grief, their flesh scorched like a scroll of parchment; sprawling on the ground, and rocked asleep with dire destruction; would melt a heart of adamant.

God himself, at other times, had a special regard to infants; excepting only some places that were execrable in his sight, Dut. xx. 17, as Jericho, Josh. vi. 21, Edom, and Babylon, Psal. cxxxvii. 9, and here Sodom. Now the sight of such a judgment among the little ones, that knew not the right hand from the left, that cleaved to their mothers' breasts

as apples to the tree; to be snatched away with death, and death in the frightfullest visage, burning and tormenting death; this did aggravate their plague, and it had been much easier for them to have suffered alone. There is nothing more natural to us, than to love our children; those living monuments of ourselves, that piece out mortality with succession, continue our names and images upon the earth. These if we do affect with our loves, let us not infect with our lives: let us hate our sins, lest they also perish with ourselves. Why should we destroy those whom we have in a manner made? We brought them into the world with pain, up in the world with care; let us not send them out of the world with sorrow. Repentance and amendment of life help us to prevent such an unhappiness; that we may neither smart for the wickedness of our forefathers, nor make our children everlastingly smart for us. Let us obey our Father in heaven, that he may bless our children upon earth.

For the other consideration; the extremity of their punishment was not only temporal death, but everlasting torment; "eternal fire," Jude 7. Their present fire could not buy out the future. Run they into the fields, it rains fire; into the houses, they flame with fire; into holes and caves, all places burn with brimstone. Miserable men! whether they flee or stay, struggle or lie still, fire possesseth them: scalding sulphur and burning stench universally racking them. Yet is not all this enough to purge out their corruption, but a worse torment succeeds, and the judgment on earth doth but deliver them over to the condemnation of hell; which continually burns their souls, and shall never turn them to ashes; a fire neither tolerable nor terminable. The breath of the Lord, like a river of brimstone, doth inflame it, and the breath of ten thousand reprobates shall never be able to blow it out: when a drop of water shall not be allowed, to cool the tongue that boils with unsufferable flames: where heat doth follow smoke, and fire heat, and stench fire, and torment stench, and burning shall be added to burning. Thus are they east into utter darkness, where neither light of sun nor moon, much less the light of heaven, and God's glorious face, shall ever appear; where their eyes must distil like fountains, and their teeth clatter like armed men.

These are those fearful vials of wrath, when God gives blood to drink unto them that boil with heat. Who can express their horrors, nay, what horrors cannot they express? Sorrows are met on their souls as at a feast; fear, despair, and anguish leap upon their hearts as a stag, and the furies of hell divide their spirits among them. Torment calls to desperation, horror to pain, Come and help us to torture these wretches. Lust sends one plague, and pride another, and covetousness a third; till they run through a thousand deaths, and yet cannot die. All their lights are put out at once, they have no souls fit to be comforted. Thus they lie, as if they bore the weight of the whole earth; and so let them lie, saith the Lord, for ever.

Hear him that spake by experience. Being in hell, in torments, he lifts up his eyes, &c. Luke xvi. 23. He looked upward, for he was low enough: he lift up his eyes, that could not lift up himself. He would not look down to Lazarus in his misery, he must now look up to Lazarus in his felicity. His eyes which were closed in luxury, he opens in misery. Where remembering his pleasures past, considering his joys lost, sensible of pains present, and fearful of greater tortures to come, he sees Lazarus in Abraham's bosom. (Every believer is a child of Abraham; and whither should the child go but to the bosom of his father?) Now he begs with more floods of scald-

ing tears than ever Esau sought the blessing, to have some comfort from Lazarus; Send Lazarus, &c. His envious pride doth not yet forsake him. He would have Lazarus come from the rest of heaven, to the terrors of hell. And what craves he? not an ocean, not a river, not a pond or some small fountain; not a bucket or spoonful; but a drop. And what if all the rivers in the south had been granted him, his tongue would still have withered, and he never have cried in the language of hell, It is enough. Or had his tongue been eased, the rest of his parts would still have dried. Water might be by him, but he hath no hand to reach it. Oh bitter day! when not the least finger (I say not, of God, but) of the meanest saint in heaven, shall bring the least drop (I say not, of the waters of life, but) of the waters of the brook to give him comfort. He fared as delicately as the Sodomites, in the fulness of all rare viands: he went not in sackcloth, or common garments, nor with a diseased body as Lazarus, but in purple and fine linen; not on the best day of the seven, or when he went to the court, where it is somewhat tolerable, but every day. But now, like the Sodomites, he is snatched from his libertine surfeit to famine, from a table of viands to a table of vengeance, from bowls of the lustiest wines to drink sulphur, from beds of down to beds of flames, from bravery to misery. O here is the emblem of wretchedness! He would have one sent to his brethren; let this calamity give warning to us all. Flame torments him, not a moderate fire. In a flame there is burning and light; but in hell there is burning without light, as in the empyreal heaven there is light without burning.

Thus had the Sodomites their portion on earth, and from the want of all miseries were driven to the misery of all wants. God does not damn men because they be rich; for himself is infinitely rich; and Abraham, that rejected the rich man, was on earth richer than he. Nor because they are great; for himself is the greatest of all. But because they abuse these to the dishonour of his glorious name. And to conclude; their torments are eternal. As our short affliction causeth us to an excellent and eternal glory, 2 Cor. iv. 17, so their short pleasure causeth to them an exceeding and eternal pain. Their sorrows are infinite: they lie pressed under an unsupportable load, and still call for more weight to despatch them, but cannot have it. What the psalmist sings of God's mercy, is true also of his justice, that it endureth for ever. If after so many millions of years as there be drops in the sea, there might be deliverance, they had some hope. Men may comfort themselves in temporal sufferings, to them God has set a limit; but there is no limitation in hell: when the Lord shall give over his being, they shall have ease, and not before; which is never. An infinite Majesty is offended, therefore an infinite penalty imposed. In hell they shall ever remain sinners, therefore in hell they shall ever remain sufferers. Sin is like oil, and torment like fire; so long as the oil lasteth the fire burneth, and that is for ever. This is a long confusion, and therefore not to be passed over with a short meditation. Let us think again and again of it, and so fear it, that we may never feel it. It is a desperate madness, for the pleasure that one hour determines, to incur those pains that are capable neither of ease nor end. Thus I have insisted on the Sodomites' punishment, that we being terrified with it, might learn by their example to prevent it. Which is the next point considerable, the monument.

"Making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly." This example of God's judgment is one of the most conspicuous and remarkable in all the sacred history, and set out for a special pre-

cedent by the pen of the Holy Ghost; with a note of recordation, like a hand in the margin that directs to some observable thing in the text: with a Mark this, as a thing of great consequence. Where collect four observations.

1. The right use of all God's mighty wonders, is when we take them for wonders; trembling at the sight of the works, and fearing the omnipotence of him that wrought them. When Israel saw that mighty work upon the Egyptians, they feared the Lord, Exod. xiv. 31. They are drowned in a sea of water, and the other do not drown it in a sea of forgetfulness. The sea was troublous, and the mariners feared; the sea was quiet, and yet they feared, Jonah i. 5, 16: this may seem strange; but the first was the fear of nature, the second of grace; then they feared the creature, now the Creator. When Ananias and his wife fell suddenly dead, fear came upon all the church, Acts v. 11. The judgment was upon some, the fear came upon all. When the earth opened her jaws to swallow Korah, the people opened their mouth to cry, Let us flee, Numb. xvi. 34. These things came unto them for ensamples, and are written to admonish us, 1 Cor. x. 11. These things they might have suffered, and their calamities have died with themselves, never been known to posterity; but they are written for us. God made a record of them, and if there be any faith in us, they be as present to us as if they were done before our eyes. If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they believe one from the dead, Luke xvi. 31. Where faith makes a doubt, there sense will never be satisfied.

But if we trust not our ears, in all this ample theatre of God's judgments, did we never see any fetched away from a prosperous estate by strange accidents? were not they precedents for us? Cannot all make us afraid of overlaying God's patience? Did the blasphemer never hear how Rabshakch sped? Did they that blush not to be called the roaring crew, (therein sentencing themselves,) never read what became of the sons of Belial? Did the secure worldlings never hear of the general deluge? nor murmurers, of those fiery serpents? nor unclean persons with their eatamites, of the condemnation of the Sodomites? Shall not all this make us to break forth into those exclamations, This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes, Psal. cxviii. 23.

Indeed these may work with the wicked to admiration, not to repentance. The very Jews beholding the wonders of Christ, could say, "We never saw it on this fashion," Mark ix. 12; and, "It was never so seen in Israel," Matt. ix. 33. Herod desired to see Christ for a miracle, as Felix to talk with Paul for a bribe. But God doth not work miracles for miracles, but for us. The gracious Lord hath so done his marvellous works, that they ought to be had in remembrance. I will live; to what end? to declare the works of the Lord, Psal. cxviii. 17: hitting the right end and use. The works of his providence are to be admired; of his justice, to be admired and feared; of his mercy, to be admired and loved. The thunder should waken our secure hearts, the rain soften our stony bowels, the lightning mind us of the coming of Christ to judgment: see 1 Sam. xii. 18.

These things hath God left as memorials to the world, to be read and preached. We have the books, let us not be strangers to their contents. Our forefathers could once have said, We see not our signs; there is not one prophet among us, nor any that divineth, Psal. lxxiv. 9; or if any did divine, they divined lies. Though this sacred book was not hid in a corner, as when Josiah began to reign, 2 Kings

xxii. 8; nor ent with a penknife, and thrown into the fire, as in the days of Jehoiakim, Jer. xxxvi. 23; yet the comfortable use was interdicted, the known language concealed, and men bound with a curse not to read it. It now lies open in our churches, in our windows; God grant we shut it not to our own hearts. Preaching applies it, and this help we have also: may we never know the want of it: yea, we shall not, unless we voluntarily put it from us, as a matter not worthy the keeping, and (with the Jews) judge ourselves unworthy of the kingdom of heaven. Divers fearful calamities are threatened to the Jews, such as shall turn their feasts into mourning, &c.; but if their eyes do not yet dazzle, nor their ears tingle, behind is a woe, that is beyond all woes, the famine of the word of God, Amos viii. 11. Famine of bread is a sore plague, when a woful mother for herself and son is dressing their last provision, 1 Kings xvii. 12. The extremity harder, when mothers by turns eat up their own children, 2 Kings vi. 28. But this is nothing to a dearth of holy knowledge. It is better not to be, than not to know: better unborn, than untaught. (Sen.)

2. God, without all exception to the honour of his justice, might enrol all the wicked at once in universal confusion; but so it pleaseth his goodness to single out some, and propose them as bleeding witnesses to the world, that their vengeance might bring many to repentance. Such an execution of his justice doth more magnify his mercy, when he punisheth some, that he may spare many. As when many soldiers have faulted in a mutiny, the general executes martial law upon some, to strike a terror into the whole army. So doth the Lord. We have deserved what they have suffered; they have suffered that we might be delivered. If we make not use of this mercy, we deserve the greater penalty.

3. There is no sin which man can now commit, but God hath declared his wrath against it, in his punishments for it: we can do nothing without a precedent. Is any sacrilegious? there be precedents to forewarn him; Gehazi, Judas, and they that kept a market in the temple. But these men fear not their punishments. Will the Jesuit be a traitor? there is precedent. Absalom rebels; what was the end? His huge army defeated by a few, the wood devouring that day more than the sword: twenty thousand lost. A senseless oak performs the part of a good subject, and apprehends the traitor: his beast left him to the gallows, who was turned beast in renouncing his allegiance. The earth refused to receive him, heaven was shut against him, none of his troops left to guard him, who had so unnaturally wronged the Maker of all in his anointed vicegerent. The king gave charge for his revival, but the King of heaven had otherwise determined of him. And he that had ambitiously provided a stately monument for his corpse, a pyramid or pillar in the king's dale, was tumbled with infamy into a ditch, like carrion under a heap of stones.

Can any be covetous without precedent? did he never read of Nabal's base penuriousness and accursed end? Hath not the adulterer Zimri for his example? can he think of his sudden end, and not tremble to embrace his harlot? And for the fictitious, that are subject to their own lusts, but will be subject to no laws, observe they not the conspiracy of Korah against Moses; whom the earth buried alive, and stayed for neither executioner to despatch them, nor sexton to make a grave for them? Can a man exact upon his brother by a biting interest, without a Jewish example? or throw his unable debtor into prison without a precedent? The usurer is a legal thief, the unmerciful creditor a legal murderer: they

do nothing but by law, and by law they may go to the devil together. The fraudulent trafficker cannot abuse his simple customer, but there is precedent for him in Ananias. Did you sell the land for so much? cost your commodity so much? Yes. What followed? The lie he told before men, he was suddenly sent to answer before the God of truth. Do tyrants now persecute the church without example? So Julian sent his subjects to heaven in earnest, himself went to hell merrily and in jest. Homicides have the example of Joab, whose grey hairs went not to the grave in peace, 1 Kings ii. 6. There is no profane libertine but had the example of Esau before him, who lost the blessing of heaven for the pleasures of earth. They cannot tell a lie but by precedent; not swear an oath, not break a sabbath, nor worship an image, but by example. All these sins, and what other we can imagine, have been committed in former ages, and plagued by former judgments. These iniquities if we admit, they retain not in so mean a quality as before. Fratricide is now worse than in Cain, because it hath Cain's ensample. Apostasy now worse than in Lot's wife, because her example hath forewarned us, Luke xvii. 32. Adulterous painting worse now than in Jezebel, because we understand her fearful end. Uncleaness now worse than in Sodom, because the Lord hath made them ensamples to those that after should live ungodly, Jude 7.

4. God's judgments are so many real sermons against the sins of men. He doth not only preach vocally by the ministry of his servants, but also actually by the execution of his judgments. "Once hath God spoken, twice have I heard it," Psal. lxxii. 11: once in his word written, a second time in his work done; his actions being so many declarations of his will. So Elihu in Job. These things will God work twice or thrice with a man, to bring his soul back from the pit, Job xxxiii. 29, 30. Once he spake it, another time performed it, a third time redoubled it. There is no people can plead ignorance, or excuse themselves by wanting means of instruction; for the whole earth is filled with the judgments of God. When the fire devours a man's estate, or the sea wrecks the merchant's hopes, or sudden death takes away our neighbour's life, God preacheth visibly to us. Though we pronounce nothing by a peremptory rashness, for fear of Christ's oburgation, Do you think they were greater sinners? Luke xiii. 4; for the cause is not revealed to us, as the prophet spake of the troubled Shunammite, "Her soul is vexed, and the Lord hath hid it from me," 2 Kings iv. 27; yet let us take them to heart: we cannot discern them, they all concern us.

Let us be the better for all this, lest we become the worse. It had been easier for us never to have heard of Sodom's ruin, than not to mend our lives by the ensample. God's hand would have been lighter upon impenitent souls, if such precedents of his justice had never been set before them. Let us raise ourselves out of their fall, and make their subversion the matter and means of our conversion. Let us be warned by examples, lest we be made examples. If we will not learn by others, others shall learn by us. There is no learning so cheap, as that which comes at another's cost. If their poison, by good allaying, be made our physic; if the sword of vengeance that devoured them, amend us with the very sight and shaking of it; we shall escape God's fury, and become the blessed examples of his mercy.

Now there are three impediments which frustrate the good use of this doctrine; contempt, neglect, and misinterpretation.

1. Contempt, which is a proud and presumptuous

humour in men; whom the most palpable judgments, and evident executions, shall never deter from their damnable projects. The judgments of God are high above his sight, Psal. x. 5: tell him how others have perished, he answers, Tut, I shall never be moved. But this is the greatest judgment of all; not to understand their errors, lest they should be brought to repentance.

2. Neglect and a forgetful slighting of such terrible things. It is to them but a pang, or a transient stitch, a nine-days' wonder, or news that is quickly out of date. Pharaoh was no sooner quitted of the plague, but presently his heart was hardened. While God thundered, he trembled; but then, as if the Lord had spent all his powder and shot, he is the same man he was. Like Ephraim's goodness, a morning dew, Hos. vi. 4. While the weather is cloudy, they are melancholy; but when the sun of prosperity rises, and the storm of affliction clears up, their moisture is dried. Such a dew you shall have stand upon the stones of the church against rain, but the stones are never the softer for it. Ahab hearing the denunciation of wrath, was humbled, 1 Kings xxi. 27: the hand of judgment did but crush his heart like a piece of clay, till the moisture was pressed out, leaving it then but more hardened earth. All Israel was affrighted at the fearful end of Korah; yet even the very sorrow after they fell upon Moses and Aaron, murmuring, "Ye have killed the people of the Lord," Numb. xvi. 41. Such small impression doth the misery of others leave in us; as if we had a protection from all arrest, a supersedeas against all suits. And what plagues soever we see inflicted on others, we think they have deserved them, never reflecting upon our own merits and mutable conditions. We come short of the circumspection that is in birds and beasts; for they can avoid the places where they see their fellows have miscarried, and are sensible by that token to remove.

3. Misinterpretation, by soothing ourselves in our own courses, and turning the stream of God's judgments another way. Some sport with these examples; and being set forth as crocodiles *in terrorem*, they make them their play-fellows, and the subjects for the exercise of their wits. As to respect the conversion of Lot's wife no better than one of Ovid's Metamorphoses; Niobe into a stone: as if there was no difference betwixt God's actions and poets' fictions. So they ascribe Noah's flood to some extraordinary aspect of the moon, or concourse of watery planets; and think not that God opened the windows of heaven and fountains of earth. The drowning of Pharaoh's host, to the inconsiderate venturing over upon a high tide. It shall be imputed to any thing rather than the true cause, God's anger; these ensamples working no more upon them than mere casualties. But woe to those that shall not so understand them as God meant them!

Here I have just cause to declare against three sorts of mistakers; with whose errors I will deal, as the venerable judges do with seditious attorneys, call them to the bench, pitch them over the bar, put out their names from the roll, and let them go.

1. The impeachers of God's providence, among whom there are six errors. 1. Of the Stoics, who call providence by the name of fate or destiny; which runs through a rank of causes, so bringing in absolute and inevitable necessity, that unions the arms of God and men. Theodoret beats the nose of this error flat to the deceiver's face. 2. Of such as tie God's providence only to celestial things, exempting all sublunary and corrupt matters. Hierome says, this error was erpt into the hearts of the Jews; as he collects from Ezek. ix. 9, "The Lord hath for-

saken the earth, and the Lord seeth not." Therefore the Lord answers, "Mine eye shall not spare them;" to show that his power is also upon the earth. 3. Nicenus, with others, held that God's providence extends itself to corruptible things only in a general manner. But our Saviour comprehends under it not only the hairs of men, but even the feathers of birds. 4. Aquinas speaks of the error of Rabbi Moses the Jew; that among corruptible things, man only appertaineth to the Divine providence. This Jeremiah confutes: "I am the God of all flesh," Jer. xxxii. 27; both of men and beasts. 5. Of the Platonists, that distinguish three kinds of providence. First, of the supreme God, that stretcheth primarily to spiritual things, in a second degree to all the world. The second, of separated substances, that move the heavens in a circle; intelligences. The last, of certain *dæmones*, powers, which they place in the middle betwixt God and man. Such are those that worship devils for a *ne nocent*. 6. Of atheists, that deny all providence, and admit only fortune. Lactantius hath confuted it by many arguments; but David's conviction is the best disgrace to it, who sets a cockscorn on the head of it; "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God," Psal. xiv. 1. In his heart he hath said it, but in his heart he never believed it. Look upon all creatures; they make one glorious army, marshalled into their several ranks, and marching to the will of their great General. Why do stones, plants, and insensible things, tend to the end for which they were created, when as yet they have no knowledge of it, but that they are directed by God? Young ones are no sooner born, but they turn their mouths to the breast of their mothers; yet man, against nature, reason, religion, doth not turn his mouth of confession, to acknowledge that God who made him. We see birds to come of eggs, and living things engendered of dead seed; why should we not as well believe the resurrection of our bodies, and the last account of all our actions?

2. All misconstruing perversers of God's judgments. That the Jews after a curse of fifteen hundred years, and a vagabond dispersion like Cain, should not bethink themselves of their murder of the Lamb of God, is the stupifying spirit of error. One of them is driven to confess, that as this plague so far exceeds all their former captivity, so the sin that caused it must exceed all their former sins. As much may justly be said of our Italianated fugitives; who seeing the terrible judgments of God upon them, will not yet know the Lord. The powder plot is passed over with "An unfortunate attempt," and the instruments no further blamed than for their rash and ill luck; as if they confessed that it wanted nothing but success to make it lawful: worse than the sorcerers of Egypt: they could cry out, "This is the finger of God," Exod. viii. 19.

They call for a judge of controversies betwixt us, yet will not see that God himself is the Judge; declaring his sentence and decision by helping the side which he favoureth. All his judgments upon the conspirators, cannot learn them how much he detesteth such practices. Still they will not gather the unwarrantableness of their designs, though they have been forced in indignation to blunder out, that the Judge of all the world is become a Lutheran. Still they are mad to be made the wretched engines of his ambition, that sells the souls of men to buy himself reputation. Cannot the catholicness of their doctrine, and the infallibility of their director, make their plots successful, and still are they blind? Such palpable demonstrations of God's wrath so directly against their proceedings, might at least make them

suspect that something is amiss, and examine where the fault resteth. To have their infallibility so deceived, might cause them to recollect themselves, if they were not drunk with the wine of Sodom. Though they smart with the vials of fury, yet they will not leave their sorcery, according to the prophecy of them, Rev. ix. 20. They will rather gnaw their tongues for pain, Rev. xvi. 10, than acknowledge God's judgments for sin. If we were such damnable heretics as they would make us, how comes it to pass that the Lord so takes our part? that they so often tempting us by flattery, and attempting us by fury, have not yet prevailed against us? that neither the pope's bulls nor curses have wrought the intended effects? Certainly if the Lord did not favour our cause, he would never so protect our state. Yet all these ensamples work not upon their consciences, nor will they confess their pernicious courses. Though many hundred of their treacherous emissaries have misearied, yet still more follow on, as if no precedent had bid them take heed. But antichrist deals with them, as Amnon did with Tamar; first ravisheth them, and then turns them out of doors. But because they would not take example by whom they should, they shall be made examples to whom they would not; even a reproach to all posterity, and a stink to the succeeding generations.

3. All profane persons that misapply these ensamples. What plagues soever come to others, they conceit of themselves no such desert; if he will perish, let him; and no further mind it. Instead of a serious application, to make a jest upon others' misery, this is common. We should "weep with them that weep," Rom. xii. 15. Woe to such as laugh at their brother's tears! whereas, He to-day, and I to-morrow, was St. Bernard's use: and, We are, have been, or may be, as miserable as they, was St. Augustine's. The seaman that sees another ship split on a rock, will avoid it. Passengers fear to travel that way, where they hear of continual robberies. Yet cannot these judicial precedents humble them; as if they had their salvation by patent. Yea, they are but temporally sensible of their own plagues; nor doth the thought outlast the smart. As that father speaks of the afflicted pagans; They lose the benefit of affliction, are confirmed in wretchedness and sin: (August.) worse in body, and no better in soul. Either they think they need no affliction, or so sure that they are above affliction. As if God, like some skillless chirurgeon, when he comes to let blood, could not find a vein; or were not wise enough to choose that vein which is fittest to bleed.

They are lethargically secure, no ruin but their own can stir them. But that which could not instruct must destroy; if they be not deterred by others they must be destroyed themselves. Thunder proceeds from a vapour lifted up from the earth, and compassed with a cold cloud: in the agitation or struggling it takes fire, and then breaks out where the cloud is thinnest: and being out, sometimes it strikes the clothes, not the body; sometimes the body, not the clothes. So doth preaching; it is the vapour or breath of the Spirit, surrounded with the cold and waterish humours of our sins: it struggles with them, and in the strife catcheth fire; and so vents itself to the terror of the world. Sometimes by menaces and examples, it strikes our garments, not ourselves: sometimes it goes further, and strikes also our own hearts. Oh then let us fear God's judgments upon others, that we may never feel them ourselves.

To conclude with application, albeit indeed the whole discourse is but a doctrine of application; for wherefore is an example propounded, but to be applied? Hypocrites are sick, and will not be

known to stand in need of physic; they can have no remedy. Profane ones are sick, and will accept of no physic; they will have no remedy. It is hard to say which case is worst: now God have mercy on them both! Can we think God will not deal with us as he hath dealt with others before us? Jezebel suborned false witnesses, and had her neck burst for it: is there no judgment for such offenders? Achan for sacrilege is stoned: our church robbers hope to escape. Miriam was proud, and became leprous: our plastered popinjays fear not. Israelites distrusting in the Lord, die by a plague: how many want faith, and yet look not to want mercy! Esau seems to say unto all profane wretches, Take warning by me; Ahab to all superstitious idolaters, Saul to all malicious persecutors, Absalom to all unnatural sons, Gehazi to all false servants, Nabal to all covetous churls, Shimei to all blasphemous railers, Take warning by us. And the Sodomites here are made to speak in the language of sorrow, to all secure wantons, Take warning by us.

Such measure is to be expected from God's hands, if such wickedness be found in ours. If men like it well, to have their buildings on fire about their ears, to see their infants dashed against the stones, or scorched with flames, to feel a bloody enemy triumphing in their streets, to have their names a derision, their cities a desolation, their carcases exposed to fowls, and perhaps their souls to furies and torments; they may then run on their impious courses without any repentance or deprecation. It is God's mercy, that we were not made the first-fruits of his wrath, and examples to all the world; but how great is our unthankfulness, if having thus escaped, we are not bettered! Or if we escape all this, yet the Lord will strike when he sees his time, perhaps when we are in worse case to bear it. He can make our deathbeds smart for this; he may reserve all horror and amazement to that desperate hour, and then lay on us the burden of all our sins. There is one thing, if we hear it, and heart it, enough to fright us all: "It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee," Matt. xi. 24: and yet the Sodomites are now in hell. If we receive not the blessed gospel with faith and fear, Sodom and Gomorrah never sinned as we sin, and Sodom and Gomorrah were never plagued as we shall be.

But as it is a happy alarm that brings in the straggling soldier to his colours; and a good chance for the wandering sheep, by seeing the wolf prey on a goat, to be gathered home to the fold: so let the destruction of Sodom be the instruction of England; let their curse become our blessing. It is a good compassion of nature, that shall bring us to the compunction of grace. So instead of fire and brimstone from heaven, or in hell; the angels shall lift us up from the vale of mortality, and the brightness of glory receive us in the paradise of joy; through the mercy of God that hath promised it, and the merits of Christ that hath purchased it for us.

"Unto those that after should live ungodly." What St. Paul says, "The law is not made for the righteous man," 1 Tim. i. 9; so nor here is the example set for the holy. But the law is for the lawless, and the example of the ungodly is for the ungodly. He that freely obeys the truth, finds no adversary of the law; it serves to chastise the bad and backward, not to restrain the good and forward. The horse that reineth well, needs no bit; nor he that runneth freely, a spur. Against the righteous there is no law, Gal. v. 23. There is no condemning law, for they are in Christ: there is no compelling law, for the Spirit is in them; and they do as willingly obey God, as if there was no law. Were there no

hell, and God would not punish transgression with eternal death; yet would they avoid all sin because it displeaseth Christ. Yea further, if Christ would not give them eternal life, yet would they love him, and desire the advancement of his kingdom. So these examples are not for the righteous, but for the ungodly.

1. Let us consider what this ungodliness is in the proper nature of it: for it seems to consist both in the privative or negative, excluding somewhat, and coming short of what is required; and in the positive, committing somewhat that is prohibited. Ungodliness is a sin, which many defy in their mouths, and embrace in their hearts; so much greater than the seven popish deadly sins, as it is indeed the ground of them all. More dangerous; because being rooted in the heart, it is not so visible to the eye, nor discernible to his reason that owes it. More heinous, because it is more spiritual, immediately directed against God himself; being a breach of the first commandment of the first table, robbing him of his due honour. It consists, either in the true worship of a false god, or in a false worship of the true God, or in the true worship of the true God with a false heart. Whereas godliness is a true service of the true God, in a true religion, with a true heart.

First, it gives him not his honour: secondly, it gives it to another: thirdly, if it do give him due honour, yet not after a due manner. The fool says in his heart, There is no God, Psal. xiv. 1: not but that his conscience is convinced of the contrary; but on the least temptation his heart is willing to acknowledge none. Said, not believed: examine him according to his creed, and never fool believed in his heart, there is no God. If he must confess his being, yet he renounceth all subjection. "They say unto God, Depart from us," &c. Job xxi. 14. This is too outrageous to be the speech of the tongue, it is the rebellion of the heart; not voal, but actual. They will not have him reign over them, Luke xix. 27. They scorn to beg a blessing of him; they "call not upon the Lord," Psal. xiv. 4. They that will crouch and attend the court for a lordship on earth, will not so much as be petitioners for the kingdom of heaven. They say, The Lord will do neither good nor evil, Zeph. i. 12: they sleep, and dream that the Lord sleeps too. Or they not only deny this tribute to their Creator, but give it to some creature; as David took the land from honest Mephibosheth, and gave it to Ziba a varlet. Or else they resolve to honour him, with that he hath declared to offend him; as Paul in persecuting, and the Jews in executing Christ, thought they did God service. Lastly, even in their best works, that may carry some show of devotion, they have a false heart; halting betwixt God and Baal; a mixed service. So Demas, though he forsook Paul, yet turned not to his idols again.

But he that will admit the service of God no way but his own, shall find the mercy of God no way at all. There may be a denial of God in real fact, even when there is a confession of God in verbal faith. A disease which this age labours of: in great ones it is a *Noli me tangere*; physicians and divines call it incurable. Yea, our vulgar are not exempted, and the pulpit can prove nothing so appositely and directly by Scripture, but if it displease the people, it shall never come in their creed. Let religion and the gospel fly away, if they speak not as this people would have them. When God's word and this ungodliness meet, you shall hear a rattling and hissing, as in the encounter of fire and water. Paul casts fire at Ephesus; Demetrius roars; in comes the town-clerk with the magnificence of Diana: alas, that was a painted fire, no noise nor tumult at it. If we stroke your spleen, and tell you that you are predestinated

to go to heaven in a coach, or that a wherry shall gently wait you to Canaan; this is a painted fire that never troubles you. But when we speak of denying your covetous lusts, abjuring your sacrilege, bleeding for malicious lies and slanders; here is presently a hissing, a mutinous, mad rebellion.

The word in us labours to destroy ungodliness in you, and ungodliness in you labours to destroy the word in us. But consider what the prophet told Amaziah, Because thou hast not obeyed my counsel, I know that God hath determined to destroy thee, 2 Chron. xxv. 16. The sons of Eli would not hearken, because the Lord meant to slay them, 1 Sam. ii. 25; their hearts must be hardened, that they may be destroyed. Alas, the scholar is but the pattern of his master, and our knowledge but a beam of God's knowledge: while ungodly men refuse us, (Truth hath said it,) they reject God himself. They got Zechariah to be made away by the king's command: he said no more at his death, but "The Lord look upon it," 2 Chron. xxiv. 21, 22: what followed? While ungodly men are whetting a knife to cut our throats, God is whetting a sword to cut their throats. One singular proof of ungodliness, is a contesting against the preachers of Jesus Christ.

2. This example is set down for the ungodly; but it is rare to find any that will confess themselves ungodly; now men that have no sense of being ill, will never care for any medicines to make them well. And though the fruits of it were never more visible and notorious, yet the root lies buried in the ground, and boasts of a concealment. We have some to whom the very church is a shadow of death, and they have earnest business, which they love above God and their own souls. Examine your fields, streets, waters, in the times of devotion; is not this ungodliness? And for them that make as though they would be saved, do they not sue for their inheritance in heaven, *forma pauperis*; refusing to give the least scrap of their superfluity for eternal life? Yea, do not they even pull down that kingdom, which they seem to crave? Is not this ungodliness? If they hear, is it not with contempt, spleen, censure, and (if they durst) with controlment? How few, when the sermon is done, think either the worse of themselves for the present, or become the better afterward! How many brutish men find we, Psal. xciv. 8, that continually mistake the soul for the body! "Soul, eat, drink," &c. Luke, xii. 19; his meaning was, Body, eat. He thought his soul was delighted with sensuels, whereas it is the lay-part, the very least of man, that is thus pleased.

Lust is with the affections, as Jezebel with her chamberlains; she paints and pleases; grace comes like Jehu, "Who is on my side?" 2 Kings ix. 32; oh that she were hurled down! If wealth increase, there is a dish added to the table, a set to the ruff, a tie to the shoes; but not a dram to devotion, not a nite to the church, not a scrap to the poor, not a grace to the soul. Not to speak of the professed enemies to all goodness, the engines of hell, and deputies of the devil, whose souls are nothing else but moving anatomies: such as are yet to choose their faith, and think religion a humour or fancy following the complexion. Like a condemned wretch, that jests away his soul. (Pardon all holy impatience: unruly patients make sharp physicians.) Men that think all we preach to be but fables; yet on their death-beds, if their lethargized conscience be suffered to wake ere it go to hell, they would give all the world to be sure what we say were not true: are not these ungodly?

To omit those hypocrites, that are shuffled among professors, as Saul was among the prophets; for

there is no cure of an unknown grief. To omit those swearers and adulterers, who are out of the reach of civil justice, but God puts them in his own calendar; judging the one, Heb. xiii. 4, and not holding guiltless the other, Exod. xx. 7. And those toes of the land that rot with idleness: lazy beggars; as it hath been observed, Great men make thieves, and then hang them up: (Sir Thomas More's Utop.) make them, by suffering sloth to slide into villany. And all those capital oppressors, that, like Felix, when they can get no money, will bind Paul, if it be but to curry favour with the Jews. They grew rich by the undoings of men, yet under the shadow of power and authority, "they wrap it up," Micah vii. 3. Wrap it up, as mud in crystal, or a foul thing in a fair cloth. Which was detested by a very Tiberius, chiding his polling officer, *Tonderi volo pecus, non deglubit*. This is rank impiety: but to come closer home, and happy is the bosom which is not conscious of these evils.

Have we any more than a mere form of godliness, reserving the pride and choice allowance to our own lusts? As our treacherous Romists, that give their liege their compliments, but to a foreign prince their hearts. Do not men spend ten hours about mammon, before one minute about devotion? do they not think of their last account, as the last thing to be thought of? Is not covetousness chief commander of the fort, and nothing done without her permission? Where did the bad servant bury his talent, but in the earth? earthy affections, covetousness, bury all. This is that which eats out the heart of grace, by eating grace out of the heart. Is not this ungodliness got into the midst of that execrable rabble? Rom. i. 29; 1 Cor. vi. 9. The devil may seem to take example by covetous worldlings, to chide his spirits, and upbraid their sloth: Mortal men in so few years can heap up so many thousands, and get abundance into their hands; and you that should in quickness outstart them, lie sleeping like drones by the hearth of hell, and seek not to people our kingdom.

And who can wonder that those men disregard their ministers, that have cast away all respect of their own souls? Or what marvel that St. Anthony's vision, which is said to be two years before the Arian heresy arose, should now be palpable: beasts about the altar, kicking it with their heels, dashing it with their horns, and trampling on it with their foul hoofs; till like Job, it be made poor to a proverb. Covetousness makes ungodliness flourish. Yet is not this all; for where is the subjection of heart to the will of God? Who suffers that supreme law to rule his actions and affections? who trembles at that thing which may offend his Maker? Men little think of their conscience, when they are going about to please their concupiscence: they study their ends, not their end. And how hardly will they prefer God's glory before their own souls, that will not prefer it to a piece of artificial clay! Is not this ungodliness? Innumerable be the fruits of an ungodly heart, whereof the fewer we see in ourselves, the more they be, and the more to be lamented. If we be not evil, why do we pray, "Deliver us from evil?" Wretched are they that flatter themselves, and blessed are they that can prove themselves, to be out of the rank of the ungodly. The Omniscient eye can find ungodliness enough in the best. To us then is this example applicable: let it make us confess that we are as they are, and repent, that we may never be as they are. Lord, take away our ungodliness, and thou shalt find none.

3. Lastly, consider the state of ungodliness. To be ungodly implies two things, wickedness and wretchedness. He is mortal, yet covetous; poor, yet

proud; foolish, yet headstrong. He takes great pains to build a house on another man's ground: he seeks for sweet water in the midst of the salt sea. He studies more to be advanced, than to be worthy of that advancement. He hath lost himself, and desperately cares not what he does, to find his will. Nor his goods, nor his honours, nor his friends go with him, but his sins: so he departs to torments boundless, endless.

The Scripture says of him, that he is in sin, I Cor. xv. 17. It is one thing to have sin in us, another thing for us to be in sin. Sin is in us all; St. Paul confesseth it of himself; "Sin dwelleth in me," Rom. vii. 20. But all are not in sin, drowned, captivated, dungeoned. We say, such a man is in drink: drink may be in him, and yet he sober; but for him to be in drink, argues him drunken. The ungodly doth hunt after sin; the eye and the ear being a couple of beagles to put up the game, and the whole man turned into a beast to follow the course. Only here is the difference: there the hart or hare that is chased dies, and the hound lives; here the sin survives, and the hunter perishes. He is slaved to sin; whatsoever lust dictates, he subscribes to: there is no base officer in his family of wickedness, but let him come with the most unnatural suit, he writes *Fiat*. He is "holden with the cords of his sins," Prov. v. 22. God help the man thus manacled: this is a case wherein a king may be pitied by a galley-slave. Here is no flying, no changing his master: he may change his place, estate, repose, lodging, repast; he cannot change himself. Whithersoever he goes, he takes himself along with him.

He hath a broad conscience; which is like a barn-door, it can take in a whole load of corn: he can swallow a camel. All ravenous fishes have large and wide mouths. The devil will never mince this man's meat, he is able to swallow it whole. (Whereas the good conscience is like the little door to the holy of holies, that lets in none but the High Priest, Jesus Christ.) He confirms his heart in evil by voluntary custom, till he can with more ease digest the hardest offence, than the stomach of an ostrich can digest iron. He is pleased with the success, vexed with the prevention of any sinful purpose. If his plot be crossed, and his hand cannot act that wickedness by day which his head hath devised by night, he is taken with a fit of melancholy, sick of the sullens; as was Ahab and Haman. He thinks it a death that he cannot be suffered to die; it is a hell to him that the gates of hell are shut against him.

If he be punished, he can grieve at the smart, not at the cause; in sickness he can cry, My head, my head, or my heart, my heart; but, my sin, or my soul, is none of his complaint. To wail some small effects, and never to think of the cause, is to be curious in healing the cliffs of skin at the root of our nails, never minding the corruption that is in our heads or hearts. His whole business is sin, he hath nothing else to do in the world. He may taste of the waters of life by chance, as a dog laps at Nilus; but his voyage is bound for mischief. And like a fire-work on a line, he runs on while his matter lasts, then goes out with stink and a crack.

Though I cannot say to all men, be not sinners; yet let me say, be not ungodly. Though you admit sin, do not intend sin; do not seek it, though it finds you. Would men know what is in their hearts, and distinguish betwixt rebellions and infirmities? Pirates forage on the seas, rob merchants, refuge themselves at Dunkirk or Algiers. They complain to the Spaniard or Turk for redress. No, say they, they are none of ours, we give them no such allowance, we own them not. Well, if yet secretly they

receive them to land, help them with fresh water, meat, tackling, provision, and thus underhand relieve them, sure these do allow them. Men profess piety, yet admit of lusts in themselves, injuries to others: whose acts be these? None of ours: alas! against our wills, we cannot but sin, yet we consent not to it. Nay, but if concupiscence be in the mean time fostered, purveyed for by the eye, batted by riot, armed with approbation, justified by dissembling, this is not weakness, but rank ungodliness. It is a habit. Every act doth not make a habit: divers have fallen into incontinence, soon repented, and avoided the sin; this cannot be called ungodliness. Transient escapes do not denominate an ungodly man, because the sins committed are now loathed. But avarice, injustice, malice, &c., these are ungodliness; because here is a continuance of will, and a will of continuance. Now as the orator said, when he had declaimed against drunkenness, it was but to keep men sober; so this discourse of ungodliness is intended to turn men's hearts to piety. But this may be planted by Paul, and watered by Apollos, no increase can be but by the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

This was their ungodliness. God often spareth the wicked for the righteous' sake; such as are either allied in blood, as Ham was in the ark; or by cohabitation and proximity, as Paul had all the souls in the ship given him. The wise man is the fool's salvation: as a physician is an antidote against sickness, and a valiant man a muniment against enemies. When Augustus had conquered Antony, and taken Alexandria, and the citizens expected nothing but present massacre, the emperor proclaimed a general pardon, for Arrius' sake, a philosopher of that city, and his familiar friend. Thus doth God forbear men for men, one for another, but all for Jesus. But where all are apostates, all perish. Noah could deliver but eight out of a world; and Abraham, beginning at fifty, went no lower than ten, lest he should have been too bold with God. He doth stay at ten, not as though God for a less number will not spare a city: for as sometimes for more than fifty he will not suspend his judgments, as Samaria and Israel found, when seven thousand good men were among them; so for fewer than ten he will sometimes show mercy, as he promised to spare Jerusalem for one: Find but one man that seeketh the truth, and I will spare it, Jer. v. 1. But here all were ungodly; only one family shunned their filthy conversation, and so escaped their fiery conflagration.

THE SINS OF SODOM.

To take a short catalogue of their ungodliness, principally their sins were six: four whereof be mentioned, Ezek. xvi. 49; a fifth by St. Jude, ver. 7, following strange flesh; the last, Gen. xix. 9, contempt of all holy admonition.

1. Pride will ever be foremost; it seeks the highest place in preferment, it shall have the uppermost place in torment. "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory," Psal. cxv. 1: this pride contradicts; To us, to us, and to none but us. We may say of humility, as of that good woman, "Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all," Prov. xxxi. 29: but of pride, other sins do vilely enough, but that surmounts them all. God resisteth the proud, for the proud resist God: a piece of rotten dent, so soon as it is made, recoileth against its Maker, opposeth that Majesty which the angels adore, the thrones worship, the devils fear, and the heavens obey. But he gets nothing by it, for if God resist him who shall defend him? If

against the proud he sent his law with such thunder, how will himself come?

The world is apt to admire pride, her words are held oracles, her works miracles, her garments true ornaments. This so flesheth and flusheth her, that she thinks no more of God, except it be with Saul, Honour me before this people, 1 Sam. xv. 30. As Nebuchadnezzar built much for his own honour, Dan. iv. 30, nothing for the honour of God. Therefore the Lord will grace humility, and give her the glory. When the ambitious promoter of himself shall be fetched down, God will say to her, "Friend, go up higher," Luke xiv. 10. Pride is like smoke. But humility is a substantial grace, so that pride itself is proud of her mantle: as Absalom, so rank with pride, yet put on a show of humbleness, in compliment. And this is the glory of humility, that proud men are glad of her livery. But pride must learn better manners, or if she escape the Sodomites' fire on earth, she must feel the Sodomites' fire in hell.

2. Fulness of bread. But is this a sin? Is not bread the staff of life, and the fulness of it a blessing? Yes, but that good mother brought forth two bad daughters; pride in habit, and excess in diet. It is not the fulness of bread, but our fulness of belly, that is the sin. "Charge the rich that they be not high-minded," 1 Tim. vi. 17: no sooner rich, but presently high-minded. "The fat valleys of them that are overcome with wine," Isa. xxviii. 1: they that dwell in fat valleys will fume with wines. "Let their table become a snare," Psal. lxxix. 22: the most riotous table is the most dangerous snare. "I will leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord," Zeph. iii. 12. They that have nothing to trust unto in the world, will sooner be brought to trust only in the Lord. Haman's abundance made him proud, and his pride advanced him fifty cubits higher than the earth, to a stately gibbet. If our gold become our fetters, we had better have lived beggars. The Israelites fared daintily on their quails, fed with meat of princes and bread of angels; but their sauce was too sharp, when that they put into their mouths God fetched back at their nostrils.

It is better to want necessities and iniquities, than to have with the fulness of bread the fulness of pride and riot. "Lest I be full, and deny thee," Prov. xxx. 9. If full, deny thee presently follows. It was the Lord's caveat to Israel: Take heed, "lest when thou hast eaten and art full, thou forget the Lord," Deut. viii. 12, 14. "All they that be fat upon earth shall eat and worship," Psal. xxii. 29: thus it should be. They wax fat, and spurn with their heels, Deut. xxxii. 15: "They were filled, and their heart was exalted; therefore have they forgotten me," Hos. xiii. 6: thus it is. We all desire plenty; but as when one wished the son to be like the father, Cato replied, Is this a blessing or a curse? would our plenty do us good, or harm? The wicked have their desire, yea, more than their heart could wish. What is the issue? "They set their mouth against the heavens," Psal. lxxiii. 7, 9. Christ did not teach us to beg variety of dishes, nor abundance of wines, but bread; and that but for the day, daily bread. It is emptiness that values God's providence, not fulness: when the Lord deals with us, as Frederic duke of Saxony with his servants, who in hawking had rode over much corn, and carelessly spoiled it; gave charge that their messes of meat should not be abridged, but not one bit of bread should be allowed to their supper.

Plenty breeds many diseases; I am not physician good enough to number them: not only pride, that worm of riches, which naturally begets another

worm that never nieth, the worm of conscience; but surfeit and drunkenness, the sins of this city. Call your wines by what names you will, French, or Greek, or Spanish, it is the Londoners' wine. Where there is such immoderate feasting, the world must needs believe that it is not maintained without sin and deceit: and for such meat you had need of strong wine to help digestion. Here it is, and here it is unmeasurably taken, abused, urged: as if our brother's fall were not the devil's victory. Some have thought that martyrdom and Christ's passion was called by the name of a cup, from the loathsome filling and violenceing the appetite with drink. The youngest daughter of this fulness, is wantonness: They rose up like fed horses, neighing with lust, Jer. v. 8. But of that anon: this is the dependence of pride and riot. One would think that they had no acquaintance, but they are very near. He that exalts himself above his creation by pride, falls below his creation by drunkenness. It is the voice of pride, All is mine: then riot answers, I may do what I list with mine own. Both are contraries to sobriety, one of the mind, the other of the body. They are often coupled and united: The proud man and he that transgresseth by wine, Hab. ii. 5. Pride turned Nebuchadnezzar into a beast; so doth drunkenness: their union in sin shall find no separation in punishment.

3 Idleness. This is another effect of fulness: they that flow with abundance, never mind any diligence. "As it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded," Luke xvii. 28. These were all *otia*, rather than *negotia*, as they used them: even that labour was idleness. To marry, is honest and honourable; yet was the old world taxed for this. Not because only, as some answer, they married not with any conjugal love, but with a voluptuous lust; for this is a remedy, not an iniquity that God so severely punisheth. They minded their lusts, they minded not God's laws; here was the sin. So, in the days of Lot, as if Lot was only in the day-light, all the rest in night and darkness. They ate and drank: this is nature's necessity, and is not reprehended: not the conveniency, but the superfluity is faulted. They bought and sold: this was a lawful negotiation; therefore not the mutual commercement, but the unjust defraudment, is taxed. They built and planted; both in themselves allowable. Christ blames not their felling of trees, nor building of houses, but the baseness of their desires; who sought eternity upon earth, and had no heart to the God of heaven. In eating and drinking was their saturity; in building and planting, their security; in buying and selling, their covetousness. These were all superfluous to that one necessary thing, and therefore idleness. They feared not the Lord, but lay drowned in their own sensuality; this was their invincible stupidity. Thus rotten were they in their lees of sin, that unless they had *animus pro sale*, they had been all stinking carcases.

Here we see, it is not enough to forbear evil, but it is damnable to do well. Christ pretermits the enumeration of their horrible delinquishments, and speaks of their acts lawful in appearance; ensuring them. If they were condemned for feeding, what is the wages of surfeiting? If they for necessary trading, what shall be for fraudulent deceiving? If they for building their own houses, what shall become of them that pull down God's house? If such a judgment fall upon marriage, what is the curse of adultery? Christ mentions not the sins of commission, as if they were damnable enough by concession: but the omitted duties: Ye did not feed me, &c.

Matt. xxv. Not that the other shall pass unjudged, but to show that there is damnation enough wrapped up in these to destroy the world.

Thus easily doth fulness degenerate into idleness; and where is no need of gains, there no vouchsafing of pains. To many a man will God say, I made thee a husbandman, who made thee a gentleman? I will make man a helper meet for him, Gen. ii. 18: this intends that neither should be idle. The man is compared to the sun, the wife to the moon, that borrows light of him, yet hath some of her own. But when the sun shall shine only by the moonlight, this is preposterous. He is a Sodomite that will eat none but another's bread, and wear no coat of his own weaving. The slothful will not plough because of winter; therefore shall he beg in summer, and no man shall give him, Prov. xx. 4. He shall beg, that is bad; and no man shall give him, that is worse. But yet a man may be busy enough, and bring labour on himself with a vengeance; when he shall labour in that he hath no thanks for, and be idle in that should do him good: thus a man may go to hell for his pains. Sodom thus laboured in sin, and now labours in torment. Let us so work on our eve, that we may rest on our sabbath; work up our salvation on earth, and reap our salvation in heaven.

4. Contempt of the poor. This is an execrable sin, a thing that hastens before the time. If he be condemned that says no more but, God help thee; how sore is his judgment that says in heart, I despise thee! That omission is culpable, that goes no further than, Be warmed; but that damnable, that says, Be starved. It were fault enough to pass by them, like the Levite, without succour; but horrible, not to pass by them without disdain. "Cast thy bread on the waters," Eccl. xi. 1, that is, on the watery eyes, which do weep for want; but if we cast not our morsels, let us forbear to cast our scorns. How basely soever we esteem them, they are the members of Christ, and such as he honours, and sets near him; taking notice of every benefit, and recording every wrong, that is done them. It will be no light or slight offence, to contemn the brother of the Son of God.

Some think that the Sodomites would admit no strangers to come among them, as they speak now of China; and that this made them so furious against the angels. There be four terms among men: 1. Mine is thine, and thine is thy own. 2. Mine is mine, and thine is thine. 3. Mine is thine, and thine is mine. 4. Thine is mine, and mine is my own. The first is of saints, the second of moralists, the third of populars, and the last is the voice of devils: of this rank were the Sodomites. For this special cause they hated Lot, for his hospitality. When they came in troops to break into his house, he pleads the laws of hospitality. For this cause came they under my roof. And when he sees their headstrong purpose of villany, he chooseth rather to be an ill father to his own children, than an ill host to strangers. Therefore is heaven called Abraham's bosom, because of his hospitality; and thither the saints go: it is fit that hospitable men should go to their Father.

Let us make the poor our friends by our alms, not our enemies by our scorns. We had better have the ears of God full of their prayers, than heaps of money in our own coffers with their curses. Worldly men think themselves wise in getting wealth, and the Scriptures folly; therefore throughout the Scriptures God calls them fools for their labour: "Thou fool." There is a tale of an abbot that gave his fool a painted staff, willing him to bestow it on the veriest fool he could meet. This abbot fell mortally sick; the fool was a visitant among the rest; and hearing him say, I must leave all and be gone, asked him whither

he would go. The abbot answers, Into another country. But I hope, replies the fool, you will carry all your gold, and jewels, and treasure with you. No, I must leave all. But sure you have sent great store of preparation, as rich hangings, coverings, beds, plate, and furniture before you. No, I must leave all behind. All? I hope at least you have sent enough to furnish your own room, provision enough for yourself. No, not the least pillow. Hold, saith he, take your staff again, you are the veriest fool that ever I met. It is easily applied: they that of so much under their custody on earth will make no provision for themselves in heaven, by giving to the poor, are well taxed of the extremest folly. Let us relieve them by our good deeds, that they may relieve us by their good prayers; so shall we find mercy in the day of Jesus Christ.

5. Following strange flesh. This was not only fornication or adultery; a man's wife is his own flesh, and she that is not so, is a stranger; but even an offence against nature, for the Sodomites were not content with the common way of sinning, but were mad with a prodigious and preposterous lust. Bring forth the men, that we may know them, Gen. xix. 5. Shall we say, herein the very Sodomites spoke modestly, though their intention were villanous? I do not think they meant any mannerly concealment, but it is the dialect of the Scripture, which by an honest name sets down a most dishonest thing. It hides the sin of Sodom, as the painter hid the scar in Agamemnon's face. Certainly their impudence was monstrous, declaring their sin, Isa. iii. 9. Bring them forth. Wherein they would make Lot, a father, not only a witness to the constupration and ravishment of the angels, but even the very bawd or pander; Do thou bring them out.

Questionless, those heavenly guests were of an excellent form, and most sweet favour, surpassing the sons of men; and the sight of this inflamed their more than beastly lust. Such a natural desire hath wicked man to mar what God made, to corrupt his most admirable workmanship; and where he hath imprinted the most fair characters of his glory, there they have most ambition to fasten: like cankers, that had rather be about one rose, than a thousand weeds. Beauty, meant for a mirror wherein to admire God, they turn into a snare to confound themselves; and so suck poison from the flower that would yield them honey. Happy man, whom the temptation of beauty cannot make to forget his duty!

This was the extremity of Sodom's sins, for whose sake it shall be called sodomy to the world's end. Whether the first excogitation of it begun, or the received practice was infamous, among them, it is still the sin of Sodom. So abominable, that fire from heaven was the reward of it. As against nature was the transgression, so against nature is the destruction. It is natural for fire to ascend upward, but here, contrary to the course of nature, it is forced to come downward. Christ himself is said to rain that deluge from Jehovah his Father. Why he? why not, as in other punishments, the Lord, without any further distinction? Because they had corrupted that nature, which the Son of God was to take. (August.) The Lord seeing this sin in the flesh, had almost forborne to take flesh; or at least so long deferred it before he came. Some have written, that all the sinners in that kind, died the very same night that Christ was incarnate. This sin was infamous among the Gentiles; They burned in lust one toward another, and man with man wrought filthiness, Rom. i. 27. For this horrid uncleanness in masculine viceroy, Socrates is branded among the philosophers, and Nero among the Roman emperors. As by lawful

marriage, two are made one, so by this turpitude, one is divided into two. But let this sin sink into hell with the Sodomites, and never more be remembered on the face of the earth. I now expel it out of my discourse; the Lord banish it out of all our hearts for ever. Yea, not only that, but all manner of uncleanness; lest we be given over, like the Gentiles, to our own lusts, by a just retaliation: who as they had dishonoured God, were suffered to dishonour themselves; and as they had turned beasts into gods, so they turned themselves into beasts.

But this following of strange flesh hath a greater latitude and further extent, and fetcheth in all carnal pollutions; a sin that is a burning, Job xxxi. 12, whosoever it hath a being. The apostle in one chapter hath six invincible arguments to dissuade us from it.

(1.) "The body is for the Lord, and the Lord for the body," 1 Cor. vi. 13. If the body be for the Lord, it is not for uncleanness. If the Lord be for the body to glorify it, then he is for the body to rule and sanctify it. The husband is one with the wife, and the wife with the husband, while both are chaste; but if the bed be defiled, that concorporation dissolves.

(2.) "God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power," ver. 14. If we desire our body to be raised with incorruption when we are dead, let us keep it without pollution while we live. Let us sow a gracious body, that we may reap a glorious body. How deformed and ugly will the fairest creatures look, when their bodies shall be raised with the marks of uncleanness upon them! *Optimi corruptio pessima*: if prostitution, maugre all the art of plastering, can turn beauty into deformity, and make despicable on earth, how loathsome will it appear in the day of vengeance!

(3.) "Shall I take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid," ver. 15. Suppose a king sitting in his chair of state, his temples crowned with a golden diadem, his body adorned with royal robes and jewels; how ill-favouredly would a torn shoe or a leprous toe appear! It is our glory, to be parts of him that is the King of glory; let us not dishonour him by defiling ourselves. He is mad that forsakes a saint to admit a devil into his arms; that for the odious connexion with a harlot, leaves the delicious embraces of Jesus Christ.

(4.) "Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body," ver. 18. Other sins are without the body, this is against the body. In theft, of all members the hand is principal, and in blasphemy the tongue; but this, above the rest, more or less, leaves a sordid iniquation upon the whole body. If then not for the love of God, whose the body is by creation; nor for desire of perfect beauty at the resurrection; nor for hatred of the highest sacrifice, robbing Christ of his members by a carnal impropriation; yet for love of thyself, and respect to thine own body, flee fornication.

(5.) "Know you not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost?" ver. 19. It is a great profaneness to abuse the material temple, made with men's hands; much worse to violate the spiritual temple, made by the hand of God. I have heard of some depopulators, that of the quire of saints have made a kennel for their dogs; that was nefarious enough. Yet so far as God loves this corporeal temple better than that, this adulterous profanation exceeds the former. To turn the Holy Ghost out of his chamber, and to make it Satan's unclean dwelling; most fearful! O think at the moment of temptation, it is the temple of God I now profane, defile, abuse; what fire cannot this meditation quench!

(6.) "Ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's," ver. 20. By this token keep thy body in temperate, saith Christ; I shed my blood to redeem it. What I have been at such cost to cleanse, do not thou carelessly defile. No gold or jewels could ransom our bodies, but the blood of Christ: let us value them according to the price, and we shall not do amiss. Do not for a moment's delight make frustrate an eternal purchase. Most enormities of life proceed from an error in the understanding; We may do what we list with our own. We may speak what we list; why? our tongues are our own, Psal. xii. 4. We may spend what we list; why? our riches are our own. Shall I take my bread and my meat? saith cheerful Nabal, 1 Sam. xxv. 11. He is deceived, for even of life itself man is not the master, but the keeper, saith law and case divinity. The Lord is the possessor of heaven and earth, Gen. xiv. 19: man but the farmer. Our bodies are our own, therefore do with them what we please? It is false, they are none of ours; but, in a true propriety, the Lord's. We have but a right of favour from the true Proprietary, and that liable to an account. He lends them us for our use, but his own service. Therefore answer all temptations to lust, This body is not mine own, but his that made it, and bought it: I dare not alienate it from the Owner, and remove the marks he hath set unto it. My body is thine, Lord, keep it, and save it for ever.

6. The last sin of Sodom was contempt of heavenly admonition. Lot charged them from God, and they, like a rusty or ill-wrought piece, recoiled in his face; Who made thee a judge? we will deal worse with thee than with them, Gen. xix. 9. They had all stony hearts, and Lot could do small good in preaching to a heap of stones. Oh that this sin of Sodom did not cleave too fast unto this land and time! They had but one Lot for four cities; we have for one city four hundred Lots. What nation under heaven hath so many learned teachers? Our church looks like the firmament in its glory, when a clear night shows it bespangled with stars of all lustres and diversity of lights. And if in some places they appear thinner, and shine less: as the stars are thin to them that live under the southern pole, and there be little sparkles in the galaxy, scarce discernible: it is only for want of competency, there is no provision to feed them. But to this city the bees come in swarms, to empty their best honey in this glorious hive. This honey you suck, and at last send them down again poor miserable drones. The number of preachers about the city, exceeds some whole country in Christendom. For aught I know, in the benefits of nature, and commodities of life, it may be equal to others; in this it excels the rest. If Rome have the gayer roads, and Spain the richer images, yet certainly we have the happier pulpits.

Thus great is our blessing, but how small is our estimation of it! Formally men come to church, to hear a man talk, but it is no matter to them what he says. We may preach ourselves hoarse and dead, and yet do no good: the reason is, men's hearts are hardened in contempt. When Christ preached, "the eyes of all were fastened on him," Luke iv. 20: our eyes are turned another way. "The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine," 2 Tim. iv. 3: the event hath sealed this prophecy. To carp at the phrase, method, voice, or gesture, this is nothing; such exceptions be like a flourish before a fight. The world's quarrel is against the substance of preaching; if we threaten, we are cruel; if we promise, we flatter; if mild, we dream; if bold, we rail; if we prove by arguments, it is called sophistry;

our affability is held lightness; our austerity, madness: nothing can please them, that resolve they will not be pleased. For our personal disgraces, we armed ourselves for them when we took the profession. We knew that we should be stared on as prodigies, hissed at as ridiculous, shunned as infectious; endure all the reproaches that the devil's scavengers can rake out of the kennels of hell, to throw on our faces. The worst language that hath been dipped in the fire, or tipped at the forge of hell, is as good as Good-morrow, if they meet a minister.

But here it is, though the contempt light upon us, it is meant at the gospel; and Christ is wounded through our sides. To speak truth, here is the very head and heart of the controversy: the world will not let men alone in their sins, therefore they must be revenged on somebody: from hence proceed the sacrilege, robbing, and the aspersions wronging the ministers of Jesus Christ. "They hate him that rebuketh in the gate," Amos v. 10. Alas, what can work upon a hard heart! Take a bar new come out of the fire, and the smith can work it, though it be iron: let him strike on his anvil never so long, there is no impression made, but rather a rebound of the stroke.

"The words of the wise are as goads," Eccl. xii. 11, but men have leviathans' skins; they esteem iron as straw, and brass as rotten bays. They are nails, but driven upon marble or iron, and so turn again. "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather," John iii. 19. They excuse themselves from the sins of Sodom, pride, &c.; but there is a sin within them, which makes them as far off from salvation. While you that see the light which Sodom never had, despise it more than Sodom ever did, it shall be more easy for Sodom in the day of judgment than for you, Matt. xi. 24. Let not men flatter themselves from being obnoxious to those execrable enormities: while they do not humbly and obediently honour the gospel, their estate is worse; and Sodom shall be saved sooner than these men.

Let Rome tremble, that hath too truly deserved this name, spiritual Sodom, Rev. xi. 8. It were no slander, to tax Italy of Sodom. By their allowance? God forbid. Yet Jeronizeded Mutius set out books of purpose to defend this filthiness: and (it seems) they were allowed by the bulls of Pope Julius the Third. Casa the archbishop of Beneventum joined himself as a copesmate to second him. They bestowed praises on that sin, whereof Sodom itself would have been ashamed. But this must be no imputation to their doctrine, for that teacheth otherwise. And for ourselves, though in this we touch not upon Sodom's filthiness, let us beware lest by other sins we bring ourselves to Sodom's wretchedness. Let us hearken to the gospel and love it, love it and believe it, believe it and obey it, obey it and so honour it, honour it and so be everlastingly saved by it. Amen.

VERSE 7.

And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked.

THE time is come at once, when Sodom must be burned, and Lot delivered. Zoar is preserved for Lot, as Lot was for Abraham. If Sodom had not been wholly wicked, he had not changed his dwelling; he could have procured mercy to it, as well as

to Zoar. Now at once the sun rises upon Zoar, and fire falls down upon Sodom. Abraham stands on the hill, and beholds the cities smoking. Lot is secure in his new habitation, and neither feels nor fears the judgment. It is fair weather with the saints, when it is foulest with the wicked. When swarms of hornets sting and wound the Egyptians, not a fly must touch an Israelite. That such a winged army came not from nature or fortune, it is plain, but from an offended God; because the very flies shall make a difference betwixt Egypt and Goshen. He that gave them a being, sets them a stint; they can no more sting an Israelite, than spare an Egyptian. The wings of those small creatures are directed by a providence, and confess their limits.

The fire can go no further than the plain, not a spark shall reach to Zoar. But when Sodom hath never a Lot left in it, what should hinder the destruction? If God meet with a very good field, he plucks up the weeds, and lets the corn grow; if with an indifferent, he lets the corn and the weeds grow together; if with a very bad one, he gathers the few ears of corn, and sets fire on all the rest. When he turned Sodom into ashes, he "delivered just Lot."

There are two principals in the verse; a freedom, and a thralldom: for Sodom was a gaol to Lot wherein he was tormented, Zoar a refuge wherein he was quieted. There is a prisoner and a Preserver; Lot is the prisoner, God the Preserver.

In the freedom consider four circumstances:

The matter, what, A deliverance.

The manner, how, A violent deliverance.

The time, when, The fire being ready to fall.

The place, where, By sparing Zoar for his sake.

For the thralldom, the prisoner is described by,

His grace, He was a just man.

His place, Among the wicked.

His case, He was vexed with them.

First, for his freedom; here was a deliverance, and God was the author of it. Indeed, who else can deliver? Deliver me, O God, for vain is the help of man. "Many are the afflictions of the righteous; but the Lord delivereth him out of them all," Psal. xxxiv. 19. Man cannot deliver out of one, God out of all. "The Deliverer shall come out of Zion," Rom. xi. 26: angels or men may be instruments, Christ is the Deliverer. "Deliver Israel, O God, out of all his troubles," Psal. xxv. 22. It was Rabshake's blasphemy, What god can deliver out of my hand? Isa. xxxvi. 20. What god? he found it to his cost. Can he deliver on the hills, and not in the valleys, O ye foolish Aramites? 1 Kings xx. 28. "Thou hast delivered my soul from death," &c. Psal. cxvi. 8. To me the mercy, to thee the glory: thou hadst no partner in the design, none shall share with thee in the honour.

Till Lot be delivered, not a spark must kindle. The impartial sword must not touch Rahab, nor the destroying angel offer a blow to the sprinkled doors. Those ministers of justice have an inkhorn as well as a sword: an inkhorn to mark the chosen first, then, Go and smite, Ezek. ix. 4, 5. "Great deliverances giveth He to his king," Psal. xviii. 50: a quantity of both kinds, multitude and magnitude: be they never so many, never so mighty, against us, the Lord will deliver us. St. Paul confesseth a deliverance past, present, future; He hath, he doth, and he will deliver me, 2 Tim. iv. 17, 18. God doth not only deliver his out of the fire, but he puts out the fire too. "The snare is broken, and we are delivered," Psal. cxxiv. 7. He doth not stand to untie it, but breaks it a piece. One deep calleth another, Psal. xlii. 7; the depth of our misery for the depth of his mercy. Our lowliness is God's height: the lower we are humbled,

the higher is he exalted; the more grievous our exigent, the more glorious his advancement. We are more sure of our deliverance, than the devil can be sure of our persecution.

Seeing the faithful shall be delivered, and God only doth it, let our confidence know no other refuge. All concur in him that make a perfect Deliverer, power, skill, and will. There may be power and will, where is no skill to use it. If the horse were privy to his own strength, he would not suffer a boy to ride him. The Lord hath wisdom with power, Job xii. 13: the school says that he knows *non entia*; which they ground upon the apostle's words, "He calleth those things which be not as though they were," Rom. iv. 17. These are of two sorts; either such as are not now in act, but have been in time past, or shall be in time to come; or such as neither are now in being, nor ever were, nor ever shall be. Now seeing foolish man often fears what never was, is, nor shall be; it is best to fear God, that is, that was, and that shall be; who only knows the things we fear shall never happen to us.

There may be power and skill, yet no will to use it. The Levite wanted neither ability nor knowledge to unbind the Samaritan; he wanted will, a heart of pity. Divers have money in their purses, and wit in their pates, when they see poor wretches; it is the want of compassion, that takes no compassion of their want. If this commiseration were not in God, he was less kind to his children, than man and beast to their young.

There may be will and skill, yet a defect of power: no such want can be in the Almighty. Philosophy says, that is most active which is most elevated from matter, separated from earthy parts. The physician distils his simples into waters, thereof he makes extractions and quintessences, which are operatively strong; still the more elevated from matter, the stronger and more active. Water is stronger than earth, air than water, fire more active than air or water, as appeared in Elijah's sacrifice; angels stronger than men, God stronger than all; above earth, above water, above air, fire, men, angels, over all. No weakness can be in him. According to the alteration of the air and climate, our bloods, humours, complexions may change; but the soul is the same still. Cut off a leg or an arm, you cut off no part of the soul. Many professors may be lopped off by martyrdom, yet religion stands; to show that it is maintained by a form and soul that cannot vary. God is unchangeable, all other hopes of deliverance deceive us: men vary, times vary, weapons vary, policies of war vary, advantages and successes vary; therefore it is best trusting to an object that cannot vary, which is only God himself. "Asshur shall not save us, nor will we ride upon horses, nor say to the works of our hands, Ye are our gods: for in thee the fatherless findeth mercy," Hos. xiv. 3.

Many animals act and are acted upon by fancy: so it is fancy in men that makes them fear where no fear is; dreading the danger, not trusting the Deliverer. The sheep at first sight of the wolf, apprehends him for a terrible object, naturally fears and flees him: the lion feels no terror, but passeth by him with an honourable scorn. A malkin frights a child, a man contemns it. Elisha's servant quakes at the Syrian army, no fear invades the prophet. He saw, and caused his man to see, a greater Deliverer above. In the street we see men walk in their equal stature and dimensions; they on a high turret appear little to us. Stand on a promontory, they with you are great, they beneath you seem small: the situation of the eye makes or mars all. So it is with men in the time of trouble: if their eyes be

fixed on earth, their enemies appear great, and God that is so high seems little. Let our eyes be in heaven, and from thence look down upon our enemies, God will then appear mighty, our foes weak and contemptible. This was Jehoshaphat's confidence: There is no strength in us to stand against this multitude; "but our eyes are upon thee," 2 Chron. xx. 12. The returning spies brought such bastard news; We saw giants, the sons of Anak, compared with whom we appeared like grasshoppers, Numb. xiii. 33; alas, their eyes were fixed upon earth. Caleb had his eye in heaven, fixed on God's power and promise, he apprehends no terror at all. Joshua had a lion's eye, that passed by all these high giants, and their higher walls, with an overlooking disdain: They are bread for us; fear them not, for the Lord is with us, Numb. xiv. 9.

Samaria had a strong enemy without, a sore famine within: a nobleman, the king's own favourite, looking on the present miseries, took them to be greater than God could cure; though he should open the windows of heaven, and rain victuals, 2 Kings vii. 2. But the prophet had his eyes in heaven, and knew that the Lord would do this without windows. The flattering courtier extolled the king, made him the mightiest, Esd. iv. 12: his eyes were upon promotion. The prophet saw no such matter; "Ye shall die like men," Psal. lxxxii. 7. Even when they ride in chariots, millions attending, guards defending, they are but grasshoppers and crickets to the Lord of hosts, Isa. xl. 22: *Domini terræ*, yet but *terra Domini*. As Moses' serpent devoured the enchanters, so God's power swallows up all men's. We are all weak; in this mighty Deliverer be our confidence. When little children first learn to go, feeling their own feebleness, they thrust out a hand to the wall to stay them. Our strength is but like children's: "Our help is in the name of the Lord," Psal. cxv. 8.

2. The manner, how: *cripuit*. It was not a *tradidit*, as Judas delivered Jesus to the Jews, the Jews to Pilate, and Pilate to death. Not only a *liberavit*, as Peter was delivered, his hands falling off, and the prison doors ready for his exit. But *cripuit*, snatched him away, delivered him by a holy kind of violence. Make haste, for I can do nothing till thou come thither, Gen. xix. 22. Cannot? Is any thing impossible to God? So it is said of Christ, He could do there no great works, Mark vi. 5. It is not because he cannot, but because he will not; he had decreed the contrary. Here observe three things.

(1.) Lot would not have hastened out of Sodom, had not the angels pulled him forth by the hand. Thus impossible is it for us, to free ourselves from the bondage of sin, unless the Lord draw us, John vi. 44. Through many gradual motions we are delivered from the wickedness of this world, as Lot was from Sodom. The angels attained their end with one motion, one conversion to God; in the very instant of their creation blessed. But man may be compared to a watch; he hath many ginnals pertaining to him, to move him; like a coach, he runs on many wheels. His head or understanding is one principal wheel: his heart or will another, and that next the spring: his affections are the minutes; his memory the little recollective wheel that winds up the rest; his life is the hand of the dial, which shows how the day goes with him; his conscience is the striking clock: only the spring that sets all a working, and keeps every wheel in due motion, is the grace of Christ. The string that unites the whole watch to the spring's government, is faith. There is a heart in the sinner, a soul in his heart, a mind in his soul, faith in his mind, Christ in his faith. The act of his intellect gives him one motion, his sensitive appetite another, and that contrary: his own will

another motion, the eternal object another: so was Eve cozened with the forbidden fruit. God that hath the heart in his hand, and turns it as brooks of waters, gives it another motion. Some of these be regular, some retrograde, some forward, others oblique. Oh what ado there is to keep this watch in tune! It is no hard matter to tune the virginals or organs, though every string and pipe be out of frame; but man is a creature so proud, so subtle, so wedded to his own opinion, and rolling upon so many wheels, that to put all his strings and pipes in tune, to make all his motions concent in goodness, this is a work for the finger of God only. A child can sooner conceive itself, than a man can convert himself; or we may say, This man made himself, as well as, that he made himself good.

We wonder that, after all the warnings by angels, those ministers of Christ, sinners will not leave their Sodom. The citizen will not forbear his sacrilege, nor be afraid to cozen God to his face. The malicious will not cease practising mischief, seducing to perverseness, and overbearing goodness with a blustering authority. The covetous will still love their gain above their salvation. But this is no wonder; God hath not yet taken them by the hand. Till then the politic fool, the proud madman, and he that makes his pew the seer's chair, deriding Christ in his gospel and ministers, cannot be humbled. The Lord snatch them out of their filthy Sodom.

(2.) How loth even a Lot is to leave Sodom! For all his vexation by their filthiness, their violence against the angels, the prediction of their instant ruin, and his peremptory charge of departure, yet he prolonged the time, Gen. xix. 16. Therefore the angels, that thirsted at once after vengeance on Sodom, and Lot's safety; that knew God would not strike Sodom till Lot was gone out, and that Lot could not be safe within those walls; are fain to break off his tardy neglect with a gracious violence: they caught him by the hand, with his wife and daughters, and brought them forth, and set them without the city. We are so naturally affected to Sodom, and so delightfully linger in it, that without great mercy we should be condemned with the world. Therefore is it added, "the Lord being merciful unto him." "I was upright," saith David, "and kept myself from mine iniquity," Psal. xviii. 23: mine iniquity; it is likely that he had some special sin of his own, whereunto he was most inclined. Oh how gracious a victory is this, I have kept me from mine iniquity!

Many being reproved, answer, Alas, you must bear with me in this, it is my fault; as if every man were allowed his own fault. There is a private Sodom within us, we are loth to part with that. Men say of their sins, as Jacob said of his sons, Go all but Benjamin. Other vices we will not so much stick for, but, Oh that Ishmael might live! There is still some worm in the root of the tree, that will spoil the fruit. We extenuate it; Is it not a little one? But a little hair in the pen makes a great blot in the paper. It is said of the Lord, that he weighs the mountains in scales, and the dust of the earth in a balance, Isa. xl. 12. We should not only weigh the mountains, our heinous rebellions, in scales; but even the dust, our smallest escapes, in the balance. Nor let our wits strive to make that good, which our wills have made necessary, grieving to leave what we love. But when God will take away the delight of our eyes, Ezek. xxiv. 16, the pleasant Sodom of our affections, the sin that we most joy in; then say we resolutely, Perish it, lest I perish by it. Let us not higgel and dodge with God, as Pharaoh did to retain the service of the Hebrews; nor linger upon a dis-

mission of that he calls for. But without any demur, "prepare to meet thy God, O Israel," Amos iv. 12: save him a labour of fetching, prevent him with a free-will offering. Covetousness, malice, uncleanness is our Sodom: how often hath God called us forth to the Year of kindness, charity, chastity! This world is a Sodom, and by death the Lord calls us out; yet how many delays doth mortal life make ere it be willing to go! "O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock," Cant. ii. 14: where we find a bird's nest; "O my dove," that is the bird; "in the clefts of the rock," there is the nest. The soul may be compared to the dove: the body to the nest or rock, wherein are many clefts, vents, and fissures to let out life. This soul, like Noah's dove, goes out by aspiration, returns in by respiration, at last by expiration departs for altogether. "Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest," Psal. lv. 6. If our souls had David's wings, we would not desire to stay in Sodom, but mount up to Zion; they being borne up, as Lot was brought out, by angels.

(3.) Lot's guests were his best friends: he had entertained angels, and they now deliver him; he would have preserved them, and they did preserve him. Where should the angels lodge, but with Lot? The houses of holy men are full of those heavenly spirits, though they be not seen: their protection is comfortable, though not visible. In our tents they pitch their tents; and when devils would mischief us, they turned them out of doors. It is the honour of God's saints, to be attended by angels while they live, and to be exalted by angels when they die. Lazarus was "carried by angels into Abraham's bosom," Luke xvi. 22. As in a family, the greater children carry the less; so God hath charged his elder sons, the angels, to bear up our souls.

Thus was Lot required for his kindness. Lodge strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels, Heb. xiii. 2. Never did man yet lose by his charity: the unthankful world may fail in due estimation, but God will regard it, and reward it. While Cornelius is doling out his alms on earth, the Lord sends down to him an angel from heaven, Acts x. 3. In charitable succour *extendere manum* is *ostendere humanum*. But if in this we be not so good as Lot, to give, let us not be so bad as Sodom, to take away. Now he that turned Sodom to ashes, and delivered Lot, turn our sins to ashes, and deliver us.

3. The time, when: the fire was even a kindling, and that sulphurous deluge prepared in the clouds; for the interim was small betwixt Lot's deliverance and Sodom's vengeance. He was "a firebrand plucked out of the burning," Amos iv. 11: the prophet alluding to Lot, and naming this very overthrow. As when a heap of seditious books are burning, and one good book ready to miscarry with the rest, is snatched by some stander-by out of the fire and saved. So near it came to him, yet did not touch him: that his heart might be sensible, both of a holy fear of the judgment, and a thankful joy for his escaping. Indeed the angels say to him, "Escape for thy life, lest thou be consumed," Gen. xix. 17; not that God meant to hurt him, but to terrify him.

It is God's delight, in the extremity of evil to be a Deliverer. When armies have besieged his servants, and they have no power to defend themselves, then he musters up his angels, 2 Kings vi. 17. Pharaoh pursues the departed Israelites: he had men of war, chariots, and horses; they were weak, unarmed people. Therefore the Egyptians gave themselves the victory beforehand, and the Israelites gave themselves for dead, and are already talking of their graves, Exod. xiv. 11. The sea was before them, their enemies be-

hind them; the wheels rattling, the waves roaring: as the Britons once complained to the Romans; *Barbari ad mare nos repellunt, mare ad Barbaros: hinc vel jugulamur, vel obmergimur*: (Tacitus.) the sword, or the deep; they knew not which had less mercy. Yea, even they that had seen the wonders past, and the pillar present, do now more fear Egypt than believe God. Their unbelief matured the danger; how could the Lord forbear them? Surely his patience was no less miracle than his deliverance. Yet even then he delivered them; and for assurance of it, he removes the cloud that was first before them, and sets it betwixt Egypt and Israel. As if he should say, They shall first overcome me, before they shall touch thee. Now when they saw the pillar remove behind them, and the sea remove before them, who can tell, whether wonder should not exceed fear? That the deep should become their protection, and the sea be made a gallery or thoroughfare! no mortal eye before it ever beheld such a path. Yet thus did the Lord deliver them.

Take another instance. Consider Joseph cast into a ditch: he looked for brothers, and behold butchers; he came to inquire of their health, and may not return the news of his own misery. Hardly are they restrained from cutting his throat: but stripping him naked, at least they will cast him into a deep hole, as it were alive into his grave, Gen. xxxvii. 24. Thus with less mercy than is found in the savagest robbers, they purpose to torment him with a lingering death; and not only to kill him, but do what they can to kill their father in him. He, like a poor suppliant, bowing his bare knees to them he dreamed should bow to him, with passionate prayers and tears, implores mercy; beseeching them by the dear name of brotherhood, by their profession of one God, for their father's sake, for their own souls' sake, not to take away his life. But what can the nearness of fraternity prevail, where humanity is lost? Who could think of so innocent a youth, naked and desolate, in a dry and deep pit, crying for pity, and not cry for company? But cast down he is, and they sit down to eat his provision unmoved; never thinking by their own hunger, what it was for their poor brother to be famished to death. Here was an extremity; who shall now deliver Joseph? The Lord steps in with a ransom in a strange hand. Ishmael persecuted Isaac, yet the seed of Ishmael shall redeem the seed of Isaac. Money shall buy him to the Midianites, and from the Midianites to the Egyptians. Little did they think, that that Joseph whom they left a poor slave to the Midianites, they should find the same a great lord among the Egyptians. God doth ever raise up some secret favourers of his children, among his most malicious enemies. Reuben saves him from the sword, Judah from the pit. How happily bestowed was this little mercy! If Joseph had died for hunger in the pit, Jacob, Judah, and all had died for hunger in Canaan. How near was his soul unto death! how present and marvellous was God's deliverance!

Take one instance more. Moses is born in the time of Pharaoh's bloody decree, that all the male children of the Hebrews should be cast into the river and drowned, Exod. i. 22. His mother, during all her pregnancy, could not but fear a son. She hath him, sees him, and now thinks of his birth and death at once. To consider that the executioner's hand must succeed the midwife's, makes her second throes more grievous than her first. In other mothers, the very sight of a new-born son works a forgetfulness of the former anguish in travail, John xvi. 21. But their remedy is her sorrow: that which mitigates their pains aggravates hers. Still she fearfully looks

when some fierce Egyptian should come in, to snatch the infant from her bosom, and cast it into the river. Therefore when she could no longer conceal in her womb, she hides in her house; afraid, lest every cry of the child should guide the executioner to his cradle. But now his age and hiding being a quarter old, the fearful parents adventure the child's life to save their own. In a reed ark she puts him among the bulrushes by the river's brink, Exod. ii. 3; trusting him to the mercy of the waves, wild beasts, and ravenous fowls, and (which was more merciless than all) an Egyptian passenger. Thus exposed, she sets her daughter to watch her son: the mother cannot forbear to love whom she is forbidden to keep. But how shall the poor babe escape; feeble, forlorn, alone sprawling upon the waves? what, but inevitable death? Yes, there is a God that looks upon him, and in this pinch will deliver him. No flood, no beast, no instrument of Pharaoh's cruelty shall touch him. No friend, not his own mother, dares own him; now steps in his Deliverer, and challengeth his tuition, He is mine. He was not safer in the midst of the tents of Israel, a prince guarded with so many thousands, than now. The tyrant's daughter must come forth to bathe, the ark offers itself to her eye, the cry of the infant to her ear, compassion leaps to her heart; his tears and beauty were a prevailing oratory. But is this all? and hath the Lord done? No, Moses must have a nurse; and the girl is ready to fetch his own mother; and who so fit to be a nurse as a mother? She could not keep him before without danger, now she receives him by authority. She would have given all she was worth to save him, and now she hath wages to nurse him. She doth but change the name of mother into nurse, and she hath her son without fear, not without great reward. Here was a deliverance, and that in season; oh how should it fix our confidence in so gracious a Preserver! The wicked say, "God hath forsaken him: persecute and take him; for there is none to deliver him," Psal. lxxi. 11. None; thus they conclude, but we find the contrary. As Apelles, striving to paint a drop of foam falling from a horse's mouth, after long study how to express it, even despairing lets his pencil fall, and that fall did it. What art could not do, chance accomplished. When we see no means how to be delivered, no hope of extrication, or attaining our wished peace, even ready to despair, the Lord knows how to save us.

4. The place was Zoar: wherein consider three circumstances; his journey to Zoar, his safety in Zoar, and Zoar's safety by him. For howsoever Zoar preserved Lot, yet more properly Lot preserved Zoar.

(1.) For his journey: believing the judgment, he desires a place of refuge; God appoints him one, he makes choice of another. Go to the mountain, saith the Lord: Let me flee to Zoar, saith Lot. Some say, this was done in a mystery: the mountain is not safe, but Zoar in the valley: a low and humble life hath more security than high places. (Greg.) The proud, like Capernaum, lift up themselves to heaven, but God shall depress them to hell, Matt. xi. 23. He refused the mountain, because of the craggy rocks, such as are now to be seen in the hills of Engedi. But more properly he preferreth Zoar for the vicinity; it was nearer to him, and he might with more speed and less danger reach it than the mountain. And such was his charitable heart, that although he could not redeem the rest, yet he would entreat for that. Therefore he useth an argument of the smallness; as being less populous, it might be less impious.

Well, Zoar is granted him, but with this double caution, Tarry not in the plain, look not behind thee.

For the former, the very skirts and suburbs of Sodom, yea, the very smell of Sodom, must not cleave to Lot, nor he to it. If we be departed from Babylon, let not a rag or a relic of superstition abide with us. What matters it, whether a man be slain with a great bullet, or with a small shot? The devil says, like Pharaoh, Go out of Egypt, but not far; be within call. But Moses separates Israel from Korah; "Depart from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs," Numb. xvi. 26; we cannot be too far off from such company. It is sorry comfort, to escape in Sodom and perish in the plain; to the terror and conviction of them, that though they openly profess not love to Rome, yet still have an itch of popery upon them. A man cannot be too earnest of heaven; that kingdom is gotten with violence, not with indifference. He that loves little, shall have little; and he may love so little, as to have never a whit. Many fear to be too hot, but are not sensible of their own coldness. We say commonly, Too much heat annoys, but too much cold destroys. Religion, of all tempers, in these days does not complain of heat. Oh that as the advanced sun heats the air, so our hearts were inflamed with zeal and love by that blessed Sun of righteousness and salvation!

For the other, look not behind thee: not because it was dangerous to look into the infected air; but, 1. To note the indignity of the place, not worthy to be looked on by an honest eye. 2. To avoid curiosity, that Lot might not pry too narrowly into God's judgments. 3. For fear the horror of the sight should have astonished him, or wrung out his commiseration. 4. For the better speed, that there might be no stay in his passage; as the apostles were forbidden the interruption of a salute. 5. That his love might be quite lost to Sodom; no more to think of the wealth and pleasure he found in such an ungracious city. 6. Lastly, to make trial of his faith and obedience, as God proved Adam in the prohibited fruit. Small precepts from God are strong bonds: obedience is as well tried and tried, and disobedience as well punished, in a little as in much. Ananias nimmèd a little, he thought the Holy Ghost had no need of it, or could not miss it. But God credits us first with less things, as men prove vessels with water before they trust them with wine.

The same charge was given to his wife, which she obeyed not; in her flight she must needs turn an eye upon Sodom. Perhaps she believed not that it should be burned, or pitied and lamented in her heart that such a populous city should be burned, or curiously desired to see it burning; or so loved the pleasures of her country, that she could not choose but give it a look, and as it were bid it farewell. But for this she was turned into a monument of disobedience, a pillar of salt. The Hebrews say, because she refused to bring salt to the guests the day before: this is their dream. But that opinion had need of salt, to keep it from stinking. Some make it an allegory: They that divert their affections from spiritual to sensual things, become senseless pillars. Nor is it said to be of salt only in respect of the duration, as an everlasting covenant is called, "a covenant of salt," Numb. xviii. 19; for salt hath a preserving property, to keep things from putrifying, decaying, and corrupting. But she was turned into a material salty pillar. Josephus saith it remained in his time; others, that it is to last unto the day of judgment. (Tharg. Hierosolymit.) Not that her soul was thus metamorphosed, but her body. And though she suffered thus temporally in her flesh, yet her spirit might find mercy and peace for ever.

But the use of this monument is to search the

faithful. (August.) "Remember Lot's wife," Luke xvii. 32. Now what did it avail her to escape turning into ashes in Sodom, who is turned into a pillar of salt in the plain? One would think it a small fault to look back, yet even this cannot the Lord endure. To sin in a small thing, is no small sin. Being so far out of that cursed city, she might now think herself safe, and no danger in looking behind. But if we provoke the Lord, he can as well meet with us out of Sodom. There is no place safe to sin, none dangerous to obedience: faith, and observance of God's will, shall secure us even in Sodom.

(2.) Thus for his journey to Zoar, now for his safety in it. Being come thither, he might well wonder at the stay of his wife, for in his flight he durst not look back to call her. Returning to seek her, he finds this alteration with wonder and sorrow. Sodom is turned to a heap of sulphur, and she to a heap of salt. This change he little expected; the loss of his wife touched him nearer than the loss of all Sodom. Yet he finds salt instead of flesh, a pillar instead of a wife. He that saved a whole city, could not save his own spouse. Here was a sharp misery clapped on the heels of a sweet mercy. When God delivers us from destruction, he doth not secure us from all affliction. Though we be not condemned with the world, yet we may be chastened in the world, 1 Cor. xi. 32.

Lot saved himself, yet he lost his allies, lost his flocks and herds, lost his gold and riches, lost his habitation, and now for conclusion lost his wife; all bitter crosses. Without some sauce of sorrow, all worldly delights are but like delicate meat to a man that hath lost his taste. Let us give God leave to scourge us, so long as he doth save us. Our deliverance from the fire of hell is cause enough to make us thankful, though the trifles we delight in be taken from us. Shall Lot say, I was rich, I am now undone; and so be dejected with sullen grief? No; but, I was in danger of fire and brimstone, I am now escaped, I will therefore lift up my heart with thankful joy. If God do not answer us in every thing, shall we take pleasure in nothing? Shall we slight all his favours, because in one thing he crosseth us? whereas his least mercy is beyond our best merit. Lord, take away what thou pleasest, for thy glory and my good, so long as thou savest me from the fire of hell, and thy everlasting wrath.

Zoar shall be honoured with Lot's preservation, a little one, the least of all those opulent cities: as Bethlehem, though "little among the thousands of Judah," honoured with the birth of God's Son, Micah v. 2. This little city was safe, when great Sodom was too hot for him. The city which God keeps, Psal. cxxvii. 1, is strong be it never so small: if he forsake it, the thickest walls and hugest turrets are weaker than paper. The Lord promisseth to be "a wall of fire round about" his elect, Zech. ii. 5: no scalade, no undermining shall blow it up; it shall both protect them, and consume their enemies. The good man sleeps more securely in his tent, than the sinner in his barricadoed fortification. All the springs and rivers of the plain, could not quench Sodom's raging fire: one drop of Lot's faith and holiness in Zoar keeps it from kindling. How poor and slender soever our cottage be, let us set our prayers as a guard without, and our faith as a lock within: the sevenfold walls of Babylon were not so strong. This is, more truly than was said of those giants, Dent. i. 28, to have a city walled up to heaven. Let prayer be the key to open the morning, and prayer the bar to shut up the evening. Let us in every place trust upon God's providence, and every place shall be safer to us than was Paradise. Be our faith upright with Lot, and in the last day, when the

whole world shall burn with flames as Sodom once did, we shall find a Zoar, the bosom of Jesus Christ.

(3.) Lastly, Lot was not only delivered in Zoar, but Zoar was delivered for Lot. "I will not overthrow this city, for the which thou hast spoken," Gen. xix. 21. As Lot in the danger of fire, so Paul in the danger of water, Acts xxvii. 24; in the rage of both the elements, God doth not only give his their deliverance, but he also gives others for their sakes into the grant. A wicked man hath the feet of a wolf, whatsoever he treads on never prospers after. But a whole family, a whole kingdom, shall fare the better for one Joseph; his very presence procures a common blessing, whosoever he goes. Zoar might haply be as bad as Sodom, but here was the difference, it had a Lot within, Sodom had none.

But for God's dear children intermingled with the world, it could not stand. The wicked persecute them, for whose sake they are forborne; they owe their lives to those few Lots whom they contemn. Potiphar was angry with that Joseph who made him prosper. The most contemptible man in the people's opinion, is he that procures their peace and toleration. Ahab's sin brought the famine, Elijah's prayer brought rain, yet Ahab tells Elijah, Thou troublest Israel, 1 Kings xviii. 17. Cease, ye malicious sinners, to vex the religious: you are beholden to them for your very breath: if they were taken away, you should be tormented before your time. As Christ himself was the Day-star to enlighten, not the dog-star to burn; and Paul no pestilent fellow to sow sedition, but an instrument of blessedness and salvation: so the elect are good, not malignant stars. Yet still they speed at the world's hands as did their Master before them: Christ healed their diseases, fed their bodies and souls, every way did them good; yet they crucified him; and in killing him they did offer to sink the only ship that might save them. As the sunbeams shining on the earth do not only heat that solid body, but by reflection also warm the region of the air contaminate to it: so the mercy of God lighting on a Christian's heart, not only heats that with inward comfort, but makes it reflect back consolation to others.

The faithful pray for the pardon of men's sins, for grace and favour to their souls, and no good comes without their procurement; yet the world cannot abide them. Let the rich aldermen thank these, that they have leisure to tell their gold: that the worldling builds houses and takes rents; that the city can feast with the ruins of the church, and miss of Belshazzar's sudden sauce; (for I am persuaded, they get enough from the temples to maintain their halls:) even in this they are forborne, because there be Lots among them. What doth a poor man find before them, but reproach and disdain? He that is not rich, with these men is neither wise nor good: only by their wealth they value themselves, and only by their wealth, as camels by their burdens, be they valued.

London, bless thy Lots, and God for them. Thine honour had long since been laid in the dust, thine oppressions become a hissing to all nations, and nothing had been left of thee but a stinking memory, but for these. The subject of thy derision, hath been the means of thy preservation; and those eyes have often been lifted up to heaven for thee in prayer, upon whom thou wouldst never cast an eye of charity. When thou wast sick, they humbled their soul with fasting, and mourned, as one weepeth for his mother, Psal. xxxv. 13, 14: thus do they for thee. But in their adversity thou rejoicest, and tearst them without ceasing, ver. 15: thus dost thou for them. While the lascivious embraceth his

harlot, the luxurious his riot, the covetous his money, the malicious his revenge; the fire of judgment would flash in their faces, and the fire of torment swallow up their souls, but for God's elected, their despised, Lots. His mercy increase the number of them, and our love to them, and our endeavour to be like them, that as we are spared for them, we may be crowned with them in the day of Christ.

"Delivered just Lot." I come to consider his thralldom, and the prisoner, described, first, by his grace, a just man. Wherein three points must be examined. 1. What this justice is. 2. In what respects a man may be called just. 3. The exceptions against his justice.

First, what is justice. There is an uncreated justice, which cannot be in man, for he is finite, and this is infinite. "Righteous art thou, O Lord," Psal. exix. 137: and, "The Lord is righteous in all his ways," Psal. cxlv. 17. A man is one thing, and his righteousness is another; but God and his righteousness is all one: therefore it is as impossible for man to be thus righteous, as it is for him to be God: this is proper to the Deity. Created justice is either legal or evangelical.

Legal righteousness is of three sorts. 1. Perfect, which consists in an absolute completion of the law: this is lost beyond all recovery. But is it not restored by grace? No, for our sanctification is but in part: as a child is a perfect man, in all the parts of a man, but not in the quantity of every part. But Rome saith, the Virgin was righteous, for she sinned not: her life was free from sin actual, her conception from sin original. This is false, for if she were no sinner she needed no Saviour; and she died: now if she had not sinned, in justice she should not have died. 2. Civil, which consists in an outward deportment conformable to the law: when a man professeth religion, to answer the first table; and refrains from public and visible sins, to answer the second. But in this the Pharisees went beyond us, yet they came short of heaven, Matt. v. 20. Too many content themselves with this rotten and heartless righteousness; but if they have no better, they shall get into heaven when the Pharisees come out of hell. 3. Internal, when a man by repentance after sin, and by endeavour after repentance, doth inwardly serve God. That this righteousness, legally considered, should justify us, is with Rome to abuse God's justice, and to encroach upon his mercy. This may justify our faith, it cannot justify us. Our works deserve nothing; it is only in Christ that they are accepted, and only for Christ that they are rewarded.

Evangelical righteousness is that which is revealed in the gospel; and should never have been revealed, if that of the law could have saved us. But it could not; not through its own defect, but our default. This is to be had in Christ only; which, as he is Mediator, consisted in the purity of his nature, which is separate from sin; and in the perfection of his obedience, which is satisfactory for sin. From so pure a nature proceeded so perfect an obedience: no original sin touching his conception, no actual staining his life. There is none perfectly righteous but he, Rom. iii. 10: not one that is, not one that was, not one that is to come; but only he that is, and that was, and that is to come. This in him was active and passive: for us he suffered, what we should have suffered, and suffered not: for us he did, what we should have done, and performed not.

Thus we have found out the righteousness that makes a man just; now let us see how Lot became just, or we are justified by it. This is done by imputation. "He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin: that we might be made the righteous-

ness of God in him," 2 Cor. v. 21. What can be plainer? Christ was a sinner only by the imputation of our sins, we are just only by the imputation of his righteousness. "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth," Rom. x. 4. Not an abrogator of the ceremonial, but a fulfiller of the law moral. A fulfiller, for whom? for all them that believe. So Christ by doing, and we by believing, fulfil the law; therefore are righteous. But can one man be wise by another's wisdom? rich, or strong, or valiant, by the wealth, power, or courage of another? We have no right in another's wisdom or valour, but we have a right and propriety in Christ's justice. One man's wisdom cannot be another's, because they are two distinct persons: but Christ and the believer make but one mystical body; so his righteousness is as truly his members', as the wisdom in the head belongs to the whole body. But it is an abomination to the Lord, to justify the wicked, Prov. xvii. 15. Why, then, will he do it himself? No, but he first makes a man just, and then so accounts him. He is indeed said to justify the ungodly, Rom. iv. 5; that is, the man who was ungodly before, but is not so after. Thus was Christ made a sinner by the reputation of our sins, and we made just by the imputation of his righteousness. And as he that knew no sin in himself, undertaking for us, suffered death; so we that had no justice of our own, apprehending his righteousness, shall enjoy everlasting life.

But how is this justice imputed to us? By our faith. "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name," John i. 12. There is a receiving; what is that? It is expressly said, believing. Man finding himself naked, by this hand reacheth that glorious robe, which is held out to him. This doth not justify effectively, working an habitual justice in us, nor materially, as though faith itself were our justification; but objectively, as it apprehendeth Christ, and instrumentally, as it instrumentally applieth his righteousness. Neither is it an opinion, which is an uncertainty in the judgment; nor a suspicion, which is an uncertainty in the will; nor a science, for that is only by the demonstration of reason: neither love, nor hope. Love can extend the passions of the heart to the thing loved, yet cannot apprehend Christ: he must be apprehended before he be loved. The office of hope is to wait: it waits for salvation, but properly it apprehends it not. It is first believed, then expected. It is good both to trust and to wait for the salvation of the Lord, Lam. iii. 26. To trust that it will assuredly come, this is the action of faith; to wait until it do come, this is the action of hope. Faith is a taking hand, and love is a giving hand: faith takes hold on Christ, love gives forth tokens of faith to God and man: hope is the eye, that looks out for the good things promised. As faith is the hand of the soul, so love is the hand of faith, and hope is the eye of both. Of faith, love is the hand whereby it worketh, and hope the eye whereby it waiteth. Thus faith worketh by love, waiteth by hope, but believeth by itself. The point of our justification being thus cleared, let me touch at two useful meditations from it: there is in it matter of humiliation, of consolation.

I. It serves to humble us. How foul was our nature, that all the water in the world could not cleanse it! Not the blood of all the creatures, not the righteousness of men or angels, could cure it. All the men and angels in the world cannot make one sinner righteous; but the Son of God must become man, suffer, die, and rise again, and all to make us just. Vain man, whereof art thou proud? Yet how doth

a little polluted dust vaunt itself! Clothe a leper in scarlet, is he not still a leper? Suppose in Christ we be embraçed, and even honoured of God himself, shall we therefore be high-looking over others? No, here is matter of exultation and gladness, not of insultation and haughtiness: let us be joyful, let us be thankful, let us not be scornful. The natural Son of God was humbled for our pride; shall we be proud still? Shall man be proud, when God himself is humble? He that is not humbled for his sin, is not yet justified from his sin. In his humility Christ wrought that great work of our redemption. Observe with wonder, that God did more for us in his humility, than ever he did in his glory. In his majesty he only made us, but in his humility he hath saved us. Look we first down with humility upon our own wretchedness, and then look up with faith unto Christ's righteousness.

2. We are just before God by no justice of our own, but by Christ's; and this is so much the better for us, as now we are sure it cannot be lost. God created Adam with a perfect legal righteousness: he received it for himself, and for us; and he lost it for himself, and for us. That being gone, he gives us another, a better; but because he saw man so ill a keeper of his own jewels, he would not trust him with it; but sets it in the person of his Son, charging him to keep it for us. We are dead, and our life is hidden with Christ in God, Col. iii. 3. It is hid past Satan's finding, and locked up past our spending. We, as ignorant of the worth, would quickly exhaust it; but Christ truly values it, dearly paid for it, heartily loves it, and therefore will safely preserve it; and when we come to his Father's presence, will clothe us with it then. It is now in a safe hand, where we are sure to find it, and have it, when we most need it. We may sin, and so lose the present sensible comfort of a good conscience; but we cannot lose our righteousness. That is in our own tenure, this is not.

It is impossible for a believer to be poor: take away all he hath, his wealth, health, friends, liberty, life: this is no more than he hath in his own hands, which he may easily lose. His true riches are in another's custody, no power can meddle with them. His treasure is laid up where no thief nor corruption can enter, Matt. vi. 20; he that is trusted with it, will faithfully keep it, 2 Tim. i. 12. Satan may make Job poor for this world, and take that from him, from which God would one day take him. But Job hath a better stock going in heaven, in the hands of his Redeemer; the devil cannot touch this. Other possessions in death we leave behind: this inheritance by death we begin to possess. *Cum corpus resolvitur, anima absolvitur.* (Ambr.) Let Ziba take all, so I may come to the Son of David in peace, 2 Sam. xix. 30.

Samson had his strength in himself, and betrayed it: Esau his birthright, and sold it; the prodigal his portion, and spent it; Hezekiah his treasure, and exposed it: Solomon his wisdom, and abused it; Mary Magdalene her beauty, and prostituted it; Nabab his wealth, and lived beside it; Adam his integrity, and an apple bought it. Oh what is in man, that he may not lose! The master of a family gives all his hired servants their wages into their own hands, suffers them to use and dispose it at their own pleasures, without further inquiry; but the portions of his children, and their jewels, he keeps himself. Lord, whatever worldly thing thou take from us, keep our righteousness for us: though sin have left tattered and death send us away naked, do thou cover us with the rich garment of Christ.

2. Thus is a man just before God, but Lot was also

just before men; and there is a visible justice, as well as the invisible. We must therefore seek out for a further righteousness, an inseparable effect of the former, and that is, holiness of life. The other is the justice of justification, this is the justice of sanctification. As a sinner is justified by Christ's righteousness inherent in Christ himself, so he is sanctified by Christ's righteousness diffused from Christ into the sinner. His justification is perfect, because that which justifies him is still in Christ; his sanctification is imperfect, because that which sanctifies him is in himself: the one imputed to him, the other infused and inherent in him. Therefore here we are to examine, in what respects a man may be called just. Neither are we bound always to the same distinctions: I conceive a man may be approved righteous, *preparative, separative, reparative, operative*.

(1.) There is a righteousness of preparation, which is a resolution and full purpose of heart to be righteous. "I have sworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments," Psal. cxix. 106. Though he do sometimes admit sin, he doth never intend sin. If the Spirit could totally prevail over the flesh, he would never do aught to dishonour God. My heart is ready, my heart is ready; ready to hear thy will, ready to do it. Give what thou commandest, command what thou pleasest. Perfect my purpose with thy gracious performance, and then I shall be righteous. (August.) By this resolution he is bound for Canaan, and thitherward steers his course; notwithstanding the perilous rocks and pirates, and contrary gusts and storms, that would put him out of the way.

(2.) There is a righteousness of separation, because it is seen to decline the places of temptation. So they are called saints, because separate from the world. He is in a manner guilty, that frequents the occasion of being made guilty. A wise senator, whose coachman had driven him over a dangerous passage, which he might easily have avoided by fetching a little compass about, though he escaped without harm, yet turned him off, as unworthy of future trust. What thanks to us, if precipitating ourselves in the known snares of sin, we are kept by God's preventing grace? "He that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not," 1 John v. 18. I do not say that God deals with us on such an advantage, as a furious papist answered, when he was asked by one of his own sect, why in the gunpowder treason they would destroy children with bastards, catholics with heretics: If they were found among heretics, let them perish with heretics. Yet often he makes them smart: as the magistrate inflicting severe punishment on a dissolute crew, one cried out to him, Spare thy son. What, my son among the enemies of peace and goodness? No, as thou hast offended with them, thou shalt smart with them. We will trust no antidote, to go into the house where the plague is: if temptation find us, never let us seek temptation.

(3.) There is a righteousness of reparation; which consists in the reforming of errors, and conforming of manners, salving past defects by a bettered life: and is indeed the righteousness of repentance. Righteous, not because there is no sin committed, but because there is no sin that is not repented. God esteems a fault indeed sorrowed, as if it had never been indeed admitted. It is one thing to sin, another thing to be a sinner. Every one that handles a lute is not a musician: nor every one that doth an unrighteous action, is straight an unrighteous person. "The unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God," 1 Cor. vi. 9: to be unjust damns, not to have

done some actions unjustly; the habit, not the act, casts into hell.

O blessed effect of repentance, that can make unrighteous manners cease to denominate an unrighteous man! I will show you a riddle. A foul mother brought forth a fair daughter; the mother bred her laughing, yet the daughter is always weeping. The father that begot the daughter, could never abide the mother, nor ever came near her bed. She was no sooner born, but she was the death of her mother, killing her that bred her; and (which is strange) she is blessed for it. She was begotten in a miracle: no sooner conceived, than born; no sooner born, but she spake: other children are born crying, she also speaking; the first air she breathed, heard her articulately declare her own desires. And ever since she works miracles: she brings light out of darkness, life out of death; she makes the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak, and even casts out devils. She looks backward, and moves forward; is herself a dark cloud, yet brings a fair sunshine. This riddle is expounded in repentance. Sin is the mother, repentance the daughter; the mother is foul, black, ugly, the daughter fair and lovely. Sin was merry and wanton, repentance is always sad and sorrowing. God is the Father of repentance, and he could never endure the mother, sin, but rather perfectly hates her society. Being born, she slew her mother: repentance could not have been born but by sin, and repentance is the only thing that kills sin. Sin breeds sorrow, and sorrow kills sin; (August.) and this matricide makes her blessed. Miraculous is her birth: at her first conception by the Holy Ghost, she looks up and speaks, Open, ye gates of heaven, and let mercy come down upon me; her first breath is, Pardon. Miracles she worketh, turning the darkness of error into the light of knowledge, and making the dead heart live unto grace. The blind eyes by her are made to see the filthiness of sin; the deaf ears now hearken to the word of truth; the dumb lips cry out for compassion and forgiveness; the devil's lust is expelled. She still is looking backward to her sins past, and moving forward to holiness and perfection. To conclude, repentance is herself cloudy, and made up of sadness, yet brings everlasting joy.

Such is God's mercy to repentance: yet let no man, though he trust to this, trust to himself. The promise is to repentance, not of repentance. Nature flatters itself in that one instance of the malefactor on the cross, who in an instant got repentance. But the calling and saving of that one soul at the last, hath by Satan's policy been the loss of many thousands.

(4.) There is a righteousness of comparison; so was Lot just comparatively among the Sodomites. It is Christ's incommunicable privilege, to be The Just: for all other men on earth to pray, Enter not into judgment with thy servants, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified. And, Forgive us our trespasses; and to pray for this daily: perpetual remission argues perpetual aspersion. He that says he hath no sin, I am sure he hath no righteousness, 1 John i. 10. But it is said of Zacharias and Elisabeth, that they were both just before the Lord, walking in all his commandments blameless, Luke i. 16. Before God, without hypocrisy; in his commandments, not the traditions of men, without flattery; in all of them, without reservation and partiality: without reproof, *sine querela, non sine macula*; not scandalous and culpable in the eyes of men, and worthy of ermination. So, he that is born of God, sinneth not, or committeth not sin, 1 John iii. 9: not the sinning sin, not the reigning sin, not the sin

unto death, which cannot be repented, therefore must not be pardoned.

Compared with God there is none righteous: he hates all men, that hates ill men. Yet some may be so, respectively to others. Tamar more righteous than Judah, yet Tamar sinful enough. The publican rather justified than the Pharisee, yet not simply and sufficiently justified. The spouse fair among women, yet she justly complains of her blackness. Some men have less and fewer sins, yet they have sins; though fewer in number, and lighter in measure, yet sins in nature. The moon is glorious to a candle, pale to the sun. The lily white to the wool, short of the snow. The swarthy compared with the black-moor, thinks himself fair.

Not that I would have men pitch themselves by the pole of the dissolute. As because they are not so drunk as Nabal, therefore to think themselves sober; because not so proud as Haman, therefore humble; because not so treacherous as Judas, therefore loyal. Compare not thyself with the worst, to see how far thou art beyond them; but with the best, to see how far thou art short of them. And the thick-eared hear well to the stark deaf. Among the numerous cloisters of illiterate monks, if one rarely get a smack of learning, he thinks himself a brave fellow, famous among his companions. They compare themselves with themselves, and measure themselves by themselves, 2 Cor. x. 12. He that hath but ferried over to Amsterdam, conceits himself a great traveller, among those that never smelt other than their own smoke. How proud is a vain fool of a strange language! apt to think all the rest idiots, that understand not his Spanish or Italian! none so bold as the blind.

Thou that thinkest thyself charitable and just, compare thyself with Zaccheus: after thy fourfold restitution, hast thou given half thy goods to the poor? Thou that holdest thyself zealous in a cold generation, consider David: "The zeal of thy house hath eaten me up," Psal. lxxix. 9. Thou that art humble, meditate on Paul, yielding to them that hated him: that art sober, think of the Rechabites: that chaste, look upon Joseph in his temptation by so great a lady. The pigmies wonder at his stature, whom we esteem a dwarf. Do not look upon the profane, to admire thy own holiness; but on the just, to condemn thy own unrighteousness. Rural people admire and even adore a lady, that never saw the queen. When the Indians first saw the Spaniards, they held them fair and goodly creatures; but bleeding under their cruelties, and beholding other from more cold and temperate climates, of fairer complexions and kinder dispositions, they took these last for angels. We that have prized ourselves by those below us, let us now value ourselves by those above us: then all our pride will turn into shame, and we shall blush for our idle glory. Lord, if they that had their faults be more righteous than we, what are we in respect of thee that hast none? Give us all grace to be more righteous, and when we have done all we can, pardon our great unrighteousness in Jesus Christ.

(5.) There is an operative righteousness; and this may be taken either strictly or largely.

Strictly, it is equity: he that deals truly withal, without respect of persons, is a just man; and he that is not just in his conversing and commercing with men, will hardly be found righteous with God. This is not only to render what the law requires, but even what a rectified conscience requires. As for instance, to bury the dead, this is not an action of charity only, but of equity. Funerals are called just, because they be as just to the dead, as meat is to the

living. So to feed the poor: Paul calls alms, righteousness. Withhold not thy good from the owners thereof, Prov. iii. 27. They are the owners of thy superfluities, and it is just to give every man his own. "When thou doest thine alms," Matt. vi. 3; divers copies read, when thou doest thy righteousness: so Eusebius reports it. Alms is thy justice; if not *debitum proprietatis*, yet *charitatis*; and he that denieth this, is an unjust man. That ministers do preach, it is justice, even due debt. "I am debtor both to the Greeks," &c. Rom. i. 14. There is a woe to them that withhold the truth in unrighteousness, ver. 18. Yet thus unrighteous is the church of Rome, to withhold the Scriptures, and obtrude traditions; as men put out the clear candle to light themselves to bed with the stinking snuff.

To help forward the truth is but justice: it is the office, albeit also the honour, of good men to be God's fellow helpers. "Curse ye Meroz," Judg. v. 23. Why? because it did hurt the Lord? No, but because it did not help the Lord in the day of battle. This question will one day be asked, When didst thou help the truth? Every man by prayer helps the hand of Moses. He that does not help forward the building of Christ, is unjust; and they that do help it even in the meanest degree, shall have part of the reward: as David would have the prey shared even among them that kept the stuff, 1 Sam. xxx. 24; they helped.

In contracts to fail willingly, is to be unjust. An oath or solemn promise is no sooner made on earth, than registered in heaven. Indeed bad romises are better broken than kept. As David in breaking of his vow concerning Nabal was not unjust; and if Herod had done so for John Baptist he had been more righteous. Yea, a just man will keep his oath with a very thief, a compelled oath about pecuniary matters; but not when a sin or mischief follows. To give every man his due, this is just. A young merchant being to choose him a partner, by his mother's advice, at convenient time gave to one a pomegranate; the receiver cutting it in two, kept the less moiety to himself, and returned the merchant the greater half. He gave the like to another; and he dividing it, gave him back the less part, keeping the greater to himself. He thus tried a third; and he cutting it into equal halves, took the one himself, and gave him the other. This last was determined by his mother to be the fittest man to make his partner. So young Cyrus being showed by his schoolmaster a great man with a little robe, and a little man with a great robe; and having both the garments put into his hands to distribute, he disposed the greater to the greater, and the less to the less. His master replied, this was just in case of decency, but unjust in case of equity; for he was to have given every man his own.

But if this be an argument of justice, Lord, where shall we find a just man? Help, Lord, for the righteous man faileth, Psal. xii. 1: time to cry, Help, Lord. Take cresset light, and search narrowly all about Jerusalem, I had almost said, London, and find one that doth justice, Jer. v. 1: scarce a just man in this whole city. Is to pay tithes to be just? O that just man is a miracle! Ignorant people on all occasions say of their minister, I wonder he does not preach. They esteem it a matter, before it comes, of no labour; and when it comes, of no thanks. Yet, who challengeth his own heart of known unrighteousness, and confesseth. How unjust have I been in defrauding God and his church! Will the Lord be so liberal to give us the best of things, eternal life, that grudgeth him the worst of things, temporal trash? or, that the gospel should save our souls, which it promiseth, when we withhold from it those

tritles it requireth? or, that God will not pinch them of spirituals, that pinch him of temporals? Will a man shut a bird fast into a cage, give her no meat, and yet bid her sing? Yet is this too universal an unrighteousness, and thus unjust are we. But let men read and tremble; If any man (notwithstanding these premonitions) will be unjust, let him be unjust still, Rev. xxii. 11. The Lord with his infinite mercy swallow up this unrighteousness, that this infinite unrighteousness swallow not up this city.

Largely: "He that doeth righteousness, is righteous," 1 John iii. 7: the scope of whose life and actions is devoted to goodness, not without infirmity, but without irregularity. The best traveller may stumble in his journey, yet have his eye observant and his foot constant on his way. The interposition of some clouds doth not frustrate the regular motion of the sun. And trees have more life at the root, than at all times appears in the branches. Notwithstanding some transient distempers, the heart may be sound and upright, Psal. cxix. 80. Some gravel will stick on the feet, even when the bath of justification hath washed our souls. We are not perfectly just except by anticipation, assuming the name before we possess the thing. We are now the sons of God; we are, and we are not: we are in hope, we shall be indeed. (August.)

There may be a time when this justice is not so operative, which yet shall not condemn us for unjust. The world is ever taxing the least fault in the best man: every man is born a Cain, envying that good in another which he wants in himself. They blame some ill in the saints, not because they are evil, but because in respect of themselves they are too good. One imaginary cloud in a just man, shall in their censure darken all the stars of his graces. The smallest spot in his face, shall excuse all the sores and ulcers in their bodies. But it is not so with God: he values men, *quomodo semper radiant, non quomodo semel cadunt*: respecting *vita communem cursum*, rather than *involuntarium currentis casum*. Nor is his saving grace so fickle a thing, to be lost by every weakness. He goes into his garden, to eat the fruits, and gather the flowers, Cant. vi. 2; not like those buzzing dross, that fly over all these to a dunghill.

But now if we will be righteous, let us do it, and show our justice by our practice. The title of righteousness is often ill bestowed upon men; as the mistaking woman attributed to the blessed Virgin's womb and dugs that happiness which belonged to her faith, Luke xi. 27; or as silly rural people salute a mean gentlewoman in brave clothes, If it like your ladyship; or flattering pamphleteers ascribe to your looser patrons noble and meriting titles. Truth calls him just that is so. God ordained light for the eyes, language for the ears, the air for respiration, but righteousness for all parts. That the mind should think nothing but righteousness, the tongue speak, the hand do, nothing but righteousness. But alas, The desire of the heart is one thing, the desire of the flesh another. (August.) There be reluctant motions in the heart, yet in the heart of my heart I serve the Lord. Bare theory may come near righteousness, only practice apprehends it. To whom is that *euge* at the great day, but to the doer? Well done, good servant, that is the form. Not the barren and dead habit, but the living and fruitful exercises of justice, shall have happiness. Rightly, a man knows no more than he practises. It is said of Christ that he knew no sin, 2 Cor. v. 21, because he did no sin: in that sense, he knows no good, that doth no good. One said of the Jesuits, that abroad call themselves apostles, The old apostles left earth to earthly men, showed others, and

got heaven themselves: we are more beholden to our new ones, they show us heaven and leave it for us to purchase; and in the mean time cozen us of earth and worldly possessions. It is as fearfully true of those that point others the way to heaven by a righteous life, and will not move a foot in that path themselves. The saints are all said to have white garments: the robe of justice that is not white, is not right; it must be visible to men, that it may be acceptable to God.

3. I come to the exceptions against Lot's justice: the Scripture notes six great faults in this good man: three principal, and three less principal.

(1.) His contention with Abraham, his uncle, elder and better, Gen. xiii. 7. Before they grew rich, they dwelt lovingly together; poverty confirmed their society. When neither want, nor weary journeys, nor strange countries could part, wealth divides. How poor a good was their opulency, in respect of their company and fraternal love! Many a one is a loser by his gains; and finds that which multiplies his outward estate, to abate his inward. Who will esteem those things good that make us worse? Abraham is the uncle and worthier, Lot the nephew and younger; yet is Abraham first in the deprecation of strife: "I pray thee," &c. ver. 8. But he holds it no disparagement to begin the treaty of peace. He that is the son of Abraham will seek to win by love, not to force by power.

It had been Lot's duty to offer rather than to choose, to yield than contend; yet Abraham offers the choice to Lot: Take the left hand, or the right, ver. 9. From whence, saith one, the custom grew in parting an inheritance, that the elder should divide, the younger choose. (Rupert.) Lot takes it, but mark the event: Lot was crossed in his election, Abraham blessed in his resignation. Never did man in desire of peace yield of his own right, that God suffered to be a loser by it. Lot, as he thought, chose the best ground, the goodly plains of Jordan; but while he respects the goodness of the soil, and not the badness of the people, he smarts for his choice, and is soon carried away captive. Abraham content with the worse, hath a large amend: Lift up thine eyes, look east, west, north, and south; and all the land thou seest, I will give unto thee and to thy seed for ever, ver. 15. Let us not desire to be our own carvers for this world; it is our surest happiness, without ambition or avarice, to rest at God's finding.

(2.) His incredulity, in doubting to be saved in the mountain; as if the promise and direction of God could have failed. He had no charge to dwell in Sodom, he had a charge to flee to the mountain; yet Sodom he affected, the mountain he refused, and was faulty in both. It is no small sin even to doubt, when we have God's command and warrant to serve us.

(3.) His fear to tarry in Zoar, which the Lord had given his word to spare for his sake. But he that was so hasty to choose it, is now again as hasty to leave it. How variable is man, when he fixeth not his submission to God's ordinance! This fugitive inconstancy is by some thus qualified: that the loss of his wife at the entering of Zoar, put him quite out of heart to stay there. And the sight of the same sins in his less city, which so reigned in the greater, gave him cause to suspect it could not be long forborne.

Here were three of his infirmities, inconstancy, incredulity, ambition; to show, that none is so righteous, but in some things offensive. None were more holy under the law than the priests, yet were they bound to offer sacrifice for themselves and their own sins, Heb. ix. 7. None more holy under the gospel than the

apostles, yet were they taught to pray, "Forgive us our sins," Luke xi. 4. Merit-usurpers are the worst servants; for how bountiful soever God be to them, they will never acknowledge their Master; all is their due: the most terrible usurers; all God's blessings they think but the interest of their own monies. But the least cloud in a diamond hinders the price; the least infirmity in a saint keeps him from being perfectly righteous. Yet no man puts away his horse, that hath carried him throughout his journey, for thrice tripping by the way. Nor do three parentheses disgrace a good oration. Three drops of poison are dangerous in a little cup of water; let them fall into a running spring, their malignity is soon dispersed to nothing. Wash a spotted robe, and it is clean again. Yet let us strive against all stains. Abraham going to sacrifice, left his two young servants and the ass behind him. Lot's fear and doubting were like two timorous and cowardly servants; his covetousness like the ass: leave we all these three behind us in our devotion, that we may be welcome to the Lord.

(4.) He offers up his own daughters to the rage of the Sodomites, that he might deliver his guests, Gen. xix. 8; choosing rather to be a bad father than a bad host. This fact hath found divers excuses. 1. It was a less sin to follow than to oppose nature; and of two evils the less is to be chosen. (Ambr.) *Answe.* This is true in penal evils, not in criminals; in corporeal things, not in spiritual. There is no necessity that should compel a man to sin; he ought rather to die. "Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing that he alloweth," Rom. xiv. 22: then he is not blessed that alloweth the thing in act, which he condemns in judgment. 2. Lot did not mean to put off one sin with another, but useth a seeming submission to qualify their rage; he knew his daughters espoused to some great men of the city, and that they durst not attempt their constupration. (Cajetan.) *Answe.* But this had been to tempt God by a fond presumption, to make such an unruly rabble this offer, in hope it would not be taken. 3. Though a man in himself must not do a less evil for avoidance of a greater; yet to stop another's precipice into some monstrous mischief, and to mollify his mind by insinuation to a less; this they hold tolerable. (Chrysost.) As if men by custom must swear, the oath is better by their head, than by God. He that is shut up in a walled fort, let him escape where the wall is lowest. (Greg.) *Answe.* This is true, where we are persuaders from evil, not actors of evil ourselves. So if Lot had persuaded them to the young maids of the town, and to forbear the men, it had been more sufferable. But no man is to sin himself, with the hazard of his own soul, for the prevention of another's wickedness. 4. His intent was good to preserve his guests. (Chrysost.) *Answe.* We must not do evil, that good may come thereof, Rom. iii. 8. Indeed there is a necessity which comes a *posteriori*: as when a man hath sworn to undo his neighbour, if he break his oath he commits perjury, if he keep his oath he breaks charity. What now? Rather in breaking it offend only God, than in keeping it offend both God and man. But this perplexity is not from the nature of things; it is not necessary to swear falsely, or break charity; but from the nature of man, who cannot revoke what he hath spoken and done. 5. He knew that if his daughters were forced against their wills, they did not sin; and if they sinned not, he sinned not. *Answe.* If the maidens should consent, Lot was the author of their sin; if they should not consent, Lot was the author of their ravishment. There might have been uncertainty in their consenting, there had been none in his exposing.

His purpose was good, his offer was faulty. If by his allowance the Sodomites had defiled his daughters betrothed to others, it had been his sin. If through violence they had defiled his guests, it had been only their sin.

It is for God to prevent sin with judgment, not for man to prevent a greater sin in possibility, with a less in present act. Thus it cannot be justified, only a little qualified, 1. In respect of the times, wherein knowledge was not so clear. 2. By his clarity, he did it to conserve intemperate his guests. 3. By his troubled mind, without any recollection or serious advice. The best minds troubled yield inconsiderate motions, as water violently stirred sends up bubbles. Thus Lot meant well, but God meant better: he preferred the unknown angels before his children, and the Lord preserved them all.

But if this were such an error in Lot, though meant in clarity, how horrible is it in those that do it for iniquity! One would think there were no such monsters in nature, yea, monsters against nature. The sea-monsters are not so cruel, as these land-monsters, to their young, Lam. iv. 3. A good father will not sell his child's body a slave to man; shall any sell his child's soul a slave to the devil? Oh that the sun should shine upon that woman, which will prostitute her own daughter! that the body she brought forth with pains to this earth, she should sell for gains unto hell! Let her lose the name of mother, and be held a murderer: there is no woman ever more deserved to be called the devil's dam. Let all her sex be ashamed of her; and even the sinners that reward her, curse her. Parents, admonish your children, dissuade them from sin, pray against their sin, do not teach them to sin. What is said of the child's eye despising the parent, let me say of the parent's tongue tempting the child, let the ravens of the valley pick it out, and the young eagles eat it, Prov. xxx. 17.

(5.) His drunkenness. Lot fled from Sodom, yet he could not flee from sin: he that could not be tainted in the city, is overtaken in the cave. It is not the place that amendeth manners. Some places are more dangerous, none are secure from temptation. It is a popish fancy, that a cloistered life can make a man more holy. If drunkenness crept into Lot's cave, who can excuse their cells and cloisters? Lot sinned in the mountain, Adam in Paradise, the angels in heaven: are nunneries and monasteries safer than these?

Some wholly excuse his drunkenness, because he did not purpose to be drunk. (Chrysost.) But the apostle faulteth all excess, Eph. v. 18: the excess is a sin, whatever be the purpose before, or effect after. Others say for it, that he drank liberally to allay his sorrows, and mitigate his heaviness. (Aquinas. Theodoret. August.) *Answe.* It ill becomes a just man to make use of such a comfort; the remedy was worse than the disease. I deny not, but wine to a man afflicted with so many griefs, hath the allowable use. Give strong drink to the heavy heart, Prov. xxxi. 6. But he that shall think to enable his body by disabling his soul, and to cure his sickness with his sin, runs into the fire to avoid the smoke.

Let there be no pretext found for drunkenness; it made a just Lot prostitute his body to beastly uncleanness. Sodom could not deceive him, but wine did. The fire of wine within him, did more than fire and brimstone without him. (Origen.) Nor in him alone hath it prevailed. Who would think to find Noah, that father of the new world, lying drunken in his tent? or that a little wine should do more than a whole deluge of water? that he who was not perverted by the bad examples of the old world,

should now begin a new example of sin to the new world? Lord, what is man, if he be but himself! What living man had more noble proofs of God's mercy and justice: mercy on himself, justice on others? The Lord once said to him in the midst of innumerable apostates, *Thou only have I found righteous*, Gen. vii. 1. He that was purged when the world was unclean, proves now unclean when the world is purged. The preacher of the former world, and prince of the latter, is the first that renews the sins which he had reprov'd, and for which he saw it condemn'd.

There is no sin hath so strange an effect; it is worse than sin. Other sins procure shame, but seek to hide it; this displays it. Lot is thus made a fool to his daughters. Noah to his son; it is a common quality in this excess to disclose secrets. Adam had no sooner sinned, but he saw and abhorred his own nakedness, seeking concealment even in bushes. Lot and Noah discover their nakedness, and have not so much rule of themselves as to be ashamed. Drunkenness doth not only make vices, but make them manifest. So would God have it, that our shame might be double by it: both a shame for those imperfections we discover, and of that imperfection which moved us to discover them. One hour's drunkenness filthily discovered what six hundred years' sobriety had modestly concealed. He that gives himself to wine, is not his own man. How horrible is that vice, which shall rob a man of himself, and lay a beast in his room! He that resists that one sin, escapes many; as he that kills the pregnant dam, is sure to destroy all the brood.

Drunkenness commands all: the senses command the members, the affections command the senses, the heart commands the affections, the head commands the heart, and wine commands the head. As Themistocles' boy said, *I rule my mother, my mother rules my father, and my father rules the whole senate*. Wine is aspiring, and will get up to the crown, and then lumbles the crown to the feet. If it once take the sceptre, as Joab said of Rabbah, all the rest will follow.

(6.) His incest. Rather than Satan will leave Lot unmated out of Sodom, his own daughters shall prove Sodomites. They that should have been his comforters to succour him, became baits to betray him. So little are they moved with that grievous judgment, the turning of Sodom to ashes, of their mother to a pillar, both in their eye; that they dare think of lying with their own father. Yea, and one of them afterward impudently calls that son Moab, *My father's son* by me.

Some have excused their fact, that they did it to preserve seed; not out of intemperance, but love of their name and posterity; not for lust, but procreation. *Thus*. The end was commendable; but the means, by incest with their father, culpable; better for them never to have been mother, than to be so by their father. Yet their intent shall judge many: they affected communion for fruit; divers make that their last and least end; lust of delectation is stronger with them than desire of propagation. It seems, they sinned directly against their own consciences; because they did first intoxicate their father, to put him from his rectified memory. They thought he would not consent to them, unless he first did forget himself; that while Lot was sober he would not be unchaste. Drunkenness is the key that opens the door to all bestial affections and actions. Wine knows no difference, or of persons or sins. Their fact was more heinous than their father's; his only drunkenness, theirs to make him so, and then to commit incest with him.

For his incest, he knew it not: he perceived not when they lay down, nor when they rose up, Gen. xix. 33. It is no incredible thing; not that it was done by nocturnal pollution, without the act of generation; as Tostatus out of Thomas. Now those sins condemn us, which we do knowingly. The use of his reason was hindered by drink; for if he had remembered himself upon his awaking, he would never have done it the second time. Some say, the progressive faculty may be exercised in sleep, as some walk in their sleep and transport things from place to place. Certainly, the devil was not absent in such a foul business, working fancies in his head. But in a word, his unchastity was the punishment of his ebriety. (Calv.)

Thus came his uncleanness from his drunkenness, but what is to be said for his drunkenness? Once and a second time he admitted it. Noah was drunk but once: one act cannot make a good heart unrighteous, as a trade of sin cannot stand with regeneration. So dangerous is it to give way to Satan's temptations; where he is once entertained, the next time he is confident. He that hath taken one score fall, is the worse for it long after. I know it is true in some, Once to have stumbled, is always to be admonished; but this is above nature, a happiness only beholden to Divine grace.

These are the exceptions against Lot's justice, who (for all these) hath a testimony from the mouth of the Holy Ghost, that he was a just man. Now whom God calls just, let no man call unrighteous. Such is the difference, not of sins, but of men. He that sees Lot and Judah pardoned for incest, while Zimri suffers for fornication, must confess, that God doth not so weigh the faults as the persons. It is a foolish proverb of man's partial indulgence, That one man may better steal a horse than another look on. But the Lord is justice, and hates all sin whatsoever, in all persons whatsoever; yet will he pardon their great sin, that are members of his good Son, and severely punish the least fault in them for whom he suffered not. He regards not so much what as who; remission goes not by the measure of the sin, but by the quality of the sinner, yea, rather the mercy of the forgiver. Not the man that hath done no sin, but whom the Lord will not charge with sin, he is blessed, Psal. xxxii. 1. From all that hath been said, I will draw certain useful conclusions.

1. Even a just Lot is suffered to fall: he that was a gracious saint on earth, and is now a glorious saint in heaven, had his aspersions. When God upholds us, no temptation can move us; if he let go his manutenance, none is too weak for us. Which of God's dear children have not once done that thing, whereof they have afterward been ashamed? This the Lord suffers for divers reasons. 1. To humble us: if such excellent men have trod awry, how should we take heed to our ways! Shall such giants stumble, and we lame cripples be secure? 2. To keep us from despair: the Scripture tells us of their infirmities, that in their pardon we may read God's mercies. Let their falling humble us, and their rising again comfort us. If we had not such patterns, how could we but despair at the sight of our sins? But he will hope well of his wound, that hath so good experience of his Physician. 3. To magnify his own infinite goodness, that can to good turn our evil: he lets us fall, knowing how to make as good use of our sin as of our obedience.

Lot might be ashamed of his incestuous seed, and wish to have come from Sodom alone. Yet was this unnatural bed blessed with increase. Divers good women have failed of this fruit by the lawful rights of marriage, as Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, Elisabeth;

all hardly conceived. Some with one unlawful copulation have become pregnant; as Tamar by Judah, Bathsheba by David, Lot's daughters by their own father. Not that God favours forbidden conjunctions; but in his justice to bring such secret sin to open shame; in the elect for their conversion, in the reprobate for their further confusion.

Moab is derived from this incest, one that might call his father, grandfather, and his mother, sister. One father begot both the mother and her child, and one man is both the brother and son of the same woman. Yet from this line came one of our Saviour's worthy ancestors: of Moab came Ruth, married to Boaz, the father of Jesse, the father of David, the progenitor of Jesus Christ according to the flesh. God's election is not tied to our means: we may beget children, we can neither traduce blessings nor curses to them. Holy parents from a chaste bed have sometimes bred a monstrous and impious generation. And the Lord sometimes raiseth a holy seed from the drunken bed of fornication. Whatsoever we do, God will be chooser; and serve himself, not according to our act, but his own purpose. Weighty ears of corn have sometimes grown out of the compass of the tilled field; and sweet flowers been found out of the enclosed garden, even in the wild forest. Thus will God keep his own liberty of election, by his grace, not our works; and let us know, that we are not born but made good.

2. Notwithstanding these infirmities, still Lot is a just man: some particular acts may be too light in the balance, without extinguishing his title before the Lord. A man is sanctified in four respects. 1. In the not imputation of his sins; and that which is not imputed, is as it were not committed. 2. In inchoation of holiness, begun in this life, perfected hereafter. 3. In acceptance: God seeth none iniquity in Jacob, he seeth no transgression in Israel, Numb. xxiii. 21: there is sin in us, but God will not see it. 4. In comparison: so they shine like stars in a dark night. Lot's offences were some blemish to his sanctification in earth, they could not nullify his justification in heaven: blemish his virtue they may, not frustrate his grace. For if still as the elect sin, they should lose their grace, and cease to be righteous, God's election were as mutable as our condition. The frantic in his mad fits doth not exercise reason, yet he hath it; he loseth the use, not the habit. In a swoon the soul doth not exercise her functions: a man neither hears, nor sees, nor feels; yet she is still in the body. A suspended priest cannot be put from his right in the church, for he hath his ministry, though forbidden to exercise it. The outlaw is still a subject, albeit declared of some privileges. The son angers his father, he doth not straight disinherit him. Though the vessel reel, yet, Fear not, thou earriest Cæsar, said that emperor to the quaking mariner. We are weak of ourselves, but Christ is in us.

Lot fell six times in many days, the just man falls seven times in one day; yet he is still just in his Saviour's righteousness. This concludes our comfort: he that bade Peter forgive his repenting brother seven times, will forgive our repentant souls seven thousand times: he scorns that any Peter, saint, or angel, should outgo him in showing mercy. In ourselves we are sinners, in Christ righteous. When the philosopher in his own mean clothes could not be admitted into the court on a solemn day, he went and borrowed rich and gorgeous apparel; he was then let in with ease and respect. Being in the presence, he was continually kissing his robe: the king noting it, wondered, and asked the cause: he answers, I honour that which honoured me. My virtue could procure

me no entrance, my garment did. We are too base, ragged, beggarly of ourselves, to be let into that glorious court of heaven: by faith put we on the Prince's embroidered garment, Christ's righteousness; then shall we be admitted. Let us admire and honour that which honours us: what all our righteousness could never do, that his robe doth for us.

Now "if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?" 1 Pet. iv. 18. Righteous, that is happy; but scarcely saved, that is hard; yet shall be saved, that is happy again. Let no believer fear, for he is righteous; let none presume, for he shall scarcely be saved; yet, let none despair, for he shall be saved. For all thy sin, yet thou (being faithful in Christ) art righteous; for all thy righteousness, thou shalt scarcely be saved; for all that difficulty, yet thou shalt be saved. Thus like those on the seas, they mount up to heaven, and down to the deep, and up again, Psal. cvii. 26; or like the heave-offering, that was heaved up, and down, and up again; or as Christ, the antitype of it, was heaved up to the cross, down to the grave, and up again unto glory: so we are justified by Christ, this lifts us up to grace; we commit many sins, this humbles us with shame; yet we love righteousness, and endeavour to perfection, this shall advance us to everlasting glory.

3. Just Lot was delivered, neither for his justice, nor without it. Not for his own righteousness, but for God's mercy: I will deliver him, because I have a favour unto him. Nor doth the apostle mean, that Lot was delivered for his own sake; nor the prophet, that he was delivered for Abraham's sake, when he saith, "God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out," Gen. xix. 29. He should have been saved, though he had not been akin to Abraham. Yet is this repeated to testify God's love to Abraham, and his gracious answer to the prayers of the sons of Abraham, which shall prevail with him. But indeed, God remembered Abraham, not so much because he prayed, but because himself had promised: the deliverance depended not upon any merit in uncle or nephew, but on the Divine goodness.

The pontificians say, there be two things in a good work; the meritorious part, to get heaven; the satisfactory part, to escape hell. It cannot do the latter, for the unprofitableness of it, being no more than we are bound to do. It cannot do the former, for the insufficiency of it, being not so much as we are bound to do. If God judge by the law moral, no work is good; but if by the law evangelial, joined with the remission of sins, many works are good. Some have affirmed that all our works are evil; as if truth and lying, covetousness and liberality, hatred and charity, were all one. God never taught that doctrine. Indeed our best actions have their blemishes and imperfections. The Egyptian midwives saved the Hebrew children by a lie; yet it is said, God prospered them, and made them houses, Exod. i. 20, 21. He rewarded not their lie, but their piety; he so regarded their mercy, that he regarded not their infirmity. Prosperity belongs to their goodness, pardon to their dissimulation. The Lord forgave the obliquity, and blessed the honesty of the work. There be three circumstances in every work, which St. Bernard would have us look unto; the lawfulness, expedience, decency: the main is the lawfulness. But man is so lame, that though he keeps the right way, yet he halts. Without our righteousness we cannot be saved, yet for our righteousness we are not saved, but for his that came to save us.

4. The just saints are to be followed but in their justice and sanctity. Too many encourage themselves on their falls. Lot was incestuous and drunken,

yet he is called just; why for such sins am I held unrighteous? Am I better than he? Better? no, would thou wert half so good. 1. He sinned and condemned himself; thou sinnest and defendest thyself. Thou likest that in him which he misliked in himself. 2. They sinned and repented; thou shonest thy sin, but no sign of repentance. Their weakness is seen in our hands, but their tears are not seen in our eyes. 3. Evil was never made to be imitated, but goodness. Lot's faith and obedience is not such a sinner's object, but his incest and drunkenness: as if Jacob's modest look, liberal hand, truth-speaking tongue, devout knee, and humble heart, were not worth noting; but only his lameness and halting. He marks none of their graces, but their scars. 4. Their falls serve to raise us up when we are down, not to cast us down when we are up; for our consolation afterward, not for our presumption before. To think of their errors should humble us with fear, not hearten us with encouragement to evil. It is said of the wicked, They fear where no fear is, Psal. liii. 5; here it may be said, where fear is they fear not. These examples are a solace to the penitent, not a refuge to the presumptuous. To say, Why should not I find mercy with David? this is the voice of faith: to say, Why should not I venture to sin with David? this is the voice of folly. 5. Thy sin is greater by this bold imitation: a lie ventured on by the example of a saint's frailty, is of a more malicious nature in thee, than it was in him. Any transgression thus derived, is the argument of a more ungracious soul than that it seeks to imitate. What he hopes shall excuse him, doth more properly condemn him, because he had that warning before him. 6. Thy repentance is doubtfuller. He that tempted them to sin tempts also thee; that is Satan; but he that gave them repentance, is not bound to give it thee; that is God. Thou makest thy fall certain, thy rising again is uncertain. Such a man hath been dangerously sick, and escaped; his physician was skilful and diligent, his medicine proper and effectual. Wilt thou make thyself sick, on purpose to try the skill of the one and virtue of the other? 7. For them, there was a cure behind, the sacrifice of the Lamb not then slain; but now if men wilfully frustrate the price of that redemption, Christ died no more: his next coming shall not be in the humility of a sufferer, but in the glory of his Father: not to redeem, but judge the world. 8. All Scripture is for instruction, all is not for imitation: a light to my feet, showing me the blocks wherewith they stumbled, that I might keep myself upright. It is so done and written. For our imitation? No, that were an argument of too much violence, to draw on sin with the ear-ropes of examples; to take some stones from the temple, that with them we might beat down the rest; and to spoil ourselves by the ruins of God's saints.

This is fit to be urged against those that flesh themselves by the sins of God's children. Will any infer, What matter is it what manner of men we are, when Paul, a blasphemer, a persecutor, an oppressor, was received to mercy? 1 Tim. i. 13; when Saul, coming a wolf against the lambs, is made Paul, a shepherd for the lambs? This is true in him, but he did it ignorantly; thou having his example doest it maliciously; and God will not be merciful to them that offend him of set purpose. He that deliberately resolves to sin, doth what he can to make himself incapable of forgiveness. Indeed it is true, that there is none good, but he was once bad. Peter by experience of his own frailty, might learn with his keys to open heaven unto others. But though God forget our sins in his patience, let not us forget them

in our penitence. God pardoned in Lot what was bad, and accepted what was good: let us follow his virtues, that we be never condemned for his sins.

5. If we will be delivered let us be just. But doth God deliver none but the righteous? Yes, sometimes also the wicked, and that for divers reasons. 1. That they might be brought to repentance; for that is the scope and purpose of the goodness and patience of God, Rom. ii. 4. But man is so given to pride, that if he speed well he thinks he deserves well; and so instead of humble thankfulness swells with proud arrogance. 2. For some progeny to come from them. For good Hezekiah to be born, his wicked father Ahaz is forborne. Why doth Amon draw out two years' breath in idolatry, but that good Josiah was to be fitted for a king? When I came into the sanctuary of God, then understood I the ends of these men, Psal. lxxiii. 17. There we find that many sacrilegious, extortioners, idolaters, are delivered, because God hath some good fruit to come from their cursed loins. 3. To fill up the measure of their sins; they have already done so much, that they are suffered to do more: so sin is punished with sin, as drunkenness with thirst. 4. To magnify the Lord's patience, in giving them time and means of penitence; that as they make his labour without success, they might be left without excuse. Thus was Ham delivered from that universal deluge, yet after he comes to deride his own father: twice had Noah given him life, yet he abuseth both his father and preserver. Even God's ark may nourish monsters: on the seats of the temple may sit contempters of their spiritual fathers, as often filthy toads lie under the consecrated stones. Was this God's favour to preserve him to judgment? He had better have perished in the waters, than live under his father's curse. It is not simply our deliverance, but our thankfulness for it, and obedience after it, that gives sufficient argument to our consciences, we are in the favour of God.

6. Never did man serve God for nothing: if Lot be just, he shall now find the benefit of it, he is delivered. It is the speech of atheism and apostasy, "It is vain to serve God: and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance?" Mal. iii. 14. Most false, from God, he highly seems to owe a man any thing. Cyrus in the conquest of Laecedomonia, encouraged his soldiers, that the footman should have a horseman's place, the horseman a chariot, the lieutenant should be made a captain, the captain a colonel, and he that was president over a city, should be made a viceroy over a whole country. Whereas Christ, say they, for his soldiers, speaks of nothing but taking a cross, and bearing a yoke; of persecution abroad, and affliction at home. Here is not labour rewarded with honour, but honour diminished by labour: it was better with us before, we had more prosperity with less pity. They are miserably deceived; there is no honour like to his service, the fear of God rewards itself. I have laboured in vain, and spent my strength for nought; the earth is barren: but my work is with the Lord, and my reward with my God, Isa. xlix. 4: heaven is fruitful, there shall be a blessed harvest of recompence.

Then spake they that feared the Lord, and a book of remembrance was written, &c. Mal. iii. 16. They met together to serve God; for this purpose was their coming, and about this business was their communing. What followed? A book of remembrance was written for them: not one good work of theirs, but is there registered: the great Master of the Rolls records them, and rewards them; here in a heaven of peace, there in the peace of heaven. "And they shall be mine, saith the Lord;" when I shall say to

the wicked, Depart from me, then I will acknowledge them for mine. "When I make up my jewels," setting all the trash and refuse on fire: I will gather up them into mine own treasury, as a man locks up his precious jewels in his cabinet. "And I will spare them, as a man spareth" (not every son, but) "his own son that serveth him," ver. 17.

This was the convinced devil's acknowledgment; "Doth Job fear God for nought?" Job i. 9: and Saul's insinuation to the Benjamites, disheartening their adherence to David; "Will the son of Jesse give you fields and vineyards, and make you captains of thousands, and captains of hundreds?" 1 Sam. xxii. 7. Reward is the encouragement of service. This was the ground and colour of the angry son's exception; "These many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment; and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends," Luke xv. 29. An unjust expostulation of a son to a father, and such a father as had given him the inheritance. "Ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord," 1 Cor. xv. 58. Labour: idleness shall do you no good, but labour. Your labour: the pains of another shall not profit you, but your own labour. Is not in vain: not like the blackamoor's washing, a labour in vain; but if it miss your end, it reacheth God's: we see not the success, yet it prospers. In the Lord: it may be in vain in the world, and men never requite it; but in the Lord it shall find recompence. Our labours end with our lives, but our rewards end not with our labours. This we know: divinity consists of certain grounds and infallible principles, a sure foundation, a knowledge. The physician, be his medicine never so proper, knows not whether he shall recover his patient. Plead the lawyer never so learnedly, he knows not whether he shall regain his client's right. The soldier may fight valiantly, yet is not sure of the victory. But divinity is a knowledge, making us know that our pious endeavours shall be rewarded.

7. The Lord first makes us just, and then saves us; as he first sanctified Lot, and then delivered him. So that our justice is not justice in proper and distinct terms, but mercy. "Ye are washed." What, have you washed yourselves? No, "ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God," 1 Cor. vi. 11. So Christ is "made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption," 1 Cor. i. 30. Wisdom in the instruction of our souls, righteousness in the forgiveness of our sins, sanctification in the holiness of our lives, and redemption in the deliverance from all our enemies. We are none of these in ourselves; that he who rejoiceth, might rejoice in the Lord. Trust not your arms of flesh, nor your hearts of ashes, nor your purest spirits while they are housed in corrupted walls. If you have stood a time, trust not your legs, you may slide; if you have slipped and recovered, trust not your recovery, you may fall again. Trust not your strength, it is infirmity; trust not your wisdom, it is folly; trust not your holiness, it is blended with iniquity: prophets have fallen, patriarchs have fallen, apostles have fallen, stars have fallen, angels have fallen: but trust the mercy of God, which is of infinite perfection; and the merits of Christ, which are of perfect satisfaction. "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake," Isa. xliii. 25. It is not Abraham, nor Moses, nor the virgin Mary, nor the virgin martyr, nor Peter at Rome, nor Paul at Jerusalem, that can do this cure: hear the Physician: It is I, saith the Lord. Not with the preparation of our own nature, nor with the co-operation of our own justice, nor disposition and

liberty of our own will: hear him once again: It is I, even I, and for mine own sake, and Son's sake, that forgiveth your sins.

To conclude with application. God hath given us a gracious deliverance, which we may parallel with Lot's. We have been saved from the fire; such a conflagration as knows no comparison, but Sodom or hell. With a match it should have been done; without all match, if it had been done. Some differences there are: that fire was in a just severity, this in an unjust treachery. Sodom's fire came down from heaven, this gunpowder fire was fetched up from hell. That was inflicted by the ministers of God, angels; this was devised by the ministers of Satan, traitors. That was prepared for the nocent, this for the innocent. That was fire and brimstone, this fire and gunpowder; of a more sudden and despatching violence; not reserving a pause for a, Lord, have mercy on us. We were "a firebrand plucked out of the burning," Amos iv. 11. The Lord did not only deliver us from the burning, but he also kept the fire from kindling. He sent Lot out of Sodom, to save him; he prevented Sodom in England, to save us: he did not remove us from it, but he removed it from us.

He that sent that fire downward, kept this fire from mounting upward. He delivered Lot by visible angels, and angels were not wanting, though invisible, when he delivered us. He remembered Abraham, and sent out Lot; when he freed us from the fire, he remembered the Son of Abraham according to temporal birth, and his own Son by eternal generation, Jesus Christ. He did reveal to Abraham this purposed destruction of Sodom; he did not conceal from our gracious sovereign the notice of this intended destruction of his kingdom. Lot was sent out by break of day, and we delivered by four o'clock in the morning; that very morning: there wanted but a little work of the morning, and then sufficient to the day, to the year, to all ages of the world, had the malice of that morning been; more accursed than ever was read in the calendar of any time. The incendiary, a Faux, a firebrand indeed, kept his vigils, but the Lord prevented his jubilee. There was a hell-brand ready with his match, to make a general bonfire, both of mortal men and immortal trophies and charters: to make a whole burnt-offering of us all, and to pass us through the fire to that Moloch of Rome. Temples, sepulchres, monuments of age and honour, should have been tossed into the air, then into the water, after they had been first spoiled by fire. Our river had been turned into a river of blood, and her carriages, instead of commodities, into dead corpses and discerpted limbs; her crystal streams dyed into rubies. Thus they meant us like Sodom, but God delivered us like Lot. The danger was imminent and furious, their rage violent and monstrous, our deliverance strange and glorious: let our commemoration and thanks be solemn and generous, heroic and perpetual for ever. Amen.

"Vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked." The next point is his place, which was sinful, flagitious, stigmatical Sodom. It was worse than a gaol to his just soul: and report lies, if our common gaols be not like to Sodom, the very dens of mischief, the schools of wickedness. Thus God's ordinance for reformation, is made a means of further transgression; and the place built for discipline, breeds and feeds villany. A malefactor learns more pestilent untowardness when he comes there, than ever he knew before. Oh that the magistrate would look to this: that drunkenness and blasphemy might not usurp the place of mortification and humility!

But why would Lot stay in such a wicked city?

Not as a neighbour affected with their customs, but as a physician to cure their diseases. (Chrysost.) But he that looked for a paradise, found a hell; and the cup of his prosperity was spiced with the bitter fruits of a cursed society. It was indeed a good land, but a bad people; as it was once said of Ireland. Nothing bad there but the people. Christ would not suffer his weak disciple to go bury his father, Matt. viii. 22, lest he should be perverted by some carnal friends at the funeral. I am life, tarry and live with me; let the dead alone, lest thou die with them. How often doth God part his children from the wicked, by making them smart with the wicked! As Augustine speaks of the religious taken among the rest by the Goths; *Jure amaram vitam sentiunt, quia peccantibus amari esse noluerant*. "Woe is me that I sojourn in Mesecb, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar!" Psal. cxx. 5.

To live among the good is a great happiness, a little image of heaven, a model and abridgement of the communion of saints. Where one doth love another and all love God; one is at peace with another, and all at peace with their own conscience; one doth honour another, and all honour their Maker. When the inhabitants of a parish shine in the day, like a firmament of bright stars in the night, not one malevolent aspect among them. Like a quire of tunable voices, every one keeping time and his own part, and in a sweet harmony, all singing the praises of the Lord. But oh where shall we find such a neighbourhood? how much ground shall we leave behind us, ere we arrive at this society! The prophet once cried, O ye heavens, drop down righteousness, Isa. xlv. 8; as if the earth had quite lost it, being taken up above the clouds. We may now cry and complain for want of this neighbourhood: O ye heavens, drop down kindness and charity into our times. O love that art *alumna cæli, sis medicina soli*, come down and help us.

Imagine, with the fable, a city consisting of select men, all peaceable, tractable, charitable, humble; the magistrate clemently ruling, the people meekly obeying. The enemy knows it invincible, while thus governed; therefore craftily resolves to shuffle in among them a pair of false brothers, a liar, and a thief. But because in their own forms they would soon be discovered and abhorred, he puts them in two disguises, the liar like a lawyer, the thief like a usurer. Their wealth procures them room and respect, they fall to work. The liar, with his forged weapons, whispers to the magistrate how the people stomach him; to the people, how the magistrate tyrannizeth over them; to private persons, what hard language is given them, what wrong is done them, what right is kept from them, and that the law is ordained to render every man his own. First, there is heart-burning, then brawling, then contesting at law; and now instead of peace and humility, there is pride and enmity. The usurer, he so robs them by a legal theft, that they become at once sensible of want and injury; covetousness gets into the heart, oppression fills the hand. Now farewell charity, every man for himself, none for God, and God for none. Consider yourselves, and wish this were but a parable: punish the devil's instruments; hang up thievery, cut out the tongue of lying, and so be shut of them: this were a fair riddance of them both, as the proverb hath it, without a session. There was a mathematician in Constantinople, that in anger thus vexed his neighbour. He did set in his cellar great caldrons of boiling water, with heat multiplying the motions of the vapours; and then turning them all into narrow pipes, gave them vent under his neighbour's floor; which made such

an earthquake, that it shook all his house. Then with fire-glasses and barrels he so thundered and lightened, that he forced him to forsake his dwelling. (Agath.) The vapours of secret slanders, the earthquakes of open contentions, the thunders of blasphemy, the flashes of burning malice, do so afflict us, that we cry, Our soul is among lions; sons of men whose teeth are spears, arrows, and sharp swords, Psal. lvi. 4.

But still what doth Lot in Sodom, a saint among sinners? Fishes may be fresh in salt waters: live in the sea, and not partake the brinish quality: it is not so with man; rather, some evil for neighbourhood's sake. Pure streams passing by a corrupt soil, contract some of the putrefaction; and springs running through the veins of the earth, savour of the mineral which they last saluted. They "were mingled among the heathen." What followed? They "learned their works," Psal. cvi. 35. No wonder: can a man be clean among lepers? or take fire in his bosom, and not be burned? We certify ourselves of men's behaviour, as the Lacedæmonians inquired the carriage of their children: Of what sort are their companions? as they, Of what condition are their play-fellows? The mischiefs of Sodom and Babylon should forewarn our departure: as the swallows would not come near Thebes, because the walls had been so often besieged. The smitten deer is presently forsaken of all his fellows. A great tree never falls alone, but also spoils the underwood, which otherwise would have thrived well enough. The reason why the raven returned not unto the ark, is given by some, because she met with dead carcases. The world's carrion keeps many from their faithful adherence to the church. Any thing taken from its proper place loseth its virtue: a coal of fire kept in the chimney, lives; separate it from the hearth, leave it alone in the air, it presently dies. What philosophy said of good, experience justifies of evil: evil is diffusive and spreading of itself; indeed more catching than goodness. Ask the priest, if a man carry holy flesh in the skirt of his garment, and touch other things with that skirt, shall they be holy? No, saith the priest. If one that is unclean by a dead body touch any thing, shall it not be unclean? Yes, it shall be unclean, saith the priest, Hag. ii. 11—13. Sooner are the good corrupted by the bad, than the bad are bettered by the good. Why are we taught continually to pray, Deliver us from evil, but that it hath a dangerous power to make us evil? Yea, Lord, free us from Sodom, separate us from sin, alienate us from the wicked; "Deliver us from evil; for thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen."

"Vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked." The matter of his vexing was their sin: the evil of the place came from the persons, who were fully, foully, filthily, palpably wicked. Not by way of infirmity, or in any mean degree, but wicked in the extent of sin. Not seldom, or by fits, but always; their conversation was wicked. Not secretly and in corners, but notoriously in the public view; their visible life was wholly wicked. And for specification, if any sin were predominant above the rest, it was filthiness, Sodom's filthiness, a bestiality, yea worse. For it is not so bad to be a beast, as to live like a beast; a sin abhorred by nature itself. Therefore to put some method into this further discourse of their wickedness, three circumstances appear in the description. 1. The impudence of it, being notorious and open, Lot's eyesore. 2. The continuance of it, during their whole life: not an act or two, but their conversation. 3. The turpitude of it, being so

obscene and nasty; a filthy conversation. Thus we have the forehead, the heel, and the composition of the whole body.

1. The impudence: it was manifest wickedness, their faces did not blush at it. "The show of their countenance doth witness against them; and they declare their sin as Sodom, they hide it not," Isa. iii. 9. It is true, that nocturnal pollutions shall have public plagues; but they that dare sin God in the face, shall bear a heavier weight of his vengeance. The harlot doth bad enough, that wipes her lips, (as if the print of her sin could be seen there,) and it was not she: though she commit it, she will conceal it. But Absalom worse, that spreads his incestuous pallet on the roof, and calls the sun a blushing witness to his filthiness. "Pride compasseth them about as a chain," Psal. lxxiii. 6: they wear their wickedness in pomp, as if they meant it should grace them. They "glory in their shame," Phil. iii. 19: such as boast their quantities of drink, and varieties of uncleanness, (it is all one,) how far into their hearts they have admitted the devil!

Such are called "dogs," Rev. xxii. 15; not only because they are as fawning as dogs, flattering their feeders; or as ravenous as dogs, insatiately devouring; or as malicious as dogs, barking out scandals at their lives that shine with goodness: but as unclean as dogs, and as shameless as dogs; noisome with impudence, and impudent with noisomeness; their place is "without." "The wicked boasteth his heart's desire," Psal. x. 3: he doth not covet it, nor excuse it, but boast it; nor shift it to another, but makes it appear his own heart's desire. *Mala admittunt, admissa jactant, jactata defendunt. Majoris est culpa manifeste quam occulte peccare: ille dupliciter reus, quia et agit et docet.* (Isidor. de Sum. Bon. cap. 20.) The popish rule is safer, *Caute si non caste*: but these, *ritia tam minime abscondunt, ut non abscondant*. They prostitute their souls, as the Romans did the bankrupts' houses, with, Who gives most? If their hand hath been the organ of unrighteousness, their mouth shall be the trumpet to proclaim it.

There is more modesty in them that seek concealment: if there be any bush in Paradise, any tempter to be named by Adam; A woman of thy giving, Eve; whereas it was a woman of his own seeking, concupiscence. Gehazi hath a lying cover, Saul a pretending colour; here is something to be alleged for mitigation. But to sin without shame, yea, to out-sin all shame, to publish the tenor of villany in print: this is Sodom's state. Uncleanness was not confined to the chamber, nor thievery to the night, nor corruption blanched and skinned over with hypocrisy; but borne aloft, justified by protection, and crowned with garlands of honour and approbation. This sin abandons secrecy, scorns reproof; admonition to it were but like goads to them that are mad already, or a pouring of oil down the chimney.

It is said of Tamar, that Judah took her for a harlot by her dressing, Gen. xxxviii. 15. She takes upon her the habit of a harlot, because she means to be one; her attire declares her purpose. If she had not wished to seem a harlot, she would have avoided such a place and veil. The external monuments of immodesty bewray a carnal heart: they that mean well, will never wish to seem ill. Nature (not too far perverted) is not more forward to commit sin, than willing to hide it; and we commonly affect to show better than we are. Not few harlots put on the semblance of chastity, and bitterly rail on them that appear naught. Moorish passages are dangerous for travellers, but the pits which the eye sees the foot avoids. Let us never trust those that do not wish to appear good.

To conclude, then, Sodom sought no cover, and she was not covered; fire and brimstone had free access to her; and her confusion, no less than her corruption, was palpable to the world. Openness of sin saves justice a labour of inquisition: there need no hue-and-cry after that thief which presents himself. Are there no such public sinners amongst us? none that openly dishallow the sabbaths; none that justify sacrilege, a sin now as manifest as Sodom's; none that have so sworn away all grace, that they make it their grace to swear? Mark them that cause divisions and tumults among you, Rom. xvi. 17, mark them with the black coal of infamy: let them be to you, as lepers among the Jews, or as men full of plague-sores among you; whom neither the fear of God nor man can work to peace, unquietness must be their portion for ever; the shame of the gospel, malicious, wrangling Christians. Concerning these open sins, let me say to the magistrate, as David to Solomon of Shimel, 1 Kings ii. 8, 9, We may not, you must punish.

2. The continuance: as their sins were extant, so constant: Their ways were always grievous, Psal. x. 5. Their ways, not some few steps; grievous, not meanly offensive; and that without intermission, always. It is not so much sin, as the trade of sin, that is damnable. They sin while they eat, sin while they walk, talk, even in sleep they sin; their sportive, transportive mirth is full of obscenity; their beds, boards, chambers, and (if they dissemble any devotion) the very churches, are witnesses of their impiety: such fluid souls, that no costly medicine can stave the flux of their sins; but the very remnant snuff of original goodness must languish out in a stinking dissoluteness. Time, the remedy of other evils, increaseth this. Other creatures grow up to their height, and then decay and die: only it is said of the crocodile, that she grows to her last day. So doth this man's sin. It is said of the moon, she waxeth, and waneth, and vanisheth, and then appears again with repaired horns: but here is no change, except from evil to worse. They so habituate sins, that the more habitual they are the less they are thought of; as the friars dwindle their orders, from Minims to Nullans; or as some owe debts so long, that they forget them to be debts. They think the preacher does them over-hasty wrong, to call them from their inveterate lusts: as when a creditor demanded his money long due, the debtor jested with his companion; See, I have owed him the money these ten years, and he is as earnest with me as if I had borrowed it but yesterday. Like men that have so often told a lie, that at last themselves think they speak true.

Lot may preach to them, but unless Lot could convert them there is no reparation of their life. Resolute sinners love dissolute teachers: such as cannot, or dare not, speak the truth. That cannot, for insufficiency: their place hath set them to charge, but they have neither powder nor shot. That dare not, for flattery: we may say of their sermons, as it is reported of some harps, It is better to see, than hear them: their fingering may please the eye, their melody is nothing worth. Yet as St. Keywin's harp is kept for a great relic, so flattering teachers are venerable monuments with these.

They sin because they will sin. The cause is neither ignorance nor compulsion, but wilfulness. Though we must offend, yet for shame let there be some interruption and breaking off in our sins: let not men run headlong to hell, and never so much as look back. It is for the devil only to do nothing else but sin; a sinner from the beginning, a sinner to the end. Who gives a penny to that merchant that

rejoiceth in his shipwreck? or will confer an estate upon him that resolves to be a beggar? St. Augustine confesseth a state of himself unconverted, bad enough, when he said, I desire holiness but cannot obtain it; but these will not so much as desire to be good.

While they are in Delilah's lap, they think themselves as safe as if they were in Abraham's bosom. As beggars get their living by showing their sores: let a chirurgeon offer to heal them, they refuse it, because they live by them. We offer to cure men's maladies, their riot, rapine, uncleanness, lying, blasphemy. No, they thank us, and say, they live by them. This is that Babel which will not be cured. Yea, they are worse than those beggars; for they desire not ulcers, yet when they have them they make use of them; but these by an unnatural lust contract them, and make ulcers in their conscience. Perhaps the issue there hath continued so long, that if they offer to stop it, they die: the devil hath hampered some so fast, that they dare not but sin, for fear they should anger him, for a *ne nocent*; and their consciences would so pinch and torture them, that they dare not admit a conference. As they that have curst and shrewish wives at home, love to stray abroad; so men molested with a scolding conscience, as the whore, drunkard, homicide, are fain continually to play, drink, riot; to go to bed with their heads full of wine, and no sooner wake, but to it again. So that their conscience must knock at the door a thousand times, and they are never within, or at leisure to be spoke withal. Yet must they at last be met and found, as Ahab was by Elijah, even by this enemy: stay they never so long, and stray they never so far, they must home at last. Sickness will waken them, conscience must speak with them, as a master with his truant scholar after a long absence; and then there are no men under heaven who more need that prayer, Lord, have mercy upon them!

3. The uncleanness: their sin was not only palpable, and durable, but detestable; they were exposed to turpitude, their bodies prostituted to fleshly pollutions. By "filthy" understand all carnal defilements, the kinds whereof St. Paul specifies to the Romans under their proper names, because they were familiarly known to them. But to the Galatians, he wraps them up in general terms, because there they were more obscure; as our apostle doth not name Sodom's filthiness to the Christian Jews, lest by specifying it he should in a manner teach it. The decree of Pope Syricius involved marriage among the pollutions of the flesh; and such was the oversight of St. Gregory upon 1 Cor. vii. 2, *Concessit minimo, ut majus declinetur*: a false gloss of a sincere text, striving to prove by the apostle's words, that matrimony is by permission, not by commandment; and therefore that cannot be without sin, which is pardoned, and not imposed. But if it were a sin to marry, God himself should be the author of sin, for he was the author of marriage. Neither doth God pardon it as a thing forbidden, but permit it as a thing lawful, though the apostle doth not there impose it as a thing necessary. And it is a forced interpretation, to tax that of iniquity, which God hath ordained for a remedy. For he doth not forbid, but rectify our desire: "Let every man have his own wife:" a wife, not a concubine; his own wife, not another man's; his wife, not wives. Lamech's incongruity. "Hear my voice, ye wives of Lamech," Gen. iv. 23, was like false Latin; for wives admit of no plurality, when they be construed with one husband. God had abundance of spirit, yet he ordained but one woman for one man, Mal. ii. 15.

But let us abhor that doctrine, that shall at once

cast out the aspersion of sin upon marriage, and yet seek to vindicate uncleanness from sin by a toleration of stewes. It was God's express prohibition, "There shall be no whore of the daughters of Israel," Deut. xxiii. 17. Many flatter themselves that this is but a trick of youth: belike they are content to lose the kingdom of heaven with a trick: an unhappy trick, that costs a man his soul!

It is truly said, that a whore is the high way to the devil: he that looks on her with lust, begins his voyage; he that stays to talk with her, is half his way; he that enjoys her, is at his journey's end. She is a liar, out-lying a newsmonger; her kisses be sweet poison: her eye is on your face, while her heart is on your cash; a deep ditch, what is wrecked there is lost for ever; dressing herself all day, to provoke appetite at night; others' sins show like landscape, afar off, hers like huge statues; damnable both to herself and others. She keeps herself a stranger to repentance, till they two meet at an hospital. She lives like Cain, a reprobate vagabond without any constant habitation. Her body is the common sewer, her soul a snuff which only surgery keeps alive, and at last it goes out in everlasting stench.

For others; it is her misery and mischief not to be damned alone, she brings many to her own fire, and so does the devil special service. She is a witch that hath wrought upon saints, as Tamar (though otherwise a good woman) did once upon Judah, Gen. xxxviii. 15. He esteems her by her habit, and the very sight of a harlot hath fired him with lust: the devil knows that a fit object is half a victory. At the first sight he is inflamed, and (which is strange) caught with her love before he saw her face. Not examining whether she was fair or foul, sick or sound, friend or enemy, it was enough that she was a woman. The presence of the Adulteress does not restrain him; so had lust besotted him, that he could endure a witness. She was cunning, and would not trust him without a pawn: a pledge he leaves her, his staff and signet. Oh that the filthy affection should thus transport a son of Jacob! But in him let us see the easiest fruits of it, fear and shame. Fear: he came to pay the hire of his lust, and she was gone: now he fears, lest his own signet should seal his reproach, and to be beaten with his own staff. Shame; purposing, if these evidences were produced, not to own them, and wishing that no other might know them. When the fact appears, and the author cannot lie hid, with what shame, yea horror, must he look upon Tamar's two sons, the monuments of his filthiness! It must needs cut off his soul to hear them call him sire and grandsire, and Tamar both mother and sister. Shame is the surest and easiest wages of this sin, there is more belongs to it.

He that hath thus fallen, must go to the price of many a tear; it must cost him deep sighs, and the heavy groans of a broken heart. It is not a light and transient sorrow that can do it: the gates of heaven are shut, and every breath of a *misericorde* will not open them. Their state is dangerous, and there is but one way to help them; to repent what they have done, and never more to do what they have repented. If we have admitted such a prostitution of our bodies, let us obtain by faithful penitence such a restitution of our honours. So shall the gates of bliss be opened again to us; for God esteems not men as they have been, but as they are.

"Vexed." The last point is Lot's case: he did burn in zeal, as Sodom did in lust: there was fire in them both; his, a holy fire from the altar of God; theirs, an unnatural fire blown into their veins by the bellows of hell.

"Vexed." This was no ordinary disturbance, nor

common displeasure; but oppressed, excruciated, tormented; his senses, his very soul, exceedingly afflicted. He was not an idle looker-on, as if he minded not what they did; nor in a timorous observation of the proverb, Of little meddling comes great rest; but knowing it to be the cause of God, his heart was perplexed about it. He durst as freely expostulate, as they durst act; and took as full liberty of reproving, as they took licentiousness of offending. He was not vexed with them, but with their deeds: we are to hate none for their creation, but perverting the end of their creation. Let us love God's image, not the filthy defacement of it: peace with the person, not with the conditions.

"Vexed." That which is here passive, is in the next verse active, he "vexed his righteous soul." He vexed his own soul: who bade him stay there to be vexed? He vexed himself, when he might have quitted himself. Yet because he was vexed, he is delivered. He was but a guest to Sodom, an host to the angels: he liked well of their situation, not of their conversation, and found more bitterness in the one than sweetness in the other. Yet because he avoided their sins, he escaped their judgments. And surely they were both miraculous; for his declining their sins was no less a wonder than his deliverance from their flames. As the latter was God's gracious prevention, so the former was his preventent grace; and he was not more bound to bless God for saving his body from the fire, than for saving his soul from their sin.

The nature and quality of his vexation I refer to the next verse. Conclude we with observing and admiring a wonder: a man environed with fire, and not burning; floating on the sea, and not drowning; dealing with dunghills, and not defiled; condemned and honoured, made rich by being impoverished. If I should propound a riddle; What is the highest and the lowest, the fairest and the foulest, the strongest and the weakest, the richest and the poorest, the happiest and unhappiest, the safest and most in danger of any thing in the world? I durst not promise with Samson, new suits of apparel to all that can expound it. It is a true Lot, a good Christian.

He is the lowest of the world; "Out of the depths have I cried," Psal. cxxx. 1: so low a hedge that every son of fortune treads him down. Yet the highest, for his "conversation is in heaven," Phil. iii. 20: let his feet stand upon earth, his head is in heaven.

He is the lowest in appearance to the world: for so disguised with weeping, watching, fasting, that he seems like "a bottle dried in the smoke," Psal. cxix. 83; so loaden with reproaches, that he looks black as if he had "lien among the pots," Psal. lxxviii. 13. There is no form, no beauty nor comeliness desirable in him, Isa. liii. 2. Yet the fairest; black, but comely; fairer than all the sons of nature; the delight of angels, the love of God. "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee," Cant. iv. 7. Thus the face of Stephen appeared like an angel. Acts vi. 15: the sun, the heavens, the firmament of refulgent stars, are not comparable.

He is the weakest, a lamb among wolves, afflicted on this side, oppressed on that; a reed that bows at every gust; Elijah under a juniper-tree, weary of his life; Job on the rack, broken with sores and sorrows. Yet the strongest, being armed with faith, hope, and love, three invincible forces: faith being able to remove mountains, to overcome the world; hope an immovable anchor, able to stay the vessel in the greatest storms; love strong as death, undertaking death in the terriblest form, that it may come to Christ. Thus Elijah durst face a king, and tell him, Thou troublest Israel, 1 Kings xviii. 18. Hero-

dian writes of Plantianus, the emperor Severus' favourite, that he had such a terror in his countenance, men durst not look him in the face. Therefore when he went abroad, he had his gentlemen-ushers before him, to give warning, that men might cast their eyes to the earth at his coming. It is said of St. Benediet, that he had such a power of terror in his eye, that casting but a look upon Totilas, that warlike king of the Goths, a furious and audacious man, he made him tremble. Such a majesty hath resulted from the face of divers martyrs, that the tormentors were more afraid of them than they of their tormentors. They are built upon such a foundation, that all the ordinance of hell can never batter them.

He is the poorest, not only in regard of superfluities, but even of necessities. Moses must not think scorn to keep sheep, nor David to beg bread of Nabal, nor Elijah to be fed with ravens, nor Lazarus to be glad of crumbs, nor the apostles for pure hunger to pluck the ears of corn, nor Peter to confess, "Silver and gold have I none," nor a penny in his purse; nor Christ himself to be so near driven as to look for figs from a tree in the way, and miss his purpose. Yet still the richest; without meat, not without Christ: whatsoever he wanteth, he wants not content. And it is no paradox, that a man may be rich with little, and poor with much. Content is the poor man's riches, and desire is the rich man's poverty. There is no want where is no wantonness.

He is the unhappiest, for his hands are tied from revenge, his eyes muffled that he must not look upon vanity, his lips sealed that he may not return rebuke for rebuke. He lives in the worldling's paradise, as the poets feigned of Tantalus; up to the chin in pleasures, and is not suffered to taste them. Touch not, taste not, handle not; what a miserable life is this! Yet is he the happiest; the peace of conscience being his everlasting Christmas; a joy he hath which no man can take from him. The African king in Charles the Great's court, offering to be baptized, observed divers poor men sitting on the ground, and served in mean manner, demanded what they were; it was answered him, that they were the servants of Christ. Whereupon he replied, If the king keep his servants so rich, and Christ's servants so poor, I will be no servant of Christ's. They that thus look on the outside of Christians, find small glory to please the eye of sensual reason: it is the inner man that is fair, and rich, and blessed, adorned with more jewels than the eye of the world ever saw, or the treasure of the world itself is worth.

He is in continual danger, his soul being the butt for all Satan's darts, his body the anvil for the world's afflictions, he runs through many deaths, and is killed all the day long. Thus was Christ himself served; *Nec recessit a servo, quod processit in Domino*. When the Jews offered Jesus gall and vinegar, he tasted it but would not drink; he left the rest for his church, and they must pledge him. Yet still he is safe, under the shadow of God's wings; and when the whole world floats on the waters, Noah shall sit dry in his cabin. Let Sodom be all on a flame, not a hair of Lot's head shall be singed. All the assaults of flesh and blood against them, is but as if glass should encounter adamant. The great King takes them into his protection, and woe unto all those that attempt their ruin!

This is the Christian's estate: now every man would be partaker of the height, not the baseness, of the beauty, not deformity, of the strength, not infirmity, of the riches, not poverty, of the happiness, not infelicity, of the safety, not the danger, that waits upon religion. But the comforts of Jesus be not for them that disclaim his sorrows. Joseph had fair

possessions in the land of Egypt, but he bequeathed none of these to his children, because they were to have Canaan. So God allows his children but little here, because he means to give them heaven hereafter. Lord, whatsoever requisites be wanting, or troubles abounding, all our journey, let our latter end be peace.

VERSE 8.

For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds.

It is an apparent argument of an ungracious man, that he can with unmoved patience bear the dishonours of God. Hot iron cannot choose but hiss when cold water is poured upon it; nor a good man but vex at open wickedness. I know there be some will sooner fight in their mistress's quarrel, than in their Maker's; fiery against their own disgraces, cool and remiss in the cause of Christ, as if it were quite unconcerning them. There is no love without zeal, as there can be no heat without fire. "Love is strong as death, jealousy cruel as the grave," Cant. viii. 6. Take death at the strongest, Christ's love to us was stronger; but if we abuse it, that love grows jealous, and that jealousy grows cruel, cruel as the grave. Our love to him must have the same nature, though it fail of the same measure; that which dishonours him, must vex our souls. Entire love will not suffer itself to be adulterated. No oil nor frankincense might come into the jealousy offering, because it brings iniquity to remembrance, Numb. v. 15. The ground of jealousy is love tending unto hate upon a just suspicion of a just cause: there is no competition with Christ to be admitted. Lot loved God, therefore was zealous of his glory; zealous, therefore reproved his offenders; reproving, he found no amendment, therefore vexed his own soul. Let him be righteous; if he had not dwelt among them there had been no vexation; let him dwell among them; if he had not been righteous, no trouble; let him be righteous, and dwell among them; if they had not been wicked, no offence. Be he righteous, and among them, and they wicked, yet if he had not seen and heard their evil deeds, yet he had been free. Yea, grant all these sinister concurrences, if their sins had been few and not frequent, his vexation had been less. But lay all these together; a good man, among the ungodly, seeing their works, and the unlawfulness of them, and the continuance of that unlawfulness; he must needs be vexed, and that vexation be of the same extent and duration as was the cause, their ungodliness, from day to day.

The general parts of the text are two; the incentives or kindlers, and the fire itself. The incentives are set down by four degrees. 1. Causal or radical, He being righteous. 2. Occasional, Dwelling among them. 3. Objectual, Their unlawful deeds. 4. Organical or instrumental, In seeing and hearing. For the fire itself consider, 1. The property, It is fervent against unrighteousness. 2. The sincerity, It works inwardly, moves the soul. 3. The rarity, But one among thousands thus vexed. 4. The constancy, From day to day. It is not cool, not counterfeit, not common, not mutable.

1. He being "righteous." As in natural things, like things are not opposed by like things, fire fights not against fire, but against water; so in moral things, the innocent are not opposed by the innocent,

one good man doth not persecute another. If either the Sodomites had been righteous with Lot, or Lot unrighteous with them, here had been no contention. Wolf and wolf can agree, lamb and lamb fall not out; but who can reconcile the wolf to the lamb? That good man who was eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame, yet brake the teeth of the ungodly, Job xxix.

17. Faith is the ground of zeal: faith is from Christ, love from faith, zeal from love; nor can faith be discerned without love, nor love without zeal. Faith is first, as the foundation before the building, the evidence before the possession, Heb. xi. 1. That which made Lot righteous in Christ, made him zealous for Christ. When the weather is hot, every man opens his mouth; when it is cold, he shuts it, till his teeth chatter again. Where is righteousness, there is heat; where is heat, men will quest and open: "I believed, therefore have I spoken," Psal. cxvi. 10. But where is no heat, there is an imperfect sound, a chattering of the teeth, as if men were afraid to speak.

Righteousness, which is the life of the soul, is discerned as the life of the body, by motion, heat, and feeling. If the dishonours of God do not run like goads and poniards to our heart, we are all dead flesh; if his glory do not lift us up with joy, there is no heat in us. Antigonus' son being grievously sick, and none perceiving the cause; when his mother-in-law entered the chamber, his eyes began to quicken, his blood to rise, and pulse to beat extraordinarily; whereby the physicians understood the cause to be the unnatural love of his mother. As in that vicious love, so in true holy affection to God, the very mention of his name will make our pulse beat, our hearts uncontainable of joy or sorrow; our love cannot be suppressed. Good blood will never belie itself; well-born children are touched to the quick with the injuries of their parents: not thus to be moved, is to confess ourselves bastards. This point will fall heavy on some, when it comes to be concluded, that where is no zeal, there can be no righteousness.

2. "Dwelling among them." One reason why God suffers evil men, is to try the good. Virtue is more glorious being set off with vice. Beauty were less admirable if there were no deformity. Some Canaanites are reserved to make trial of Israel's constancy. There must be sects, that the approved may be known, 1 Cor. xi. 19. They are the best lilies that thrive amongst thorns. To be temperate in islands, sober among Germans, chaste in Sodom; this is the praise. Divers have stood with filthy shoes on holy ground; but to stand on filthy ground with holy shoes, here is proof. It is peculiar to heaven, to have never a bad neighbour: only that immortal kingdom hath the privilege of never being tempted. This world is for trial, that to come, for reward. The solitary man knows not himself; he thinks himself good, because he hath no means to be bad. Let him refrain sin, yet it is *laus parva, quia laus parvi*. (Bern.) He that overcomes the solicitation to evil, holds his virtue in assurance. If I can be patient among my offensive neighbours, chaste among the lascivious, sober among epicures, modest among impudent railers, just among defrauders, faithful to the church among the common and exemplary spoilers of it; this argument is of force. The soldier can keep his station till he be assaulted. When temptation oppresseth, and lust rebelleth, as when a man's horse curvets, then let him sit fast. When blustering storms of persecution shall make a man gird the garment of his religion closer about him, this approves him. True zeal, like fire in a frost, is the hotter for opposition.

Among them that hate righteousness, and him for it; that say of good living, as Festus did of great

learning, It makes a man mad, Acts xxvi. 24. They cannot know another to be sober, that are mad themselves. As old men answer the young, You think us fools, but we know you are not wise; so answer we these, You think us mad that are so hot against sins, but we know you mad that are so cold for your souls. Achish and his courtiers thought David mad, yet he was the wisest man among them. It is not a Niodeemus that the world takes notice of, but a Peter; Thou wert with him in Galilee; they will put him to it.

Among them that thought Lot to be the only man that molested them. Abiab can charge Elijah with this, and Tertullus Paul, Acts xxiv. 5. The mutinies and uproars of the world were fathered upon the Christians in the primitive times; as the popish traitors decreed to blow up a state, and then to lay it upon the puritans in these latter days. There can be no cross or judgment in Sodom, but Lot is the man that brings it. Yet in all sense he that does but defend himself, is not the author of strife. Though the true man strike some blows, yet the thief is he that begins the fray.

Among them that thought Lot a proud and imperious fellow; as Eliab censured David, I know the pride of thy heart, 1 Sam. xvii. 28. There is no goodness in man, but such will ascribe it to vain-glory. This opinion of others is derived from a consciousness of themselves; that would not do one good deed, but to be highly applauded for it. Therefore would not the rich man perhaps help Lazarus, because he feared that as Lazarus died, so his good turn should die with him. Nor the Levite succour the wounded man, Luke x. 32, because it was not in popular view. The Pharisees did all to be seen; now that distressed man was out of the way, nobody to look on.

Among them that thought him a fool for his labour. Tell us of our facts, as if they were faults? Do not all thus? You only against it? Alas, it is but one doctor's opinion. That which the world calls policy, eats up true wisdom: their discretion and moderate staidness devours all true honesty. O say they, "Be not righteous over-much," Eccl. vii. 16. But of that extremity there is in these times no fear, it is now short shooting that loseth the game. You have scarce one that exceeds, for ten thousand that fault in the defect: and it is better to have our broth boil over, than be raw; rather go in furs than naked. Liberality fears and flees covetousness, rather than prodigality; truth is more suspicious of falsehood, than of vain-glory; zeal is more cautious of coldness, than of heat; is more afraid lest the fire should go out, than endanger the chimney.

Among them that thought him exorbitant, because he walked not after their rule, 1 Pet. iv. 4. Often do we hear remiss professors strive to choke all forward holiness, by commending the golden mean: a cunning discouragement, the devil's sophistry! Whereas the mean of virtue is betwixt two kinds, not betwixt two degrees. It is a mean grace that loves a mean degree of grace. Yet this is the staff with which the world beats all that be better than themselves. What, will you be singular, walk alone? But were not the apostles singular in their walking, "a spectacle to the world?" 1 Cor. iv. 9. Did not Christ call for this singularity? What singular thing do ye? Matt. v. 47. You that are God's peculiar people, will ye do no peculiar thing? Ye that are separate from the world, will you keep the world's road? Shall Lot leave his righteousness, for such an imputation of singularity? Must the name of a puritan dishearten us from the service of God? St. Paul said in his apology, "After the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers," Acts xxiv. 14; and

by that which profane ones call puritanism, which is indeed zealous devotion, so let my heart desire to serve Jesus Christ.

Among them that hated the truth, and loved the prophecy of wine and strong drink, Micah ii. 11. Such a man may live in quiet: if Lot had spoke peace to Sodom, and not the truth, they had brooked him well enough. It is truth that breeds hatred among bad neighbours. "Nevertheless I tell you the truth," John xvi. 7; though it breed sorrow, or anger, or malice in your hearts, yet I tell you the truth. I know that in these days to speak the truth, is to be censured of indiscretion; the world thinks us children or fools to hazard ourselves by speaking the truth. Yet we will not square our positions to their dispositions, nor forbear to tell what they are loth to hear. Indeed, you will hear the truth, if there be no nevertheless; if it concern you not. But saith Christ, better lose your favours than your souls; and it is better for us to discharge our consciences from a burden of blood. They that flatter you, are your deadliest enemies; that either in furthering sin, or in smothering sin, spill your dearest lives.

Among these bad men dwelt this good Lot, and still he was righteous. Neither their exemplary life, nor popular exposition, nor powerful terrors, could turn his feet out of the paths of goodness. It is likely, they endeavoured to win him to them, either by rewards or menaces. But as when Capellus tempted Fabricius, the first day with an elephant, so huge and monstrous a beast as before he had not seen; the next day with money and promises of honour; he answered, I fear not thy force, and I am too wise for thy fraud: so Lot could be corrupted with neither. But now, if he could be holy among wicked, a saint among sinners, how is it that we are evil among the good, sinners among saints? He could be hot when all the rest were cold, and shall we be cold when many are hot? He was righteous in the midst of irreligion, we in the midst of true religion are unrighteous. We have no interdictions of piety; may be some snuffers to qualify our zeal, and make it burn brighter; no extinguishers to put it out. It is not forbidden us to serve God with all our heart, with all our mind. If there be some lazy professors, divert we our eyes from them to the gracious examples of righteousness. Complain we of trouble? There is no age that always suffered good men to live in quiet. As St. Augustine said of persecution; *Inventus est ignis, qui unum dilet, alterum damificet, utrumque probet*. Were we frighted with the Spanish Inquisition, wearied with the Turkish imposition, somewhat might be pleaded for our remissness. But he is a bad swimmer that cannot move on with the current. The gospel calls us, grace invites us, good examples help us; what is now left to excuse us, if we be not righteous?

"Their unlawful deeds." Sin is the object or matter of a saint's vexation. It is the attribute which God gives himself, I am a jealous God, Exod. xxxiv. 14. Now when we ascribe any human affections to God, we must separate them from all imperfections whatsoever. A man may be jealous not out of love, or without just cause; God cannot be so. The ground of his jealousy is love; the cause of his jealousy, our unfaithfulness to him. We cannot be jealous of God, because his love is infinite, and we need fear no partners. Paul wished this happiness to all his hearers, Acts xxvi. 29. God's love hath room enough, beyond all measure and comprehension, nor is it diminished by being communicated. How many millions soever the Lord loves, he loves thee and me never the less. But man's love to God is so pent and narrow, and the bed of affection so

little; that if we admit a partner, he hath cause to be jealous; another's gain is his loss. There is an obligation of love between the husband and the wife; when he conceives likelihood of any breach, he grows jealous. Love is the ground, and suspicion the cause. If no love, no suspicion; if no suspicion, no jealousy. This is man's torment and rack; nor can the strongest bars enclosing her ease his pangs. Knowledge is the only cure of jealousy; there is more misery in doubting her false, than in proving her so. The remedy of known evils is patience; but for doubted evils there is no physic. This spark once kindled will never die, nor can time, that dull and tardy physician, help it; nor can the strictest observance satisfy it. This is the jealous man's misery: he may prove his wife false, he can never prove her true. The anguish of this affliction is more or less according to his affection.

Thus hath the soul of man plighted her faith to God, and by virtue of that contract is called his spouse. If she forsake his holy bed, and run after other lovers, he grows jealous; not by way of suspicion or doubt, because he knows the heart and most secret motions; but because his honour shall not be given to another. Thus he is jealous over Jerusalem, Zech. i. 14; and if she prostitute her betrothed love, he disclaims her for his wife, Hos. ii. 2; and when he quite gives her over, and ceaseth to be a husband, then he will no more be jealous, Ezck. xvi. 42, as a man divorceth himself from a wanton wife. As the primary nature of God is to be loving, so it is the nature of that love on just cause to be jealous, and the nature of that jealousy to be cruel, cruel as the grave, Cant. viii. 6: if before the grave swallow us, repentance do not help us. God is so jealous in the decalogue, that he will not set any creature in the same table of the law with himself. There shall stand neither father nor mother, king nor Cæsar, saint nor angel, in the same table with God. If we take our lusts into a resolute competition with him, his jealousy will burn like fire against us, Zeph. i. 18; Nah. i. 2.

Now that which grieveth God, should also vex us: this hath tried the zeal of the saints. So was Moses vexed; the idolatry of man made him break the tables of God, Exod. xxxii. 19. So Elijah; he durst confront a king, and reprove an idolatrous kingdom, 1 Kings xix. 14. Samuel hews Agag in pieces. Hezekiah rends his clothes at blasphemy. Mattathias sacrifices the sacrificer on his own superstitious altar, 1 Mac. ii. 24. It grieved Paul's heart at Athens, to see the town so given to idolatry. Phinehas' wife heard at once of her father-in-law's death, of her husband's, with many others; yet did not all this so afflict her as that the ark was taken by infidels. It is of this alone she speaks dying: "The glory is departed from Israel; for the ark of God is taken," 1 Sam. iv. 22. We are no Lots, if not vexed with the world's unlawful deeds. All Israel saw the boldness of Zimri, in bringing a whore so palpably to his tent, Numb. xxv.; but their hearts were so full of grief, and their eyes of tears, for their bleeding brethren, that they had no room for indignation. Phinehas looked on too, but with other affections. Zimri seemed to him as one that defied the Lord, and flouted the people's sorrow; that while they were wringing their hands, and beating their breasts, he would be dallying with his mistress. His heart boils with a desire of holy revenge; his hand was used to a censer, but now it shall manage a javelin; and with one stroke he joins those two bodies in their death, which were joined in their sin; and in the heat and height of their lust, makes a new way for their souls to their own place. As they were

more beasts than any that ever he sacrificed, so their slaughter was the best sacrifice that ever he offered. He doth not stand casting of doubts: Who am I to do this? I am a priest, my office is all for peace and mercy: it is for me to sacrifice for the people, not to sacrifice any of the people: my place is to appease God's anger against them, not to revenge God's anger upon them; to desire the conversion, not to work the confusion of a sinner. Is not one a prince in Israel, the other a princess of Midian, and can the death of two such persons be so put up? Or if it be safe and fit, why doth my uncle Moses rather shed his own tears, than their blood? I will even be sorry with the rest, and let them revenge whom it concerneth. No, this holy fire of zeal hath quite consumed all the dross of such deliberation; he holds this execution to be both his duty and his glory. How doth God love this heat in all the carriages of his servants! and if it ever do transport them too far, yet he will rather pardon erring fervency, than lukewarm indifferency. And to show that it pleased him, he presently frees Israel from the plague, and entails the priesthood to Israel and his posterity for it.

But this holy disposition is not to be found in many. Will you know what vexeth us? We think ourselves wronged, and know not how to be revenged; this vexeth us. If God do not answer us with rain or fair weather, as we would have it; this vexeth us. The better estate of our neighbour, as if another's preferment were our ruin; the crossing of our unnatural desires, if we cannot have our own wills; the interdiction of our lusts by a superior law: these things vex us. Men would have the law according to their lives, not their lives according to the law. (Sen.) If the usurer's interest comes not in the same pace that his covetous heart prompts it, this vexeth him. To be told that sacrilege is a sin, that our contentions be carnal, that while we maintain strife with our brethren we have no peace with God; this vexeth us. Private inconveniences take up our vexation, not God's loss. But if you will be angry without sin, be angry at sin; not with your brother, but with his and your own faults. When you see God's name dishonoured, his service profaned, his good Spirit resisted, and the church or family that is named in heaven and earth wounded; let this vex you. Be vexed at them that are vexed at God himself on every slight occasion; that if their mouths be not filled with laughter, and their bellies with delicacies, are ready to break forth into terms of unprofitableness. What profit is there in serving of God? Mal. iii. 14. But let the zeal of Lot be a coal to kindle this dead age; so may this text be as profitable, as it is convenient for these times. If those angels were sent again to survey the earth, what other news or observation of their travel would they return, but that "all the earth sitteth still, and is at rest," Zech. i. 11; all are either cold or but lukewarm. Not only those frozen in paganism out of the church's pale, but even the most within the tropics of Christianity have just so much and so little heat, as to think they have enough and need no more. This end of the world being like the period of David's life, so old, so cold, that no clothes were enough to keep heat in him. Our spiritual state and condition is like our country's site and position, between the torrid and frigid zones, neither hot nor cold. If Lot's example may but warn us, and warm us, to be inflamed with the love of God and hatred of sin, where my labour ends, your comfort shall begin, and the fruit of both continue for ever.

4. "In seeing and hearing." The eye and ear are those special doors, that let into the heart its comfort or torment. We are not sensible either of the

mischiefs or pleasures which we neither hear nor see. Sodom might have continued sinful without Lot's disturbance, if their sin had not been exposed to his sight and sense. His soul had been quiet enough within him, if suspicion had not begot mistrust, nor experience a manifest proof of God's dishonour. His eyes and ears were the unwilling witnesses of their impiety, which he neither would see, nor yet could look off. No man delights to look upon ulcers, unless from a desire of healing them; nor to hear the barking of dogs, howling of wolves, and screechings of owls; such is the noise of oaths and blasphemies; but with necessity and detestation. There are many things which a good ear would not hear; as his servant cursing him, Eccl. vii. 21: nor a good eye look upon: says Ilagar of her child, "Let me not see the death of the child," Gen. xxi. 16. As the blind bishop answered Julian, taxing Christ of impotency, that he could not open the eyes of his servant; I am glad that I want eyes to see thee, the monster of men. Such was Lot's unhappiness, that he must see and hear their wickedness. From this instrumental means of his vexation we may observe divers things.

1. The sight of sin makes a man either sad or guilty; if we see it, and be not sorrowful, we are sinful. If Lot had not now been vexed at them, God had been vexed at him: on such a cause not to be angry, had angered Heaven. Eli heard of his sons' impiety, doubtless, with grief enough, but not with anger enough; therefore he is punished with hearing of their destruction, that was too remiss in hearing of their transgression. It is unhappy to make another's sin become our own, by a fond indulgence: he that sees evil without dislike, does not see it without fault. They are not true-hearted that stand by without drawing their weapons against the notorious oppugner of holiness. Meroz is cursed by the angel, because they came not forth to help the Lord in the day of battle, Judg. v. 23. They saw the armies and heard the drums of those proud adversaries, gave the looking on, took part with neither: they fought not against God, yet because they did not fight for God, they are cursed.

Such are dough-baked Christians, too clammy for the stomach of God; whom he hath borne long, yet but wamblingly. Shall we hear blasphemy, see uncleanness, and hold our peace? will the Lord digest us in such a temper? While the fields and tap-houses beguile the temples, curses are offered up instead of prayers, vain expenses for alms, and we see this, are not our souls grieved? While men pray as if they were asleep, and hear sermons as dead men do their funerals; it would make a man sick to see God thus worshipped. But alas, how do men rage at those that find fault with others, or endeavour to be good themselves! Let a sparkle of fervent devotion break out in a family, all the neighbours are up in clamours; as when the bells ring disorderly, every man is ready with his bucket to quench the fire. Disgraced they must be for puritans, but only by Laodiceans. Indifference strives to dash zeal out of countenance. But if we hear and see evil, and dare not reprove it, cannot amend it, yet let us grieve for it, that we be not guilty of it.

2. The most offensive sins are such as be objected to sight and hearing. There is a sin that is only mad within-doors, without admitting any witness but the inevitable ones, God and their own conscience. But sins that are secret to man, we leave to Him to whom all things are open; they be only known evils that vex the righteous. When all Israel rings of the lewdness of Eli's sons, it is high time for their father to be grieved. Spiritual and internal sins may be more culpable, corporeal and out-

ward be more infamous. Take an instance: while God was angry, all Israel grieved, the heads hanged, the people plagued, a prince dares brave God and them all in that sin, which he saw so grievously punished before his eyes. Here was fornication, an odious crime; and that of an Israelite, whose name imports holiness; and that of a virtuous prince, whose actions are so many rules to others; and that with a Midianite woman, with whom it had been unlawful for him to marry; this in the face of Moses governing, of all Israel mourning, even while they were yet bleeding and weeping for the same offence; how monstrous was this impudence! But because he was a prince he thought he might sin by privilege; Who dares control me? His nobleness sets him above the reach of justice. It is easy for the greatness of authority to bear out the smallness of piety. Commonly the sins of the mighty are mighty sins; therefore their destruction is made answerable to their presumption, and their vengeance so much the greater as was their conceit of impunity.

In this example we read the sins of the world; blasphemy is audible, drunkenness visible, oppression sensible; we hear them, see them, feel them; there is no gall of zeal in our souls if we be not vexed. How can we not be ashamed of them, that are not ashamed of themselves! A wicked man thinks he may live out of danger of the law, if either he have a great man to his friend, or have not a great man to his enemy. Pride would be out of request at home, if notice were not taken of it abroad. While sin hides itself in corners, there is some hope: if there be shame, there is possibility of grace. But when it dares once look upon the sun, send challenges to authority, defy heaven and earth, the ulcer is desperate, the member fitter to be cut off than lanced.

3. He did see and not see, hear and not hear. Connivance at rank impiety is bad in all men, intolerable in some; such are the ministers of either gospel or justice. For preachers, if they wink, the wolf may prey on the lamb: cold preachers make bold sinners. But we have cause to tremble when we consider, that God will in some sort reckon with us for the religion of our people. Let there be fire in our lips to consume the dross of vices that are fallen into the sink of our times. When the whole city is secure, it is our parts to mourn for their abominations, Ezek. ix. 4. The evils, the devils, of these days will not out but by frequent preaching and fervent praying. Shall we be mutes in the midst of so many raging consonants? not as loud for God, as they for Baal, for antichrist? We see wickedness, we hear it: O let us pray it down, let us preach it down, outface it, outlive it. Let us be within and without preachers: the weights of the sanctuary by the law, were to be double to those of common use. How gracious be their feet, not only their lips, that bring the gospel! Isa. lii. 7; because their feet must walk in the way which they prescribe. It is good life that must accompany doctrine, as lightning doth thunder. Fire in the preaching does well, but water in the preacher to quench it by example does ill. Infirmities are in all, but rank and resolute sins become not those that find fault with the like in others. In all respects, and by all means, let us make it appear, that God's glory is our only scope; therefore we dare not but rebuke sin, as men preferring the winning of souls before the winning of the world.

Connivance is yet worse in magistrates: we can but reprove it, they must correct it; and open wickedness is too stubborn to be chidden out of countenance; it is well, if sharp whipping can reform

No scarlet robe so well becomes a magistrate, as one made of zeal. Be wise, ye judges, Psal. ii. 10; yea, also, be just, ye judges: some are so wise that they dare not be just; nor punish less offenders, for fear lest great offenders should punish them. I know there is a wisdom required to distinguish of offences; and true Christianity takes no delight in blood. If magistrates were only to kill, the devil might have been put in sole commissioner. It is a breach of justice not to proportion the punishment to the crime; for theft, rapine, adultery, sacrilege, to say no more, with Eli, but, Why do ye so? 1 Sam. ii. 23. This is true connivance; to shave the head that deserves cutting off. A weak purgation doth but stir the proud and tough humours, and anger them, not drive them out. To whip one for murder, or to burn treason in the hand, or to lay a pecuniary mulct upon incest, is in effect to patronize evil, not to punish it. Bare reproofs do but encourage wickedness, and make it think itself as easy as is the censure: like vehement showers to a ripe field, which only lay the corn that is ready and worthy of a sickle.

Moses did put the idolaters to the sword, Exod. xxxii. 27: it was his mercy that made him thus cruel: all Israel might have cursed him if some had not smarted by him. Do not our magistrates hear and see idolatry, blasphemy, sacrilege, profanation of sabbaths? are there not laws for castigation? why then be these impieties suffered in the face of Heaven? Doth not want of execution make all laws like great bells without clappers? The magistrate's sword should not be like a child's dagger, rivetted in the sheath: a sword, saith Paul, not borne in vain. When they punish malefactors, they are said to consecrate their hands to God, Exod. xxxii. 29. The judge's countenance should be like a northern wind, Prov. xxv. 23, to dispel the fogs of sin. The kings of the earth are charged to render double to the bloody strumpet of Rome, Rev. xviii. 6: why then do her locusts increase and multiply? God grant our too much pity never undo ourselves. There are two special causes of this connivance in subordinate magistrates; cowardice, and covetousness.

Cowardice and timorousness is a quality too base for eminence. "Should such a man as I flee?" saith Nehemiah, chap. vi. 11. It is the want of courage that betrays the truth: while men are more careful of their own quiet, than of God's glory, Solomon's throne had carved lions, not foxes, apes, nor wolves; not yish, petulant, deceitful, or ravenous things, but majestic lions: no dastard fear is admitted to that seat. Magistrates have iron gauntlets, and need not fear children's blows. Moses seeing the sin, commands them to punish one another, and they do it. None replies. He is but one, we are many: we may more easily destroy him, than he can destroy our god. Aaron durst not resist us in making it, and shall he withstand our keeping it? Not so, God hath set such gracious characters of majesty in the brow of authority, that guiltiness dares not look it in the face. They stoop to the basest and bloodiest revenge he should impose. Sin is so conscious of itself, that when it is brought forth to trial, paleness and fear shall betray the guilt, and it will rather seek a hole, than a hold or fort. If the fore-horse in a team be shy, the carter fenceh his eyes on both sides, that he may lead the way fore-right without starting. Let the magistrate rectify his looks, and only bend them directly upon justice: a squint eye, cast upon persons, ill becomes him. Let him look no side-way, neither to the left hand for fear, nor to the right hand for favour.

Covetousness is a vice, which makes a man of plus transgress for a morsel of bread. It blinds

the eyes of the wise, much more of the foolish; of the righteous, much more of the covetous, Exod. xxiii. 8. When a malefactor shall give him so much gold for a, Say, you saw me not; then, as if he had the Jews' curse upon him, hearing he will not hear, and seeing he will not perceive, Matt. xiii. 14. "A gift is as a precious stone; whithersoever it turneth, it prospereth," Prov. xvii. 8: a prosperous stone, as if he meant the philosopher's stone, so much in quest and request; a charm more powerful than a witch's night-spell. The building of great houses, keeping great houses, or rather leaving great houses, and matching with great houses, are too frequent occasions of injustice. When a small office shall swell up a great estate, the world must needs swell bribery in it. The ambition to advance their own house, blows out their zeal to God's house. Job compares justice to a cloak or robe, chap. xxix. 14: a cloak it is; but the cloak that hangs, like our gallants', on one shoulder is quickly blown off: a robe it may be; but a loose one, some night-gown, that is soon put off. Many say, they discharge a good conscience, and so they do in some sense, they discharge it quite away. Justice is called a girdle, to girt all other virtues; but let them take heed lest it sag and bend to the side where the purse hangeth.

4. Sodom's sin was so much the more heinous to God, for offending man, and vexing the heart of his servant Lot, Iniquity then exceeds itself when it grows scandalous. "Woe unto the world because of offences!" Matt. xviii. 7: when it is not enough for men to be bad themselves, but to rail at the good. If there be one in a company that abhors impious language, they will blaspheme on purpose to vex him. They had better have sunk into the ocean, bound to a mill-stone, ver. 6. They whet their tongues like razors, not only to shave a man, but to cut his throat; but the Lord shall cut them out. Thus popelings hiss like serpents at their mother; curse like Shimei, not only by word of mouth, but in their railing and lying pamphlets. Many a good man may say, "I was the song of the drunkards," Psal. lxxix. 12. Ask the drinking-schools, if no such doctrine of hell be heard there. While we play upon David's harp to ease their griefs, they cast their spears and javelins to wound us. What Paul bids put from them, Eph. iv. 31, they delightfully call to them. Serpents, not only deaf to our charming, but turn their tails to sting us.

Nor let the great ones, whose authority should punish these abuses, think to escape; there be often pasquils to cast aspersions on their noble names. Whereas honour is a curious parcel, gilt, laid on with God's own finger, which no lewd tongue may scandalously lick off. For us, our contempt is not enough, unless it be chanted in rhyme. It is Joseph's party-coloured coat, composed of all kinds of graces and blessings, that procures their hatred. Such is the world's desperate policy, to vex them whom God hath blessed. But the Lord takes them into his special tuition; and if any shall hurt his faithful witnesses, there goes a fire out of their mouths to devour their enemies, Rev. xi. 5. "Destroy all them that afflict my soul," saith David, Psal. cxliii. 12: not that he would have it so, but because he knew it must be so. A man had better anger all the witches in the world, than one of the saints; for God often forbears offences against his own majesty, when he plagneth offences against his little ones.

5. He that would not be vexed with evils, let him turn his eyes and ears another way: be not fond to be grieved; no man is bound to seek his own vexation. Therefore *nunc te melioribus offer*; let us frequent their company, where in seeing and hearing we may reap

comfort. But how shall we know them? They have not such marks, as Du Bartas describes Cain's supposed horse; and he may deceive others, that cannot but deceive himself; yet the wise heart may discern them. By the innocency of their actions, sobriety of their speeches, disesteeming gain, coldness after pleasures, ardour in God's cause, you may distinguish them; as by sparks rising from a heap of embers, you may know there is fire within. So did the saints leave such repining tumults, and resort to places of sanctity and benediction. If we fall, here be they that shall raise us; if we stand, that shall confirm us; if we complain, that shall comfort us. Sorrows divided among many, are borne more easily: many small brooks meeting and concurring in one channel, will carry great vessels. By their reproofs we shall know ourselves: we are blind in our own imperfections, therefore we borrow the eyes of our friends, lending them ours; so we mutually direct and correct one another.

There are two helps to goodness; the praises of an enemy, and the reprehensions of a friend. He that shall take from friendship the liberty of a modest reproof, leaves nothing to distinguish it from flattery. To see men in troops till the courts of God; to hear the melodious harmony of his praises, the volleys of invocations sent up to his glorious name; to behold the charitable contributions to the poor, the holy emulations to exceed in good works, all like bees labouring to bring honey to the hive of the church; where wrongs are pardoned, good men encouraged, the gospel honoured, and the will of God obeyed: O here is an object worth our seeing and hearing, which instead of vexing, shall delight our righteous souls: lifting up our desires to heaven, where all good works are done with perfection; where we shall see and hear what we shall never be weary of seeing and hearing; see the glory of God, hear the melody of angels, the joy of all saints, and be both ravished in the pleasure, and confirmed in the eternity of them.

To conclude; we that have grieved others, let us now be grieved for it ourselves. It was an impotent and childish passion in Honorius, to be more grieved for a paltry hen, than for his imperial city. Yet if we can more lament the departure of a friend into bliss, than the departure of Christ from our own souls; and be more heartily troubled with a convulsion of body, than with dishonesting our conscience; if every trifling inconvenience of our own have power to rack us, when the dishonour of God cannot move us; wonder we no more at Honorius. We may howl for corn and wine, Hos. vii. 14, but in vain; our true tears and sobs should be for our sins. We are yet in the day, yet in the way; let us husband aright this blessed opportunity, the only certain hour of our visitation. O let us not play out the candle, and go to bed darkling; nor consume our lives in folly, and go to the grave in ignorance: like boys that slubber out their books before they have learned their lessons. That sudden conversion of one at the last, was never intended in God's purpose for our temptation. If every man should run on in sin, till he meet unexpected mercy, because one in sin obtained mercy; then every man might as well spur his beast till it speak, because Balaam's beast did once speak.

Could we be sure that God would call us at the last, yet how unsweet were our sacrifice, the bran and dregs of our dotage, the wine and flour being consumed in folly! whereas the good man is the older the better, as Christ kept the good wine till the last. If we repent when we cannot sin, all is necessary: they leave us, we leave not them; nothing is here voluntary. What equity is it to lay the heaviest

burden on the weakest beast; to force old age, too weak to bear itself, to carry the load of our repentance? When that strong man is grown stronger by prescription, our tabernacle rotten by corruption, when custom hath turned vice into nature, and sin is soaked into substance, our bones being full of the faults of our youth, we would then repent; we would if we could. But as he that never went to school will hardly, when he is put to it, read his neck-verse; so he that never learned the doctrine of repentance in his life, will find it very hard, if not impossible, at his death. Wine at first drawing is quick and lively; when it runs low, it grows dead. Let us give God our youth, that is livelihood, and pleasing to him; not when our life runs on the tilt, the lees and dregs of old age. Heaven is not unlike Ahasuerus' court, no mourners are suffered there; all joyful guests in their wedding garments: we must either mourn on earth, or mourn in hell. Thus we that have vexed the Spirit of God, and the eyes and ears of others by our sins, let us now please the Spirit of God by our repentance, and rejoice the eyes and ears of others by our amendment. Wretched men if we defer our repentance; wretched, if we repent not our deferring! Let us repent as soon as we can, yea, and repent for this, that we have repented no sooner. In a word, howsoever in indifferent things it be held safe to hear, and see, and say nothing; yet in gross and scandalous evils let us not be silent: so if we cannot mend others, yet, with Lot, we shall save our own souls in the great day of Christ.

"Vexed his righteous soul." I come from the kindlers to the fire itself. Zeal is a fervency of spirit, arising from a mixture of love and anger, say some. It is not a single affection; that were to confine it, rather than define it: there are more affections exercised in it than love. Nor yet is it a mixed affection; that were rather to compound it than comprehend it. It is not one affection, nor many, but a fervent heat of all; as varnish is no one colour, but that which polisheth all. It makes a man to love what he loves, excessively; to desire what he desires, passionately; to hate what he hates, deadly; his sorrows be not remiss, but bitter and racking; his joys not transient and overly, but ravishing; when he hopes, his eyes are dim with waiting; when he fears, all his bones feel a trembling and shivering. To be cold or lukewarm is not an affection, but a constitution: so zeal is no nature, but a temper; a spiritual heat wrought by the Holy Ghost, improving all sanctified affections for the glory of God. As the spirits are to the body, and wine to the spirits, and quickness to the wine, so is zeal to the soul, making it vigorous and strenuous in God's service, like a giant refreshed with wine, Psal. lxxviii. 65. Faith and zeal are the soul's two wings, whereby she is made resembling the angels; who are armed with wings, and called a flame of fire, for their burning and tying execution of God's behests. It is zeal that helps us to do what we pray, the will of God in earth as it is done in heaven. This zeal is the axis, the hinge, the life-blood that runs in every vein of the text; a burning fire in the heart of Lot, that gives him mettle to contest with God's enemies; and because he cannot amend them, he vexeth his own soul. His example teacheth us three observations of zeal; that it doth prove our righteousness, improve our righteousness, and honour our righteousnesses.

1. It is the argument of a righteous man, to be far from coolness in his Maker's service. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might," Eccl. ix. 10. Dost this become us in other things, and misbecome us in the worship of God? Shall a man eagerly follow his lusts, and not be violent for

the kingdom of heaven? The slothful hastens his own beggary in temporal things, much less shall he be rich in the graces of Christ. He that hath but a mean skill in the most excellent art, is never admired: a man had better never poetize, than only rhyme; never paint, than do no more but daub: as good no religion, as coldness in the best religion. Shall we, like those Jewish elders for the centurion, be instant for a friend, and cold for our heavenly Father? He is worthy of infinitely more love than we are able to give: all our brooks and springs of affection ought to run into this main: not one small channel be suffered another way. Let all reflect upon him, and nothing be respected out of him, of whom, for whom, and through whom, are all things.

How unbrookable is dulness in any work to a man of spirit! A heavy and sadness oration is insufferable to a quick hearer. We single out the forwardest deer in the herd, choose the liveliest colt in the drove: and think we the backwardest man fit enough for God? Will he that is all Spirit, be pleased with a leaden and drowsy service? He bids the giver, give cheerfully; the doer, do quickly. He forbade the Israelites to offer the firstling of an ass, Exod. xxxiv. 20: why so? doth God hate the ass? No, but for the quality of the creature: it being the hieroglyphic of slowness: to show that God cannot abide tardity in his business. It is lazy to go, we are bid to run the way of his commandments. As sails to the ship, and wind to the sails, so is fervency to righteousness. A soldier without courage, a horse without mettle, a creature without vivacity, such is a Christian without fervency.

2. It doth also improve righteousness; like the fire which came down from heaven upon the sacrifices, causing the sacrifices to ascend thither in acceptance. Righteousness hath no grace, but this fervency makes it more gracious. Repentance is one primary grace; yet if a man's sorrow be not fervent, it is like a hot summer shower, that makes the streets stink after it. Faith is a fundamental grace, should overcome the world; it will prove but a coward without fervency. Hope, the waiting-maid of glory, will soon fall asleep, if zeal keep not her eyes open. Love without fervency is cold and dull, and as it were enforced; and you cannot extort love. Relief of the poor is left-handed without this; no reward belongs to it. It is only fervent prayer that prevaileth, Jam. v. 16. Israel had never wrestled, or wrestling, not prevailed with God, but by fervency. It was no perfunctory devotion in Moses, that caused the Lord to answer, Let me alone. No vapours ascend up from the still, unless there be fire under it; nor prayers reach heaven without the heat of zeal. Fluminal baptism is but a cold proof of a man's Christendom, except this fluminal baptism of fire and zeal approve it, Matt. iii. 11. The worship of God without this, is like meat dressed by an uncleanly cook, it will not down with him. Let a table be furnished with the choicest viands the season affords, if they be boiled or roasted to the halves, or stand on the board till they be lukewarm, the guests will not be pleased with their cheer.

Fervency is that mark which God would have us set on all his services, that so they may be discerned to be his own: as the name of a famous tradesman doth sell his commodity, so the mark of zeal crowns all our works. If the colour be pale, the motion insensible, and the pulse leave beating, we give a man for dead; the moving of these argue life. They whose actions want heat and colour, that give unwillingly, that do justice constrainedly, appear dead. It is fervency that makes a difference of actions; we have all alike precious faith, the seeds of all graces

are in every convert: the inequality is in the degrees, the degrees are seen in the fervency. This makes men differ in grace, as stars do in glory, or as humane men in blood and dignity.

3. It honours righteousness: many thousands have been righteous, whose names are not on record; but of those that have been zealous in their piety, the Scripture takes special notice. Our apostle having spent one whole verse upon the commendation of Lot's fervency, in vexing himself for their sins, is not so content: but exegetically presseth it further, exemplifies it in particulars, showing that a righteous man is better than his neighbour. The righteous are the best of the world, the fervent are the best of the righteous. It is true of zeal, as of fire; the nature of it is to multiply, as one coal kindles a whole heap, and one torch lights many. Elisha calls Elijah, the horsemen and chariot of Israel, 2 Kings ii. 12; in the plural number, to show that he was one man worth a thousand; doing God more service than a Jesuit doth the pope, or a hypocrite Satan. It is not unlikely that David's zeal made him styled, A man after God's heart.

But do we thus honour our righteousness, that God should honour us? If at the same time come several news; one, some loss of our own estates; the other, of some apostatized Christians; which doth now most vex us? We hear at once God's name blasphemed, our own name traduced; which most stirs us? We perceive trade decaying in England, the religious professors of the gospel bleeding in France and Germany by the sword of a cruel enemy; which of these goes nearest to our hearts? When some unruly yokers were sporting in the field on the sabbath day, a churl fretted and stormed at it; an honest neighbour did also dislike it, that they so little regarded the sabbath: Tut, quoth the other, what tell you me of the sabbath? it vexeth me, that they have spoiled my corn. In carnal things we are very sensible; in spiritual, without feeling. Men carry swords, and stand on terms of reputation, on the least cross word they are ready to cut one another's throat; confessing their lives to be little worth, not so much as a word. Let God be dishonoured a thousand ways, they are as stupid as the stones they walk on; if they take any part, it is against their Maker. Be the honour of their own house questioned, their weapons fly like lightning: let God's house be pulled down to the ground, all their help is, to carry away the timber and the stones. They heat the furnace seven times hotter in their own cause than they do in God's cause.

But will the Lord multiply his favours upon such? Husbandmen cast their seed on the fruitfullest ground, which will return them the best harvest; and God his graces on such as will improve them. When judgment covers the earth, who shall then be delivered but the zealous Lots? God will preserve them, as men do their plate, while they let the baser stuff burn. For their fervency in goodness, was Enoch translated, and Elijah advanced in a triumphant chariot to heaven. However all believers have their places in blessedness, yet He that rewards all according to their works, observes that congruity in crowning his own graces, that the most zealous in this world shall be the most glorious in the world to come.

"Vexed his soul." As this was no common fervency, so no counterfeit; he little dissembles whose soul is moved. Zeal, like the king of Israel, hath many shadows, therefore we must distinguish it from all semblances. There be false fires, which while they usurp the honour of it, rather bring an ill name upon it. How common a thing is it to wound all

holiness under the name of puritan; whereof convinced, they think to make amends with, Cry you mercy, I meant the hypocrite: as the ruffian strikes a man first, and then excuses it, that he mistook him. Besides, it cannot be denied, but some have taken on them this order, greater than the knights of Malta, or of St. John of Jerusalem, that have disgraced it by an unworthy deportment of themselves. And some, after it hath served their turns, leave it; as the door, when it hath been oiled, leaves the creaking. For their sakes, the name of goodness is blasphemed all the day long, an ill report and suspicion raised upon them that serve God in truth: so for the deceiver's fault, the true man is beaten. There is in the body the native and radical heat, a principal instrument of life; and there be often anguish and distempered heats, that cause sickness and death.

There be some that vex themselves out of envy: Lot did not so. The poets feign this affection to be born of Styx and Pallas: they meant, inspired into men by Satan, and those envious devils. This is a black zeal, reckoned among the works of the flesh: see 1 Cor. iii. 3; Acts v. 17; Gal. v. 21; Jam. iii. 14; 1 Cor. xiii. 4; Rom. xiii. 13. These are not pure tapers, shining clear, and giving light; but brinish and ill-made candles, that sparkle and spet at others. Lot vexed himself because he saw men bad; these, because men are good: not that God's law is broken, but because others keep it better than themselves. It is the cursed zeal of these men, to malign the good zeal of all men.

There be that vex themselves out of choler; robustious men, transported with intemperate passions. We do not read that Lot was cruel and turbulent, vexing others; but he vexed himself. Severity should never be but by compulsion, and then not without compassion. Christianity abhors cruelty, and rather wisheth with that happy queen, that it knew not how to write a sentence of condemnation. It is for the malignant church to satiate herself with gore: nothing but fire and faggot is the voice of Rome. This is a volwish fervency, to feed on no diet but the warm blood of the lambs. Poor sheep are the subject of their tyranny: to the lion they are as submiss and fawning as dogs; over the rest they rage and domineer, like the sea in a storm. Whereas the thunder spares the yielding purse, and melts the resisting metal; descends not to the low cottages, but strikes the towering pinnacles. The sons of thunder dare check the highest and greatest; as John did Herod, and Jonah Nineveh. But these, like bustards in a fallow field, cannot raise themselves without a whirlwind; and then, like squibs in a throng, they fly out on all sides. This turbulent fervour is bred of two causes; the defect of love and humility, the excess of passion and imperiousness. As spirits, that being once conjured up, scorn to keep within their own circles. A wildfire, no hearth can hold it: it is mettle in a headstrong horse; and runs like the weights of a clock when the spring is broken.

There be that vex themselves without cause, and strike an Israelite instead of a Sodomite, their friends for their enemies. A contentious zeal: Sheba blows a trumpet, and suddenly they are up in arms. Alas! against whom do you fight, ye sons of debate? Brethren against their own mother's children? You are brethren, wrong not one another in the sight of your Father, in the arms of your mother. What way is this, but to advance the name of Mahomet in the temples of Jesus? But to come nearer home; how hath antichrist got ground by our dissensions! The unnatural coldness of some, and the preterna-

tural heat of others, hath set us together by the ears about trifles; while the common enemy breaks in; and we have poured those vials of indignation one upon another, which should all be spent upon the seat of the beast. While the devil can busy men about ceremonies and circumstances, he hopes they will let him alone about the principal, which is faith and manners. Alas! they are not worth our vexation; we have made him too much sport already. How doth St. Paul beat down their weapons! Rom. xiv. 4, 10. Let our zeal come in to part, not to partake the fray; all endeavouring and praying, that peace may be within the gates of Zion.

There be that vex themselves out of hypocrisy; they have other ends than God's glory. Ostentation leads them more than conscience: they will offer violence to nature, wring out a show of fervency; but all is on the stage. When such a furious Orlando hath done his part, he is quite another man. These be histrionical professors, that bounce at the gate as if they would break down the house; more violent than a Jesuit in the pulpit. There is nothing more liable to suspicion, than a fantastic affectation of zeal. A horse-courser's jade will bound, curvet, and show more tricks, than a horse of good mettle. "Come, see my zeal for the Lord," says Jehu, 2 Kings x. 16: his word was, "for the Lord;" but his project was for the kingdom. It is not a little art to hide art: let me tell them that love to be marked for the religious, by the white of their eyes, audible sighs, unfashionable garments, (as if this were, not to fashion themselves to the world, Rom. xii. 2,) by conspicuous places in the church, and ruffling their leaves for proofs; that the best zeal is to hide zeal. The preacher in the pulpit, or the painter in the windows, most proclaim their benevolences: this is far from Christ's rule. Comets make a greater blaze than fixed stars; reed, than substantial fuel. A fever breeds flushings, and is more seen in the face, than natural warmth at the heart.

There be that vex themselves out of ignorance; for there is a zeal not according to knowledge. Thus a devout papist vexeth himself, that his adored idols should be held as puppets, and that the pope's supremacy is curbed. The separatist vexeth himself, that all reformed churches receive not his innovation; that his sect-master should not be set at the stern to guide the whole vessel. Blind they are, and led by the blind; whose errors they first imitate, then inherit. Out of this ignorance, Satan hammers them like swords and pistols, to raise tragedies; till they become, like the Turk's janizaries, his best soldiers. Here is a pitiable fervency, like mettle in a blind horse, or a sting in an angry bee. If their eyes were opened, and their zeal directed, they might be special instruments of God's glory. The Stoics would pull out the gall and bowels, as if they had no use to serve virtue. Not so; they are bad masters, but good servants. Let anger remain still, but stand in awe of reason: as a soldier, that at the command of his captain takes up and lays down his weapons. There are three affections in the soul, like three minerals in the earth, salt, sulphur, and mercury. Wit is like salt; anger like sulphur; affability like mercury. These well tempered and allayed, are necessary and helpful, otherwise noxious. If wit whet itself to justify mischief, if anger be not qualified by reason, if affability turn to flattery, if all be not directed by knowledge, they run to danger. When the ship is under sail, with a fair way, and a forewind, then look to the steerage, keep the watch, have an eye to the compass and landmarks. The angels are said to have eyes to guide their way, as wings to maintain their flight. Turn Paul's zeal to

the right, and he did not so much hurt before as now he will do good.

Thus true Christian fervency hath divers counterfeits, which brings honest zeal into suspicion with the world. But shall men tax all the apostles because of one Judas? or admit no fire into their houses, because some sparks are unruly, and will not keep their own hearths? The very name of a counterfeit presupposeth an original: he that hears of a false Christ, takes it granted that there is a true. Slip-coin warrants us that there is of that stamp current money. The best drugs have their adulterates; and let not men that have been deceived by base colours, despise those that be dyed in grain. This we may safely conclude, that that virtue which even hypocrites put on to grace them, is, questionless, some rare and admirable thing. The true Lot, whose fervency is in the Spirit, not in show; in substance, not in circumstance; for God, not for himself; guided by the word, not by humour; tempered with charity, not driven with turbulence: such a man's praise is of God, though it be not of men; and through all contents on earth, it shall find a glorious reward in heaven. But as St. Paul said of his countrymen, "I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge," Rom. x. 2; so I must invert it of my countrymen, I bear them record, that they have a knowledge of God, but not according to zeal. Now the Lord rectify our zeal by our knowledge, and heat our knowledge by our zeal: that every man of a Philemon may be made a Zelotes, of a faithful servant on earth a glorious saint in heaven.

"That righteous man." This is the singularity of his zeal. One Lot will be righteous amongst and against all Sodom; and express this righteousness in the midst of their vicious customs. It hath been the lot of fervent holiness to be rare, as to be excellent; adherents may hearten, opposites must not dash zeal out of countenance. It is the common remora to all forwardness of profession, the small number of such; why should I attempt more than others? Few indeed there be that stand with all their might for religion, and few there be that shall be saved. He is unworthy of heaven, that will not live well without company, nor do good but by example, nor move a step before his neighbours. Cowards stand still looking who should go first; and they are mere jades that will not go except the way be led them. He was a brave and bold Israelite, that first did set his foot into the channel of the sea, leading the rest all along that moist and uncouth walk; he a soldier of courage, that first mounts the breach. Yea, resolute spirits will cast lots for the onset, and show willingness to desperate services.

The fear of trouble is a poor hinderance to godliness, where faith looks into the preserver and reward. The fearful stand in the fore-rank of them that are cast into the lake, Rev. xxi. 8; they have been most backward to goodness, therefore shall be foremost in vengeance. The timorous snail puts out her horns to feel for danger, and pulls them in again without cause. It is an ill modesty that suffers another to outgo him in the way to bliss; like some travelling jade, that hearing another horse come after him stands still till he overtakes him. True faith neither fears to do well, nor to reprove those that do ill. But there be few so good. Yet Lot was good alone, none to go before him, none to go with him, none to come after him, in all Sodom. No man can say so with us, for we see some zealous of God's glory. And if there be any, true emulation will single out the best patterns. How dearly is one content to buy a choice principal, or some rare copy!

He that intends to be a good artist, propounds to himself the most exquisite master and lesson. God limits us to no ordinary stint of holiness, but bids us aim at perfection; if we can, to go beyond all that have gone before us, yea to come (if possible) close up to Christ, I John iii. 3. From this point we may well gather three duties.

1. So near as we can to make choice of the good; for man naturally produceth works conformable to the objects before his eyes: as Jacob's sheep brought forth lambs according to the colour of the pill'd rods. A good example hath not so much power to make us good, as a bad one hath to make us evil. One man sick of the plague will sooner infect ten sound ones, than ten sound men can cure him. The flocks feeding among the bushes will leave some of their wool behind them: it is hard to live in the forest of impiety, and to reserve integrity. Sin upon earth is in its own soil, grows without planting, or any pains bestowed on it; much more when it is manured with applauses and practice. But virtue is like some precious seed fetched from Paradise, which will hardly grow here without special care and indulgence. It is not safe venturing among the wicked in confidence of our own strength; no more than it is to run among thieves, in hope that they will not rob us. How many breathe in this world, like men sleeping in a boat, carried down the stream even to their grave's end, without waking to think where they are! Therefore, if we may be our own disposers, seek we our lot among the righteous. The situation of Jericho may be good, but the waters are naught; he that goes from Jerusalem to Jericho, soon lights among thieves: to leave holy company for base commodity, is a quench-coal to righteousness. "Can one be warm alone?" Eccl. iv. 11. Can one single coal keep itself from going out? He that forsakes the orb of heat and fervour, the congregation of saints, must needs take cold.

2. If, like Lot, we be necessitated to the society of bad people, yet let us be good still; yea, therefore the more holy, because in the midst of a perverse generation, shining as lights in a dark place, Phil. ii. 15. The colder the climate, the more piercing the air, the more doth a man's natural heat fortify itself within: their palpable wickedness caused Lot inwardly to vex himself. Every visible act of vice should be our encouragement to virtue. The dissolute lavishness of many prodigals makes the wary man still the better husband. And it is the tradesman's policy, by engrossing a commodity in the plenty and neglect of it, to enrich himself when a year of dearth shall come. It made Erasmus more studious, by seeing the monks such illiterate dunces; as the good knife is made sharp by the dull whetstone. The Christian will be good and devout, like Daniel, though alone; though with the emperor's and the world's opposition; though he seem a prodigy among men, the pointing of all fingers. We "are for signs and for wonders in Israel," Isa. viii. 18. Signs and wonders, where? even in Israel. If it were a wonder to see a family serving God in Israel, what is it in Sodom! If a miracle in Jerusalem, how much more in Babylon! But as he that stands upon a hill, where the air is clear, and sees the fields round about beaten with tempests, the valleys full of fogs and mists, doth not seek to change his station for being alone, though he be remarkable to every eye; let our hearts be aloft, fixed on Christ; and albeit we are exposed to the world's derision, yet we shall bless God for our deliverance from the world's malediction.

3. Let us follow the examples of the best, not of the most. Who had not rather be righteous with

one singular Lot, than perish with all ungodly Sodom? Neither have we him alone, but even a cloud of witnesses, that have been faithful among the dissolute; a pillar of fire (in many blessed precedents) that went before directing us the way to Canaan. The church is full of those holy acts and monuments: the confession of Christ before Pontius Pilate, the profession of the apostles before the world's tyrants, the bold testimony of the martyrs at their stakes. O let the very pictures of their fires warm our hearts, and inflame our constant zeal to do, and (if God will) to die as they did, that we may come to the place where they are. If we find a living Lot among us, fasten we our eyes upon him; let his sprightly example put us forward. He is a dull jade that will not follow: a brangling hawk in the company of high flyers will mend her pitch, and make her point: the society of the prophets is able to make even a Saul prophesy. Yea, let us learn to be righteous even by a man of meaner grace: a good mettled horse seeing but a jade in the company put forward, springs out and is scarce restrained. No free spirit but is ambitious of a transcendence in lawful endeavours. At Silas' coming, Paul burnt in the Spirit, Acts xviii. 5: a lesser stick may fire a billet, a little candle lights many torches. But these great examples, how should they work in us great zeal! So the Stoics defined zeal: The emulation, without envy, of something good. Thus Alexander was stirred up with the fame of Achilles, Caesar of Alexander: Cicero with the eloquence of Hortensius, Demosthenes of Isocrates. The zeal of the Corinthians provoked many, 2 Cor. ix. 2: let this good man's provoke us, that we may provoke others; helping them that come after us, as we have been holpen by those before us, toward heaven.

"From day to day." This is the constancy of his zeal; it was not mutable. The fixed stars are ever like themselves, whereas meteors and vapours have no continued light: the wicked may have some aguish fits, and lunatic moods. To run with the stream, or sail with the wind, or like the marigold to open only with the sunshine, is no praise of piety. Give me that Job, that will be as honest a man among his thousands, as under the rod, when the number of his present ulcers exceeds his former riches. To shoot up like the corn on the house-top, by the favourable influence of great persons; for a Saul to prophesy no longer than he is among the prophets; or for a Joash to be good only while Jehoiada lives: that which depends upon human supportations, is but like Ephraim's, a transitory goodness. Thus you have some rash riders; at their first *excant* they gallop amain, till within some few miles they tire, and are overtaken by the slow pack-horses. The hasty girds of profession are seldom durable; sudden showers have sudden ends. And whereas the sun and all natural motions are swiftest toward their end, these begin hot in the spirit, and conclude stone-cold in the flesh. Their religion is but a blaze, which quickly goes out in smoke and smother. True fervency, like the vestal fires, or the fire of the altar, is never extinguished. To be hot to-day, and cool to-morrow, gives little assurance of Lot's fervency.

Would we know the means to maintain a constant righteousness, to be good, yea better, from day to day? 1. Pray instantly. Prayer and zeal, like water and ice, naturally produce one another. Fervency enlivens prayer, and prayer increaseth fervency. At heaven-gate he that does not knock manfully, knocks vainly. This God will hear, yea, if it should want a tongue, so it want not a heart. As Christ, though he heard not the words of Zaccheus, yet he

perceived his desire to invite him, therefore invited himself, Luke xix. 5. Thus he breathes more grace into our soul, that breathed our soul into our body. 2. The ordinary fuel to maintain it, is preaching; sermons being so many bellows to increase this holy flame. 3. Reading the word hath a special place: no devout soul ever returned from that exercise, but his soul was more warmed. 4. Meditation perfects the rest. Contemplate that infinite Majesty, the apparition or shadow whereof fired Moses more than the burning bush. Let but the unfolded heavens give way to Stephen's eyes, to behold Christ in the glory of his Father, how willing is he to ascend by that stony passage! These be the accustomed meals of the good soul, that will keep natural heat from decaying. When thou goest to bed, rake up thy fire, wrap up thy devotion with prayer; so in the morning thou shalt find it ready to cheer thy heart.

Discontinuance of good duties hath lost men much virtue: to bethink the cause betwixt God and ourselves only by snatches, when we have nothing else to do; or to read the Bible by fits, only upon rainy days; here may be a smattering, to maintain table-talk, but not enough to keep life and soul together. Let not men plead want of leisure, they have somewhat else to do; for there is one thing necessary, to which, as to the king's business, all the rest must yield and stand by. From our most serious labours we can steal some hours for our pleasure: is there no time to be spared for God and our soul? Oh that men should think one sabbath more tedious than ten holidays! Nor let those flatter themselves with sufficiency, that present themselves in the temple twice every Sunday; let God have some of the devotion at home, and by themselves. The king's ordinary servants do not only wait on festival days, but are always ready in the presence to be commanded. True love is most passionate without a witness: he that humbles himself before the Lord alone, betwixt them two disburdens his heart, weeps, prays, begs mercy, hath some proof of his Christianity. Our families, beds, boards, walks, and meetings must witness our devotion as well as our temples: this is the daily work of Christians.

I know the soul hath its satiety as well as the body; and fire may be oppressed with too much wood; nor doth God so require men to serve him, as to be unmerciful to themselves. He that hath done his work honestly, may go to play merrily. But this is rare, to find a man offending on the right hand. Nor let the derisions of Sodom cool this religious heat; a wise man will not be scoffed out of his money, nor a just man be flouted out of his faith.

One caution; when we have thus heat ourselves, let us beware of taking cold again. The fire is put out either by the subtraction of fuel, or pouring on of water. Sin is the quench-coal; he that voluntarily admits it, or does not suddenly repent it, endangers the cessation of zeal. When we have done a sin, till we repent truly, we serve God but coldly. He whose very hunger hath tempted him to steal a lamb, says but a cold grace to his supper. How the oppressors and defrauders of this city give thanks to God for their wealth, I refer to your thoughts and their own consciences. Sin is worse than a thief in the candle, or an obstruction in the liver. A deadly sin clapped on the heels of late devotion, is like a sudden cold after a violent heat; dangerous, if not mortal. Let us beseech him that hath begun a good work in us, to finish it; that we be not vexed with sin to-day, and pleased with it to-morrow; but that our lusts may drop from us like leaves in autumn, and our graces enjoy a perpetual spring, through the sap and life of all goodness, Jesus Christ.

Thus I have run through the main scope and other passages of the text; and yet some further instruction remains, if your good construction will admit it. Three things I take leave to consider; a question, an illation, and a conclusion.

Lot was vexed in soul, inwardly grieved; but was his zeal confined to his own breast? Did he smother it from the Sodomites? How could they then be convinced of their crimes, or know his dislike of their foul courses? Certainly, that holy man did not keep it in, but manifested it to them on all just occasions. Fire in Jeremiah's bones will make him weary of forbearing; and new wine, if it have no vent, will burst the vessels. We may justly suspect that zeal that is never manifest: let men talk what they will of their honest hearts, whilst they have dumb mouths and lame hands. Faith will open the lips, and he that loves God cannot but speak for him. Nicodemus was but cold when he stole to Christ by night; but when he buried Christ by day, his fervour broke forth like unsuppressed love. It was hard enough for Obadiah, to hide his religiousness in his bosom, as he did the prophets in a cave. Profession is the relative to faith; with the heart we believe, with the mouth we confess, Rom. x. 10. Some confess and believe not, such are hypocrites; some believe and confess not, such are timorous cowards; some neither confess nor believe, such are atheists; some both believe and confess, these are sound-hearted Christians. Fire cannot be smothered, it will either find a vent, or go out: true righteousness never wanted words or deeds to declare itself. David often professed not only to praise God, but in the great congregation: both for them that cannot, and for them that will not. But, "Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God," Rom. xiv. 22. What then? Be present at mass, communicate with the wicked in their idolatries; because faith may still be firm before God? No, Paul speaks of the faith that concerns indifferent things; otherwise, he that expresseth not his faith before men, hath denied the faith before God.

Earnest affections will find a tongue: if it be low water, the mill may stand; but a strong current will set it a-going. If the spring of zeal be wound up in the heart, the wheels will be kept in motion. It is not enough to keep our religion within doors, to tumble over a few orisons while we are dressing or undressing ourselves, half asleep, half awake; nor to observe a short perfunctory form and stint, as mill-horses do their round, or pack-horses their pace: such coward soldiers are not for Christ's standard. They must be those that dare hazard themselves to many troubles; a fire not quenchable by the world's buckets, but consuming their own and others' corruptions. So Chrysostom conceives the apostle, as a man made all of fire, walking in the midst of stubble. The sluggard hears of a lion, and quakes; tell Samson and David, they will go out to meet him. Let Agabus tell Paul of bonds at Jerusalem; he answers, "I am ready not to be bound only, but to die at Jerusalem, for Jesus," Acts xxi. 13. The horse neighs at the trumpet, the leviathan laughs at the spear. Tell Luther of enemies in Worms, he will go, though all the tiles of the houses were devils. To carnal friends he says, I know you not; to dissuaders, Get you behind me, Satan. Four comely things are commended by Solomon, Prov. xxx. 30, 31, to which we may add a fifth, stronger than the lion, swifter than the greyhound, nimbler than the goat at climbing upwards, more victorious than a king: it is a resolved Christian, who, armed with faith and zeal, disdains all resistances in his journey to the kingdom of heaven.

If the Sodomites be so condemned for vexing a righteous Lot, what deserve they that vex the true Lot, Jesus Christ the righteous, with their unlawful deeds? Is it not enough that we have once put him to death, but that we must again renew those wounds, and being healed set them bleeding afresh? The Jews were but the instruments of his crucifying; we are the principals; they cried, Crucify him, in the court of Pilate; our sins cried, Crucify him, in the court of heaven. Ours, I say, not the reprobates'; for as his death was not efficient to save reprobates, so their sin was not sufficient to kill him. To despise the blood wherewith we were sanctified, Heb. x. 29; this comes near him. If we ask him concerning his former wounds, he will answer, Thus was I wounded in the house of my enemies; but if concerning these new incisions, by blasphemies, oppressions, &c., he will answer, Thus was I wounded in the house of my friends, Zech. xiii. 6. The least unkindness of a friend pierceth deep: My own familiar friend did me the mischief, Psal. xli. 9. Our latter vexing of him is far worse than the first; his body was then passible and mortal, now it is glorious and immortal: the Jews knew not what they did, we know it and yet grieve him; then he was dead and buried, but he rose again; we bury him in forgetfulness not three days, but all our life, excepting only his mention.

The torments of his passion were unconceivable, incomparable, intolerable; yet it appears by his protestation, that the least wilful sin of a Christian doth more vex him, and strikes more to his heart, than all those dolorous pangs. It is our sin still that keeps him on the rack, and (though he be out of the reach of sorrow, yet) does what it can again to kill the Lord of life. What pleasure can we take in grieving him that is the life of us all? Call not thyself the friend of Christ, if thou delight in that which tormented him. Think of this, you cursing swearers, whom nothing can persuade to be civil, to be men, I say not, to be Christians. You swear away your salvation, curse away your blessing, vex the Lord that bought you. If nothing can assuage your rancour and hell-bred malice, know it had been better for you that there had been no Christ. His first death was for your redemption, but the many deaths you now put him to, is for your greater damnation. If your blind souls could consider this, it would not only mollify your hearts for the sins past, but also terrify you against sins to come. Nor flatter yourselves, that he shall do you good at your death, who have misused him all your life. When that fearful hour comes, you would all then fain go to heaven, and that by Christ: alas, as that despairing pope said, the cross could do him no good because he had sold it away; so how should Christ do you good, who have railed him away? You have vexed him so long as you lived, and his justice shall vex all the veins of your hearts when you are dead. The nearer a man comes to God, the more heartily he detests sin: now if Lot, a man holy but in part, with many infirmities, were thus vexed with iniquity; what an offence must it be to the most righteous God, and Him that died for it, Jesus Christ!

The conclusion. If Lot were so vexed at others' sins, how should we be vexed at our own! For them is required a sorrow of compassion, for ourselves a sorrow of compunction. Come we home to a self-condemnation; we, we have dishonoured God, therefore are to be vexed at ourselves. What is repentance but contrition? what is contrition but a vexation? We that have sinned with Sodom, let us be vexed with Lot. If Lot had not repented his own sins, he had never grieved for theirs; if the Sodomites had been thus vexed, they had not perished. We have

sinned; what shall we do unto thee, O thou preserver of men? Job vii. 20. What, but repent and amend? Repentance is the proper medicine for sin; as God hath ordained a salve for every sore. A medicine which cureth the eyes and nothing else, we may say was made for the eyes and for nothing else. A man loseth his wealth, and is sorry for it; will sorrow recover it? He burieth his child, and is sorry for it; will sorrow raise him from the dead? He suffers injury, and is sorry for it; will sorrow right him? Himself is sick, and is sorry for it; will sorrow heal him? nay, will it not rather hurt him? Sorrow then was not made for these things. He hath sinned, is he sorry for that? sorrow now will help him, repentant sorrow will take away his sin. Sin is then the sickness, for which sorrow is the remedy. Direct this lesson to your hearts before you go home to your houses, and digest it before your dinners; have troubled hearts, vexed with sorrow for your sins. Many a one comes into the church a dissolute sinner, that goes out a humble saint; why should I not hope so much of you? This were a blessed effect of a sermon, when the fruit of one hour is no less than eternity of days. A square piece of metal, molten and cast into a round mould, comes out round; a piece of blue put into the scarlet vat, comes forth scarlet. Remember our Saviour's sentence of sin. Except you repent, you shall perish, Luke xiii. 5. If the child cry it lives; so if we can heartily cry for our sins, there is life in us. Thus let us be grieved, that we may be comforted.

VERSE 9.

The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished.

PROFANE people conceit God to be all of mercy, and cannot endure to hear of his justice; or if they be convinced to acknowledge him also just, yet they measure it by the poverty of their own judgment, and think it pity to destroy a man for his sins. Indeed it pleaseth God to be magnified by his mercies above all his works; and we never find him called the Father of judgments, but often the Father of mercies. Mercy seems to be more properly his than vengeance, for he takes the matter of mercy out of himself and his goodness; but that he punisheth and condemneth, our sins compel him to it. (Bern.) But both are infinite in him that is infinite; and as mercy hath her day in giving time of repentance, so justice must have her day in the retribution of vengeance. All sins are debts, all God's debts must be paid: it is a bold word, but a true; it is in vain to hope for pardon without payment. Every sin must be punished, either in the person of the Saviour, or in the person of the sinner. Too many reckon their own sins as the false steward did his master's debts: of a hundred, they set down but fifty; as if God would not call them to account, because he knew them faithful. Thus they may hide God from themselves, but they cannot hide themselves from God. Do they think that God will be so kind to them as to be unjust to himself? No, the Lord will be just, let them go on and perish. There can be no reconciliation without remission, no remission without satisfaction, no satisfaction but in the blood of Christ. Turn over the book of thy conscience, see if thou canst find that reckoning there discharged. We keep books for expenses, do we keep none for offences? He never

breaks his sleep for debt, that pays as he takes up. But careless arrearsages shall find a day of reckoning.

That God is not just without mercy, nor merciful without justice, this text proves; which speaks of a deliverance to the godly, to the unjust of vengeance. God indeed is slow to anger, yet he will not acquit the wicked, Nah. i. 3. "So that a man shall say, Verily there is a reward for the righteous: verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth," Psal. lviii. 11. A man, any man, every man shall confess it, none have power to deny it. This is our apostle's conclusion upon the premises: God could preserve the holy angels by his mercy, and confound the apostate angels in his justice; in his mercy saveth righteous Noah, when by his justice he drenched the unrighteous world; justly destroyeth four ungodly cities, and mercifully delivers one just Lot. He that could do such mighty works, in heaven, on earth, in the waters; can as easily still deliver his children, and "reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished."

The verse contains a pair of thwart sentences, directly opposite, in quality of persons, conditions, and events. Here is the godly, and unjust; a delivering, and reserving; out of temptations, into judgment. God stands in the forefront, and hath two arms stretched forth; one arm to the east, another to the west; one to deliver the godly out of trouble, the other to inflict severe punishment upon the wicked. Here is an enlargement, and an attachment; a delivering out of prison, and a casting into prison; a releasing from present perturbation, and a binding over to a further session. The godly are acquitted, absolved, freed; not reprieved, but quite delivered. The unjust are apprehended, bound over, go as it were under bail; at the general assizes they must make their appearance, and being guilty receive their sentence. This the Judge can do, and will do: he wants not power, for he is "the Lord;" he wants not wisdom, for he "knoweth." His Almighty wisdom, and all-wise power, are extended to both these actions, "The Lord knoweth." The righteous proceeded thus far; they come upon their trial, for temptation is a trial; but not to arraignment, much less to conviction, least of all to condemnation. But being charged by that common narrator, the accuser of the brethren, and thus brought before the Judge, not publicly at a session, but to a private examination, they are found innocent, and delivered. Temptations, like fetters, may hamper and afflict them for a while, but when their cause comes to be heard, and their righteousness appeareth, they are discharged. For the other, their guilt is manifest, therefore the chains of bondage are upon them, which, together with the custody of Omnipotence, shall keep them fast to the day of judgment, and that shall send them to execution, to be punished.

In the enlargement consider these particulars. 1. What. A deliverance. 2. Who are delivered, The godly. 3. From what, Out of temptations. 4. By whom, The Lord doth it. 5. How; we need not examine, it is sufficient, The Lord knoweth how.

First, the matter is a deliverance. It is a great comfort in every distress, to hope for a deliverance; to believe it, greater; to be sure of it, greatest of all. Thus certain is every Christian, by the assurance of faith, grounded on the infallible promise of God. It was promised to Abraham, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called," Gen. xxi. 12: yet must Isaac, before he had seed, be killed; and that by his father's own hand. Here Abraham might reason; I may believe the promise, and not obey the commandment: I may obey the commandment, and not believe the promise; but how can both stand together? But he holds the promise, and obeys God, though all the

reason in the earth cannot tell how that promise and that commandment should stand together. Though I know not, and reason know not, yet God knoweth. In human reasoning it is a note of ignorance to stick always to the conclusion; but in spiritual trials this is sound divinity, to hold fast God's promises. Therefore he both believes the one, and obeys the other: this deliverance was above his reason, it was not above his faith. He did not argue, but obey; being sure that what God commands is good, and what he promises is infallible; therefore, careless of the means, he trusts to the end. Daniel is not delivered at the beginning of his trouble; he must first be in the lions' den, then he finds it. Those three servants are not rescued at the oven's mouth; in the furnace they are. That is a gracious, well-tried faith, that can hold out confidence to the last.

Abraham, after that terrible command, must go three days' journey, a tedious extension of his sorrow; and in all that travel no angel meets him with news of a deliverance. He sees the chosen mountain, dismisseth his servants; a strange devotion that will abide no witnesses; none comes yet. All the while the altar is a building, his own heart bleeding, Isaac pleading for his life; none yet. He binds his hands, lays the wood on the altar, the sacrifice on the wood; yet no news. Now having kissed him his last, after many mutual tears, he lifts up his hand to give the fatal blow of death; yet he does not think, perhaps God will relent after the first wound. Lo, now the comfort of Abraham, the hope of the church, lies a killing by the hand of his father; yet there is no revocation. It would have made the bowels of a savage yearn at this spectacle, to see the knife of such a father hanging over the throat of such a son; yet he whom it nearest concerned is least touched; faith had wrought in him, what cruelty would in others, not to be moved. He proceeds, condemning all fears, and overlooking all impossibilities: deliverance he might expect, but he knew not which way it could come; only that the same hand which raised Isaac from the dead womb of his mother, can revive him from those ashes. Now having given Isaac, and Isaac given himself, for dead; the knife is falling upon his throat; now, now comes the deliverance, by an angel calling, forbidding, commanding him. Often is deliverance promised, and yet the time not mentioned. They "shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years," Jer. xxv. 11; not a day, not an hour to be bated. "At the end of four hundred and thirty years," Exod. xii. 41; till then Moses undertook it in vain. That very night, Dan. v. 30. Neither did Daniel, that knew the determined time of seventy, till upon the expiration, pray for deliverance.

God defers his deliverance, 1. To return us home: when no man will harbour that unthrift son, he will back again to his father. 2. To make us seek our deliverance in the right place: while money can buy physic, or friends procure enlargement, the great Physician and Helper is not thoroughly trusted unto. 3. To set a better price on his benefits: for suddenly gotten are suddenly forgotten. Abraham's child at seventy years was more welcome than had he been given at thirty; and the same Isaac had not been so precious to him, if he had not been as miraculously restored as given; his recovery from death made him more acceptable than if he had never been in danger. God's charges are often harsh in the beginning, hard in the proceeding, but the conclusion is always comfortable. Spiritual consolations are commonly late and sudden; long before they come, and speedy when they do come, preventing even expectation.

The Lord defers on purpose, that our trial may be perfect, our deliverance welcome, our recompence glorious. Say our temptation be externally allictive, and we are not delivered from it; our poverty is long, and we shall never be rich; our sickness tedious, and we shall never recover; what now? shall we despair and die? No, but whether he doth deliver us or not, we will serve him; though he kill us, we will trust in him, Dan. iii. 18. Though he hold off long, and suspend our ease, yet deliverance shall come; if not the same way we would have it, yet a way that is better for us. Shall we be sullen, because our desires be not presently granted? as Jonah would die, because he was displeased; Ahithophel, because he was despised; Saul, because he was discomfited. No, death itself shall deliver us; that Red Sea shall put us over to the land of promise; and we shall say to the praise of God, We are delivered.

The persons delivered are the godly. Godliness (according to the propriety of the word) consists in two things; the devout adoration, and sincere imitation, of God. They that worship him as he will be worshipped, and follow him in the things wherein he will be followed, are right godly men. He that worships God aright, adheres to the rule, and believes the reward. Superstition first loves, and then believes; true religion first believes, and then loves. Reverence and zeal become adoration: for a man to mouth a Pater-noster, while his heart is in his coffer; as if he could reconcile those two contrary masters, and at once serve God and mammon; in vain thinks himself godly. When in the temple God scarce hath our knees or our voices, seldom our minds, never tell me of godliness. You are not atheists, to think that he regards your prayers, as he doth the humming of flies and bees; that they be so formal and heartless. The godly man knows that God sees him, sees him in every place, takes special notice of him in the church. Caesar's eye made his soldiers prodigal of their blood; God's eye and speech to the soul, "Well done, good and faithful servant," makes him work out his heart. Loose thoughts are too bad for common places, intolerable in divine worship. We may observe how God bates of his own service for us; allows us to go from his temple to quench a burning house, or to help a beast out of the pit; and makes homicide the greatest sin upon earth. Now shall he bate of his own glory for our benefit, and shall not we bate of our benefit for his glory? They that either for wantonness or covetousness, much worse for drunkenness, violate the sabbath, which is the time of God's worship, or neglect the church, which is the place of his worship, have little godliness. We are charged to "worship him in spirit and in truth," John iv. 23. The Jews worshipped him bodily, we must also in spirit; they figuratively, we in truth.

Nor is adoration enough without imitation; it is the sum of all religion, to imitate him we adore. He was called a Platonist, that followed Plato's principles; and he that follows the example of God, is godly. Outward holiness must be joined with inward; a man may be a saint at church and a devil at home: true godliness is seen in our own house as well as in God's house; he is far short of godliness, that is not an honest man. It is shame for Christians to learn honesty of pagans; and yet they say, some of us are a form below them. We may know whose children such are by their complexions and conditions: "He that doeth righteousness is righteous," 1 John iii. 7. It was not enough by the Levitical law (whose ground was moral) to chew the end, but to divide the hoof: our feet must be clean as well as our mouths. While the worship of God

sits in our lips, and the dishonour of God is seen in our lives, we might as safe be wholly unclean. Some have the mark of the beast in their hand, some in their forehead, Rev. xiii. 16: whether in the forehead or in the hand, so it be his mark, it is all one to the devil. This commended Job, that he feared God, that is one part of piety; that he eschewed evil, that is the other, Job i. 8. The doctrine of faith is much controverted; and while Satan can raise troubles about faith, he hopes the world will let him alone about manners; and so that the name of Christ may perish from off the earth: but it is a counterfeit faith without obedient and practical godliness.

God's word is first sown in the heart, that seed is rooted in faith, that root brings forth a tree of charity, and that tree bears the fruit of good works. Our persons are justified by our faith, our faith is justified by our charity, our charity by the actions of a godly life. Therefore justify thy faith, that thy faith may justify thee. Faith is an illumination, and many content themselves with an illusion: if we want charity to our brother, there is no faith to our Maker. Some lose themselves by vituperating Christ, as pagans; some even by praising Christ, as profane Christians: these so praise his merits, that they never weigh their own misdemeanours. But do good, and have good: little says the Scripture of the apostles' learning, it speaks much of their acts. It is not the taste of meat that nourisheth, but after concoction the benefit is in the strength. The conscience is not satisfied with reading good things, the comfort it feels is in the practice. Children take after their father; thus to show mercy, is to be godly, Luke vi. 36. Forgive your offenders. Why? God doth forgive you: be as ready to pardon men, as you are ready to desire your own pardon of him. He that walks under a wall in a sunny day, shall be heated by the wall, which first was heated by the sun: if God have forgiven us, the warmth of charity is in us to forgive others. "Be ye holy." Why? Because God is holy, 1 Pet. i. 16. If we find a piece of wax with an impression or mark upon it, we know there hath been a seal, the print whereof is left behind: holiness is the print of God's sacred seal; if not holy, not sealed. God is patient toward sinners; furious avengers of themselves are not godly. He is the God of peace; the sons of malice and contention are far unlike him.

We see who are godly, now these are delivered: they, of all men, out of temptations, because they, of all men, are most subject to temptations. The higher a tree shoots up, the more tempest-beaten: if a Christian grows to any stature and tallness in grace, and sprouts up toward heaven, Satan will raise the sorer storms against him. Some are not troubled with temptations, know not what they mean; ask them, they never felt the devil so busy about them. The more miserable creatures they. No prince makes war against his obedient subjects: should they rebel against Satan's laws, they should hear of him in another kind. But as God said in his justice, "Ephraim is joined to idols, let him alone." Hos. iv. 17; so Satan in his malice, They are joined, united, incorporated to sin, let them alone. They meddle not with repentance, and he meddles not with them; all is peace, Luke xi. 21. Let them take it for the fearful sign of a dead heart, when they feel not the thorn in the flesh, temptation. Fall they to deprecation, cry for pardon of their sins, and seek the kingdom of heaven; then Satan begins to bustle, then temptation upon temptation: Job had not more foes to vex him, than they shall find baits to entice them. Therefore Christ on purpose, to the pardon of sins,

annexeth, lead us not into temptation. Not only because, with the pardon of sins past, we should desire the prevention of sins to come; that neither our consciences be stung with the old, nor our concupiscences corrupted further with the new: but because a man's sins be no sooner forgiven, and he rescued from Satan, but that lion foams and roars, and bestirs himself to recover his loss. So that grievous temptations do always accompany the remission of sins. Some suspect themselves to be out of God's favour, because they are so wearied and worried with temptations; but if godliness and temptation be such inseparable attendants on the same person, it is otherwise. For the devil's hatred is to them most, whom God loves best; and where he shows mercy, Satan will exercise malice. So that in the characters of temptations we may spell God's love, which cannot be enjoyed without Satan's disturbance. Yea, howsoever weak consciences have been dismayed at it, one proof of saving grace in us is the exercise of the devil's malice against us.

They that receive from God more graces, are sure of more temptations. Let God testify good of Job, the devil will have a fling at him. If Peter have once the keys, Satan will tempt him to be a Satan to his Master, Matt. xvi. 22. If there be honey in the vessel, the wasps will be busy about it. But as no wise man leaves his house for some flies, but rather seeks to drive them out than they should drive him out; so no good man forsakes his holiness for temptations, but rather resists the devil, as knowing then he will flee from him, Jam. iv. 7. A full barn is better than an empty one, though thieves let this alone, and be pilfering about the other. We do not destroy our roses for the cankers, but rather destroy the cankers from the roses. It is no policy for the traveller to leave off his weapons, because he knows there be thieves in the way. We say, one true man is hard enough for two thieves, one faithful man is able to repel many wicked spirits. Our godliness doth not secure us from temptations, but conquers them. Christ was no sooner come out of the water of baptism, but he enters into the fire of temptation: if he be full of the Holy Spirit, he shall be set upon by the malignant spirit. If God say, "This is my Son;" Satan will say, "If thou be the Son of God," Matt. iii. 17; iv. 3. That Divine testimony did not allay his malice, but exasperate it: the serpent most violently assails him whom God hath honoured.

Neither the gifts of grace, nor the seals of grace, can free us from assaults: we may have force to repel bad suggestions, we have not to prevent them. The more we are engaged to God, by the bonds of our own profession, and the pledges of his favour, so much the more busy is the tempter about us. That Goliath defies none but the host of the living God: if we be once seen in the field, then he is mad, and seeks to wring away our weapons, and with them to wound our own bosoms. Lord, how should we escape that dragon's assaults, when the Son of thy love could not be free? when even to be gracious draws on his enmity, and the profession of a good conscience is the butt for his burning arrows? He that spared not the Head, will not forbear the remoter limbs. If the state of innocency could have been any defence against evil motions, the first Adam had not been tempted, much less the Second.

Nothing should more comfort us than resistance: if we did not stand for the Lord, Satan would not stand against us, Zech. iii. 1; if we were not in a way to do good, we should find no rubs. The devil hath no cause to trouble his own, especially while they go about his business. To sin, he would have our paths smooth, and calm, and pleasant, winning

us forward; but if we turn our feet toward Zion, then he encounters us, and blocks up our way with temptations. But it is not the presentment of bad motions that can hurt us, but our entertainment of them. Ill counsel is the fault of the giver, not of the refuser: if we be tempted, as Joseph was by a great lady, and withstand it, we are not the worse, but the better. We cannot forbid lewd eyes to look in at our windows, we may shut our doors against their entrance. If Satan knock, it is in our choice to open: a booty lies in our way, we may choose whether we will stoop and take it up. To suggest evil, is Satan's blame; to resist evil, this is our praise. The more we are tried in the furnace, the purer gold we shall go to the treasury of heaven. Lord, make us as strong as the devil is malicious: say in a sweet spiritual feeling to my conscience, as thou spakest once vocally and audibly to my Saviour, Thou art my son; and let the devil do his worst.

Temptations we understand to be of two sorts: probations, or provocations; trials of suffering, or trials of doing. God tempts, to draw something out of us, and to make it appear: Satan tempts, to put something into us which was not before. It is one thing *explorare an sit peccatum*, another *provocare ut sit peccatum*. The former we may properly call examinations, searchings, afflictions; these are of God. The other, incitements, enticements, impulsive motions to sin; these are of Satan. Now this promised deliverance stands in analogy and reference to both these.

For Satan's suggestions: what godly man hath not been wrought upon by temptations; not only to like the bait, but even to swallow it with consent of will? Yet hath it not choked their grace, God hath delivered them. Look upon David, 2 Sam. xi. While his people are busy in the war against Ammon abroad, Satan as busily makes war against David at home; they lay siege to Rabbah, he lays siege to their king. The temptation first takes fire at his eyes, his eyes recoil upon his heart, and his heart burns in the desires of his lust. The tempter so prevails, that he makes him become a tempter, bestowing his own bad office upon him. He sees Bathsheba, inquires after her, sends for her, solicits her to uncleanness. There was store of fair virgins in Israel, yet he must dote upon the marriage-bed: he had many wives of his own, and was not restrained from taking more; yet is not contented saving with the only one of a subject. He was not overcome by the solicitation of a strumpet, but himself was the prosecutor of this filthiness. There is nothing wanting to amplify his sin, and cause our fear. O whether shall we go, if God stay us not? What man among the millions of God's servants was better furnished with preservatives against such temptations? Where could the devil have less hope of prevailing? Yet is this strong man overcome; and as it is hard and rare to commit a single sin, he does not only abuse the wife, but betrays the husband, and teacheth his lust to look with bloody eyes on the life of his faithful servant. If wine cannot work him to father a false seed, the sword of an uncircumcised anatomy shall fall upon him. Thus deep in is David, and falls asleep many months, exchanging the conscience of his sin for the sense of his pleasures. Yet even out of this temptation he is delivered; Nathan shall rouse him, the Spirit shall melt him, his own heart shall smite him; with a wounded soul he shall cry for pardon, detest his wickedness, and find mercy.

In this glass we see ourselves, how apt to be tempted, to go along with it, yea, often to persist in it; yet, withal, God's infinite goodness to deliver us from it. For this we pray, "Lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil;" the latter being an exposition of the former: that we be not led into temptation, deliver us from evil; the cause being taken away, the effect ceaseth. The best of God's children may not only be drenched in the waves of sin, but even lie in them for a time: as a man may sink twice to the bottom, yet rise with life in him. But they that belong to the covenant shall be delivered. Saul is tempted, sinneth, and sleepeth in it his last: David is tempted, sinneth, and sleepeth, but not his last. Peter is tempted to conceal, to deny, to forswear his Master: yet one look of Christ delivered him: Judas is tempted to betray him, goes on, and perisheth. The Lord would never have suffered so dear favourites of his, as Lot, David, Peter, to fall so dangerously: if he had not meant to make them universal examples to the world, of not presuming, of not despairing. For how can we presume of not sinning, or despair for sinning, when we find so great saints thus fallen, thus risen? How many years had those ten brethren forgotten their unnatural treachery! Alas, what long and dead sleeps may the holiest souls take in fearful sins! Were it not for God's mercy that thus delivers us out of temptations, we should end our spiritual lethargy in a sleep of death. David in those ten months might have some transient glances of remorse; but no compunction is heard of till Nathan's message, and perhaps had been further adjoined, if that monitor had been longer deferred. God could have sent him sooner, and checked David in his first project of sin: so had Bathsheba been chaste, Uriah alive, and himself guiltless of murder. But that Almighty wisdom knew how to win more glory by the permission than by the prevention, by the permission of one sin to prevent millions. How many thousands had presumed on their own strength, if such a champion had not fallen! How many thousands had despaired in the consciences of their own misdeeds and weakness, if such sins had not found remission! It is happy for all after-times that we have such precedents, so holy sinners, so sinful penitents: their falls have taught us by whom to stand. In a word, many saints have committed as great sins as probates: that the one is pardoned, not the other, the difference is not in the quantity or quality of the sin, but in the mercy of God.

1. Sec. I. We that pray for deliverance from evil, must endeavour against evil. The best fence lies close, and is more careful to defend than to offend: while we lie open, Satan hath a fair mark. Rank mirth, gluttony, gaming, and wine, lay a man open. That wine is an inducement to lust, David knew, and therefore gave Uriah such superfluous cups; and it is hard to refuse pledging, where a king begins a health to a subject. This might easily lay him open to evil; the drunkard may be any thing but good. But temptation is then stronger, when it proceeds from a mighty instrument: the requests of princes are commands, their very suits imperative. How many Bathshebas and Jane Shores have thus been wrought to pollute both a royal and matrimonial bed! The countenance of authority is authoritative with many: ask a Romist, whether if the pope command him to kill his sovereign, he is to do or refuse it: perhaps he trifles that the pope will never command it; but put him to it, if; then his answer must be affirmative. If Saul charge a Doeg, he will wrack his spleen on the priests. Let the master tempt his servant, the father his child, their least word is a law. But it will be no excuse to say at last, such a great person tempted me, as Adam said of Eve: it is what that we must regard, not who; the action, not the person: be the mover never so glorious, if his motion be to sin, let it be entertained with defiance. Let

us have wary eyes, for it is not the self-appearing devil, but the same a transformed angel, that doth corrupt us.

2. Consider what preventions the provident God useth against our sinnings. How many stays doth Saul find in his pursuit of David: twice he casts his javelin, and missed him; exposed him to the Philistines, but he slew them; Michal was given him for a snare, yet she delivers him; Jonathan is constant to him; Saul hath begirt him, so then he is delivered by the Philistines' invasion, 1 Sam. xxiii. 27. This found Balaam in his pestilent itch to curse Israel: one night God puts him off; the second time he answers his importunity and bids him go in anger: an angel stands to cross him, his beast turns out of the way; she bruise his foot against the wall, at last falls down under him: many crosses to recall him. How is the other Saul (with his letters missive to vex the church) arrested from heaven! I know there be sudden sins, no sooner thought of than despatched; which is like fire to powder. But in our resolved intentions of doing a sin, if we would mark it, we meet with strange impediments, as Jonah did in his flight; which should make us grow jealous of such enterprises. Some have been frighted from their uncleanness by the tolling of a passing-bell; others diverted from a bad journey, by the sudden lameness of their horse. How often hath God prevented murders by strange accidents! Sometimes he shortens our own arms, sometimes strengthens others against us. Sometimes reason is heard, when religion sits out; and the dishonesty, inutility, or difficulty of a sin is perpended. But it is best, when the fear of God hath corrected us, or the word of God averted us, or the Spirit of God recalled us. By innumerable means doth the Lord stop our precipices, hedge up our ways to sin; that when temptation invites us, we may have hands manacled, and feet fettered with detentions; and we cozen the devil against our wills. He would have us come, and we would come, but (thanks be to God) we cannot come. Let us observe it; as when we are doing well, we have many provocations to alienate our minds from it; so when we are intending mischief, God sends many inconveniences, as it were vocal accidents, to hinder us; as if God should say, Take heed what you do.

3. Let us meditate how we are blessed of God, and have reason to bless God, for these happy deliverances. As St. Augustine: I had time and place to commit sin, but then the tempter was away; thy doing, O Lord, it was that he was away. The tempter was present, but then time and place were wanting; thy doing it was that I wanted time and place. Time and place were convenient, and the tempter was there also, provoking me forward, all opportunities furthering; but then I had no stomach to it, but was cool, my will had no will to consent; thy doing it was that I was unwilling, that the edge of my appetite was dull. Sometimes I had will, but then I wanted means; sometimes I had means, but then I wanted will; sometimes I had likewise will and means, but then I also wanted ability; another time, means, will, and ability were concurring; but then came in some other interruption; a messenger with sudden business, the distress of a friend, the invitation of a neighbour. Still, O Lord, that I was not led into temptation, nor captivated by suggestion, it was thy doing. Blessed be God, as for his furtherance in good, so for his hinderance in evil. If we be godly, and find these things true, let us enter into our chambers, fall upon our knees, lift up our hearts, and say in humble thankfulness, Lord, thou hast delivered me, I find thy mercy, to thy name be the glory.

4. Lastly, if we love not evil, let us long for our final and plenary deliverance from it: that immortal court, where sin can no more enter, than sorrow or death: out of this the tempter is excluded for ever. Here the Lord delivers us from the damnation and domination of sin, there from the temptation and assault; here it shall not overcome us, there it shall not come near us. "Wretched man! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Rom. vii. 24. Who? He that now frees us from the burning, will then from the smell of the fire. Here even a saint is but a mixed creature; and the sin which he hath by his generation, fights against the grace which he hath by his own regeneration. This felt St. Paul: and Hierome in his very abstinence; My face was pale, but my heart was flushing, and I had a burning mind in a chill body. Mortal perfection is a vain dream. Aquinas thinks we may fulfil a precept two ways; either perfectly, when we perform the full scope of it; or imperfectly, when we keep the way conducing to the end. (Epist. 22.) But as when the captain bids the soldiers fight and conquer, he that fights and conquers, perfectly doth his will; he that fights and doth not get the victory, comes short of doing his will: and in God's battles, he that conquers not, which is the end, doth certainly fail in the means. Therefore he that sincerely loves God, and detests sin, desireth dissolution for no other end, but to be freed from temptation. The good soldier will fight when he is in the field, but he is contented to have the battle over. This is one benefit that death against his own will shall do us; a perfect delivery from all temptations. In Paradise man had a power not to sin; in heaven he shall not have the power to sin. Satan shall then be bound in eternal chains, never to stir out of that local torment, and the elect be set at triumphant liberty.

For probations, which are the other sort of temptations, or trials by troubles; they are derived from three fountains, and may thus be distinguished, not in propriety of terms, but after the common acceptance. As they come from Satan they are usually called temptations; as they come from man, persecutions; as from God, afflictions. All these are in some manner from the Lord: neither man nor devil can afflict us without God, God can afflict us without them. When we pray not to be led into temptation, we pray not against correction, but against evil; for though Christ makes us invincible, he makes us not invulnerable. All our days are evil, some worse; as the ague hath chief fits, critical days. Some be more grievous sufferings than others; as martyrdom in the extent (for it may be *occulta cogitatione*, though not *aperta passione*); and we have cause to bless God that we resist not unto blood. If there were no good in these temptations, they should not come near us; for nothing absolutely evil shall come to a good man. And when they have done the business they came for, they shall leave us: the plaster will not stick on when the sore is healed.

Do they come from the ungodly? Whether Tertullus persecute the church with his tongue, or Elymas with his hand, God hath the command of both. Indeed the wicked are the mediate causes of our troubles: the righteous are as the centre, the other the circumference, Psal. cxviii. 11; which way so ever they turn, they find themselves environed; yet still the centre is fixed and immovable, being founded upon Christ. It is good for some men to have adversaries; for often they more fear to sin, lest they should despise them, than dislike it for conscience, lest God should condemn them. They speak evil of us: if true let us amend it; if false, condemn it; whether true or false, observe it. Thus we shall

learn good out of their evil; make them our tutors, and give them no pupillage. In all things let us watch them, in nothing fear them: "which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to us of salvation," Phil. i. 28. The church is that tower of David; if there be a thousand weapons to wound us, there are a thousand shields to guard us, Cant. iv. 4. When the angel saluted Gideon, The Lord be with thee; he replied, "If the Lord be with us, how is all this evil befallen us?" Judg. vi. 13. Why do the Midianites vex us? Yes, God may be with us, and the Midianites against us: yea, therefore are they against us, because God is with us. It is neither our shame to suffer what Christ suffered, nor their honour to do as Judas did, (Cypr.) Howsoever they be wicked instruments, yet the just hand is the Lord's. God gave, saith Job: what, and the devil took away? No. The Sabaeans took away? No; but the Lord took away. As when the malignity of a disease is spent, health will return: so when all our adversaries have done their worst, if not before, then God will deliver us. Let Jezebel fret her heart out, and swear by her gods, Elijah must be safe. Let the red dragon spout forth floods of venom, the church hath wings to fly away, she shall be delivered, Rev. xii.

Do they come from God? he chasteneth whom he loveth: storms and afflictions are not from fury without love, but rather from love without fury. "Lord, he whom thou lovest is sick," John xi. 3: Lazarus may be sick and yet Christ love him. The intelligent son knows that his father's correction is no argument of his father's hatred; therefore is silent. "I was dumb, because thou didst it," Psal. xxxix. 9. I was not dumb for that I did, but confessed my sin; but dumb for that thou didst, acknowledging it a just punishment. "In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment," Isa. liv. 8. It is but a little, for a moment: and I hid my face, never turned my heart from thee. Indeed as man is under the law, they are legal punishments; but as under grace, paternal corrections. They are a testimony of his good favour toward us, when by them he separates the sin which he hates from the person which he loves. And this he always so tempers, that it is neither according to our sins, nor exceeding our strengths. Ours? No, but not above God's strength in us. No parent corrects another's child, and he is no good parent that corrects not his own. By this we come to know our friend: three things are not known but in three places; valour, but in danger: wisdom, but in anger; a friend, but in misery. Afflictions have done us this good, that we are sure we have a Friend, a Father in heaven, for we have tried him. Faith understands troubles to be *probationis iudicia*, not *reprobationis argumenta*. Our life is a web woven by the hand of God, the thread reaching from our birth unto our death. The web is trouble, but still runs with it a web of interwoven comforts. But if so, then may we not pray for their removal? Yes; "Remove thy plague away from me," Psal. xxxix. 10: thy plague and mine; thine by affliction, mine by passion; thine because thou didst send it, mine because I endure it; thine because it comes from thy justice, mine because it answers my injustice: remit what I have done, and remove what thou hast done. But whosoever laid it on, the Lord will take it off. Be our troubles many in number, strange in nature, heavy in measure; yet God's mercies are more numerous, his wisdom more wondrous, his power more miraculous, he will deliver us out of all, Psal. xxxiv. 19. This doctrine well digested, will breed good blood in our souls, and is useful three ways.

1. To fortify our patience: he needs not fear the trouble, that knows an infallible deliverance. Pos-

sess your souls in patience, Luke xxi. 19. He doth not say, possess your mouths, for some being provoked will give no bad language; nor possess your hands; many being urged can forbear violence: yet still the desire of revenge may boil and rankle in both their hearts. But possess your souls, that is, yourselves, in patience: this binds both mouth and hand to the peace and good forbearance: all are quiet, if the soul be quiet. Two things become a Christian; *sapientia in verbis*, *patientia in verberibus*. Time is the physician's cure, reason the philosopher's cure, patience is God's cure. Time helps sorrows, but still this is tedious, and time runs too dully with them that be in misery. Reason qualifies it, for it is the courage and magnanimity of a man to suffer. But this only seeks means to extricate us: reason will not stay for time; but faithful patience looks neither to reason nor time, but knows a better remedy: she commits her cause to God, and resolves upon this resignation, that either her sorrow shall be less or her fortitude more. Patience is a noble kind of conquering. Faith, charity, and patience, are the three rich possessions of a Christian: by faith we possess Christ, by charity we possess our neighbour, by patience we possess ourselves. He that wants faith is without the Head; he that wants charity is without the body; he that wants patience is without himself. Our patience, like our trial, hath but a short exercise; our deliverance is glorious and everlasting.

2. To confirm our hope. He that hath tasted the mercy of God in some notable deliverance, hopes in the next trial for the same assistance. Experience brings hope, Rom. v. 4: because it hath made the matter easy: he that hath often done a thing easily, mistrusts not to do it again. David had often found his deliverance out of hard exigents, therefore says, In the name of God I will leap over the wall: his experience had made it so easy to him, that it was but a skip or jump in his conceit.

3. Let us not feign afflictions before we have them: we can expect no deliverance out of fantastical griefs. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked," Gal. vi. 7. There are beggars by permission, that feign themselves halt and blind; and beggars by commission, that have patents for fires and wrecks; but their fires are often feigned and false fires, and all their wrecks the wreck of their own consciences. Let them take heed, lest their fictions prove at last true afflictions, their dissembled lameness prove lameness indeed. As Martial writes of Calpis, who to avoid the giving his attendance early and late to the great ones of the time, feigned himself sick of the gout, so cunningly, that his hypocrisy came home to him, and he fell sick of the gout indeed. How often have those mischances fallen to men without relief, for which they begged relief before they had cause! God promiseth deliverance from the temptations he sends, not those we fetch; such as come from our want, not from our wantonness. Many make to themselves crosses; and while God's hand is not visible, they with their own hands beat themselves. Haman, that great favourite, hath honour enough, though Mordecai do not eringe to him; yet this makes him discontent: here was a cross of his own begetting. Ahab was king, had lands and demesnes enough of his own, yet because Naboth denies him his vineyard, he falls sick of the sullen. For this trouble let him thank himself: what needs a rich man be a thief? Amnon had variety of choice objects for his inordinate affection, yet he must be love-sick of Tamar, 2 Sam. xiii. 2, 4; none but his half-sister can please the eyes of that wanton prince. Ordinary pleasures will not content

extraordinary persons; such pampered and ungoverned youths, whose greatness and ease have made unruly appetites. This is the unnatural heat of which he languishes; was not this an affliction of his own making? It is not rare to see a great man vex himself at the neglect of a peasant; whereas a true lion will pass by with an honourable scorn: to see the husband of a virtuous and comely spouse, dotting on a foul and forbidden bed: to see a rich man pine away with projecting how he should live when he is old. Innumerable be our fantastical evils, and we trouble ourselves about nothing. Evils come fast enough of themselves, there is store made to our hands, we need not increase their number: those ill weeds will grow without our planting.

4. Our deliverer is "the Lord." It is the voice of all creatures in their several languages, Salvation is of the Lord; the confession of men more sensibly, Thou art the preserver of men, Job vii. 20: the acknowledgment of saints more especially, "Our help standeth in the name of the Lord," Psal. cxviii. 3. This word leads us to a consideration of his power; He can deliver us, and none but he. "Lord;" his Almightiness was the first name he would be known by to the world, Exod. vi. 3. Not that Jehovah was not in some manner formerly known: see Gen. xv., and xxvi. 24. But as if he made this difference: Then I gave promises what I would do, now I come to perform the promises; with God Almighty, which signifies my majesty, I will show myself Jehovah, the God of Abraham, which shall demonstrate my mercy. "The Lord;" his sovereignty is a point that comes not often to be handled, therefore here I take leave to enlarge myself. It may be considered in seven respects.

1. It is independent: many things are said to govern, but they have some dependence on their superiors. Our life is beholden to the fruits, the fruits to the trees, the trees to the earth, the earth to the rain, the rain to the sun, the sun and all to the Lord, Hos. ii. 21, 22. Fruits are from trees, and trees from seeds; both moistened by the air, and matured by the sun: element is qualified by element, orb depends on orb, the sun itself on *primum mobile*: we can go no higher. The child looks up to his father, his father lives by the peace of the country, the country could have no peace but by the magistrate, the magistrate is countenanced and warranted by the king, the king is ruled by God. Still one looks upon another, but the eyes of all things look up unto thee, O Lord, Psal. cxlv. 15.

2. It is absolute; he may dispose of his subjects at his pleasure: as the potter, having the lump in his hand, makes what kind of vessel he listeth; great or small, round or square, for the parlour or for the stable; and when he hath done, he may set it on his cupboard, or on the dunghill: be it to honour or dishonour, he will be honoured by it. Man respects deserts or demerits, in making the poor rich, or the rich poor; in ennobling the base, or debasing the noble: God doth all according to his own will, without further relation. "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?" Matt. xx. 15. He can make Tabor a little heaven, and turn Paradise into a desert. It is absolute, without control: there is none to call him to account or examination, with Why dost thou thus? O Lord, it was not therefore thy doing because it was good, but therefore is it good because it was thy doing. Whether thy mercy saveth us, we have cause to be thankful; or thy justice confoundeth us, we have no cause to complain: still, "Thou continuest holy, O thou worship of Israel," Psal. xxiii. 3.

3. His Lordship is universal. First, over all times:

other lords die, but he is eternal. Eternity is properly the duration of an uncreated Ens. It is improperly taken, either for things that have both beginning and end, as everlasting mountains; divers such phrases in Scripture: or for things that have a beginning but shall have no end; so are angels and men's souls eternal; so, eternal life, eternal fire. But God calls himself, "I AM," Exod. iii. 14: I am what I have been, I have been what I am, I am and have been what I shall be. This attribute is incommunicable: all other things had a *non esse* preceding their *esse*; and they have a mutation tending to nothing. "They that war against thee shall be as nothing," Isa. xli. 12: all come to nothing unless they be upheld by the manutenance of God: but "Thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end," Psal. cii. 27. Thou turnest man to destruction, and again sayest, Return: "even from everlasting to everlasting thou art God," Psal. xc. 2; the sole umpire and measurer of beginning and ending. Secondly, over all places. heaven, earth, hell, Psal. cxxxv. 6. Kings are limited, and cannot do many things they desire: they cannot command the sun to stand still, nor the wind to blow which way they would: in the lofty air, in the depth of the sea, no king reigns. They fondly flatter the pope with his long arms, that they reach to purgatory; (but indeed both power and place are alike imaginary;) it is Christ alone that hath the keys of all places. Thirdly, over all creatures; binding the influences of Pleiades, and loosing the bonds of Orion, Job xxxviii. 31; commanding the fire against the nature of it, to descend, 2 Kings i. 12; creating and ruling the stars, Amos v. 8, overruling the lions, Dan. vi. 22, sending the meteors, Psal. cxlviii. 8, hedging in the sea, lapping it up like a child in swaddling-cloths, Job xxxviii. 8, dividing, diverting, filling it. In both fire and water, those two raging elements that have no mercy, he shows mercy; delivers us from both in both. He calls the fowls, and they come; the beasts, and they hear; the trees, and they spring to obey him. He hath a raven for Elijah, a gourd for Jonah, a dog for Lazarus. Makes the leviathan, the hugest living creature, preserve his prophet. That a terrible lion should be killed, as was by Samson; or not kill, as they forbore Daniel; or kill and not eat, as that prophet, 1 Kings xiii.: here was the Lord. Over metals; he makes iron to swim, stones to cleave asunder. Over the devils; they must obey him though unwillingly. But they continually rebel against him, and break his will? They do indeed against his complacency, not against his permission. There is then no time, not the hour of death; no place, not the sorest torment; no creature, not the devil; but the Lord can deliver us from them. Therefore at all times, in all places, and against all creatures, let us trust in him for deliverance.

4. It is necessary; we could not live but by his dominion. Take away government, we are worse than beasts; a bad king is better than no king. If man rule ill, He overrules all: "Higher than the highest," Eccl. v. 8. Above all, to support; the pillar, and the foundation of the pillars and foundations of the world. Above all, to correct; binding kings in chains; if authority grow warped, to straighten it with his justice. Above all, to direct: he directs natural government to natural good: that the elements be not at war, but working in a well-disposed harmony for our benefit; that one doth not swallow up another, nor the stronger oppress the weaker; it is the Lord's doing. As he made nature with his *Fiat*, so he sets it a working with his *Faciat*: let it so be, let it so work. He directs

politic government to politic good, that we might live like men in a civil peace : supernatural government to salvation, that we may live like Christians in a gracious obedience and comfort. This power was necessary for creation ; he must be an Almighty Lord that could make us of nothing. It is necessary for preservation, to conserve things in their being and working. Necessary for redemption ; it must be an infinite store that must pay an infinite debt. If the Lord had not become a servant on earth, those servants could never have been lords in heaven. All the parts of a commonwealth ought to uphold one another in policy ; all the members of the church to uphold one another in charity ; as in a building one stone doth bear up another, but the foundation bears up all. The members uphold the body, the body the members ; the subjects uphold the king, the king upholds the subjects ; but thou, O Lord, upholdest us all.

5. It is immutable : whatsoever the Lord is, he is *simul et semel*. With us one thing doth exclude another ; this moment thrusts out that : learning excludes ignorance, riches poverty ; the business of this hour gives place to the next. But God's essence and perfections are together ; eternity is the essence of God. As he is eternal, with beginning, so invariable, without change. We are not present to things past or to come : God is to all times and things, past, present, or future, ever present. The reason is, he is immense, and fills all places without motion, without ascent or descent. Indeed he is sometimes said to descend ; but it is because he then doth some new work ; men took no notice of his presence before. This Lordship hath no succession, yet he produceth works successively : *Ego facio*, and *Ego faciam*. But this is not in regard of himself, but in respect of us, that he is said to do one thing after another. He doth not now create the world, nor now destroy it, nor now call Abraham out of Ur ; nor is Isaac redeemed from sacrifice, and Christ sacrificed, in the same place or at the same time. The type must properly go before the antitype. It is false then to say that men were justified before they were born : they are elected before all time, but called and justified in time : these things are done successively. With the Lord there is order, though there be no time. If I come to a pillar with my left side toward it, it is then on my left side ; if I come with my right side toward it, then is it on my right side ; yet is the pillar itself immovable. All change is a kind of death, saith the school : if God could change, he could die. Now change is either substantial, or qualitative : but God's substance cannot be changed, and he hath no qualities. Again, it is either amissive, or perfective : no man changes but he is either the better or the worse by it : God is the fountain of life, nothing can be added to him, for he is infinite ; nothing derogated from him, for he is the Lord Almighty. In his will, in his purpose, in his joy, in his justice, in his mercy, in all unchangeable. How is he then said to repent ? Not that he doth repent, but appears to us, in the alteration of his work, as one repenting. There may be change in the work, there is none in the Workman. The unchangeable decree of God disposeth the change of all things. A man that builds a house, hath an idea in his head wherby he purposes to frame it : he decrees how to order this part, to erect that corner, here to build a partition, there a chimney, to set up a scaffold, and pull it down again : here is a variety and change of the work, the worker is still the same. What God once is, he is for ever : once just, ever just ; once merciful, ever merciful.

6. It is incomprehensible : who ever saw God in

his strength, and lived ? This Lord is in himself invisible, as indivisible : seen in his mighty works, never to be seen in his person. But we shall see him face to face ? 1 Cor. xiii. 12. Not the Deity itself, as the Anthropomorphites dreamed : not a light only resulting from him, as was the error of the Armenians : but by face to face, is meant the clear knowledge of our understanding : and we shall know him, not with comprehensive knowledge, but with adequate knowledge, as he is cognoscible, for he is incomprehensible. So are those places to be understood, Heb. xii. 15 ; 1 John iii. 2 ; Rev. xx. 4. The intellectual vision is not of his essence, but of some work represented. And that of Daniel, chap. vii. 9, was but a dream or vision upon his bed, some divine and supernatural revelation. But did not John Baptist see the Holy Ghost ? Matt. iii. 16. No, not the Divine nature, but the Dove. But doth not Job assure himself of seeing God ? Job xix. 26. Not God himself, but his Redeemer, God in the veil of the flesh : Jesus shall be thoroughly and joyfully looked upon : but the Deity shall not be seen hereafter with the bodily eyes.

Nothing can apprehend that which is out of its limits : but we are finite, and God is immense. Every thing that is seen, must be seen in some place ; but God is in no place. Our body indeed shall be spiritual, not needing meat, nor sleep, nor breathing by air ; yet it is not capable of comprehending that infinite Spirit. Here we understand him after the measure and capacity of man, in a human resemblance ; as if he had feet, eyes, affections ; because they that should know him, have such. But when we read of God's foot, let us think of his coming, as a man removes by his feet. When we read of his eyes, consider his knowledge of all things, as a man sees all by that organ of sense. So when we are said to see his face, conceive our knowledge of him to be meant. "He that planted the ear, shall he not hear ?" Psal. xiv. 9 : he doth not say, Hath he not an ear ? but, shall he not hear ? The pure in heart are promised to see God, Matt. v. 8 : but as that pureness is in heart, so is that vision in heart. We say, I see a man's wisdom, see his valour, see his meaning ; yet are not these visible : so nor this Lord, but by his effects, what his power worketh. Thus far in heaven we shall exceed in knowledge. Here we know him only by negatives, what he is not ; that not mortal, not mutable : and by his works : The Lord is known by his judgments, Psal. ix. 16 ; and, "Be still, and know that I am God," Psal. xlv. 10 : you that are absent, come and see ; you that are present, stand still and contemplate : see and know, know and confess, confess and apply, make use of what you see and know. What is that ? I am God, you are but men. Put them in mind, O Lord, that they are but men : worms, vanity, nothing. But I am God : not a popular, titular, idle, alject god, like the gods of the Gentiles, not able to wipe the dust off their own faces ; but a God that makes gods, a God that mars gods ; that hath a dominion above all dominion, above all comprehension. Lord, we cannot comprehend thee in thy majesty, do thou comprehend us in thy mercy.

7. It is glorious and blessed : he is the chiefest good, and he enjoys himself, therefore is perfectly and infinitely blessed. Our blessedness consists in enjoying him ; his, not enjoying us, but himself. The Hebrew speaks of blessedness in the plural ; as the Latins call wealth, *divitie, opes* ; because many things concur, as to make up a rich man, so to make one blessed. There is of them both an essential part ; as gold, silver, lands, houses be the materials of riches. And an external part, the free and certain possession of these things ;

for if they may be gone, a man is poor in possibility; when they are gone, he is poor indeed. Man's blessedness is from another, the Lord's is from himself; man's is in grace, God's in nature; man's temporal, God's eternal; man's voluntary, God's necessary, it cannot be otherwise; man's changeable, God's always the same. The greatest and stateliest monarch puts off his glory and robes at some times; as when he goes into the bath, the bed, the grave. He carries no sceptre in the bath, yet may he then have a crown on his head; he hath neither sceptre nor crown in his bed, yet even then he is known a king by his attending guard; but in the grave he leaves off all. Now God's glory is never left off, there is no interruption of his blessedness, not a moment wherein he is less happy.

His blessedness is internal or external. Internal consists, 1. In the contemplation of his own sufficiency: thus he saw all to be very good which he made, and took pleasure in his own wisdom that made them. 2. In the comprehension of all happiness; for it is nothing to be blessed, and not to understand it: many were happy if they did but know their blessedness: God's omniscience is his blessedness. 3. In the delectation taken in this comprehension, when he knows there is nothing can offend him; whereas kings may be free from danger, not from fear. 4. In the contentation taken in this delight; having all things so fully in himself, that he needs no addition. Many men think not themselves happy in the much they have, because they want something they would have; but there is nothing more for God to desire. He contemplates his own goodness, and rests in himself with a sweet complacency, as the infinite fountain of all blessedness. External blessedness is that he receives from the creatures, every one, sensible and insensible, especially angels and men, Psal. cxlviii. He is blessed in himself, Rom. ix. 5, yet he will also be blessed of us. We can add nothing to him, nor may we take his due honour from him. He looks for praises for electing us, creating us, &c. We discourse our blessings with an annual commemoration, rejoice and solace ourselves in them; but still let us reflect all by praises to our Maker. A king will take a present of a beggar, that by this occasion he may (not enrich himself, but) reward the poor man. God needs not this outward clothing, yet he is pleased to wear it for our sakes. "Blessed be God," &c. 2 Cor. i. 3.

Thus far I thought good to meditate on the ineffable majesty of God. It is not possible to drink up all the sea, to suck in all the air, much less to comprehend God. (Nazian.) When a man considers himself in relation to the reasonless creatures; how the beasts do him homage, the earth yields him her fruits and metals, the sea brings him in merchandise, the air provides breath for his nostrils and fowls for his table, the sun misseeth not his hour to enlighten him; he may then think himself something; but when he considers the Lord, he is swallowed up, and thinks himself nothing. Now though a man cannot drink up all the river, yet he may taste it; though not span the sun, yet look upon his beams; though we cannot take in all the air, yet enough to fill us. Let us get enough of this Lord to fill our hearts, we need no more. (Bern.) When a man thrusts his hand into the fire, it burns him; when he comes but near it, it warms him: let us come with a purpose to partake, not to comprehend the Lord. (August.) The two days' offering are the two Testaments; these eat and feed upon: what is reserved for the third day, is for the world to come; it will fire us to search that. (Origen on Levit.) Nor is this point barren, but hath its comfortable use, and that even

applicable to our purpose. Doctrine being like the sun, not only to delight us with the contemplation, but also to warm and quicken our affections.

1. This Lord being the Supreme, and all other powers subordinate to him, and dependent on him, let this encourage our faith to trust him with our deliverance. Trouble not yourselves with your enemies, nor yet say, Our own hand shall deliver us, Exod. xiv. 13. Kings are men of might, yet but men of dust: without this Lord their power cannot save themselves, much less us. Angels are mighty, but cannot come unless this Lord send them. I could ask my Father, and he would give me legions of angels, saith Christ, Matt. xxvi. 53; we must ask our Father, or not have one angel to do us good. He shall look his eyes out, that trusts to any other deliverer than the Lord.

2. His dominion being so absolute, let men cease to rebel against it. I will be exalted, not only in my Israel, but among the nations, Psal. xlvii. 10: if they receive me, with their good contents; if they refuse me, against their wills. And if there be any ground, whose lines are extended farther than people and nations inhabit, there also will I be exalted. We fear kings, and take their wrathful looks as messengers of death; and we do well to give fear to whom fear belongs, Rom. xiii. 7. But here is a power we cannot resist, a wisdom we cannot delude, a justice we cannot corrupt. Locks, and stocks, and treble-barred doors, a dark dungeon, and a cruel gaoler, all cannot keep them in whom this Lord will deliver, Acts xvi. 26. His power shall shake the foundations of the earth, that earthquake the foundations of the prison, that trembling (as in the body) disjoint and unfasten the doors, and loose all their bands. There is no knot but he can untie it; let us at once fear and trust him.

3. This being universal over all times; the God of Abraham, and of his seed; "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever," Heb. xiii. 8; the God of our fathers that were of ourselves that are, of our posterity that shall be; then our enemies shall never find time, wherein he shall not find means to deliver us. Over all places; whither shall we go from his presence? Psal. cxxxix. Whither? That place was never yet discovered. He is present even to those that shun his presence, that say to him, Depart from us; how much more to us! The Lord is with us; yea, he is not only with us, but for us; Immanuel, God in our nature, God in our flesh. "The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge," Psal. xlvii. 11. The God of virtue, there is his power: he is our refuge, there is his favour. The Lord of hosts, strong: the God of Jacob, sweet. The one of puissance, another of promise. "The Lord, the Lord," Exod. xxiv. 6; whatsoever belongs to power, majesty, governance: "merciful;" whatever belongs to election, dilection, compassion, covenant, sacrament: both together a just equilibrium between greatness and grace; a fair and sweet harmony. Over all creatures: as heaven is his throne, the earth his foot-stool, and the sea his wash-pot; so all creatures in them are at his beck; none can say, I alone have escaped. He can make the very flies and insects, those scorns of nature, executioners of his vengeance. Over us, in a gracious and special manner; which affords us a challenge and defiance against all adversary forces; we fear not armies of men, legions of devils, nor the gates of hell. The Lord is our God: which are not only words of charity, comprehending in a community all Christians; but words of faith, when we take this great Lord for our proper and peculiar God. That he can deliver us, this we presume; that he will de-

liver us, this we assume; from that principle or thesis, we derive this hypothesis, and appropriate it to ourselves. Therefore we say not only, with the leper, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean," Matt. viii. 2; but we know thou canst, and we believe thou wilt, and we beseech thee to do it.

4. The necessariness of this Lordship gives us experience, experience confidence, and confidence will bring deliverance. How easily would the thunder strike us dead, the sea break in upon us, thieves spoil us, the whelps of Rome worry us, the fiends of hell ruin us; but that our Lord sits in the chair of omnipotency and protects us! Many are the dangers which we see and fear, innumerable those we neither see nor fear; therefore, to take away all attribution to ourselves, even when we know not, the Lord delivers us. "How manifold are thy works, O Lord!" Psal. civ. 24. How manifold! if we sail in the main ocean, and put not into some arm or creek, we never find an end. But we wonder not because they are common. Of fulness comes loathing. It is not magnitude, but novelty, that draws our eyes and observations. But he that considers his own weakness and impotence; how he was made in the womb, and knew it not; taken from the womb, and not able to help himself; that God must now give him his daily bread to feed him, his daily breath to quicken him, or he perishes; or that considers the power of his enemies, with the implacable fury of their malice, the blood-hounds of hell; and yet that he is delivered; must confess, This is the Lord's doing. That Sisera should fall by a woman, Pharaoh's host sink like stones into the bottom of the sea, an invincible navy perish by a few rotten ships on fire; "Oh that men would therefore praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!" Psal. cxviii. 8; that our children's children to the last period of any generation in this island may say, O God, we have heard with our ears, our fathers and grandfathers have declared to us, that noble work of thy deliverance.

5. The immutability of it gives us further cause to trust in him. Laban may love Jacob well, but his countenance will change upon him; Amnon will hate Tamar more than ever he loved her; Pharaoh's officer forgets Joseph when his turn is served: there is no constancy in man; but I the Lord change not, Mal. iii. 6. The world changeth, the vine casts off her grapes, the tired earth grows dull in increase, man's stature is lessened, his length of life less than that, his honesty little or nothing at all; the sea encroacheth upon the land, springs look like autumns; states change, policies change, governments change, all the materials of nature change: we see it, we need not preach it; it is matter of sight, not of faith. Every man's month is full of this complaint. The world is fickle; whatsoever is delectable, vanisheth like smoke. That medicine helps to-day, which doth not to-morrow; God is always helpful. That receipt helps one which helps not another; God helps all. (August.) The hoarder adores his money; yet is his wealth but like an inheritance on Salisbury Plain; he may rob many passengers for a time, at last somebody will rob him. Set not your heart on riches, lest you be driven to say, as Laban to Rachel, Thou hast stolen away my heart. And when they are gone, their loss gives more of pain than their possession of pleasure. Contrarily, God's love increaseth; though not really, in itself, yet effectually, to us. (August.) Friends are notable, Paul had many adherents, yet at last complains, "No man stood with me, but all forsook me," 2 Tim. i. 16. Indeed Alexander opposed his words; some withstood him, but none stood with him. Yet then he finds this Lord to stand for him, he delivered

him, ver. 17. Peace changeth into war, discord thrusts out amity; but in God is constant peace. "I create the fruit of the lips; Peace, peace," &c. Isa. lvii. 19. Where we find, 1. Sureness; Pharaoh's dream is doubled for the sureness. 2. Greatness; no peace like our reconciliation with God, it is past all understanding. 3. Multiplicity, all kinds of peace that may stand with goodness. If sufferings abound for Christ, consolations abound also, 2 Cor. i. 5: if the exuberance be in either scale, it is in the comforts. We read of seven enemies, Rom. viii. 35; and of seven victories, ver. 38. And if there be any other obstacle, from the height of heaven to the depth and bottom of hell, or further malignity in any creature, it shall be removed. Whom God loves he loves to the end; and if he have once given us an earnest of his favour, we shall be sure of the whole bargain.

6. The incomprehensibleness of this power, so far transcending the narrowness of the human heart, and yet so visible to the eye in the great and wondrous effects, may well further show us where our deliverance lies. Howsoever the noblest demonstration of things be from their causes and principles; yet the nearest to usward, and most apprehensible, is from the effects and performances. At Sennacherib's army Judah hung down the head, rent her clothes, and hid her face; nothing was left her, but, Lord, bow down thine ear and hear, open thine eye and consider: yet in this extremity they found the Lord a Deliverer; an angel slew in one night 185,000 of them. Here was an invisible hand, but a mighty one; a power not comprehensible, yet discerned in the work. If any object, We see not our signs, not one finger of this hand appears: we are in distress, and the Lord hath thrust his working arm into his bosom, buried his mercies in forgetfulness: yea, he does that which seems contrary to his works of favour, which the prophet calls strange and improper works, Isa. xxviii. 21, almost alien from his nature, troubling his own people; that the very wicked insult, Where is now their God? yet even then is an invisible hand working for us; and when the devil's conspiracy is come to the birth, it shall be abortive, or strangled in the womb; the God of our salvation will deliver us.

7. It is blessed, and that which blesseth us, and all things to us: the sun doth not so necessarily lighten the air, as God doth bless them his favour is pleased to shine upon. Christ is his principally blessed Son. "Son of God," Matt. xxvi. 63. "Son of the Blessed," Mark xiv. 61. This blessedness comes down from him to the rest of his children: all blessings come from God, but by the hand of man, even that man of God, and hand of his Father, Christ. That bread should not choke, rather than nourish, it is blessing. That garments, which are cold of themselves, should keep us warm; but especially, that we perish not in our sins, that we are delivered from the power of death and paws of the dragon, this is his extraordinary blessing. Blessedness is every man's desire; now he that hath God, hath blessedness. Whosoever hath the sun, hath the light of the sun; he cannot want water, that hath the fountain. St. Augustine hath the story of a histrionical mountebank, that to get spectators, and money by them, promised to tell them the next day what they all most desired. The theatre being full of people, and their minds full of expectation, what was the device? "You would all buy cheap and sell dear." But this hold is not, for the good man in a famine will buy corn dear, and sell it to the poor cheap. And on the other side, the unthrif will sell his inheritance cheap, to buy vanities dear. Therefore he failed of his pro-

mise. But if he had told them, You would all be happy; this had been a full satisfaction. Let us cleave to this blessed God, and he will deliver us from sin and hell, which is blessedness begun; and bring us to salvation and heaven, which is blessedness perfect and consummate.

Let this teach us to bless him, as being most blessed and lovely. Look what foundation there is in any other, why thou shouldst love, fear, serve, honour them; all these are a thousand times more in God. Thy prince hath honour, thy father reverence, thy master service, thy wife love: all these are due to God in a transcendent measure. He that is thy king, is but God's servant; and spiritually we are all kings, in Christ: and when all the confederate kings of the earth cannot deliver thee, this Lord can save thee. Thou lovest thy country, it is well: thy country gave thee not being and life: to dispense God is the way to make thine own country spew thee out. If therefore Curtius, in a vain-glorious love to his country, threw himself into the gulf, because the oracle said, Whom the people loved best, he must be cast in to stop it; how are we bound to love God even above our own lives, that hath preserved us here, and provided a better country for us hereafter! Thou reverencest thy father, thou doest well, nature itself would rebuke the contrary; but if such awe be to the father of thy flesh, what humble reverence is due to the Infuser of thy soul, the Father of thy father and of all mankind! Thou servest thy master, well done; that God which always commands, not seldom commends this obedience: but if a master's reward be such an encouragement, what is it to hear from heaven, Well done, good servant! Thy wife hath thy heart, it is fit, you are one flesh; but be not so uxorious to thy wife, as to be injurious to thy Husband, Christ. Of all places, remember Solomon, and let not thy wife have God's place. The love of a brother is great, of a friend greater, of a wife above that; but the love of God must be above all. Let the dead bury their dead; follow thou me, Matt. viii. 22: forsake thy father living, much more dead, to follow Christ. If the wife of thy bosom alienate thy affection from him, she is a traitor to thee and to him. Now if lust or profit comes in competition with God, examine thy conscience, which preferrest thou? Gold many go to the devil for, "yet the law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold or silver," Psal. cxix. 72. How many, of all these things, do make it their last and least care! Many men's shoe-ties cost them more in a year than God and their souls: so unmindful are we of thee, O Lord!

"The Lord knoweth how." I have held you long in this point of deliverance, and you say it is high time to deliver you from it: one circumstance more, and you have your wish. This last concerns the wisdom of God: it is enough that he promises deliverance, he keeps the manner to himself. It is set down indefinitely: no man, no apostle, no angel, can know all the means of God's delivering his: it is enough that he himself knows. This gives a check to all saucy inquirers, that will not believe help from the Lord, unless he tells them how. It hath

ever been the foolish ambition of man, to be most prying into concealed things; desiring to know what he is forbidden, and slighting that he is charged to learn. It was not the thirst of gold that was the fall of mankind; the earth and all her metals were his: not of honour; he had sovereignty over all the creatures: not of pleasure; he wanted none: Satan had another bait, a forbidden knowledge. How divine a thing is knowledge, whereof even innocency itself was ambitious! Adam looked for speculative knowledge, he should have looked for experimental. He thought it had been good to know evil, whereas good was ample enough to have made up his perfect knowledge and blessedness. He that knew all other things, knew not this one thing, that he knew enough. All that God made was good, the Maker being much more good; they good in their kinds, he good in himself. Adam knew the Creator, and his creatures, yet this could not content him: he would know that God never made, evil; evil of sin, evil of death; both which himself made by desiring to know them. Ever since, we know evil too well, and smart with knowing it: how dear hath this lesson cost us, that it is safe to be ignorant where God hath not bid us know! Yet still are we transported with this saucy appetite of our grandmother, and run ourselves aground with the curious affectation of forbidden knowledge. For the things revealed, Lord, give us a sober knowledge; for the things concealed, give us a contented ignorance. There is more manifested than we can know, enough to make us happy by knowing. Deliverance we look for: how or when the Lord will deliver thee or me, that is in his own bosom, and the breast of his Privy Counsel, Jesus Christ.

"The Lord knoweth how." As there is nothing impossible to his might, so there is nothing concealable from his understanding. God's wisdom and providence is like the eye of a well-drawn picture; that looks upon all and every one, as if every one were all. Take an eye and draw never so many lines from it, it sees all alike, and at once; the centre is present to every point of the circumference. This is a threefold comfort to us.

1. He knows our temptations before they be upon us; he sees the preparing of the potion, weighs the ingredients to a scruple, qualifies the malignity of the purgatives with sweet consolations. Satan, that bloody apothecary, minds nothing but the drugs and dregs of poison; but God puts in an antidote that he knows not of: he means to do hurt, but the Lord knows how to convert it to good. Thus, as Augustine saith, all the misery of a Christian is a medicinal pain, not a penal sentence. Now he that looks to our affliction, will look to our extrication. He would never suffer Satan to assault us, but that he knows how to deliver us. If Pharaoh had kept himself at home, God's honour had not been so great at the Red Sea: he knows as well how to get himself honour of Satan, as he did of Pharaoh.

2. He knows them when they be upon us. The Lord looked down upon the affliction of Israel, Exod. ii. 25: Pharaoh plagues them, he sees it, and therefore plagues Pharaoh. "Thou hast considered my trouble, thou hast known my soul in adversities," Psal. xxxi. 7. Now he that knows the soul in adversity, knows how to deliver it out of adversity. "The Lord look upon it," says dying Zechariah, 2 Chron. xxiv. 22. Yes, he did see it. The wronged child hopes to relieve himself by making moan to his father. The eagle, though she flies aloft, hath still an eye to her young ones; if any danger approach, she swiftly stoops to defend them. (Plin.) Thus Christ in heaven hath an eye to his darlings on

earth: if any Saul be riding with a bloody commission against them, down he comes from his imperial throne to their rescue. Why dost thou persecute me? Me: dost thou think, Saul, that Christians have no patrons upon earth?

3. He knows how to rid them from us. They are often so perplexful and intricate, that neither we see, nor the world sees, nor reason apprehends how, yet the Lord knoweth. Egypt afflicts Israel through many degrees; Pharaoh suspects them for purpose of revolting, imposeth on them heavy burdens; still God looks on, and lets him alone. To the name of strangers is added the name of slaves. Israel had gathered some rust in Egypt, and now must be scourged: it is well they bore their burdens, who else had borne the burden of God. When, like palm trees, they flourish with their burdens, midwives are suborned to destroy their male children: and they whose office is to help the birth, must murder it. Still the Lord knows, and holds his peace. From burdens they proceed to bondage, and from bondage to blood: from vexation of their bodies to destruction of the fruit of their bodies. If the midwives refuse, the multitude shall do it: cruelty had but smoked before, now it flames up. It is rare tyranny that finds no villany for an executioner. Lastly, impossible labours are laid upon them, the tyrant requires tasks not feasible: they could neither make straw, nor find it, yet they must have it. Do what may be, is tolerable; but do what cannot be, is cruel. Yet thus doth Pharaoh pick a quarrel to punish; and if they do it not, they are beaten. Now God begins to look down, and spite of all he delivers his people. No arms shall keep them longer in Egypt, no armies shall hurt them out of Egypt. Pharaoh or the sea looks for their conquest; to escape is beyond all hope, all thought; yet both shall be disappointed; the Lord knew how to do it. So that they did not cry so loud before, as now they sin: not faith, but sense, teacheth them to magnify that God after their deliverance, which they scarce trusted for their deliverance.

The antichristian enemies of God's church and truth, after the infatuation of so many treacherous conspiracies, found out at the last a speeding one; such as in so many thousand years, from the fall of the reprobate angels, never came into the head of any devil, to put into the head of any man; or if the head could devise it, yet to find a heart to receive it, or a hand to act it, would have been thought impossible. But decreed it was in the senate of Rome, in the bosom of that man of sin, who turns the keys of the kingdom of heaven into the keys of the kingdoms of the earth. Advised by that family of malice, who, of all the world, were the only ones that found out how to systematize a lie, as Augustine said of the Priscillianists. Thus far God lets them alone. Executioners must be found, there must be hands as well as heads. Ulysses may contrive, Diomedes must through with it. Still the Lord says nothing. Their secrecy makes them confident, dejected with a treble bond of counsel-keeping, religion, oath, sacrament: You shall swear by the blessed Trinity, and holy sacrament, not to reveal it: thus they eat their God upon a bargain of blood. Still the Lord is silent. They build the foundation of their design under the foundation of the parliament house, and say to the ground, Cover us: they trust not the air, but lay up their treason in a subterraneous vault, with great improbity of labour. Who should discover those inward chambers of death? Yes, the Lord knows how. Their catholic doomsday is now at hand, and there wants nothing but a hand to set it: they say of our souls, There is no help for

them in their God. Then was God's time and hint; and in a parable, by a miracle, we are delivered. Their stratagem is defeated, their dungeon and hell of secrecy opened, the deeper hell of their hearts eviscerated, their vault of most barbarous villany ransacked, to convince the and all the world, that the Lord knows how to deliver his. Alas, we were like men that dreamed, nay, we dreamed not of this: the noise of millstones, light of candles, bread and wine, bride and bridegroom, were our song; the plot of ruin came not within the reach of our thoughts. Blessed be that God who only delivered us.

Thus he can deliver with equal means, with small means, with no means: he can tell how. Midian comes against Israel; they, like the sand by the sea, covered all the valley; the Israelites were two and thirty thousand strong. They think, We are two few; God says, The people are too many. They say, The Midianites are too many for us: God replies, You are too many for them. Indeed, if Israel had expected the victory from their own fingers, they had been too weak for Midian; but seeing God will give the conquest, and have the glory, they are too strong. Where human strength is opposed, there needs an equality: but now God will fight, and he knows how to do it with a few, with none, as well as with many. His care is not how to get the victory, but how to preserve the glory of it gotten. Therefore he chooseth to save by few, that all the honour may redound to himself. So jealous is he of his glory, that though he give deliverance to Israel, yet the praise of the deliverance he will keep to himself. Therefore he shortens their means, that they may not shorten his mercies. Now if he will not allow lawful means to darken his honour, how intolerable is unlawful means! He that remembers the year eighty-eight; (and what true English spirit can forget it, or forbear to report it to his children?) an invincible navy, an implacable fury, furnished with instruments of murder and torture, confident of our utter desolation; and consider how they were all desolated, and we delivered, when no arm nor finger of flesh was for us: must needs confess, that the Lord knows how: he used no help in the delivery, let him have no partner in the glory. There is less danger in stealing any thing from him, than his honour. If men steal the prince's tribute, or clip his coin, he may pardon it; but not if they go about to rob him of his crown. No, but still let him be praised, both in our chambers at home, and abroad in our churches, for our time, and throughout all the generations of our children's children after us, till Christ appear in the clouds; and then in the kingdom of heaven for ever and ever. Amen.

"And to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished." We have seen how the godly speed, now let us mark the end of their persecutors. The wicked keep such a noise in the world, that a poor man's tale can no more be heard, than the humming of a bee in a clap of thunder. So headstrong and uncontrollable is the precipice of sin, that when the righteous would withstand it they are borne down by it. The church should never find so many stratagems directed avowedly against her, but that she takes a course which the world dislikes. The disapproval of the ungodly, is the approval of our life and conversation, says Gregory, in Ezek. Hom. 9. In all ages, the rebuke of Christ hath been the religion of Christians. The reason is, our singularity and dissent from their customs; which as it makes them hiss like serpents, because we trouble their nests; so, like an antiprismatic, it should inflame our zeal. We have read of heathens that would shun the popular current. Phocion had not

suspected his speech, had not the people applauded it. Antisthenes mistrusted some ill in himself for the vulgar commendation. And shall we be brutishly driven with the drove? or rather, like nails in a wheel, turn as we are turned, without either conscience of sin or guidance of reason? If we live like them that are reserved to judgment, how should we think ourselves not reserved with them? This is their time to persecute, ours to suffer: their time will come to snuff, ours to triumph. Let me rather feel their malice, than be wrapped up in their vengeance. That man refuses to be one of the body, (the church,) who is not willing to bear the world's hatred along with the Head (Christ). (August. Tract. in Joh. 87.) They are our corrosives, corrosives, used only to pare off our excrements, and eat out our dead flesh by their temptations; but the patient is preserved, when the plaster is thrown into the fire.

St. Hierome allegorically upon Ezek. xlvii. 19: The possession begins at Tamar, and reacheth along to the waters of strife. Is there peace between Joshua and Gibeon? then there is quarrel enough for the Amorites against Gibeon. The heirs of heaven can expect no better at the hands of the children of this world. A larger book might be written of the apostles' sufferings, than that of their acts. And had not the Divine power given them a miraculous success, in the safe conduct of a gospel through a world of temptations, it might have been entitled in a bloody rubric, The book of the sufferings of the apostles. "God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death," 1 Cor. iv. 9. Paul might well say *last*, with an emphasis: the former endured but the injuries of their own country: the last, the malice of all the world, vicing who should multiply the most disgraces upon them. "Concerning this sect, we know that every where it is spoken against," Acts xxviii. 22. They might well affirm it, that were the first authors of it. As Caesar wrote of those battles, *quibus non solum interfuit, sed et præfuit*, at which he was not only present, but in which also he had the chief command. But let us stand upon our guard, keep to the lists of our warfare, maintain the fight we have sworn in baptism. Subtle arguments well answered, breed a clear conclusion: our souls shall shine the brighter one day for this rubbing. Consider we two encouragements. First, Christ endured such contradiction of sinners, Heb. xii. 3: he is the Commander and beholder of this combat: the Judge and rewarder of this courage; the Leader of the company, and Conqueror of the enemy: "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world," John xvi. 33. Next, their rage is but like their general's, sharp but short; for a time; for they are reserved to the day of judgment to be punished.

The parts are four, according to the proceeding of civil judicature: the malefactors, their binding over, the assizes, and the execution.

The malefactors, The unjust.

The binding over, Are reserved.

The assizes, To the day of judgment.

The execution, To be punished.

"The unjust." This term must be considered in a threefold relation. 1. As it is a want of that righteousness which the law requires. 2. As a want of that righteousness which the gospel accepts. 3. As it implies a habit of unrighteousness, such as both the law and gospel condemn. Of all these a little.

1. For legal justice, how far short is the best man of it! God requires a perfect fulfilling of the law, because he gave a perfect ability to do it. If man would lose wilfully this sufficiency, what fault is in God? Now the son that inherits his father's goods, is bound to pay his father's debts: we have our

father's goods, natural endowments, &c., therefore bound to answer for his sin; if so we call original sin, not ours, but his. But howsoever our parents conveyed unto us original sins, we ourselves are the parents of actuals. All naturals are depraved, all supernaturals are deprived, by the first fall. Man's nature may be inclined to some moral virtues imperfect, as truth, justice, temperance, chastity; but not to supernatural, as faith, hope, charity, humility; these are quite out of nature's orb. So for that justice which should give absolute obedience to God's will, all men be unjust.

2. For evangelical justice, which is had by faith: this is a righteousness of grace, to supply the defects of nature. We that had no righteousness of our own, must be beholden to one that hath some to spare: such a one, as though he give never so much, hath never the less; an infinite and inexhaustible fountain of goodness. Satan, like a chymic, had extracted all the juice and spirits of our grace: we have no way to enrich our bankrupt estate, but with the treasures of Christ. He was not only our Brother, by taking our flesh upon him, but also our Surety, by taking our debts upon him; not only the nature of man, but the form of a servant. He may well say, I paid that I never took, Psal. lxxix. 4. What man will give his son for his sin? Micah vi. 7. Yet God did more; he gave his Son for (not his own, but) another's sin. Man's sin was the cause of Christ's death; Christ's death the cause of man's life. He gave life to us, by giving his life for us. Had he been mere man, this had done us no good; his justice had been little enough for himself. But the Son of God suffered, not in the propriety of his nature as man, but in his unity of person; and so he merited. The sword of justice was awaked to be sheathed in our bowels: the Shepherd interposed himself to take the blow, Zech. xiii. 7. By sin we are indebted to God more than we are worth; now Christ undertook for us. In his circumcision, he gave the earnest, set his hand to the obligation, to pay the whole debt. God is the Creditor, he paid him, and sued out for his church a discharge. Satan was the gaoler, he paid him; death the executioner, he paid him too; though for their fees they parted his garments among them. As Jacob's life was bound up in the life of Benjamin, without whom his grey hairs would be brought to the earth in grief, Gen. xlv. 30, 31; so our life is bound up in the life of Jesus, and if he be not with us, we shall die with anguish, and go to the grave in sorrow.

This is a second way to be just: the former we lost by sin, this we find by faith; he that wanteth this is unjust and must perish. Now reprobates cannot have this justice, by reason they lack faith; as he that is blind hath no benefit by the light. Indeed the world thinks this an easy attainment; but is quite mistaken. A child cannot generate, nor a man regenerate himself; the latter is as possible as the former. Man's nature being whole, could not preserve itself; much less being broken, can it repair itself. He that cannot keep himself from death while he lives, will more impossibly restore and revive himself to life being dead. Faith is a rare gift, though there be many Christians: all think they have it; yet even Christ himself says, he shall scarce know where to find it. How great a part of the world lies quite out of the orb of faith! In Rome it is not; they contest against it. In courts it is rare; many live there rather by the favour of the prince than by the faith of God. In the city, the credit of faith is so weak, that it cannot be trusted without ready money. In the country she is likeliest to be had; but the tenant finds so little faith in the landlord, that he

thinks it a needless virtue in himself. Among lawyers there is just so much faith as there is clarity. Most men have so much, and so little, as to think they need no more. The professors of faith are like Gideon's army, two and thirty thousand; but when the faithful are separated, as those soldiers were mustered, there are but three hundred left. Lord, increase our faith, and the number of the faithful; that we who cannot be just in ourselves, may be just in Jesus Christ.

3. There is a third kind of justice, actual, practical, inseparably proceeding from the former: it is a sanctified conformity to the will of God. This justifies all them to the world, whom faith hath justified to the Lord; when in all our earthly business we still carry a heavenly mind; when our faith to God is seen in our faithfulness to men. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life," Rev. ii. 10. Continue in evangelical faith, though you die for it; continue in moral faithfulness, till you die in it. There is a faith of the law, Matt. xxiii. 23. There is a faith of the gospel, Matt. xxv. 23; Rom. i. 17. The one is fidelity in our promises; the other is confidence in the promises of God. If he covenant with us, I will be your God; we must stipulate, Then will we rest upon thee. Thou shalt be my people; then we must be faithful. According to the faith which we believe, God is faithful to us; according to the faith by which we believe, we are faithful to God. Both these together; for no man can deal faithfully with God legally, unless he believe evangelically that God will deal faithfully with him.

Want of legal faith opposes the majesty of God; want of evangelical faith opposes the truth and mercy of God. Be not false-hearted in the first, nor faint-hearted in the latter. In a word, he is a just man that doth good; and there is no sap of life in the tree if no fruit appear in the branches.

The unjust man wants all these three righteousnesses: he is not legally just, for he hath no purity of nature; he is not evangelically just, for he hath no sanctity of grace; he is not practically just, for he hath no morality of life. The first wicked men cannot have, the next they will not have, and (without that) the last they shall not have.

Thus we see negatively who are unjust; but there is more than a bare privation in it, there is something positive: it includes not only a defect and indisposition to do well, but also an actual contrariety to justice, doing what is palpably evil. So there is a twofold malignity in it; the transgression, and the duration of it. For the former, the wicked are unjust to God, to men, to themselves.

1. To God. Righteousness is an obedience to the will of God, and injustice is no other than disobedience. That we may learn to judge ourselves in this, consider the infallible marks of obedience. First, it must be entire, respective of all the commandments; he that transgresseth one, hath not obeyed. Saul kept part of God's precept, slew the most, and worst; yet God rejected him as disobedient. Many pierce their lives, as beggars do their cloaks, here and there a new patch: an alms at Christmas, this is a patch of charity; communicate twice a year, two patches of faith. Disobedient for all this. Secondly, single or sincere; we must obey the law without a glance at our own profit, or credit, or safety by it. If one eye look one way, the other another way, the object will never be well seen. The servant would go to church, to please his master; more fain another way, to please himself: but he that looks any other way in his devotion, than to the Lord's precepts, is unjust; he makes God the second, himself the principal. Thirdly, ready. Angels have wings to fly about it.

Abraham no sooner received that strange command, but he rose early to obey it. A compulsory obedience the devils may give, but are never the nearer being righteous. He shall never be welcome to God, that comes on his feet, and leaves his heart behind him. Fourthly, constant. That obedience which hath an end, had never any true beginning. If it falls it was never a fixed star, but a mere meteor. A man may lose his horse, his purse, his cloak; these be separable: the grace that hangs on by tacks, like a mantle, soon drops off. Divers have a crust of profession congealed by cold; desirous to keep themselves warm by the fire of the temple, which the summer of wantonness thaws into fluid and spilt water. The grasshoppers camp in the hedges in a cold day, &c. Nah. iii. 17. In cold weather they lie in heaps and swarms; in hot weather they scatter: when prosperity comes, their looseness appears. In God's book these are found unjust servants. Fifthly, true or just, no trick nor equivocation in it. It seeks not to obey God for man's sake, but man for God's sake: it obeys men, but never against the Lord.

Disobedience is called witchcraft, for it goes from God to the devil, and like a witch intends mischief and revenge. There be two parts of it; disobedience material, when it breaks the law; formal, when it scorns the Lawgiver. Disobedience did east Adam out of Paradise, angels out of heaven, Jonah out of the ship, Saul out of his kingdom, Israel out of Israel. Superiors complain that others do not obey them; but no wonder, when they obey not God. Shall any creature owe that man service, that will perform no service to his Maker? God for this often makes a tumult and rebellion in their own bosoms; that reason, the queen regent of the soul, cannot be heard, nor any of her laws be respected, because the nintuous affections make such a combustion, putting the whole man out of order and good disposition. Disobedience will not bow, but it shall be broken; as the thunder melts the stubborn metal, and spares the unresisting purse. Thus is he unjust to God, that detains his honour; that is fed and gives no thanks: such a one steals his meat. He requires the seventh of our time, the tenth of our increase: we are unjust that deny this. These are thought honest men, yea, think themselves no less; they go as merrily with this profanation and sacrilege at their heels, as horses with an empty coach. Yea, the devil serves them as carriers do their horses; lay on them heavy loads, and then hang bells at their ears, to make them music. These are reserved to judgment, for no human law takes hold of them. Where should the poor minister have the tenths adjudged to him? And for making that day common to licentiousness, which God hath separated for especial holiness, where is this censured? A good lord gives his poor servant a farm to live on; for the rent, he requires every week one day's service, and at the year's end the tenth of his profits. He that returns not this small part to that God who gives all, is most unjust, and will be so found at the day of sentence.

2. To man. Such are they that measure their right by their power, and therefore will do injury because they can do it. Unjust, 1. To the commonwealth, as the golden extortioner. (I may so call him, because he gets gold by usury; as Babel is called the golden city, because she is an exactress of gold.) Let all the scribes in the city pass their words for him, yea, set their hands to it, yet God will hold him unjust. 2. To the church; that deny reverence to their mother, and withhold her maintenance; and, which is worse, plead a custom for it; as if it were a custom for children to rob their parents. The Italians have a trick in the art of rapier and dagger;

they will teach a scholar with a traverse or two, to get the point of his adversary's weapon, and then to lock him up so sure, that (turning away his face) he runs him through; and forsooth he turns away his face, because he will behold no cruelty. It is custom in England that locks up our points; and the law takes away the church's weapons by a trick of custom: yea, men stand still, behold this, justify it; but God's judgment shall find them unjust. 3. To private persons; such as steal away a man's good name with a felonious slander. Every one is bound to preserve the reputation of his brother; he that abuseth it (colour his spleen with what pretence he can) shall be condemned for unjust. Such a man is a monster, his throat a sepulchre, his tongue a sword, his mouth a bag of poison. I know in divers courts, scandals have their just censures; but how if the courts themselves admit of scandals? By the law of quittance, he that accuseth another of crimes which blemish his credit, and cannot prove them, should undergo the punishment due to such an offence. Gallio drove the railing Jews from the judgment-seat, Acts xviii. 16; he knew they had more malice than matter: a rare example! Thus lawyers often hunt a man at his form and leave the cause at loss. A captain of Darius hearing a mercenary soldier rail upon Alexander, struck him with his javelin, saying, I hired thee to fight against him, not to rail against him. Let advocates plead the cause, not invigilate against the adverse party.

The great injustice of the world is oppression; that doth ravish the poor, Psal. x. 9, not of their bodies, but of their estates. The hard-hearted Levite did but pass by, without succouring the robbed passenger, Luke x. 32: it is wicked *miserum relinquere*, but worse *miserum facere*. If the Levite be taxed for not helping him, what is their punishment that robbed him! Such are depopulators, ruining people to feed beasts; that where before men devoured sheep, now sheep devour men. This hath been an old disease, complained of by our forefathers; there were oppressors in their days, but the successors of them are now worse. Antigonus was a tyrant bad enough; yet being dead, and a more cruel one succeeding him, a cynic fellow falls every day a digging by the highway. The passengers asked him what he digged for; he answers, *Antigonum refodio*, i. e. I am digging up Antigonus again. Rehoboam's government made them ready to say, God be with Solomon. This caused the poor widow, an old tenantess, so to pray for the life of her young landlord, who had now the third time racked her rent. This he hearing, demanded the reason why she should so bless him, that had so cursed his father, seeing that he (in his modest phrase of oppression) had improved her rent. She answered, When your grandfather dealt hardly with us, we wished him in his grave, hoping for some goodness in the next. Your father was worse than he; we longed to be rid of him, our hopes looked on you; now you are the worst of all. And seeing by experience, seldom comes the better, we desire to keep you still; for certainly when you are gone, the next will be the devil himself. Innumerable other be the demonstrations of injustice: as, the wicked borrows, and pays not again; the sword-man wounds the image of his Maker; the tradesman abuses the simplicity of his customer; the lascivious corrupts the wife of his neighbour: these be capital unrighteousness, that bring men to judgment.

3. To a man's self. So is the unthrift, that spends himself into poverty by pride and luxury. His father went to hells with excess, and he follows after with misery: out of a laborious silkworm rises often such a painted butterfly. The drunkard is un-

just to himself; hath blood, and he fires it; spirits, and he chokes them; drowns himself on the dry land. So is the envious, that loseth the sweetness of his own, by grudging at his neighbours; that grinds himself to powder with his neighbour's millstones: another's fatness shall keep him lean; and not being patient to tarry sickness's leisure, or (which is more despatching) his empirics, soon dies of the sullen. The covetous is unjust to himself; what he should add to the content of his nature, he adds to the continent of his treasure. It grudgeth his heart, that his heart should have any good. If his body be not kept pining, his mind is repining. A secret and sore judgment; that he who is unjust to all others, should be most unjust to himself. When pride, or lust, or misaffection calls for the purse, it is ready; let the soul call for it, that cost may be spared. While you deny yourselves for a whole year the body and blood of your Saviour, are you not unjust to yourselves? While you hear sermons, the food of your souls, as if you had no stomach to them, you are more unjust to your spiritual life, than he that wilfully famisheth himself is accountable for his own death. O hear your consciences in time, and comfort them, lest they be never able to comfort you.

Thus you have heard the nature and specifications of injustice; now look upon the continuance of it, for so much the word imports. God will not cast all sinners into hell; who then should go to heaven? but the unjust; such as practise unrighteousness without any recovery of repentance. The unrighteous shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven, 1 Cor. vi. 9; Eph. v. 6: it is the continuance in sin that excludes from mercy. Two things throw men to perdition, without the intervention of extraordinary favour; malice in sin, and utter apostacy. These be the symptoms of that endangered disease, for which there is no balm in Gilead; we call it the sin of the Holy Ghost. Not that it is against the Third Person, as he is the Third Person, more than against the First or Second; but because it is against the function or operation of that Person, whose office is to illuminate the mind, and mollify the heart with love; therefore himself is called love. If men sin wilfully after that they have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for their sins, Heb. x. 26; because they maliciously have sacrificed their sacrifice, and split the only vessel that should save them. "The iniquity of Eli's house shall not be purged with sacrifice for ever," 1 Sam. iii. 14; never expiated. "There is a sin unto death; I do not say that he shall pray for it," 1 John v. 16. Every sin is unto death, but this emphatically; with a prohibition of interceding set upon it, like the flaming sword that kept Paradise; pray not for it. Schoolmen give this reason why the sin of malice is unpardonable: The defect may find remission, where the will may pretend fear of excess. A sin of ignorance is often forgiven, as was Paul's, 1 Tim. i. 13; because a man may affect too much knowledge, as Adam did. A sin of infirmity is oft forgiven, because a man may affect too much power and dominion, as did the angels. A sin of carnal fear is often forgiven, because a man may affect too much zeal, as did two of the apostles. A sin of partiality is oft forgiven, because a man may affect too much justice, Eccl. vii. 16. But not a sin of malice, because a man can never affect too much charity.

No less doth apostacy and falling off from God. A man may sin beyond all comfort in his own conscience, till he cannot hope for himself; as did Judas: beyond all interest in the church's devotion, till their prayers cannot help them; "Pray not thou for this people," Jer. vii. 16: beyond all claim to

Christ's satisfaction: the blood of the Lamb shall not help them, Matt. xii. 31. That which makes this sin past all cure, is, because it strives against the cure; as a madman wounded, will not suffer his wounds to be bound up, but rather seeks to wound the surgeon. God hath mercy upon sinners, Christ came to call and die for sinners, there be none now in heaven but they were once sinners; which of all the holy patriarchs, blessed apostles, can excuse themselves that they never did act unjustly? But injustice was none of their trade; they did not live in it, nor die in it. Zacchæus was once unjust, but he testified his repentance by charity and restitution. But they that practise unrighteousness to the end, in the end shall find judgment.

Are reserved. This is the binding over: God puts off many wicked men from the quarter sessions to the great assizes. There is a reservation that tendeth to good: as in the danger of wreck, much luggage is thrown overboard, the precious things are reserved. In the general slaughter of Amalek, Saul reserved Agag. Unless the Lord had reserved a remnant, we had been as Sodom, Isa. i. 9. But here is a reservation to punishment: whether they sleep or wake, play or work, stand or walk, their time runs on, their judgment is nearer; and they are more surely kept unto it, than any dungeon, with the thickest walls and strongest chains, can hold a prisoner till his arraignment comes. This reservation affords us a twofold collection or observation.

1. Wickedness hath but a time, but the punishment of wickedness is beyond all time. The most raging sea of malice hath bounds, the devil himself knows that he hath but a short time. Stay till the Amorites' sins be full, then comes their overthrow. The wicked are suffered to have their wills upon the righteous, their fills of unrighteousness; but, "How are they brought into desolation, as in a moment!" Psal. lxxiii. 19. The manner is scarce visible, the time scarce divisible: *how*, and *in a moment*. Impudent Pharaoh, bloodied with this unresisted tyranny, can belch out defiance in the face of Heaven; Who is God? It is too much honour for man to receive a message from heaven; yet God sends to Pharaoh, and is repulsed. Humility says, What is man, that God should regard him? Pride says, What is the Lord, that I should regard him? Thus he domineers for a while; but ere God have done with him, he will be known to him, and known by him to all the world. He could have swept him away suddenly, as a man most unworthy to live, who with the same breath he receives, denies the Giver of it. But he was reserved to another purpose, he must rage awhile longer, that his determined confusion might be the greater. He sees Israel crossing the sea, and wonders; yet hath neither the grace nor wit to retire. He is angry at the sea, thinks not on the Lord; sees not the plain difference which he puts betwixt his Israel and the Egyptians. He cannot now either consider or fear, it is his time to perish. Fair way he had, and smoothly ran on, till he came to the midst, not so much as one wave to wet the foot of his horse. When he is too far to escape, then God begins to strike. They know not why, but they wish themselves out again. Their chariots grow heavy, when they had done them the service to bring them to their perdition.

Wicked men run not faster into sin, than they would run from judgment. But they shall find, that it was never so easy to post into transgression, but it will be more impossible to post from destruction. Saul's persecution makes David take many a weary step: he kills the priests, consults with witches; what not? He hath his day, but in the mean time

is reserved to the Lord's day; the battle in Gilboa shall pay for all. The people are slain before his face, his sons fall under the swords of uncircumcised enemies, and the last scene of that tragical field is reserved for Saul himself. God is long ere he strikes, but when he doth, it is to purpose. The wicked man is not half so sure of transient pleasures, as he is of permanent plagues. Sin serves him as Abner did Ishbosheth, put him on the challenge of the kingdom, and then leave him miserable: or as Tamerlane helped Cosroe to the kingdom of Persia, and then took it away again. It is like a boy's squib, flashes, and cracks, and stinks, and is nothing. It serves him as Jacl did Sisera; he asks water, she gives him milk; he wishes shelter, she makes him a bed; he begs but the protection of her tent, she covers him with a mantle; she gives more than he asks, but withal, more than he expects. When his troublous thoughts were pacified with the change, and he flatters himself, It is better to be here than in the whirling of chariots, in the horror of fight or flight, among such wounds, such shrieks, such carcases. But, as when Agag says, The bitterness of death is past, even then he feels the sword: so in these contentful thoughts Sisera dies; the terror of Israel lies bleeding at the foot of a woman. Do we see impudent sinners flourish, awe the greatest, confront, yea, control magistracy? It is their time, and they take it: do what mischief they can, answer it as they may. But the Lord laughs at him, for he seeth that his day is coming, Psal. xxxvii. 13. There is a day of reckoning, and that day is coming, and the Lord sees it. He that may reckon with them at any time, will not reckon till that time.

2. The unjust are already reserved, the decree is passed against them. They are bound over to the last assizes by a threefold recognisance, as it were with infrangible, though insensible, chains of judgment; the bond of their sins, the bond of their conscience, and the bond of omnipotent justice: and this threefold cable is not easily broken.

The first bond is their sin: "He shall be holden with the cords of his sin," Prov. v. 22. His own shackles shall hold him fast enough, he needs no stronger chains than those he makes for himself. It may be asked the sinner, what he means, to make his fetters so strong? Saul was ever from the beginning his own enemy; neither did any hands hurt him but his own. At last, his death is suitable to his life; his own hand pays him the reward of all his wickedness: he that had been so long a killing his soul, now makes as short work with his body; Satan needs not bind a reprobate faster than he binds himself. The wicked do not, like temporal malefactors, go under bail; where it is but forfeiting the recognisance, and escape; for every step they take in sin, brings them directly forward to their judgment.

Therefore is this bondage called a death: sin being the death of life on earth, and the life of death in hell. There may be certain degrees in this spiritual dying, as there are in a corporal dissolution. There is a syncope or swooning, an epilepsy or falling sickness, an apoplexy or cold palsy, which if it be total is also final. The former are incident to the faithful, but recoverable by their ordinary repentance; as a man in a swoon is restored by sprinkling cold water, or bowing forward the body. The second are greater crimes, deadly sins; so expelling the Spirit of God, that no sign of his presence appears. It must be an extraordinary repentance that recovers these offenders; as a man in the falling sickness, by striving, sweating, beating of himself. Now they that are in a swoon, or foaming under an epilepsy, are bound

fast enough, they cannot run away; yet such fits and falls may be recovered. But when it comes to an apoplexy, a putrified custom, a rotten obstinacy in sin; the grave does not surer bind a dead body within her mouldy bars, than these bonds of obduracy enchain such a soul. There may remain awhile some small appearance of breath, a little natural warmth; yet it is impossible, without a miracle, to recover that spiritual life, which is so long, so universally excluded.

There is a proceeding with the mortified conscience, as with the dead carcass. First, the dead man that is to be buried, is the impenitent sinner; resembling a corpse in many respects. 1. In lack of sense; so lethargized in sin, that he feels not the prickings and woundings of a sore heart. Lay a mountain upon a dead man, he feels not the weight. Christ counsels him to buy restoratives, Rev. iii. 18; he perceives no need to buy: the cause of buying is the feeling of want, not the want of feeling. There is no love to God, no charity to men, in them; they have the true love of sense, but not the true sense of love. 2. In lack of appetite: they neither hunger nor thirst after righteousness, as being full of sinful crudities. Life brings appetite, appetite desires meat, and meat affords nourishment; if the soul hungers not, it lives not. Appetite is sharper in famine than in plenty; a double punishment, more stomach and less meat: but these desire not the body and blood of Christ. There is no corporal affection like thirst; as we see in Hagar, in Samson, in Christ himself suffering; not *esurio*, but *sitio*; extreme heat working upon the radical moisture. But dry these souls are to the death, yet feel no thirst after the waters of life. 3. In lack of motion. Indeed, a dead body hath a natural propulsion downwards; so these unjust men have a passive motion, they move down to hell; but they cannot actively move one finger to goodness. A corpse is a heavy, disanimated lump, pressing downwards; as sin cast Dathan from this world, Lucifer out of heaven. 4. In lack of heat, infected with the poison of that serpent, which is cold in the fourth degree, mortal. When a man is dead, chafe him, rub him, bow him, put *aqua viva* into him; then take him by the hand, and bid him walk; yet he cannot stir the least joint: except the soul be restored, all persuasions be in vain. 5. In lack of sweetness; the soul, his salt, being gone, what can keep it from putrefaction? Thus is adultery a noisome uncleanness; slander an unsavoury breath, like the stream that comes from a new open grave; their throat being an open sepulchre, Psal. v. 9. Heaps of ill-gotten wealth is a very dunghill; all wickedness like stinking carrion to God.

Now the coffin or grave for such a sinner is threefold, according to his death. The sepulchre of the body is the earth; the sepulchre of the soul is the body; the sepulchre of both, dying in sin, is hell: as there is natural, spiritual, and eternal death. The bearers that carry him, are four. 1. Hope of life; neither age nor sickness can put him out of that hope. 2. Promise of repentance to himself, when he can sin no longer. 3. Presumption of mercy, as if God must needs save him because he made him. 4. Love of the world, which makes him forget the world to come. These carry him out of life, as the widow's son was borne out of the gates of the city, Luke vii. A wanton eye carries a man out by the gates of his sight; a swearing tongue, by the gate of his mouth; listening to scurrilous speeches, by the gate of his ears.

Thus dead is every obstinate sinner: dead in sin, saith Paul; yea, saith the Lord. It is not the

opinion of some physician, that may be deceived in his principals, but it is a Thus saith the Lord. It is said of Adam fallen, as of a condemned malefactor, that he is dead in law. Not only in respect of the dissimilitude betwixt God's life and theirs; which is such an alienation, Eph. iv. 18, as is indeed a diametrical opposition; but in the order and course of God's justice, sentencing death to every one that sins; and this death must be answered either in the sinner or in the Saviour. So they are as dead to God, as a traitor to the prince, or as a felon is to the judge.

This is one especial bond, whereby they are reserved and bound over to the day of judgment; a death in sin. Not but that Christ is able to raise the dead, and to loose these bonds, Psal. cxvi. 16. He raised three sorts of dead in the three years of his ministry: one in the house, Jairus' daughter; another in the gate, the widow's son; a third in the grave, which was Lazarus. St. Augustine (Serm. 44. de Verb. Dom.) thus resembles them: A sinner is dead in the house, when he sins secretly, imagining mischief in his mind. He is carried out of the gate, when he sins openly, not confining it within doors; but brings it forth, Psal. vii. 14, in word or deed, and makes it scandalous to the church. He stinks in the grave, when he sins habitually, without any remorse. The first may be raised by doctrine; the next by discipline, as appears by Christ's own practice and direction, John ii. 15; Matt. xviii. 17. But what shall we do with the incorrigible and customary sinner, who is dead in the grave? Only pray, with Mary, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died," John xi. 32; but I know all things are possible unto thee. Now there was weeping for the damsel dead in the house: more weeping for the man carried out of the gate; the mother wept, the church laments; but most weeping at Lazarus' grave; Martha wept, and Mary wept, and the Jews wept, and Jesus wept, and groaned in the spirit. We ought to weep penitently for the beginnings of sin; more for the proceeding and increase; most of all for the completion and accomplishment of death, when the sinner betakes himself to the seer's chair, deriding God and all goodness. Let us say in the church, as Demosthenes did in Athens, We have more cause to weep for the lives of the bad, than for the deaths of the good. It is over the spiritually dead, that the confused quire of hell sing songs of triumph. They are glad to see us sin in the house, admitting an ill motion to our purpose: rejoice at our carrying forth, breaking out into notorious offences; are most merry, when we continue in filthiness, till we stink in the sepulchre. O let us hearken to Christ, Arise, sit up and speak: to comfort our mother on earth, to please our Father in heaven.

The next bond is their evil conscience; an infallible binder, hell itself is not surer. Such a man is *αισχροκαρδιος*, damned of his own self, Tit. iii. 11. Unless he could run away from himself, he cannot escape this judgment. There be three acts of conscience. 1. Before the deed is done, examining whether it be lawful or unlawful. 2. In the deed doing, allowing or resisting. 3. After the deed done, approving or condemning. There be divers reasons why every man hath a conscience.

1. That man might have an internal schoolmaster to direct him. Now the fittest for this office is conscience. (Chrysost.) If the irascible or concupiscible part had been our governors, either they would have been often absent, or else led us amiss. What a beast is man under the regiment of lust or sense! and how seldom does anger play the game with reason! But conscience, like a pulley, keeps reason

in the right wheel; and either cashiers mutinous affections, or executors martial law upon them. If only outward rulers were to govern us, they have no eyes to see the mind; there might be misrule enough within doors, and they never the wiser. Therefore they would either be condemned for meanness, or condemned for partiality. But in the conscience there is both awe enough and justice enough, and every man is willing to be ruled by his own mind; if not, this schoolmaster hath a rod to compel him.

2. That he might have a thing within him to put him in remembrance. In the law a man will do nothing without his counsel learned; but for the passages of his life, he seldom stands upon advice. This monitor will be ever plucking him by the sleeve, telling him, this action is naught, God is angry at it, unshiftable plagues attend it. David carried in his bosom, as it were, a painted picture of adultery and murder, says Chrysostom. The word doth but sometimes discover our corruption: it is the glass St. James speaks of, wherein we look, and see our image, but turn our backs, and forget it. But conscience is always at hand; it is the continual reflection of the soul upon itself. Even in the dark it will represent to a man his own form, make his wounds smart, and send him quickly to the Physician.

3. That he may have a judge within him; wherein conscience hath yet a higher office. For, 1. A schoolmaster may be despised. Customary sinners, like boys grown tall and stubborn, condemn the rod. A remembrancer may be dispraised; and said, as Hushai of Ahithophel, his counsel is good, but not at this time; but a judge we all tremble at. 2. External judges may be corrupted, but the conscience will take no bribes. Oh that as every judge hath a conscience, so this conscience might evermore give the judgment! 3. The guilty person may flee from another judge; but there is no evasion of conscience. It is impossible for a man to run away from himself. 4. Great men cannot be brought to judgment-seats: the poor are like the primitive or original matter, under generation, so under reformation; but the rich are like stars above the moon, too high for the reach of ordinary power. When a company of Lacedæmonian gallants had defiled the bench and seat of judgment, the magistrates at first stormed, and vowed punishment; but when they knew who did it, they enacted a law of exception: It is lawful for those gentlemen to do what they will. But be they never so great, this judge will make them stoop. 5. Preachers dare not reprove all men particularly; such an attempt would bring them into contempt. Conscience fears no man; dares check a magistrate, control a prince. It may sometimes slumber; no woman is always scolding; but when she wakens she will speak.

4. That man might have his comfort, or his torment, within him. Comfort to the righteous; in all afflictions they have this stay, that they be not overwhelmed with sorrow. Though they be condemned, this approves; affords liberty in prison; in the want of outward food, this sustains: it is the "hidden manna," Rev. ii. 17. Torment to sinners; that they may taste of God's judgments even in this life. (Chrysost.) In the midst of all their prosperous fortunes, they have inward tortures. A malefactor in prison, though he fare well, yet is tormented with the thought of ensuing judgment. It is the hand-writing on the wall, that prints bloody characters in Belshazzar's heart. This is the breakings-out of the flames of Tophet, a little model of hell: as a looking-glass broken into many small pieces, every one can show the contracted form. This is another indissoluble chain that binds them over.

The last bond of this reservation is the immutable justice of God. In respect of his decree before the world, and suffering them to heap up sin in the world, that they may be punished in the world to come. But this is to be adored with reverence and with silence. The Lord knoweth how to do it.

For ourselves, let us take external prosperity for no good mark of our election; the fattest beasts are kept for the slaughter. Flatter we not ourselves with the sense of impunity; the less sorrow we feel, the more we have cause to fear, for the more may be behind. Let us break off our sins by repentance, that God may break the bonds of our durance. Pray with David; "Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name," Psal. cxlii. 7. "Rescue my soul from destructions, my darling from the lions," Psal. xxxv. 17. That our sins being remitted, and our consciences quieted, we may live in grace, and go to the grave in peace; and when all books be opened, ours may have no sin found in it, but instead thereof, the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

"Unto the day of judgment." This is the assizes. Sinful persons riot in the gaol of their durance; yet when the session comes, they begin to be a little calm, put off their disguises of dissoluteness, and put on some modesty and semblance of humiliation. Then they change their apparel, their garbs, their looks; all to appear civil. If the meditation of this dreadful day, when all hearts shall be searched, all secret corruptions embowelled, a final sentence pronounced, by a Judge that cannot be deceived, upon sinners that would not be converted; if this cannot make us tremble, our hearts disdain comparison for hardness with the nether millstone.

Jugment is diversely understood. For rule and government, Matt. xii. 18: order them aright. For equity, Luke xi. 42; Jer. xxii. 3. For opinion, 1 Cor. iv. 3: that is a man's judgment, which he thinks. For plagues and calamities, Exod. vii. 4. For righteousness and holiness: All the ways of God are judgment and truth, Psal. xxv. 10. For authority, John v. 27. For God's secret counsel, Rom. xi. 33. For our afflictions, 1 Pet. iv. 17; 1 Cor. xi. 32. Here it is taken for a determination, or giving a sentence by a judge on the bench, and in the seat of justice. For this there is a court, and a throne. The court shall be kept in the clouds, Matt. xxiv. 30. If any ask, Why rather on earth, than in heaven? I answer, the malefactor to be judged hath sinned on the earth; and it is the manner of secular judges there to keep the assizes, where men committed the trespasses. All the elements have been abused by sinners, therefore are they judged in the midst of the elements; that the very place guilty of their fault, might be satisfied with their ruin. Again, to be admitted into heaven, though there to be judged, is an honour whereof sinful nature is not capable; therefore they must remain in the lower parts of the world. No reprobate man or devil shall ever see God; Christ indeed they shall see in the glory of a Judge, not in the glory of God. There is also a throne, Matt. xxv. 31. Earthly kings, when they will show themselves to their subjects in awful majesty, ascend their thrones; this is the highest state of a kingdom. This throne shall be most terrible to the wicked; a fiery flame, and the wheels burning fire, Dan. vii. 9. But to the faithful there is a rainbow about it, Rev. iv. 3, to qualify the terrible-ness of it.

"Unto the day of judgment." This point I have divers times handled: therefore to avoid a coincidence of discourse, I fasten only upon two meditations, formerly not observed; the sufficiency of the Judge, and the necessity of the judgment.

1. First, the sufficiency of the Judge : his infinite perfection cannot be better discerned of us, than by comparison. There be two main conditions that concur to the making up of a judge ; outward warrant, and inward enablement.

For the former ; judgment is not every man's work, there must be commission and designation for it. There have been indeed some extraordinary actions of justice, without specification of warrant. Such was the act of Phinehas, Numb. xxv., for which some plead extraordinary instinct from God ; and doubtless he would not have accepted that sacrifice, if himself had not prompted it. So he had the substance of authority from private revelation, though not the form of authority from public deputation. But I rather think that his judgment was also solemnly warranted. For both, God says to Moses, Hang up the heads ; and Moses to the under-rulers, Every one slay his men that were joined to Baal-peor. So that for this execution every Israelite is made a magistrate ; and then why not Phinehas ? But it is objected, that he was a priest, and his place for peace and mercy. I answer, even this act of justice was a work of mercy : Samuel thought it not out of his office, to hew Agag in pieces. They might make a carcase, which might not touch it. Levi got the priesthood by such a sacrifice, shedding the blood of idolaters. Thus ordinary justice might well bear out Phinehas in that act. But it is not for every man to challenge this office ; private persons may only pray for the redress of sin ; if the man be not warranted, it is a lawful question, Who made thee a judge ? Now if a deputed judge be of great authority, who hath yet a supreme magistrate over him, to examine and reform him ; how mighty is this Judge, that makes, yea, and unmakes judges ! that judgeth them, and if they do ill, condemns them ! By him kings reign and judges rule ; by him shall king and judges be called to account. The Jews once questioned Christ, " By what authority doest thou these things ? " Matt. xxi. 23. And the fools of the world would fain doubt it. But this day shall show, that the Father hath committed all judgment unto the Son, John v. 22.

For the other, which is enablement ; whatsoever sufficiency is in other judges, comes from the Lord ; how infinite then is himself ! To make a sufficient judge, these virtues are required,

(1.) Knowledge, Deut. i. 13. A man can best judge of that which he knoweth. Ignorance of the judge is the misfortune of the innocent, says Augustine. It is bad at the bar, worse on the bench. An advocate's ignorance can wrong but one man's cause, a judge's may prejudice the whole country. In this Paul thought himself happy, that he stood before a judge expert in the laws, Acts xxvi. 3. " Wisdom is better than weapons of war," Eccl. ix. 18. Without this a magistrate is but a blind Polyphemus, a great monster without an eye. A stander-by can say, This you cannot do by law ; or in derision, You are beside your book. It is a shame for a justicer, that before he can tell what to do, he must go consult his clerk. Otherwise he must weave a resolution out of his own brains, as spiders spin their cobwebs out of themselves. If he hit on the right, it is beholden to his luck, and so he relieves the plaintiff's hope, not with constant equity, but with an uncertain lottery ; and fills up the time with that which empties the occasion, some adage, or a stolen jest of stale wit, or a patch of poetry. But our Judge hath clear eyes to discern the cause ; and knows the law, for it was of his own making. There is nothing that can lie hid from his knowledge, or escape his power. The Jesuit cannot equivocate with him, though he have tricks beyond the devil.

(2.) Courage, magnanimity, or spirit : typified in Judah, that judicary tribe ; whose emblem, or escutcheon, was a lion couchant, that lies by the prey without fear of rescue, and turns not his head at the sight of any creature. The principal pillars of a house had need be heart of oak. Of soft wood, or bending lead, carpenters will not make them rules ; and are flexible dispositions fit for rulers ? Men do not choose a starting horse to lead the team. He had need be of David's valour, that can snatch the prey out of the lion's mouth, rescue the oppressed from him that is too mighty for him. Now all the courage of man is but the gift of God : " In thine hand it is to give strength unto all," 1 Chron. xxix. 12. If a beam be so radiant, how glorious is the Sun himself ! The Judge of all the world is inflexible. It is falsely said of Cato, that the sun might sooner alter his course, than he pervert his course of justice. The stoutest and strongest may yield, either for fear, as Pilate when he heard but a buzz that he was not Caesar's friend ; or for favour, as Eli, that buried the living severity of a judge, and burning zeal of a priest, in the frozen and dead indulgence of a father. But whom should this Judge fear, or who can deserve his favour ? No audacious swaggerer dares cross him, no great man's letters can prevail with him, nor the frowns of kings, nor the flatteries of courtiers, can move him.

(3.) Integrity : there must be no corruption in him. The brain had need be of a strong constitution, that can disperse and dispel the fumes surging from a vicious stomach, liver, or spleen. He whom neither clamour, nor rumour, nor terror, neither furious passion, nor melting compassion, can divert from justice, is fit to be a judge. In this court of Christ, there will be no commuting, Give me thy silver for thy sin. No dispensing, Bear with me, and I will bear with thee. No conniving, as Eli, The judge shall judge it, 1 Sam. ii. 25 ; whereas himself was judge, and did not judge it ; so sentencing himself, while he did not sentence his sons. No slubbering over a cause, without ransacking the bowels of it. But a vindicating of truth out of all the dens and thickets of juggling conveyance. The scholar searcheth it by disputation, the judge by examination. Neighbourhood is my friend, alliance is my friend, bounty is my friend ; but justice is my friend above all. Thus Job searched out the cause which he knew not, Job xxix. 16. Man doth search before he finds, God doth find before he searches. Man goes by discourse, by certain rules and principles, and general deductions, and from thence concludes : God sees at first, Man and truth are two several things ; truth and God is all one.

Mortal judges may be blinded with bribes, and the champions of justice become mammon's slaves. A gift in the bosom wresteth judgment ; the injection of a dram sways the golden balance of justice, and so the cause is poised by the weight of the bribe. If the left hand be full of bribes, the right must be full of mischief. But our Judge is not thus to be wrought upon : " Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right ? " Gen. xviii. 25. Did not the Judge in his mortal flesh scourge such money merchants with zealous severity ? Did not his apostle with fiery indignation ban Simon and his money ? It comes to pass that whole kingdoms and churches perish, because such men and their monies perish not. Oh if this Judge would take gold, how few rich men would go to hell ! But gold hath lost millions of souls ; it never did, never shall, save one. A dram of grace shall be more worth then, than all the treasures of the earth. Sublunary materials have their places ; " Iron is taken out of the earth, and brass molten

out of the stone," Job xxviii. 2: the sun is found in his orb, fire in his element, &c. But where is grace to be found, and what is the place of justice? It is not found in the land of the living, ver. 13. Nature says, It is not in me: wealth and honour disclaim it. It is not found in us. Then how shall we do in the day of judgment? It is found in the treasury of Jesus.

This point willingly and usefully extends itself to magistrates, of what place soever; collaterally to all persons, teaching them to do equity, and to preserve integrity.

[1.] Do justice: to this the judge stands bound in reason, as the proper act of his function: if he be not at leisure to do this, it is time to unjudge him: as the woman said to Philip, Do not reign. Judgment is not man's, but the Lord's, 2 Chron. xix. 6. Judges are a kind of living instruments; and the nature of instruments consists in the use and operation; as a knife is only to cut. That avails nothing, which does not avail to its own proper end. If the axe be not good to hew, we say it is good for nothing. What then say you to those magistrates, that have eyes and see not, ears and hear not? They are idols: only one defect of those idols they are not troubled with; we cannot say, They have hands, and handle not: for they handle too much; so much of the money, that they care not to handle the cause. Eyes they have, and see not; feet they have, and walk not; mouths they have, and speak not; hands they have, but they do handle. These are instruments without operation; for *judicem judicare*, is as agreeable and natural, as for the eye to see, the ear to hear. If the other be not idols, sure they are idolaters; golden calves if they be not, yet they are worshippers of golden calves. Yet in doing justice, I would not have judgment triumph over mercy; whereas mercy rejoiceth against judgment. To banish all favour, is to banish some equity. There may be favours within the cause, not favours without the cause; legal favours, though not personal. Where no wrong is done to justice, there may be fair use and place for mercy.

[2.] Keep integrity, what place soever you make good; it is the spiritual constitution and best health of your souls. The breach of this, the apostle calls a shipwreck. The weight of all goodness will leave us, when we leave that: it shall pour contempt upon princes, and make a great Antiochus called a vile person. As we love our lives, as we love our souls; through all the transitory, temporary, momentary passages of this world; let us preserve the life of our lives, and soul of our souls, our integrity.

2. The necessity of this judgment. That this should be, it stands both with the justice and mercy of God. "It is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you: to you that are troubled, rest with us," 2 Thess. i. 6, 7, rest with himself. For this world, they are afflicted most that serve God best; and men of worst conscience flow with abundance. So that the world thinks none miserable but the conscientious; the more holy, the less happy. Who have more seconds and friends at a pinch, than the deboshed sons of Belial, the roaring monsters of the world, that with crest and breast oppose all hinderance in the way of their lusts and humours? What plotting, what sifting there is to maintain a ruffian, to countenance some disordered retainer, to uphold a rotten alehouse, to procure a homicide's pardon, who sees not? Whereas a good man's trouble is by all cunning aggravations heightened; as if the world meant all hurt against him, that means none. Oh if in this life only we had hope in Christ, we were of all men the

most miserable, 1 Cor. xv. 19. There had need be a judgment; and for this cause among the rest, the saints cry instantly, incessantly, Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.

Be pleased to consider this point also comparatively. Without judgment how could any nation stand? All things would run to disorder and confusion but for this. There can be no society among men without indifferency: there is no indifferency, where offence is done without satisfaction: satisfaction may be sought many ways, can no way be enforced, but by judgment. This they resolve into several acts of judiciary proceeding, even from the summons to the sentence, from God's own example in the first sinner's conviction. If visible powers were not more feared than the invisible God, the world would be overrun with outrage. Even when God's own Israel had offended, Moses makes them bleed for it. He that was so good, that he would rather perish himself than Israel should perish, yet pronounceth sentence of death on the idolaters, rejoices and blesseth the executioners. It is charity as well as justice, to punish offenders; and it is hard to say whether God loves more a pitiful justice, or a punishing mercy. But might not those sinners have repented and lived? Or if they must be punished, can nothing serve but death? Or if they must die, shall it be by the hands of their brethren? Or if brethren must cut their throats, shall it be done in the heat of their sins? Yes, so God commanded; and even that judgment was mercy; judgment on the bad, mercy to the whole; the corrupt blood is let out, that the body may be preserved. Moses had a soft heart, but zealous and wise; pitiful he was, not fond.

A sinful commonwealth cannot live, unless it bleed in the common vein. There is not a better sacrifice to God, than the blood of malefactors: this sacrifice so pleased him in the hands of the Levites, that they alone must sacrifice to him still. Next to our prayers, we do no better service to God, than in punishing obstinate sinners: if they deserve it, even unto blood. How doth this free the land from those judgments, which God otherwise would inflict! His revenge pursues transgressors; but if the revenge of man's justice overtake it, God gives over the chase: to execute this judgment, saves him a labour. If the land be defiled with blood, in duels, drunken quarrels, there is no way to purge it, but by their blood that polluted it. Often hath the Lord done justice on the whole body, because the head hath not done justice on a member: and the seasonable infliction of a less punishment hath avoided a greater. The tribe of Levi, by shedding the blood of the idolatrous Israelites, was cleared from the blood of the innocent Shechemites. The best friends to the state are the impartial ministers of judgment: nor do the prayers of them that sit still and do nothing, so much pacify God's wrath against us, as their just retribution. We gaze and wonder at the iniquity of the land, yea, shed tears for it; but it is the public sword of our authority in correcting it, that must reconcile the Lord. Governors are faulty of those sins they see and punish not. It is no less than a good sight in a state, even a malefactor at the gallows. We could not eat our meat, nor sleep in our beds, nor pray in peace, but for judgment. Such is the necessity of it, that no state can stand without it.

This is a benefit in our land which we must acknowledge by experience. God grant we may acknowledge with thankfulness. We have courts and judgment-seats for all causes; spiritual and temporal, civil and criminal, pecuniary and capital. We have judges visiting all the great cities twice in the year at least, 1 Sam. vii. 16: so that the people can-

not complain that they travel far for justice, nor except against trial, who stand or fall by the deposition and verdict of their nearest neighbours. The widow took a right course in soliciting the judge, Luke xviii. 3. "When they have a matter," saith Moses, "they come unto me," Exod. xviii. 16. And when Christ chargeth us to "agree with our adversary," Matt. v. 25, he speaks not against just proceeding in law; but rather ratifies and rectifies the course of civil justice. Being smitten, he struck not again; yet he expostulated concerning the act, John xviii. 23. Paul reproving the high priest in justice, Acts xxiii. 3, was yet prepared to suffer; and he appealed unto Caesar. If then it be so necessary for man, that he cannot conserve his profit, credit, quiet, life itself, without judgment, how much more stands it with the honour of God! There be innumerable sins, which neither the eye of man sees, nor the arm of man can reach; these must not escape, God must be glorified in all: now he cannot be glorified, unless all transgression be punished, and all obedience crowned. I conclude.

Oh that men would therefore prepare themselves for this last and great audit. "I beheld a pale horse; and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him," Rev. vi. 8. Many tremble at death, but how would they be affrighted if they could see his follower, hell! The jackals do not more wait upon the lions, nor crows upon armies, nor gaolers on serjeants, than the devil attends on death for a booty. Death is but as the hook, that jerks the reprobates, like fishes, out of the pond of this world; there is afterward a fire and a frying-pan, or scalding caldron, to come. "Let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we die," 1 Cor. xv. 32. Never beast made such a senseless argument. Riot, because we shall die? How strange is such a conclusion to such a promise! It is all one with them to be a farmer's hog, or an alderman's horse, or a lady's puppy, or themselves; that think death the full period, the last and final cessation of the creature. So when Antisthenes cries out in his pangs, Who shall ease me? Diogenes tendered him a knife, to cut his own throat. Our frantic combatants, falsely termed brave spirits, as prodigal of their lives as cocks and dogs, pouring them out on every drunken quarrel, little think of this dreadful day to come. It is not the loss of the men we so much pity; good for nothing but to stop breaches, and make up forlorn hopes, in the mouth of cannons; but it is the loss of their souls. If they did think of this judgment, they would have little list to such desperate combats. For who would not rather welcome a rapier or pistol, than a lingering and racking sickness; but for this consequence, that after death comes judgment?

Death is but the beginning of sorrows; when we have done with him, judgment begins with us. Yet too many banish this meditation as too melancholy; and, like children or cowards, rather shut their eyes, and choose to feel the blow, than to see and avoid it. How silly is it to fear death, whose pangs be sometimes less than the tooth-ache, more than the day of judgment, which whom it finds out of Christ, shall cast into everlasting fire! So fools fear the thunder-crack, and not the thunder-bolt; the report of the ordnance, not the bullet; the serjeant's arrest more than the gaoler's imprisonment. Let us not seek to avoid death, this we cannot, but prepare ourselves for the trial, this we may. Some a little wiser, and a very little better, upon a cold thought of death, admit a short-breathed parley of judgment. And then after a sigh or two, put all upon a Lord, have mercy on us; we trust it shall go as well with us as with others; even as God will have it. These have

some scattered and preposterous flashes of the last judgment in their consciences, yet take no course to get faith and pardon in Jesus Christ. Most men think all well, and they shall answer the matter easily enough; not weighing the horror of their sins. But how fearfully do they find themselves deluded, when their souls awake, as Jonah did in the tempest, in the gulf of fire and brimstone! Let us ballast our ship before we put to sea, lest we perish in the main; and judge ourselves, that we be not judged in the day of Jesus Christ.

"To be punished." This is the execution. It were a vain session, if malefactors were not put to execution. Irrite and foreless are those censures, which impunity follows. The mulets and fives which are not required, do make wickedness more bold and insensible. But after God's judgment follows an unavoidable execution; the unjust are not only judged, but punished. Among men, good laws drop into contempt, by making difference of offenders; magistrates are afraid to meddle with the outrages of the mighty. Whence it comes, that small thefts are condemned to carts, while the great sacrileges are honoured in coaches. If the great beast make a gap in the mound, the whole herd will not be afraid to follow. It was the Lord's charge to Moses, Hang up the heads, Numb. xxv. 4. God could as well have struck the rulers as the people; yet while himself punisheth the vulgar, he bids Moses punish the princes; which one would think should have been more properly reserved to his own immediate hand. Yet these he leaves to human authority, that he might procure awe to his own ordinances. It is the impartial execution of noble offenders, that wins credit to government; and the want of it cuts the sinews of any state. If their sins have made them base, let there be no favour in their penalty. But in this judgment, God respects no persons; he knows no valour, no honour, no riches, no royalty, in the matter of sin; but "Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil," Rom. ii. 9. He knows nothing in man, nothing for man, but only the righteousness of one, God and man, his Son Jesus. There is a sin among men, for which there may be some mediation; "but if a man sin against God, who shall entreat for him?" 1 Sam. ii. 25. None but Christ. From hence I will only derive these two collections.

1. That man's soul is immortal, and his body shall be raised again; otherwise how could there be a punishment after the day of judgment? Carnal reason can hardly imagine, how a soul should have subsistence after its separation from the body; it seems incredible, because it is invisible. But eagles can see more than owls: nor was mere nature ignorant of this; through all clouds of error she could see this clear truth, that souls die not with their bodies. This is an inbred instinct sucked from the breast of nature, an indelible principle stamped in the soul by God himself, not to be rased out. The waggoner hath a being, though his coach be broken; the ship is wrecked on the sea, yet the mariner may swim to harbour; the adder lives after she hath slith off her coat; the musician keeps his skill, though his lute be broken; the snail may creep out, and leave his shell behind. Beside faith's clear sight, and supernatural revelation; I saw souls under the altar, Rev. vi. 9: John did see spirits.

Reason itself can find no absurdity in it. (1.) I know my soul to be in my body, I cannot see it: my body is but a house of clay; cannot another substance be as capable of this soul as clay? may not the air, or heaven, or any other place, contain it as well as earth? (3.) The soul is not guided by the body, but

the body by the soul; that may be choleric, when the body is phlegmatic; that cheerful, when the other is melancholy. Divers martyrs have expressed solid joy, when their corporal torments have been extreme; as if they had been spirits without bodies. The body would often eat, when the soul hath a mind to fast; the body would sleep, the soul rouse it up to pray: often have you seen a cheerful mind in a disordered body. Now if their dispositions be so manifestly cross, that the one can be well when the other is ill; one grieved and troubled, when the other is in perfect health; it is plain, that this soul may as well be, and be sensible, out of the body, as in the body.

(3.) It were foolish for men to be so careful about their surviving names, if their souls were extinguishable with their bodies. What is that honour to me, whereof I am not sensible? If death were the destruction of the whole nature and substance, a good remembrance were to little purpose: and men had better leave their posterity more wealth, though less credit behind them.

(4.) Death itself were but a toy, if no judgment followed it, or if there was no soul to be judged. It were then only as the breaking of a pitcher, which was full of nothing but fluid air. He were a coward that would fear death, if he thought it to be the end of all fear. Expiration were not terrible, if it left nothing that remains sensible.

(5.) If the soul does exhale as sensual brutes, why does it understand more than brutes? The soul of the beast is as salt to keep it sweet: man's hath a nobler and more divine dowry; it can discourse, reason, forecast, invent, remember; it can read, exercise arts, deduce conclusions; which be characters of an immortal nature. For men will not write on waters, nor engrave curiously in snow, ice, or such liquefying stuff. Therefore it is a particle of divine breath, inspired into formed loam by God himself. It doth not arise out of the body, but is infused into it; therefore may as well exist without the body after, as it did without the body before. Dust returns to dust, the spirit to him that gave it. Eccl. xii. 7: both to their originals, dust to dust, heaven to heaven. First the soul goes to this tribunal, then the body to earth: first the soul is judged and punished or rewarded, as the principal in good or evil; afterwards the body, as a mere accessory. The soul of the righteous is first crowned, as that which more purely and primarily served God; the body did but rather hinder, therefore must come after. The day of death to the body is the day of birth to the soul.

(6.) The body is but sometimes awake, the soul is never asleep. The body is infirm and dull; now that which never sleeps in the body, shall certainly never sleep out of the body. And how is that liable to death, that is not capable of sleep? In the deepest and deepest slumbers, that is always discoursing, working, thinking; death's younger brother cannot overcome it, sleep's elder brother shall not annihilate it. No somniferous opium, or dormitory potion, can charm this into slumber: yea, it doth not seldom exercise the faculties with more freedom in the epilogue of sickness, in the confines, yea, even article of death; and shows more vigour in the corporal weakness, than it did in the fullness of health: as a prisoner looks and speaks more cheerfully, when the windows be open, than when all are shut up in darkness. Yea, it rejoiceth at death, as at the keeper's turning of the key, to open the door, and set it at liberty. It leaves the body, as the inhabitant leaves a rotten and ruinous house; as a carpenter leaves his axe when the edge is blunted; or as a musician lays by his lute, when the strings are

broken; or as a guest makes haste out of his inn to his long home. She never sleeps in sleep, therefore not in death: for death is a long sleep, as sleep is a short death. Elijah prays that the child's soul may come to him again, 1 Kings xvii. 21; therefore it was not extinct, though out of the body. "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," was St. Stephen's farewell, Acts vii. 59: his spirit was not stoned to death. Fear not him that can kill the body only, &c. Matt. x. 28. To kill the body is one thing, to kill the soul another. By St. Paul's choice, a man may be at once "absent from the body, and present with the Lord," 2 Cor. v. 8. "As thou livest, and as thy soul liveth," saith Uriah to David, 2 Sam. xi. 11: he speaks of two different lives. The rich man was in hell, Luke xvi. 25: no man thinks his body there; it was his soul. God is called the God of the living, Matt. xxii. 32: now the bodies of the saints are dead, therefore their souls be safe.

To conclude, then, the soul is not a vapour, but a spirit; not an accident, but a substance; the body's elder sister, an excellent queen over it: in it, but not mixed, but separable from it: a guest that falls not with the house; but departs from it for a better habitation: and when it is re-edified at the resurrection, will revisit and reunite it again to itself. Thus it lies not a dying with the flesh; but as when the body sleeps, the soul sleeps not; so when the body dies, the soul dies not. If it have kept house well, it shall be exalted to everlasting peace; if unjust in life, after death it must be punished.

But is the soul only accountable, is that alone liable to punishment? No, the body that hath accompanied it in the sin, must not be separated in the penalty. Divers have believed the soul's immortality, that have doubted the resurrection of the body; and this error seems to have found place in some of the Corinthians. "How say some among you, that there is no resurrection?" 1 Cor. xv. 12: some of you, all do not say so; St. Paul doth not wrap up the innocent and orthodox with the rest in the same accusation. Many acknowledged this, some doubted; therefore he spends a long chapter in this argument; which I forbear to amplify, as not daring to suspect any of us taken with such a hesitation. The soul never dies, and a man is not a man without his body; therefore there must be a resurrection of bodies. Let a green twig be bowed together by the hand of man; when the hand is gone it will come to itself again. Some are so nimble that they can lay their heel on their head; yet is not this the right place; but after such a forcible violence, the whole body comes again to the first proportion. Death may take one piece of man from another; but when he shall be driven to let go his hold, these two parts shall join. The soul is a spirit, and cannot be called a man without the body: no man is said to be a husband that hath no wife: nor is the sap a tree; nor fair-written paper called a book, till it be bound up in a cover. The soul in heaven is not a perfect man without the body. The uses are,

(1.) It discovers their pitiable folly, that, upon every galling discontent, lift up their own hands against their own lives. They think death the remedy of all evils, seek it as a present ease, the only cure of their violent passions and perplexed consciences. But alas, then begins their present misery; for that sends them to this judgment, and for this lamentable end, to be punished. They leap out of the smoke into the flame; from a momentary disturbance, that may be cured by faith and repentance, into a woe that enwraps them in eternal vengeance. What a fool was that crafty politician, that could order his house, dispose his goods, and

then hang himself! He little thought of this judgment. Thus Saul, forsaken of all hopes, scorned death's blow by the hand of a Philistine, begs it of his armour-bearer; and what he could not obtain of him, himself supplies. As if he had borne arms against himself, he falls on his own sword. The armour-bearer follows his master, and does that to himself which he durst not to his king; both yielding that to their own swords as familiar executioners, which they grudged to their pursuers. Saul had been told the evening before by a familiar, "Tomorrow thou shalt be with me," 1 Sam. xxviii. 19. Now he makes haste to prove the devil no liar; rather than fail he makes his own mittimus, accepting the greater mischief to avoid the less. He might have suffered the Philistines' violence without blame; to have died by an enemy had been his fate, not his fault. But when he will needs act the Philistines' part upon himself, he lives and dies a murderer. Other prisoners by breaking the gaol may escape the assizes; but here to break it and not to stay for a summons, is to hasten the judgment, as it were to purchase a sessions, for his own damnation. Upon the soul we pass not this sentence, upon the fact we may. There may be repentance, but the deed is heinous; and without repentance the punishment will be grievous.

(2.) Let it teach us all to provide in our life, a harbour for this storm that comes after death. How unshiftable otherwise shall we be in that hour, how unable to answer at the day of judgment! What is it for a poor man to take care of his winding-sheet? or the rich for a curious tomb? their names may stink like their carcases for all this. Or for the superstitious to be buried in a friar's cowl, or with a great sum to purchase a grave under the altar? Whereas a good man buried in the church, is a temple in a temple. Or for the desperate to wish for mountains, instead of monuments? when they shall be turned out of their bodies, as Hagar was out of doors; and rejected from God's presence, like vagabond Cain; saying with the unjust steward, What shall become of us? It is a provided receptacle, that shall comfort them that have it: foxes, and hares, and even vermin fore-aquaint themselves with muses, thickets, and burrows; and when they are hunted, repair thither for safety: and shall man be to seek for his refuge? "The conies make their houses in the rocks," Prov. xxx. 26: we have only one Rock to burrow in; our only city of refuge, and sanctuary of peace, Jesus Christ.

2. The other collection is, that there is a punishment ordained for the wicked; a punishment for the matter; but for the quality and manner, this is sealed of God and concealed from man. Horrible it is, and unconceivable; therefore hath no specification in Scripture, saying only in some shadows and narrow representations, according to human capacity; the figure, rather than the nature, of hell. Divers popish writers have made certain maps and models of hell, searched all the nooks of that dungeon, surveyed the dark rooms, quartered them into regions and cantons; here placing lust, there riot, there covetousness. Bellarmine says that one glimpse of that burning climate were enough to make a man not only Christian, but even turn monk, and confine himself to the strictest rule of their mortification. But to wish such a sight, and come off like a discoverer; to make report unto men, is superfluous, superstitious; a thing that God hath not thought fit for him to grant, nor necessary for man to know, Luke xvi. 31. If we ask what is in heaven, Christ answers, Ye know the way, John xiv. 4, follow it. So if you ask what is in hell, you know the way, avoid it. What is death,

do you ask? If I knew, I should have been dead, says one. No man ever saw hell, that came back to make relation. Let us hear Moses, the word, the preacher: if the Lord mean us any good, they shall do us some good. Let us not desire it painted in tables, but considered in our meditations; and that frequently: short and transient thoughts of it may leave men to the long and permanent pains of it; so think of it that we study to escape it. Take these glimmering shadows of it.

By the want and privation of all comforts. How terrible is it for a man to be famished! it is able to make him gnaw his own flesh. In hell the want shall be greater, and the desire more violent, described by gnashing their teeth for anger, and gnawing their tongues for hunger, Rev. xvi. 10. A son takes it grievously to be banished the sight of his father: Absalom was weary of his life by this delay, 2 Sam. xiv. 32. What a torment is it then to be shut out for ever from the presence of God, without all hope of redemption? David was but the father of his flesh, God is the Father of all spirits. Absalom might have life by him, but did not live in him; yea, he could live not only without him, but against him: but in God we live, and without him can be no life. It was grief enough for Adonijah, though he were pardoned, to be decourted, confined to his country house. With what horror shall the reprobates hear, Depart from me, ye cursed! Everlastingly to be expelled from him in whom is all life, must needs be an everlasting death. If in the Lord's presence be the fulness of joy, the fulness of sorrow must be in his absence.

By the necessity, in respect of the decree of God's immutable justice; which casts them into prison without bail or mainprize; no ransom, no redemption. Bondage is terrible, especially to them that have ranged in liberty. Though Absalom be repealed, yet to have his own house his prison, vexeth him. It could not content Shimei, though he had room enough, to be confined to the river Kidron for gadding. Take a man from his well-furnished house, seated in a good air, his grounds watered with commodious springs, with his choice of gardens, fields, or walks, from walking or riding at his pleasure; and lay him up in some loathsome prison, to spend but the short misery of his remaining days; how disconsolate is this restraint! Such, and ten thousand times more, is it to be fetched from this broad world, sunshine, light, and delight, and to be bound in the chains of eternal darkness.

By the society: the company adds much to the content or torment of a place. A loving wife, gracious children, kind neighbours, cheerful companions, are the sweet refreshments of this life. Now for a man to be excluded from these, and to be haunted with furies, mal-contentes, melancholy or wrangling copesmates; how grievous is the change! No man delights to dwell among hearse and funerals, or to live in charnel-houses; unless sextons, that can make themselves merry with dead corpses. We hate to dwell in hospitals, bridewells, or bedlams; yea, the very society of ruffians and tear-Christ's is odious to us, if the love of God be in us. How intolerable then is the habitation among dogs, unclean birds, reprobate spirits worse than any screech-owls, tigers, or toads!

By the extremity: flesh and blood hath been exercised with many sharp miseries, and those sorer than flesh and blood (without the comfort of grace) could ever endure. The colic, the gout, are torments; the strappado, or the rack, the slow burnings of material fire, all terrible. Yet are all these but the taste of this punishment; like an itching to those exquisite pains. The rich oppressor will then think his former

gout a pleasure; and the murderer wish to hang eternally on his gibbet. But hath a man been vexed with a disquiet conscience, the arrows of guiltiness sticking in his sides, groaning under the pressure of unbearable sins? This comes nearest to the say of hell, a taste of those vials, to which the gall of asps is honey, and the stings of scorpions a mere tickling. That which made the human nature of the Son of God sweat clots of blood, and heavy his soul to the death; crying as if he were forsaken; think of that punishment.

By the eternity; which makes all the rest absolute. Did the glass hold more sands than ever the sea washed on the shore, and but one little dust could pass in a million of years, this were miserable enough; yet would there be an end of that long ruin. But this punishment is a continual fever, a death which hath no death; it hath a beginning, it hath no end. Add eternity to extremity, and then consider hell to be hell indeed. If the ague of a year, or the colic of a month, or the rack of a day, or the burning of an hour, be so bitter; how would it break the hearts of the wicked, to think of all these beyond all measure, beyond all time! Yet is all this truth, saying that it comes far short of the truth. This is much, it is not near all.

Oh that men would meditate on this before they sin! but such thoughts are held too melancholy; and we counted bloody physicians to speak of hell in our sermons. They upbraid us, that we torment them before their time, Matt. viii. 29. Men are loth to be tormented before their time, and yet fear not to be tormented time without end. Alas, all our scope in discoursing of this fire, is but to snatch your souls out of the fire; we bring you to the brink of the gulf, that seeing it with horror you may never fall into it. All this the very devils, I do not say, believe, but feel and shudder to think of. Shall a temporal king have his judgment-seat, his prison, his executioners; and not God, who is infinitely just? Shall man punish with death corporal, and is not death eternal just with the Lord? Let men ruminate of these things by themselves; and if the description of these flames cannot make them detest sin, how likely are they to become firebrands of these flames! Without some infallible antidote against this poison, methinks the souls of unbelievers should go out of their bodies, as devils do out of the possessed; raging, rending, foaming. It is a wonder that any should die in their right senses and wits, that have not learned to die in the faith of Christ. Death itself is painful, therefore no marvel if men wish it short; of an useful life man desires a protraction, but speed of his inevitable dissolution; not more willing to live when he is well, than to be out of his pain when he must die. Every pang of violent and mortal sickness is a death: to lie one hour under death's tyranny is tedious; but to be a whole day a dying, is beyond natural patience. What then is that death which knows no end? As this body is as frail as the life that animates it, so that death is as everlasting as the soul that endures it. It were grievous for man to be but so long a dying, as he hath leave to live; yet one minute of the second death is worse than a whole ages of the first. Let us never be so mad and desperate, as to shrink at that which must come, and will soon be over; and not to tremble at that which may come, and continue for ever.

To conclude, here is one thing that answers to all doubts and questions that here might be moved. If it be asked why these unjust are; the Lord knoweth: he knows who are his, which is a knowing of approbation; who are not his, which is a knowing of reprobation. If, how reserved, what bonds be upon

them; the Lord knoweth; he hath insensible chains of durance. If, when this day of judgment shall be, what time is designed for it; what month, what year, the Judge shall appear in the clouds; the Lord knoweth; it is not fit for man to know, the Lord keeps it to himself. If, how they shall be punished, what that fire and brimstone is, how differently it shall work upon sinners, where the local seat of torment should be, in air or earth; still, the Lord knoweth, and will reveal it in his own time. One query before I part with the verse.

Whether doth God always forbear notorious sinners to this great day? Indeed he set a brand upon Cain, that he should not be cut off by the hand of man, but reserved to this general session; and many an oppressor dies aged in his bed, and tarries long for his condemnation. Even this is a heavy punishment, that suffers men to grow old in their sins. It is best for a reprobate, excepting only never to be born, to have his swaddling-clouts a winding-sheet, and his cradle become his sepulchre. Then is a terrible woe, when God forbears smiting, and man forbears not sinning. But this impunity doth not always hold to a mature and white-haired death. Some are met withal betimes, in the heat of their fury, breathing out blood and slaughter against the church; even suddenly confounded, as Paul was converted. Korah rebels; doth his fall stay for his age? No, the earth opens, and swallows him quick. That element was never used to such morsels; many dead carcases hath it taken into its hungry bowels, never before bodies informed with living souls. Before it hath been only opened with the violent hand of man; now opens itself. It had often been a grave, now it is both a grave and an executioner. Those five kings pull sudden vengeance on their own heads, they come forth to their death: Joshua's sword and God's hailstones despatch them apace.

Sisera flees from the impartial hand of a victor's war, gets into a tent, a friend's tent, there securely falls asleep: in the midst of all that tumult, and the jaws of death, he finds time to sleep; as too many hearts do in the midst of their sins and spiritual dangers. And whiles haply he was dreaming of the clashing of armours, rattling of chariots, cries of the bleeding, and triumphs of the conquering; even then he sleeps his last, and hath the fatal reward of all his cruelty. His head was fastened so close to the earth, as if his body had been listening what was become of his soul. Of his hundred thousands, so soon hath he none left, not a page, to prevent his death, to accompany it, or bewail it. He bragged of great wonders that he would do with his iron chariots; and now one nail of iron kills him; and he knows not by whom he perishes. Fearful are the examples of these sudden dooms; there is nothing more horrible, than to die in the act of sin without the act of repentance. Too many promise themselves the grace and space to repent in their old age: that rich man afforded himself many years, Luke xii. 19; fool, he had not many hours. Nadab and Abihu, while they were offering sacrifice, were made sacrifices. God sends down true and strange fire upon them, that offered false and common fire to him. What sinner can be safe, when these sons of Aaron so suffer? Nature might have pleaded for them, They are young men, scarce warm in their office, the sons of the high priest, of great eminence, they have not yet experience, may be more careful all their remaining time, it is but their first fault.

Think of this, ye that study pretences and patronages for your sins: what hope of plea shall you find either in the greatness of your birth, or greenness of your youth, or in the newness of your ill doing, when

you do that you know God hath forbidden? Oh there is no privilege that can bear off a sin with the Lord; no prerogative can challenge pardon; whereas you see young men, sons of the ruler, for their first offence, struck dead. How did the javelin of Phinehas take Zamri napping; as it is reported of one of the popes, to die in the instant act of his adultery! Let fornicators tremble at this remembrance, when they propose fulfilling their lusts. The blasphemer, that wounds himself by wounding Christ, hopes to quit all with a *miserere* at the last; but did he never hear of Julian, of divers common swearers, that have died with oaths in their mouths? The drunkard assures himself to be sober long enough before he dies; yet how many hath he heard of, yea, some known, that have perished in their cups, and never awaked from their drink, till their souls appeared to judgment! Examples of men quackled, drowned, crushed to death, breaking their necks, are frequent enough. The thievish oppressor promises himself to give over, when age hath filled his purse. Such is the resolution of reprobates, and men ordained to condemnation. I have credibly heard of one slain outright with a piece of timber, which he stole but half an hour before. Of another that had stolen a sheep, and resting his burden on a stone, was strangled with the struggling of it about his neck.

Thus doth God sometimes execute martial law, doing present execution; that fools might not say in their hearts, There is no God: as he forbears others, that men might see a necessity of the solemn judgment to come. We pronounce not definitive sentence upon particular men so dying; but certainly they leave behind them to their friends little hope and comfort of their salvation. Nor yet is speed of death evermore a judgment: sudden dying is always deprecable; and when it comes, full of fear, doubt, and suspicion of the worst; but is never a manifest and infallible argument of anger, but when it strikes men in the act of sin. Howsoever, leisure of repentance is a sign of God's special favour: when he gives a man law, it implies that he would not have him rapt up in destruction. But presume not, O sinner, nor flatter thyself that the day of judgment is a great way off. Thou knowest not, when the drunken cup is in thy hand, whether thou shalt live to drink it off. When thou swearest, whether thy mouth shall ever open again to call for pardon. When thou goest to the bed of adultery, whether thou shalt ever rise again from thy unclean pillow. When thou liftest up thy hand to strike thy brother, whether thou shalt ever lift it up for mercy to thy Father. When thou beginnest an unjust contention, whether thou shalt ever end it ere thou comest to hell. O think of a powerful arm, which though it draws back long to fetch the harder blow, yet is it always able to strike dead the despoiler of goodness ere he can have leave to swallow his spittle.

How often doth God cut men off for a sin they never did, while their assiduous iniquities are not summoned, nor meddled withal! Not much otherwise he did Zebah and Zalmumma: they had been cruel to many of Gideon's father's children, yet had they been spared if his mother's children had not died by them. For Succoth, he slew the rulers, and spared the people; for Midian, he slew the people, and would have spared the rulers. Gideon would, but God would not: he will find occasions to bring wicked men to their judgment; and they which should have escaped the penalty of their public wrongs, must perish in a private quarrel. So swaggerers, when for theft and homicide they have escaped the judgment of a session, often bleed their last drop in streets and taverns; God doing on them just execution, by an

unjust adversary's weapon. Wherein he shows his manifest wrath, by performing that himself which he charged the magistrate to do, and he performed not. The slaughter of Gideon's brethren was not the greatest fault of those kings; yet when the rest should have found an unjust forgiveness, this alone kills them. The sins of a wicked man are many, yet some one shall bring him to shame. Not seldom doth God pay men with one sin for all the rest. Shimei had faults enough, cursing and abusing the Lord's anointed with dust and stones: David pardons him, Solomon confines him; he might now rest in peace. No, he must run to Gath, to fetch home his servants, with the loss of himself: this paid him for all the rest. Joab had treacherously murdered Abner and Amasa, but escapes for both these; at last he sides with Adonijah, and this brings him to his end in blood.

How many bloody murders have been thus punished in a mutinous word! The tongue in rash language hath scourged the iniquity of the hand. One hath done many robberies, escaped many searches; at last, when all hath been forgotten, he hath been hanged for necessary to a thief he never knew. Suspected felony hath often paid the price of an unknown rape; and they that have gone away with unnatural filthiness, yet have clipped off their days with their own coin. Still God's judgments are just, even when man's may be unjust. Sinner, that which hath befallen any of these, may befall thee, what dispensations soever thou givest thyself. Some of these were mighty, some rich, some young, some thought themselves as wise as thou; none of them ever looked for such ignominious ends, more than thou doest. In the fear of God, if we deprecate such ends, let us decline such courses.

VERSE 10.

But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government.

So monstrous are the outrages of the world, and so incorrigible the boisterous precipice of sin, that reason (which is of a middle nature betwixt grace and corruption) begins to doubt whether there be a God and Judge of all the earth. The godly suffer injuries, and are not delivered from their oppressors. The wicked are impune and prosper in the midst of all their flagitious crimes. Where is then the Judge, to punish the one, to deliver the other? He sits in heaven, sees and disposeth all that is done upon earth; beholds the sufferings of his pious children, knows when it is fit time to release them. The wickedness of the unjust cries to him for vengeance; he knows when to answer it. He forbears to strike these, for the ripening of their disobedience; to ease the other, for the exercise of their patience. Some hot spirits would call fire from heaven, sudden destruction on their persecutors: Not so, saith God; there is a day prefixed, and what is it to you if I will have them tarry till then? They cannot wind themselves out of my hand; I have them bound fast enough: be ye quiet, and let your expectation depend on this judgment.

Now from this thesis he comes to the hypothesis, accommodates the general doctrine to his own purpose. If God will take vengeance on all the wicked, let not these pernicious seducers, beasts in the shapes of men, think to escape. They follow the flesh, not reason, much less the Spirit; but, like brutes, are governed by their sensual appetite. They

"walk after;" the flesh is not like some stranger, whom they meet rarely; or some friend, whom they see but now and then; or a neighbour, whom they border upon, and often converse with; or a domestic companion, with whom they eat, drink, play, sleep. But it is their captain, their leader, their commander, whose colours they march under; file, or rank, or troop, according to his direction: their *primum mobile*, by whom they move; as if they had no particular motion of their own: so benighted and puzzled with blindness, that they know no other way than the flesh guides. It is the weight that sets all their wheels a going; the horses that draw their chariot, the very life of their corruption, and corruption of their life, without which they do nothing. "In the lust of uncleanness;" if you desire to know what course this flesh prescribes them, it is lust; renouncing all study of honesty, they must give themselves to lust. But there may be a sanctified lust; I desire to do thy will, O God: or a natural lust, as hunger is an appetite to meat. Therefore this lust hath the specification; lust of uncleanness; a sordid, belline, irrational, stinking turpitude. After this the reprobate walks; his whole self, all the parts of him: his eyes walk after to look upon it; his ears walk after to hearken to it; his mouth walks after to talk of it; his feet walk after to pursue it; his hands stay not behind to act it; his heart is foremost of all to desire it. Finally, whatsoever may cross their lusts, they set themselves to contend. "Despise government." Not that Almighty word which rules heaven and earth, but all the beams of God's omnipotent royalty, in his deputed magistracy; vilipending all laws, canons, sanctions; dishonouring all princes, judges, sovereign powers. Neither Moses nor Aaron, Cæsar nor Paul, minister of the word nor minister of the sword, find reverence in their hearts, or obedience in their lives. As if they resolved to disgrace that, wherein God hath imprinted the most immediate characters of his own supreme majesty.

"But chiefly." There be degrees and differences of sins and sinners: for God here sets a "chiefly," especially, principally, upon some. Whatsoever becomes of others, they shall be sure of a large share in vengeance. There is a notorious mark set upon them, a boring through the ear, like perpetual slaves; or a burning in their hands, like once convicted malefactors; a branding with some indelible mark of shame. There is great reason for this "chiefly," in respect of the sinners' quality: they "walk after the flesh," that is, their own carnal desires and sensual delights, in the strength of corruption, yet perhaps without eruption. They bask such facts as may expose them to the censures of men; so keep themselves, that the national laws cannot fetch them in. How doth the covetous man scrape and oppress, yet dares look the judge in the face; because though he be in the extremity of the law, yet not beyond it. The usurer guards his interest with statute-lace, he will not take a penny above that stint or allowance; so he escapes, and is rather made a grand juror than a guilty prisoner. The adulterous walks under the canopy of night, throws the silken robe of greatness over his lust, and then the judge dares not see it; or locks it up with the doors of secrecy, and then the judge cannot see it; or buys it off with money, and then the judge will not see it; or when none of these will serve, he hides his head where the law's hand cannot find him. Now upon him God sets his mark, this "chiefly;" then escapest fairly, yet remember thou art reserved to judgment. The more remiss man hath been against thee, the more impartially will God proceed with thee. He is content thou shouldst pass all apprehensions till the last, till his own pursuivant, death, comes for thee. A king takes some capital offenders from the common course of justice, and reserves them to his own censure.

But how is this so fitly applied to the next clause, despisers of government? This should rather seem to bring them into present condemnation; that by suffering temporal punishment, they might repent and escape the eternal. Magistrates are often more curious and sensible of their own injuries, than of the Lord's: though this be an abuse of authority, to wear the sword of justice in their own sheaths, and to draw it not so readily against public offences, as in their private causes. How then come these to be reserved? Either they are too great for the hand of authority, or too contemptible for the eye of authority. Too great, as the popish clergy are exempt from the temporal sword; or a strong faction of malcontents; a beast that knows its own strength. Or too base for notice: such are the droves of beggars, professed ciphers, nothing-dos that swarm about this city, and have their cantons all over the country. Spite of all laws, statutes, and contradictions, they will beg rather than work; and curse that authority to the pit of hell, that shall correct their vicious life. These the connivance of man lets alone, and the patience of God also forbears; but their damnation sleepeth not.

Great difference then doth God make of offenders: eye for eye; not the whole body for an eye, not two eyes for one. Theft finds an easier mulct than murder, murder than treason. All sin is culpable enough, but there is a chiefly belonging to some; as to him that miscalls his brother, Matt. v. 22. "Whoremongers God will judge," Heb. xiii. 4; they are often reprieved to his own tribunal. "Without shall be dogs," &c. Rev. xxii. 15. Many other sinners shall be excluded, but chiefly these. If hell were too little, some less offenders should be thrust out; these must have room. There is a chiefly on the head of a debauchee; howsoever men live ordie out of the pale of the church, a wicked Christian shall be sure of plagues. Woe to him that betrays the Son of man! Matt. xxvi. 24. Jews, elders, priests, soldiers, Pilate, all guilty; but chiefly woe to Judas; he had "the greater sin," John xix. 11. The Midianites fare not so ill as the wicked Israelites, Judg. viii. 16. The sword quickly despatcheth them; these die with lingering and horror, the flesh torn from their backs with thorns and briars, beaten and scratched to death. How severe was this revenge! how sad a spectacle to a tender heart! to see their bare bones looking in some places through their skin and flesh; every rent worse than the former, death multiplied by torment!

Such a chiefly, or high place, in hell is reserved for some sinners: the rest are beaten, but they that know God's will and do it not, especially, with many stripes, Luke xii. 47. All corrupt and rotten trees are good for nothing but the fire; but chiefly the vine, if it be dead and fruitless. At that dreadful day how many shall unwish themselves Christians; or wish that the gospel and they had never been acquainted! If infidels live ungodly, they do but their kind; their punishment shall be, though just, yet less. But if men after a religious nurture, and knowledge of the truth, shall shame their education; if this God takes more heinously, and revenges more sharply. The more bonds of duty, the more plagues of neglect.

"That walk after the flesh," &c. Here is a double misbehaviour; one in regard of themselves, another in respect of their betters. While they neglect service to their governors, they justly become slaves to themselves. It is fit they should be left to their own desperate guidance, that seem to be awed by God's

ordinance. In the former of these vices consider two things. 1. What is their leader, The flesh, &c. 2. How they follow this leader, Walk after it. In particular, here is the daughter, the mother, and the grandmother: the daughter is uncleanness, the mother lust, the grandmother the flesh. Uncleanness is from lust, lust from the flesh; uncleanness, lust, flesh, and all from the devil. In a tree there is the sap, root, branches, fruit: Satan is the root, flesh the sap, lust the branches, uncleanness the fruit. All of them bad counsellors, intolerable commanders.

"Flesh." By flesh, to decline the various acceptations, we here understand the whole corruption of our unmortified nature. It is not only a privative incapacity of goodness, but a positive inclination to all evil. The godly are not wholly freed from it, but not wholly governed by it. It is in the wicked, as the Turk is at home, ruling all; in the regenerate, as the Turk and Christian, they can never agree. The flesh, like Esau, is the first-born; but Jacob, grace, gets the blessing from it. These are mixed in the believer, as fire and water are in compounded bodies, light and darkness in the air at twilight, or water cold and hot in one vessel. We cannot say, that the water is in one part hot, in another cold, but the whole quantity is partly hot and partly cold, that is, lukewarm. The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, &c. Gal. v. 17. The flesh carries him one way, the Spirit another: as the inferior orbs have a violent motion from without, and a natural motion contrary of their own. But still light shall overcome darkness, heat over-master the cold; and the dead flesh be weakened and finally annihilated by the quickening grace of Christ.

Many complain of the flesh, as of the night-mare in a slumber; they would remove the burden, and cannot: hence they begin to doubt of their salvation. But then Paul could not be sure of his salvation; for he cries out for deliverance "from the body of this death," Rom. vii. 24. And we need no better proof that a man is not dead, than because he feels his deadness. If we be sensible of the flesh, detest her motions, repent of her over-bearings and prevailments; weep and fight, as a troubled air doth at once both rain and thunder; call upon Christ for victory, with the weapons of resistance in our hands; we shall then sing to his glory that triumph, Blessed be God, that gives the victory through Jesus Christ, 1 Cor. xv. 57.

But the flesh in these men here, is a lord paramount; which not only makes laws to a reprobate, but makes him keep them: a queen regent; and under her conduct and standard marcheth the whole feminine army, envy, avarice, pride, &c. The devil dotes on the flesh, and her resisting is a resigning; for if Satan should not feed her with temptations, she would tempt him for them, and snatch her own bane. Sometimes she is troubled with a wrangling neighbour, conscience; which, if she cannot pacify, she will tear up; as chirurgeons do incurable fistulas. She hears of Christ's passion, and is glad of it; not as her remedy, but her security: she takes his death as a licence to sin, and his cross for letters-patent to do mischief. She hears the word, as a man writes on the waters; no character, no print of his finger is left behind. She will not understand, but dies without instruction. Prov. v. 23: only hell-torments can open her eyes. So the rich man lift up his eyes in hell, Luke xvi. 23: they were never opened before. As Gideon taught the men of Succoth, with briers and thorns, Judg. viii. 16: he made them to know, taught them with a vengeance. She is ever ready to run into extremes; like the Jews, in adversity unfaithful, in prosperity unthankful. Or as Laban's

sheep were in the extremes; either all black, or all white: Jacob's were in the mean, partly-coloured. The wicked are always in extremities, of either defect, or excess: of irreligion, or superstition.

For us that have both our Father's blood and our mother's blood in us; grace from the former, as we have flesh from the other; and one of these will be master; let us, as it is fit, give the sovereignty to our Father; let his grace rule us, albeit the flesh entice us. Be thou a faithful porter in God's house; diligent to keep out his enemies, and to let in his friends. Beware of denying entrance to the least motion of grace: for man's heart is like a spring-lock; pull to the door after you, and the lock will shut of itself, but being shut it cannot be opened without a key. The heart with the least pull locks out grace easily; but cannot open to re-admit it without his help that hath the key of the house of David, that opens and no man shuts, that shuts and no man opens, Rev. iii. 7. Know you not that flesh and blood shall not inherit the kingdom of heaven? 1 Cor. xv. 50. We say in wrongs, flesh and blood cannot endure this: we say in temptations, flesh and blood cannot hold out. What flesh do we mean? that which God hath damned? which he will never admit to the kingdom of heaven? A fair plea! when that must be our apology which is our impiety. No, let grace be our direction, for it is grace that must be our salvation.

"Lust." This is the daughter of the flesh, and mother of uncleanness; the branches that grow from that cursed root, and bringing forth more cursed fruit; the sparks that fly up from that burning furnace, the bubbles of that noisome and baneful fountain. For method of discourse, I shall examine five questions concerning lust.

1. What lust is. It must be considered as the original fountain of all sins; and so it is an impetuosity of heart, whereby it is inordinately carried with the desire of evil. Original sin is called lust, because it principally shows itself in lusts: as an obstruction of the liver is perceived in the burning and dryness of the palms. Or it is taken for a branch and fruit of the former corruption: flesh is the tyrant reigning; lusts are his laws, rules, precepts; obeying them is the vassalage, a tenure in villany, Rom. vi. 12. It is either the inborn occasion of sin; or the inward act, whereof be three degrees. 1. The first motion. 2. It likes us. 3. We yield to it. The first is impossible to be avoided, the second difficult, the last by grace easy. The appetite desires noxious meat, yet we choose whether we will taste it: it pleases our palate, yet is it in our choice to swallow it down: we swallow it and it makes us sick, yet then let us refrain it. Lust then is either the faculty of desiring, or the act itself; the one like a drowsiness of nature, the other like the passion of slumber; that native pravity, this active pravity; that the nourishment of sin, this the accomplishment of sin.

There is a threefold concupiscence; natural, sensitive, voluntary. 1. Natural, which is in stirps and plants, whereby they covet and draw unto them their food and nourishment; this is properly called *ὁρμή*, desire. 2. Sensitive, such is in brute beasts. 3. Voluntary, this is in man only, (though the other be not excluded,) and is called *ἐπιθυμία*, lust. In this voluntary lust we must consider *ἐκπαγή*, the faculty itself; and *ἐκπόνησις*, the exercise of that faculty. Further, these must be considered naturally, such is an appetite to meat; or supernaturally, such is a regenerate desire: so there is a holy covetousness, Psal. cxix. 127; a spiritual lust, Gal. v. 17; an anger without sin, Eph. iv. 26. Thus we may covet, desire,

affect, and sin not. Or morally, in relation to the commandment; which consists in lusting after unlawful things. Such are not our own; another's house, or wife, or any property of his. Or lawful things in an unlawful degree, as exceeding in measure; so sinners covet wine to riot; or money to hoard; not to use; or strength to revenge; or beauty to tempt; or apparel for pride. To lust for a lawful thing may be an unlawful lust; as to desire it above its proper measure, or short of its proper end. Therefore St. Augustine (De Doctrin. Christia. lib. 3. cap. 10.) calls concupiscence, a motion of the mind to enjoy riches, health, another, yea himself; or any thing else, not for God.

2. What is the seat of this lust. "I know that in my flesh dwelleth no good thing," Rom. vii. 18; where Ambrose by flesh understands the body. His reason why sin hath the habitation in the flesh, rather than in the soul, is because the flesh is derived by propagation, so is not the soul. For if that were propagated as the flesh, sin should rather dwell in the soul than in the body; the soul being the agent offending more than can the body, which is but the instrument. *Ans.* This proves that the first pollution is of the flesh; not that the soul can be free, for by infusion must follow infection, as good liquor is spoiled by a rusty vessel. But sin disperseth itself into the whole nature of man, body and soul. So there is *σάρκα σαρκός*, a mind of flesh, Col. ii. 18; nor is the natural mind apt to any good. "Corrupt minds," 2 Tim. iii. 8; therefore the apostle requires a renovation of the mind, Eph. iv. 23. Nor by the outward man must we understand the body, and by the inner man the soul; but the regenerate part is called the inward man, the unregenerate part the outward, 2 Cor. iv. 16. Grace is the inward man, because, 1. The power of it is chiefly discerned in the mind. (Martyr.) 2. It does not appear to the eyes of men; so called "the hidden man of the heart," 1 Pet. iii. 4. (Pareus.) 3. It does not seek external things: evil lusts are ever wandering abroad, without a man, exercised about vanities; this keeps home, and seeks not riches, but peace of conscience. (Cajetan.) 4. By way of eminence: as the mind is more excellent than the body, so the spirit more noble than the flesh. (Calvin.) Lyrannus would have the inner man to be reason, the outer sensuality, that beast of man which always rebels against reason. So Gorrham: In the flesh, that is, in the sensual man: so Tolet, Pererius, and the present Romists. But it is plain by the apostle's demonstration, that the flesh is the whole natural man, and the spirit the whole renewed man; there being in the regenerate something that is spiritual, and something that is carnal. The seat of sin is in the rational part, the will bringing it forth: the body doth but execute the edict of reason and will; therefore the part rational hath something carnal. Schoolmen, like the philosophers, make two parts of the mind; *λογικήν*, the reasonable part; and *αισθητικήν*, void of discourse, the seat of affections and passions. (Arist. Eth. lib. 1. c. 13.) If Paul should make no other difference between flesh and spirit, his apostolical theology were no greater comfort than their blind philosophy.

3. Whether lust be a sin. We must know that not only the act of lust, but concupiscence itself, is corrupt and forbidden. (Beza.) The difference between us and the pontificians in this point, lies thus. They say, there is concupiscence formed, the second motion, which is with consent of will; this is sin; and we say so too. There is concupiscence unformed, without deliberate consent; this they say is no sin; we affirm it. They say, it is not sin, but the cause of sin; as the sun is said to be hot, because it

causeth heat; but we call it truly sin itself. Let us first weigh some of their arguments against it, then ours for it.

Object. That which is natural cannot be evil; but concupiscence is natural, for it was in man before his fall. *Ans.* As it is natural, it is not forbidden; if the matter desired be lawful, the manner regular, the end honest; God's glory, ours or others' good. So a man may desire that is proper to him, the wife of his bosom; or that is appropriate to him, as an office, 1 Tim. iii. 1.

Object. Nothing involuntary is sin, but the first lust is against the will, therefore no sin. *Ans.* The rule of good or evil is not man's will, but God's law. That which is in us necessary, was in Adam voluntary, and by him in us. Now it cannot be avoided, then it might; his willing transgression transmitted to us a necessity of sinning. Original sin is in infants, it is not voluntary; yet they die, which could not be in justice, had they not sinned. So though that saying of Aristotle may be true, No man is bad with his will, nor happy against his will; yet habit can make that necessary, which was at first voluntary.

Object. The law commands no impossible thing, nor doth God condemn for that which no good man avoid. *Ans.* The law was possible to created nature, that is now impossible to corrupted nature; that we want power to fulfil it, is because we had power and would not keep it. No one better knows what power we have, than He who gave us the power itself. (Aug. de Temp. Ser. 61.)

It is objected from Jam. i. 15, that either concupiscence is not sin, but the cause of sin; or if it be sin, yet is not mortal sin: for sin, till it be perfect, brings not forth death. *Ans.* This is no true conclusion, concupiscence brings forth sin, therefore it is no sin; but therefore it is not that sin which it brings forth. A man begets a man, therefore is he not a man? No, but therefore he is not that man which he begets. Yea, he is a man even because he begets a man. And to say, Sin perfected brings forth death, therefore sin not perfect brings not forth death, is as if we should thus reason: The father begets a mortal man, therefore the grandfather doth not. Because actual lust produceth death as the nearest cause, this hinders not original lust as a remote cause to be mortal.

Our reasons. *Argument 1.* Whatsoever is forbidden by the law, is sin; but the law forbids the first motions of lust. If you ask, what commandment forbids it; I answer, Lust with consent is forbidden in the ninth, lust without consent in the tenth. Without this distinction I see not how we can make ten commandments. The seventh forbids lust in the voluntary desire, as our Saviour expounds it, Matt. v. 28. Therefore if the tenth should not restrain the involuntary and first rising lust, it were superfluous, as being all one with the seventh. It is not untrue, that original sin is condemned in the whole law, but more directly in the first and last commandments; because these two more properly concern the heart of man: the former respects it as concerning God, the other as concerning man. St. Paul confesseth that his lust tempted him against his will, Rom. vii. 7; and by that lust he means the first motion; for the second, which are with consent of will, he knew well enough before to be sins; yea, the very heathen knew this by the light of nature. To covet them is forbidden; if we do cover, we break the law, therefore sin. The other laws condemn the depraved affections with which we are delighted; the last, the very appetites by which we are tempted. To say with Pererius, that the former

only prohibit the outward act, and the last the inward consent, is false by Christ's own exposition; who citing the law, "Thou shalt not kill," affirms it to be broken by rash anger; and that, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," by lusting after a woman, Matt. v. 21, 22, 27, 28.

Argument 2. "If I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me," Rom. vii. 20. He is unwilling, yet he calls this lust, sin. Periculus answers, It is called sin because it is the effect of sin; as the writing is called the hand, because it is written by the hand. *Solut.* But that which makes a man bad cannot be good itself. Whatever makes a thing to be of such a character, is still more itself such. Concupiscence is not only the cause of sin, and the punishment of sin, but sin itself; as St. Augustine hath it. The Jesuit replies, Augustine means not moral sin, nor mortal sin, but the fault of corrupt nature: as blindness, deafness, lameness, are called the sins or the errors of nature, as being against the integrity and perfectness of our natural constitution; so the rebelling of concupiscence is against the integrity and perfection of the soul, an error in nature. *Ans.* There are natural faults in the soul; as ignorance, forgetfulness, dulness of understanding; in the body, infirmities, weakness, sickness: which are the effects of sin, not sins themselves. But all these are effects and passions, whereas concupiscence is active and working. In a word, it resists the motions of God's Spirit: now all disobedience is sin. In civil matters no man is accessory to a sin without consent of will, but it is otherwise in the court of conscience.

4. What variety of lusts there be. St. Paul enlargeth lust to all motions, inclinations, passions, and perturbations, of heart, mind, will, and affections, Eph. ii. 3. Original concupiscence is the seed of all sins in man: look how many sins there be in the world, so many lusts in the heart of man, 1 John ii. 16; the number of lusts is no less than the number of sins. Of actual lust there be two degrees; sudden, or voluntary and deliberate. Sudden is the motion not agreed to; voluntary is with consent. The eye is sometimes east upon an object on the sudden, without any intention or consultation of the mind; sometimes it is sent on the heart's errand by the mind's direction. As the eye may be shut in a twinkling, without thought or purpose; and it may be shut with deliberation, to sleep, or prevent harm. The heart is a furnace, that sometimes sends forth sudden, sometimes leisurely flames. The first is the nature of sin, the next is the nurture of sin; consent doth nurse the child of death, practice brings it up; actual lusting is the oil that feeds the lamp of concupiscence. The mother brings forth the daughter, and the daughter nourisheth the mother: Hagar produceth Ishmael, Ishmael sustains Hagar; blessed is that Abraham, whose house is well rid of them both.

5. How heinous this sin is: even no less than damnable in itself. Lusts are often more punished by the great Judge, than divers actual sins. The continued lust of uncleanness, is worse than a discontinued act of uncleanness. He that always desires pollution deserves greater punishment, than he that is overtaken with it against his will. One kills a man against his will, another desires to kill him and is hindered; this last is the murderer before God. It is this lust that Paul calls the burning: it is one thing to be hot, a good man may be hot; but to burn is another thing; when lust finds indulgence, and is scarce restrained with shame. The act of adultery is not more heinous among men, than the unlawful desire and consented lust of the heart is to God, Matt. v. 28. Without practice, the very purpose stands

culpable before him. Silly people think the commandment is not broken, if the outward gross sin be abstained: but God fetcheth in malice, anger, envy, within the compass of murder. Some ignorants use the commandments for prayers: poor souls, they little think they are God's thunderbolts, to throw them into hell for their sins. Thus usury, the desire of gain by the undoing of others; hoarding of corn in dearth, which is to make a private profit of God's public judgment; bad example, with a delight to corrupt others, which are like those erring lights, that instead of guiding ships to the haven, lead them upon rocks and shelves: all these are degrees of murder. So a wanton eye, an obscene discourse, a vain attire, a light behaviour; all these are degrees of adultery. Lust is like a secret malignity in the bones, hardly got out: wounds and ulcers are sooner cured because of their appearance. Adultery may be restrained by corporal impotency; still lust is bid within; it must be a potent medicine that fetcheth it out. The uses are,

1. It justly humbles us. If the first motion, without consent, be sin; if the second, with consent, be greater sin; Lord, who can say, My heart is clean? Not many can clear themselves so with Samuel, from the act of injustice, 1 Sam. xii. 3: fewer with Paul, "I have coveted no man's gold," &c. Acts xx. 33; but, I was never tempted to this; no man could ever say this but one, even that man who is the Son of God. If we had no more, this last were enough to hide our faces, and stop our mouths before the Lord. Too few take notice of this natural uncleanness; though it be born in them, and borne about them, yet they neither see the filth nor feel the weight. Moors, that never saw men of more temperate climates, think there is no other complexion but their own. He doth much good that goes not after his lusts, Eccles. xviii. 30; but he is not perfect, that doth not what is written, Thou shalt not lust. (Aug. de Mixt. et Concup. cap. 23, 29.) Now shall we not be cast down for that, which without repentance will cast us down to hell? Paul did not more truly bear about him the marks of the Second Adam, Gal. vi. 17, than we do all the marks of the first Adam. Let us know, that eternal fire is the wages of this lust; consent makes it hotter, practice inflames it. This lust is in us all, and this lust is sufficient to condemn us all.

But then, alas, what shall we do? How should we escape? This necessitates our ruin. Therefore as the law compelled him that had opened a pit, and left it uncovered, to make good his neighbour's beast that miscarried in it, Exod. xxi. 33, 34; so having opened a pit, lest any soul should perish in it, let me cover it again with comfort. The condemning quality of this sin is taken away by regeneration, Acts ii. 38. All sins; now children have no sin but original lust. The guilt which was contracted by generation, has been done away by regeneration, says Augustine. In Christ it is pardoned, and shall not cast his members to hell. Yet is it by nature so dyed in grain, that nothing but his blood can purge it. And even in the purged it still remains. It shall not reign over us here, not confound us hereafter, yet will dwell in us till our dissolutions. Pardon frees us from the damnation and domination, not from the inhabitation, of sin.

2. It teacheth us to withstand the beginnings of sin, to kill that pestilent brood in the cradle, to destroy them in their infancy, as we do a nest of young wasps. For lust, when it hath conceived, bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death, Jam. i. 15. Lust tempteth, there is the mother: being moved by the devil, there is the father:

it conceive, thus the child is begotten: she is the mother of the dead; as grace (like Eve) is the mother of the living. Delight is the midwife. It bringeth forth sin, there the child is born; it must now have a nurse to bring it up, that is custom; and the full stature it grows unto, is death. It tempteth by enticing the mind to evil, conceive by the consent of will and resolution to do evil, bringeth forth by execution and practice, nurseth it to growth by custom and continuance; lastly, this stripping engendereth another child, Benoni, the sorrow of the mother, and that is death. If we cannot prevent the conception, yet let us destroy it in the birth, make it abortive, by purposing never to act it: if it is born, and draw the air of intention, yet let us stop it ere it come to action; let us not do the determined evil. If it oversway us to like and act it, yet let it never come to a habit, let us devour a custom. But how much more easy were it to stop it in the first cause! as seasonable physic doth meet with an infection at the first taking, before it run into the veins, and corrupt the blood. The seed of Ishmael had never afflicted the seed of Israel, had Ishmael been killed when he was banished. At the first rising of Elijah's cloud, Ahab had time to get home dry; that once ascended, all the speed of his chariot cannot outrun the shower. Cut off the gangrened joint, and save the body. The way to diminish the increase of ravenous and noxious fishes, is to destroy the spawn with the mother; to be rid of harmful birds, is to spoil their nests. When a fire-ball is thrown into a ship at a sea-fight, they presently cast it out ere it break or fasten. Meet thine enemy at his coming out of his bed, before he arm himself; take lust ere it come to a rebound. At the first motion, stop the mouth of it; let it never make a reply; stand not to argue, lest thou be overcome.

3. Let us avoid them as perilous and mortal enemies. 1. Dangerous for their nature; continual tempters. Conscience doth sometimes sleep from reproving, these never rest from enticing. 2. Dangerous for their number. If you despise them as being very little, you may have to fear them as being very many. (August.) Many temptations come in by the cinque ports, the senses. More by Satan's injection, that presents to the affections things absent from the senses. Most by lust itself, that (as no created thing is quicker than thought) tumbles over a thousand desires in an hour: many strings to sin's bow, that if some break, the rest may hold; many trains of powder, some likely to take fire. 3. Dangerous for their effect, bringing forth the most monstrous offences. Open but the pit, out swarm these pestilent locusts, Rev. ix. 2. Who would have thought that David's wanton look should have begot murder? He that hath given way to his lust, must confess such fearful precipices. Murder we detest; yet how many hands hath the lust of revenge embroiled in blood! how many necks hath it brought to an ignominious halter! Incontinence hath the name from uncontained lust: many a disease of body, reproach of name, consumption of estate, loss of life and soul, are beholden to it. 4. Dangerous for their continuance: an ill seasoning, that is never got out but by breaking of the pitcher: a mark that all carry to their graves, some to their torments. While the soul doth animate a body mortal, it will tempt both body and soul. Cut off the sprig of a tree, it grows still; a bough, an arm, still it grows: lop off the top, yea, saw it in the midst, yet it will grow again: stock it up by the root, then (and not till then) it will grow no more. Next unto God and Christ, we may thank death itself, for the abolition of lust. We have three birth-days: the first of na-

ture; this gives lust the breeding: the second of grace; this sets lust a bleeding; it doth mortify it, not nullify it; it makes it dying, not dead: the last of glory, then are we rid of it for ever. Thus all the saints in heaven are thrice born; to sin, to grace, to glory. Lust in the first is a king, in the second a slave, in the third nothing. The second nativity crosseth the first, the last perfects the second. To be freed from concupiscence is a main motive of that zealous prayer, Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.

Let us (in the mean time) beware the captivity of our affections. Let not sin reign in our mortal bodies, Rom. vi. 12: where it is a sovereign, it will force obedience. There is difference between lusts and actual sins. 1. The intervention of time. Lust is sudden, action requires time. He hath the present lust of covetousness, he must tarry a time to enlarge and fill his barns, Luke xii. 18. 2. The interposition of place. Lust often desires, that cannot be present, therefore adultery must stay for opportunity. 3. The interception of instruments. Balaam had a desire to kill his harmless beast, but he had no weapon, Numb. xxii. 29: the hand is not so quick as the thought. 4. The interposition of impediments. Absalom lusts for his father's crown; there be many hinderances, he cannot reach it. If to achieve were as easy as to desire, one man's lust were able to ruin all the world. 5. The intercession or pleading of arguments. The soul hath some discourse between the lust and the act. The *Video meliora proboque* (I see better things, and approve them) of the heathen poet, is in the soul of a Medea, a sorceress. 6. The entrance of other desires. Sometimes the second nail drives out the first. So the Lord sets our lusts together by the ears, as the Egyptians against the Egyptians; that while two poisons wrestle we may live. The falling out of thieves helps the true man to his goods. The lust after beauty is driven out by a desire of revenge, that again by a golden thirst; and if grace comes, this drives them out all: as the feathers of an eagle, that will not endure blending with other feathers, but rather consumes them. All these *inters* should be the interruption of sin, and for the compunction of heart; that though concupiscence have conceived, she may not be delivered. Justly should we say to lust, as the Hebrew did to Moses, "Who made thee a prince over us?" Exod. ii. 14; whence hast thou this authority? Wilt thou kill me, as thou killest the worldling? No, thou shalt not, I have a deliverer, Rom. vii. 25.

5. Seeing the flesh will be in man so long as man is in the flesh, let us strive to fill our hearts with better desires. Lust works in the memory, by remembering vanities, injuries, bad examples: instead of these, let us remember our sins, our ends, our audit. In the affections: if it work by pride, stop it out by humility; if by malice, with charity; if by uncleanness, with chastity; if by covetousness, with liberality; if by revenge, with mercy, as darkness will give place to the sun. In the mind, if idle thoughts find room, it is because God is not there. "Let the word of God dwell in you richly," Col. iii. 16: emptiness of that food will cause the reptation of lusts. In the body, if it work by drunkenness, rather turn Rechabite, never drink wine. If by surfeit and high feeding, fall to Daniel's pulse, shorten the commons of sin: as it is better to beat down the house, than to be fired in it. If by idleness, screw up thy endeavours to a greater task. They be idle, therefore regard vain words, Exod. v. 8, 9; thus a Pharaoh could conclude. Let lust never call, but we have other business. The best remedy is prayer: when concupiscence tempts us to folly, let us make the matter known to our Husband,

Christ. When lust covets transient riches, call home the meditation of those permanent joys; and say, "Our Father, which art in heaven." When lust would study how to get honour, then say, "Hallowed be thy name." When ambition would have such a preferment, then say, "Thy kingdom come." When it would carve thy own portion, then, "Thy will be done." When it covets monies and riches, then, "Give us this day our daily bread." When it would revenge thy wrath on others, then say, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us." Howsoever it tempts us, let us pray, "Lead us not into temptation." And that we may never yield unto it, "Deliver us from evil." Let not lust reign in us, "for thine is the kingdom;" we cannot avoid it ourselves, for thine is "the power;" and for our deliverance, thine be "the glory, for ever and ever. Amen."

"Of uncleanness." Of sores, and ulcers, and such noisome pollutions, sordid and odious to God and good men; such is the subject of my present discourse; that this may well be called a spital sermon. But as the physician is seldom sent for unless men be sick; nor is so much consulted about diet as physie; the whole need him not, but the diseased, Matt. ix. 12; so if there were no sin, you should need no preacher: yet wise men require antidotes and preservatives, and would rather pay the physician to keep them well than to make them well, health being not so easily restored as conserved. Therefore let them that be infected with this leprosy, learn now the means of their recovery; let them that be not infected, observe the means to continue their purity. Whether they be or be not, this discourse, like the bath, shall do them no harm; an honest heart will not return unbettered. For method, first, I will describe the disease of uncleanness; then, the cause; last, the cure.

The disease lies not, like the megrim, in the head, nor like a pleurisy, in the blood, nor like a gout, in the joints and extreme places, nor like an ache, in the bones; but it is epidemical, like an ill habit of body, and possesseth in a reprobate not only the whole man, but the whole of man: as Job was not here and there ulcerous, but all his body one coagulated ulcer; there is no whole part about him, Isa. i. 6. First, there is a contemplative uncleanness, when the mind pleaseth itself with vicious thoughts: thus there may be a world of wickedness in a man, though the acts of pollution be refrained. The devil, who is the father of lusts, John viii. 44, reigns in the soul by these; yea, such a heart that infernal prince takes up for his bed-chamber. Secondly, there is a preparative uncleanness, which is an effeminateness of carriage, or affectation of inviting the eyes of lust: all their postures being so many characters, to spell the meaning of their lascivious hearts. It were well, if such a one were forced to cry, as the leper in Israel, I am unclean, Lev. xiii. 45. Thirdly, there is a procurative uncleanness; that takes up the devil's office, and helps forward the damnation of men. Such was Jonadab to Amnon; whose unkindly flame might else have wasted itself out in time, but that such a wicked counsellor blew the coals. This was no worse a man than the king's brother's son: now this noble pander will project a course for Amnon's satisfaction. The procurer is as unclean, if not worse than the committer: the fire would languish, vanish, perish, if there were no such fuel. Fourthly, there is a sensitive uncleanness; when the ear sucks in obscene stories, the eye delights in immodest mixtures, and the tongue screws it into all discourses. This is, as if the door were not wide enough, to set open all the windows, and break down the walls, to let in the air

of uncleanness. Actual uncleanness follows, whereof there be many degrees.

1. Fornication. I mean not titular: as hostess and harlot are convertible terms: nor metaphorical: as "the children of whoredoms," Hos. ii. 4: nor spiritual: as idolatry is called fornication: but corporal; which is commonly taken for the incontinency of single persons. The natural cure of this uncleanness is marriage: thus Shechem bewrays a good disposition even in filthiness, he would not let Dinah fare the worse for his sin; but as he had with dishonest rage abused her, so he strives with honest love to entertain her. Her deflowering shall be no prejudice to her: as the sin was done by him, so he would have the whole shame redomd to him; and so he will hide her dishonour with the name of a husband. To this purpose he communes, craves, offers, indeed would buy her; even purchase leave to make her satisfaction. He sues to his father, to hers, to her brethren, to herself; and begs with submission what he might have gotten with violence. The father consents, solicits, is ready to buy his son's peace with his own pain. No dowry shall hinder, but Shechem shall recompense Dinah. How far worse are they, that abuse without any purpose of amends! But marriage in this case is some satisfaction, no restitution: a good salve is not so good as no sore. This may make the next act lawful, not justify the former. However the scene concludes, the first entrance was naught. Though a late satisfaction be better than none, yet a timely prevention is best of all.

2. Adultery, when one or both are married. This is the breach of many faiths; and so much the more pernicious, as it is a wilful shipwreck abroad, when it liath a harbour and safe remedy provided at home.

3. Whoredom; which is a mad and transportive desire to abuse many. Sometimes it is lust, joined with anger; doing it in spite; a desperate revenge, by polluting another's bed to cast away his own soul. So the foolish child, when one snatcheth his apple, throws his bread after him. Sometimes it is joined with covetousness; he wastes his body to fill his purse; as a fool burns his hand to make tinder. Always it is joined with folly; not so much respecting a fair woman as she is fair, but as she is a woman: foul water will quench that fire as well as fair.

4. Unnatural uncleanness; as men with men, men with beasts. But these things are so horrible in the deed, that they are even disgraceful in word.

5. Uncleanness with our own kindred, which is incest. To patronize this, some allege precept, practice, and custom. But that law to the Jews, Dent. xxv. 5; Gen. xxxviii. 8; Matt. xxii. 24, was partly political, for distinction of families; and partly typical, preserving the right of primogeniture, prefiguring the spiritual birthright in the Messias, which should be endless. The moral law was otherwise, Lev. xviii. 16. Therefore we answer, that albeit God had particular exceptions from his general laws: as the cherubims over the ark was an instance against the second commandment; the Israelites robbing the Egyptians, against the eighth; and Phinehas killing Zimri, against the sixth; yet it is plain that the Lord condemns all incest.

6. With more wives than one, which is polygamy. I know this fact of Jacob is diversely excused. As, first, it was prohibited by no law. (August.) *Ans.* It was not prohibited by a law written, it was by the law engraven: God made but one woman for one man; and he was a wicked Lamech that first begun bigamy. 2. But custom excuseth; as at first a side garment was a shame to the Romans, but at last it grew to a fashion. *Ans.* That was a thing indiffer-

ent, the decency whereof time might vary; but there is no custom against the first institution. 3. In the multiplicity of wives he propounded to himself the multitude of children. *Answe.* If ever such an indulgence had been fit for any, then Noah should have been dispensed with, to propagate the world; but God gave him no such indulgence. 4. This was done in a mystery. *Answe.* Indeed, August. Ruper. Greg. all reduce it into several allegories; yet cannot this justify the fact; no more than Christ's second coming like a thief, can warrant a thief sudden breaking into a house. This therefore must be granted Jacob's infirmity: to marry two wives was his transgression; but to marry two sisters, no less than incest. Albeit God disposed this to increase the holy seed, yet the fact is against his ordinance; and our positive law makes it death, as by the law instinctive it is deadly. Every man shall cleave to his own wife, Gen. ii. 24. A wife, not a harlot; his own, not another's; wife, not w'es.

7. Uncleaness with a man's spouse; I mean between the betrothment and consummation. The Levite's spouse, till he married her, was but his concubine; and their conjunction was fornication. It is not enough to say, they were married before God; the hand of the church must be there, or this is culpable uncleaness. Marriage is no amends; otherwise than wilfully to break an arm or leg, to set it again; or to condemn a man first, and then to sue out his pardon. The common opinion is, this is but a true covenant antedated; the taking possession of a man's own without due course of law; the mowing of his corn before harvest; the plucking his own grapes ere they be ripe. But this is trivial: contract is but a right to the thing, marriage gives a right *in* the thing. Contract binds to marriage, not allows to touch before marriage. Contract is but like articles agreed upon, marriage puts a seal to the covenant. Such a fruit of their bodies is but a monument of their sin; and without hearty repentance, a good proceeding seldom follows so bad a beginning.

8. Uncleaness with a man's own wife. This is when the use of the marriage-bed is either unseasonably, or intemperately; in a season prohibited, or in a measure not moderated, or in a manner not ordained, or to an end not warranted: as when it hath altogether respect to pleasure, not to generation; or to beget an heir for their lands, rather than a saint for heaven; or their own image, rather than the image of God. If uncleaness can creep into marriage; where will it be kept out? How foul is the disease, when the very remedy is often infected! Not but that the marriage is pure, but the married impure: marriage doth not stain, nor so much as dye, in the Romish sense; it is honourable and clean, yet the married may be unclean.

9. Uncleaness with a man's self; as the heathen dishonoured their own bodies against themselves, Rom. i. 24. There be three turpitudes against nature; with another kind, or with the same kind of the same sex, or with no other person but with themselves. Thus St. Augustine distinguisheth between *flagitium* and *facinus*; the latter is in hurting another, the former in committing against a man's self. Other sins are without the body, fornication against the body, 1 Cor. vi. 18, this uncleaness in the body. This was the sin of Onan, Gen. xxxviii. 9; abusing himself against the order of nature and institution of God. This was a grievous sin; against God, whose ordinance he disobeyed; against his wife, whom he unjustly defrauded; against himself, whose issue he should not have prevented; against mankind, whose number he should have increased; against his brother, to whom issue should be raised. Some Hebrews think, that he did

it to preserve the favour and beauty of Tamar, which bearing of children would have impaired. However, sensual was his pleasure, and the sin in any man is very grievous.

10. Ravishment: the former is a rape upon a man's self, this upon another. Such was Shechem's sin, Gen. xxxiv. 2, as some understand it; but some rather think, that Dinah being so light to wander and gaze, was not over-difficult to yield. Commonly, such lust ends in loathing, as Ammon's: beating her out of doors, whom he was sick to bring in. And therefore Shechem's seemeth to be no rape, because he still loved her; and having wrought her shame in his father's house, he would not send her home with disgrace to her father's tent, but rather seeks to marry her whom he had defiled. His offence did not make her odious; but so constantly he affects her, that he is willing to draw blood of himself, rather than forego her. Ammon's rape was far worse. Tamar is sent for as his physician, but he makes her his physic. She dressed him meat, but that was not the dish he longed for: he loves the cook, not the eates. She presents the diet, he throws down that, and falls aboard with her. His sickness is now forgotten, the devil hath made him lusty and strong on the sudden. The innocent virgin entreats for herself, persuades in vain: shows the sin, the shame, the danger; Thou shalt be a fool in Israel; I, no wife, yet no virgin. Prevailing not by reason, she seeks to cool his present heat with future hope of an impossible thing. Ask me of my father. But in vain; he grows mad with resistance, and resolves to be a ravisher. If the devil were not more strong in such than nature, they would never seek pleasure in violence. This rape defiles Ammon, not Tamar: the wrong was hers, the uncleaness his. She that is ravished, is more a maid, than she whose own loose thoughts have made her unclean. Two lay together, only one committed adultery, as Augustine of Lueretia. She was but the patient; and it was not her fault to suffer, what was not her will to do. Her virginity was not lost, but torn from her by compulsory means; she still reserved it in her soul, though it had forsaken her body. The inhabitant is not to be blamed for thieves breaking into the house. She can do no more than bewail what she cannot keep: lamenting the shame of another's sin; living like a widow, who was neither maid, wife, harlot, nor widow, but a ravished woman. Thus you have the specification of some uncleanesses, (which, oh that none knew but by a general apprehension and hearsay! and not as Adam knew evil, by sense and experience,) now to

The causes; which are many. Physicians say, that to know the cause is half the cure. By cause, here, I understand not only that fundamental cause, which is inordinate affection, the boiling fountain of lust; but also such occasions as breed and nurse uncleaness. These are,

1. A roving eye, that looks up and down for the objects of lust. "The sons of God saw the daughters of men," Gen. vi. 2: by that looking came lusting, thence preposterous marriages, thence universal confusion. "His master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph," Gen. xxxix. 7: her eye led her heart, her heart led her tongue, her tongue led her hand. (Ambr.) Such be the harlot's three weapons: the first engine is her eye, the very motion whereof discourseth a silent filthiness. 2. Her tongue offers to take hold where her eye cannot. 3. Her hand offers to catch him, whom her tongue cannot win. Tamar "sat in an open place," Gen. xxxviii. 14, where she might be seen: Hebr. in the door of eyes. This was Achan's confession; I saw, I coveted, I took, Josh. vii. 21. The eye betrays the heart, the heart the

hand: sin gets in by the senses, yea, by the least piece of a sense; as bad air at a crack in the window. By them it seizeth on the inmost fort, and there it commands them like a tyrant, to whom it was beholden for entrance. This is the order of our crimes: Achan's song shall many chatter to a doleful tune; I saw, I coveted, and took. The thief, I saw the booty, coveted, and took it: the drunkard, I saw the colour of the wine: the idolater, I saw the goodly picture: the adulterer, I saw the beauty, coveted, and took it, and took my death with it.

David rose from off his bed, and from the roof of his palace he saw a woman, 2 Sam. xi. 2. From an afternoon's slumber he riseth to his evening's walk: the eyes which unseasonable sleep had shut up, an enticing object opens. Her bath was no open place, but lust is quick-sighted: she could espy nobody, but David had espied her. "Dinah, the daughter of Leah, went out to see the daughters of the land," Gen. xxxiv. 1. The daughter of Leah; her mother's own daughter, right bred; because both had a fault in their eyes: the mother's, a defect of nature; the daughter's, a defect of nurture: hers an infirmity, this a curiosity. Her eyes were guilty of this temptation: she would needs see and be seen; and while she looks about vanity, she is looked upon lustfully. Thou lookest about idly, thou art not looked at idly; thou lookest about curiously, thou art looked at still more curiously, says Bernard. I know there may be a clear and honest aspersion, as the queen of Sheba came to see Solomon, 1 Kings x. 2. See this woman, saith Christ to Simon, Luke vii. 44. But it is better to be blind, than look with lustful eyes. This sin is little regarded: many come to the church with Christian ears, but pagan eyes; and Satan comes faster in at the eyes, than God at the ears; that which should save the soul, is lost by the wandering sense. There can be no safety to the chariot, where these unbridled horses are let loose. "Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity," Psal. cxix. 37: we must see it transiently, not behold it wishfully. He can never keep his covenant with God, that makes not a covenant with his eyes, Job xxxi. 1. But my inward man is safe, why may not my outward man be free? This is an idle presumption: he is more than a man, whose heart is not led by his eyes; he is less than a good man, whose eyes be not restrained by his heart. So, the ear is the trap-door of the soul; the flies of hell are ever humming about it. It is temptation enough to the thief, that he hears of a booty. If dishonesty come so near as the ear, let wonder stop it out, and save virtue the labour.

2. Bad company. Joseph shunned the society of his mistress, Gen. xxxix. 10. We know our own hearts, we know not the hearts of others. To be the provocation of sin is unholiness, not to avoid the provocation of sin is unhappiness. God and his angels will protect thee "in thy ways," Psal. xci. 11: in thy ways, not in thy wanderings. If we once rove out of the lists of our calling, there is nothing but danger. Had Dinah kept at home, her virginity had been safe: had Shechem forced her in the house, she had sustained loss without sin. It had not then been her evil, but his: her gadding gave the occasion, even this made her not innocent. It is no sufficient warrant to draw us into suspected places, and spiritual dangers, only to see. No wise man will go into the infected pest-house, only to see the fits of the visited. Who would poison his body to please his taste? With the lascivious we hardly learn to be chaste. Immodest behaviour makes way for lust; this gives life unto wicked hopes. A cold denial invites a second charge: she deserves some blame, that hath only been tried, though she consent

not. A fair carriage keeps temptation out at the staves' end; lightness of presence lets it in to the grapple, and gives encouragement to lewd desires. Though we fight and conquer, yet it was our fault that we were put to fight. A man is not only to keep his conscience clear, but his name: and to keep this is harder. For our conscience is in our own custody, our credit lies in the hands of others; this stands on likelihoods, and their construction of our deeds. It is no easy thing to disprove a slander; like an unruly spirit once raised, hard to conjure down. Our reputation is more frail than ourselves, still liable to suspicion: it must be our good behaviour, and avoiding bad society, that can keep our name from scandal.

3. Idleness, or no company, and nothing to do. Such a heart is the devil's day-bed, whereupon he takes his nooning. The philosopher called love *otiosum negotium*, a disease to be cured by labour. "Thou wicked and slothful servant," Matt. xxv. 20: if slothful, certainly wicked; if "slow bellies," presently "evil beasts," Tit. i. 12. While Israel is working in Egypt, pursuing or pursued in Canaan, they have no leisure to be wanton. Let them lie still in the plains of Midian, the dancing lasses of Moab will soon seduce them to folly. Who ever saw David so tempted and foiled in the times of his busy war, as when he was idle at ease? In troubles he could rise up in the morning to his early devotions, prevent the morning watch, break his night's rest with the cares of the day, the service of God and business of state took him up; thus long was he innocent and holy. But when Satan finds him wallowing in the bed of idleness, he now thinks him fit for a temptation. Gentlemen that live of their lands, and those of a worse condition, that have given over all trades, to live of their monies, think themselves the only fortunate men; they need not toil, nor weary their limbs with labour; instead of the pen or the pike, the pot and the pipe is all their exercise. But there are none more unhappy; for lust can be no stranger to an idle bosom: the industrious man hath no leisure to sin. Doth any man complain the contiguity of his labour? he finds fault with his own felicity: the toil of action is recompensed by the benefit: if he were not doing good, he would be doing ill. If we did work less, we should suffer more: while we work not ourselves, Satan works upon us.

The sitting bird is the fowler's mark: the devil is like some lazy companion, that while he finds us busy gives back and sees it no time to meddle with us. But if, like the idle housewife, when her gossip comes in, we throw away our work and hold chat with him, nothing can please him better. Gratify him but thus far, to talk with him, and he thinks us sure. Exercise is wholesome for the body, better for the soul. The earth stands still, therefore becomes nature's common sewer: the receptacle of corruption, all dregs; the heavens, that are ever in motion, are always pure. The troublesomest work to a good man, is to have no work: which when he hath supplied by prayer and meditation, and yet finds room for more guests, he studies business; and if he does not find it, he makes it. They that surrender themselves to sloth, find matter of disease breeding in their bodies and souls. The active spirit is soonest dulled with no labour; as the water that hath been heated, soonest freezeth. The danger of women's corruption is their leisure: idleness breeds fancies, which continuance of domestical business would keep out.

4. Lust after beauty. This is the general snare, and occasion of uncleanness. "Joseph was a goodly

person, and well-favoured," Gen. xxxix. 6; lovely to all, but not looked on alike with all eyes: his fellows praise him, his master trusts him, his mistress dotes on him; all love him, she over-loves him. That is true of the poet, that virtue never hath a better grace, than when it shineth from a beautiful face. Yet was this danger, it gave him means to sin; which when he refused, it was the occasion of his trouble. But he was fair without, and fairer within. Even the sons of God were caught with beauty. Balaam could not harm Israel with his curses, he doth with his courses and counsels: his curse had hurt none but himself, his counsel cost the blood of twenty-four thousand. Send out your fairest women among them: this policy was fetched from the bottom of hell. There is no sin more plausible than wantonness, wantonness is no way sooner provoked than by the sight of beauty. This shall draw them to lust, their lust to folly, their folly to idolatry: so God shall curse them for thee, unasked. This project of that cursed magician was too prosperous: the daughters of Moab do more in the tents of Israel, than the Amorites and Amalekites could do in the plains of Moab. The women made them captives, whom the men felt conquerors. Had they sent their subtlest politicians, and strongest soldiers, to persuade or compel them to idolatry, they had been returned with scorn. But the eloquent and victorious beauty of the women effected this. It had been happy for them if Balaam had used any charms but these.

I know that a man may lawfully desire beauty in his own spouse, as Jacob loved Rachel; not for provocation of lust, but more loving society. Some actions do not so well rid off a hand, without some delight: as eating of meats, learning of arts; and such is matrimonial society. As meat pleases us better in a clean dish, wine in a crystal glass; so virtue in a comely person. But if the beauty be let into our thoughts, and the virtue shut out, there is no speedier way to ruin. As it is God's use to fetch glory to himself out of the worst actions of Satan; so it is Satan's ambition to advantage himself by the fairest works of God. If the Lord suffer him, he will ruin us with the most rare pieces of creation. No one means hath so enriched hell, as beautiful faces. The beautiful harlot "increaseth the transgressors among men," Prov. xxiii. 28. Three of David's children were undone by it at once; it was the occasion of Amnon's incest, of Tamar's ravishment, of Absalom's pride and murder. Beauty, if not well disciplined, proves a traitor rather than a friend. It is a blessing to be fair; but such a blessing, that if the soul be not as clear as the skin, leads to a curse. It is no rare thing to find the foulest soul dwell fairest. If the inward conditions be bad, oh what strange mischief can beauty bring about! How many Solomons and Samsons hath it befooled and blinded! The weaker sex is the stronger in temptation: it was the dowry that our grandmother Eve bequeathed to her daughters, that they should be our helpers to sin. Indeed it is not a woman's fault to be fair; the candle does not amiss in burning; the foolish fly offends, that scorseth her wings in the flame. The crystal stream is not to be blamed, because some distracted man drowns himself in it. Yet to be but a temptation, and though the unwilling occasion of another's ruin, is an unhappiness, albeit not a sin. The Lord so mortify all inordinate lusts in us, that we may be admitted to that city, into which no unclean thing shall ever enter.

The cure follows; and this is twofold: the one a preservative, the other sanative. To see the sin in the proper and natural odiousness, is a preventing

antidote. For them that be infected, there are other medicines. The horribleness of it is seen in itself, and in the effects.

For itself, the light of nature discerned and condemned it. It is objected that Solon, a lawgiver, one of the wisest among the Grecians, used to buy harlots for the young men: and among the Carthaginians it was a custom for the virgins before their marriage, to prostitute themselves publicly in the temple of Venus, that they might bring the greater portions to their husbands. *Answe.* This was not by natural light, but the unnatural darkness of those given over to a reprobate sense, as the punishment of former wickedness, Rom. i. 28. *Object.* But the prophet Hosea was thus commanded, "Take thee a wife of whoredoms," Hos. i. 2. *Answe.* Nothing can be concluded for it out of a typical act: neither did he make a harlot, but take a harlot, to reduce her to chastity. *Object.* But fornication is reckoned among indifferent things, Acts xv. 20. *Answe.* Their esteeming it so did not make it so; their own conscience thought otherwise. Abimelech calls it a great sin, Gen. xx. 9; this that heathen could see, but not so clearly as Joseph, Gen. xxxix. 9. Dishonour to the husband, wrong to the children, breach of covenant, but above all, disobedience to God, is in it. "Against thee have I sinned," Psal. li. 4, was his confession, that had sinned against Bathsheba, Uriah, and the whole church; but especially against the Lord. It is most odious among Christians; this folly ought not to be done in Israel, Gen. xxxiv. 7; 2 Sam. xiii. 12: it is bad enough in all places, here intolerable; not to be named among saints, Eph. v. 3. Let the act be so abhorred, that it may quite lose the name; especially, let no saint have such a name. It makes the name stink both living and dead. Living: If a brother be a fornicator, with such a one eat not, 1 Cor. v. 11. Dead: "his reproach shall not be wiped away," Prov. vi. 33. It is more heinous than theft: Men do not despise a thief, if he steal to satisfy his hungry soul; but he that committeth adultery destroyeth his own soul, ver. 30, 32. Goods may be restored, honesty never: the breaches may be repaired, the pristine state not recovered.

For the effects: 1. It breeds diseases in the body, that the quality of the sin may be seen in the nature of the plague; as we know a rotten nut by the worm-hole in the shell. 2. It makes a more loathsome soul: so odious, that till it be cleansed, neither will God dwell with it, nor shall it dwell with God. 3. It blasteth the estate, roots out all the increase, Job xxxi. 12, and brings a man to a piece of bread, Prov. vi. 26. The parents' uncleanness makes the children beggars. 4. It curseth the house, Hos. iv. 13, 14. His own sin abroad, is able to make his house miserable. What followed upon David's adultery, but present payment? The deflowering of his daughter Tamar, the murder of his son Amnon, the treason, incest, and ruin of his Absalom. How justly is he scourged by the sins of his children, whom his own act taught to offend! Unlawful lust still propagates itself by example: when the father of a family brings sin home to his house, it is not easily swept out. 5. It endangers incest; when the legitimate son may come to marry the bastard issue of the same father.

It is not only the punishment of sin; that a man being hateful to God for other sins, is made hateful to men for this; that what lay hid in an impure heart, may be exposed by an ignominious deed: other sins owed him a shame, this shall pay it him. Therefore, he that is good before God, shall be delivered from the strange woman, not the sinner. But also, the cause of sin, it brings on more wicked-

ness. So the apostle joins them, "fornication, wickedness," Rom. i. 29: if *πορνεία* be first, *πορνεία* follows. Give lust room in the eye, she will possess body and soul. The Midian faces first appeared to Israel; they like them, that brought them to like their presence, that to take pleasure in their feasts; from their boards to their beds, from their beds to their idols: and now God is separated, and they are joined to Baal-peor. Corporal fornication is the way to spiritual: if superstitious love make idols of flesh, how soon do they give us up to idols of wood and stone!

7. It hath not only undone persons and houses, but ruined whole cities and kingdoms. What a breach did this double fornication make in Israel! God doth not smother his wrath, but himself strikes with the plague, and bids Moses strike with the sword, Numb. xxv. Dinah is ravished; the whole city is destroyed for it. While every man lies sore of his own wound, Simeon and Levi rush in with weapons and kill them. What was the shrieking of women and children in all the streets of that city, while the fathers and husbands take mortal physic for their prince's sickness! For a particular Ammon to answer his lust in blood, is not so ponderous: many an unclean lover meets with such a catastrophe. But for a whole tribe to be cut off for uncleanness, as was Benjamin, Judg. xxi. 6; for a whole kingdom to smart, as Abimelech said to Abraham, Thou hast brought a great sin on me, and on my kingdom, Gen. xx. 9; that the whole kingdom of Israel should smart for the king's filthiness; these be dire effects. The name of king became odious to Rome, for the rape of Lucrece: famous Troy was razed for one Helena.

8. It is commonly mixed and plagued with blindness. So had lust besotted Judah, that he could not discern the voice of Tamar which he heard every day, Gen. xxxviii. 15; nor foresee what shame might follow those pledges: this passion for the time even bereaves a man of himself. Thus impudently blind was Joseph's mistress, Gen. xxxix. 12: it had been too bad to yield, but for a woman to solicit, yea, to importune, yea, to force the modesty of her servant; gross and desperate! As sin ever ends in shame when it is committed, so it makes us past shame in the committing. Thus Ammon thrusts his defiled sister out of doors: where was his reason? Secrecy had some hope; but to expose her, what was it but to anger a royal father, incense a brother, incur the law, provoke her friends, fill the world with outcries? Though he looked not so high as heaven in doing the sin, yet he might look so low as earth to prevent the shame. No; lust knows no reason, and they that lose their honesty shall lose their wit. This is just with God, to punish a deboshed heart with a besotted understanding. Uncleanness loves a dark mind, as well as a dark house. How foolish were those Israelites, in joining themselves to Baal-peor! All idols are abominable, this was also beastly; the devil appeared in a sordid and nasty form; yet uncleanness works them to it. Cupid is blind; and whither may not he be transported that wanteth his eyes?

9. Not seldom it goes off in hatred of the object: ordinate conjunction increaseth love, this begets detestation; and that both where it is crossed, and where it is satiated. For the former, Potiphar's wife is an example, Gen. xxxix. 17: if she cannot have Joseph's body to enjoy, she wills it to ruin; when she fails of his love, she seeks his life. Lust is a pleasant madness when it is yielded, a desperate madness when it is opposed. Love is not more witty than malice; the arguments of his innocency shall challenge him of sin: he left his coat because he

would not do that, for which he is condemned because he left it. No hate burns so furiously, as that which ariseth from the quenched coals of love. He either ardently loves thee, or mortally hates thee, says one. For the other, look on Amnon; how did he hate abused Tamar more than ever he loved her! 2 Sam. xiii. 15. He should indeed have hated himself for this brutish violence, not his innocent sister; but his former love was not more unreasonable and misplaced, than his later hatred. Fraud drew her into the house, force entertained her within, and hatred drove her out. So did one hour change the extremity of his love into extremity of hate, that he is now sick of her, as before he was sick for her; and she that kept the keys of his heart, is now locked out of his doors.

10. It is a sin not easily repented of: "Whoredom and new wine take away the heart," Hos. iv. 11. St. Paul comforts the Corinthians, that they are washed from their sins, 1 Cor. vi. 11: they will not off without washing, and there can be no washing without water, and a drop or two will not serve to baptize the conscience. But, say some, this sin ordinarily of itself brings to repentance. Indeed, loss of spirits, and terrors of the fact, may breed some kind of remorse; and the expectation did not promise, nor the fruition perform, more delight, than the remembrance brings irk-someness. The face of uncleanness looks lovely, but the farewell is deadly. If we could foresee the end before we taste the beginning, we would never let it come so far as to repentance: our former detestation would save our after-sorrow a labour. But lust often ends in discontent, seldom in true repentance. "Her guests are in hell," Prov. ix. 18, and that is no way to heaven.

Lastly, it pulls down God's fearful judgments, Heb. xiii. 4, though it escape the censure of man. Amnon had so quite forgotten his sin, that he durst go to that house a feasting, where Tamar was mourning; not suspecting him other than a friend whom he had deserved to make an enemy. Now when his heart was merry, he fell down dead, 2 Sam. xiii. 28. Wicked Absalom meant this murder to his soul, as well as to his body; but God was just in both. He that in two years' forbearance would find no leisure to repent, must now perish without leisure to cry for mercy. How fearful a judgment came to that Levite's concubine, to be abused to death! Judg. xix. 25. She had wronged the bed of a Levite before by her willing wantonness; yet her father harboured her, her husband forgave her, the world had forgot it, herself never smarted for it. Thus far she goes smoothly away with her sin; and neither father, nor husband, nor neighbour, nor magistrate, nor her own conscience, upbraid her with it. Now it is forgotten of all hands, God calls her to account for it. Yea, so just and even is that Almighty Judge in his retributions, that the matter of her sin shall be the manner of her punishment; he will plague her with her own delight. Uncleanness was her fault, uncleanness shall be her fate and ruin. Before she had exposed herself with willing pleasure, now she is exposed by force: adultery was her sin, adultery is her death. Men may forget their own filthiness, God remembers it; and will pay them when they least expect it. Sin is a faithful debtor, it never borrows without payment: if it owe us a punishment, it will not break with us. And if it fail of present judgments, yet this is sure, it destroyeth the soul, Prov. vi. 32. Lusts fight against the soul, 1 Pet. ii. 11, but uncleanness kills it. These be the terrible effects, which if tremblingly applied, like corrosives will eat out the dead flesh, and become so many proper ingredients to the medicine of our cure; or like ashes that are made by a fire of

wood, which being poured on, will smother the fire in the wood, and put it out.

The other remedies are, 1. To abridge the flesh of provocatives; beating down the body, and keeping it in subjection, 1 Cor. ix. 27. Take away the fuel, if the fire be too hot. High feeding and lasciviousness are inseparable; that is the limbeck which distills all into lust.

2. To remember a man's beginning and end. The Lord did not make us for pollution; and the thought of death will be a death to lust. Meditate of thy mortality whensoever thou art tempted to this iniquity.

3. Fear God, which will make every joint tremble at the very suggestion. Some forbear a sin because it is dear, some because it is laborious, others because it is dangerous, few because it is impious. But the death of lust is religion: morality resists but in cold blood; heat nature, and all her in-born principles are forgotten. Regard of name and credit may fear the shame, yet love the sin. But he that fears God, and is watched by his own conscience, can never find a place dark enough to offend in. The law looks to our words and deeds, and requires that they be good: religion also fetcheth in the thoughts, and makes them holy. We cannot without danger trust a moral heart with a fair body; we may safely trust a fair body with a sanctified mind. This was Joseph's argument, the pleasure of sin cannot stand with the fear of God. He might conceit, that this kindness might endear him as strongly to his mistress, as his service had to his master: to be so great a lady's minion, how many hundreds of our younger brothers would have embraced it! But holy fear had taken up all the room before carnal love came. He knew that all the honours of Egypt could not buy off the guilt of one sin; that such an advancement would have cast him down from the royal favour of God. The good heart chooseth rather to lie in the dust, than to rise by wickedness. This were to get up on the scaffold of death, that a man might look higher.

4. Abhor idleness; the standing pool will gather filth of itself, and be full of toads and vermin.

5. Attend the word preached; wherewithal else should a young man cleanse his way? Psal. cxix. 9. That physic is only able to purge it. This shall "deliver thee from the strange woman," Prov. ii. 16. If wisdom enter not, lust will; they that find not delight in the Spirit, will seek it at the flesh. By the word of God abiding in you, ye shall overcome the wicked one, 1 John ii. 14. How have all weapons of reason and moral resolution doubled in this encounter! It is the sword of the Spirit that gets the victory.

6. Prayer; if Paul be buffeted, this is his refuge, and it brings remedy; he prayed thrice, 2 Cor. xii.

8. Declare thy grievances, this shall bring down heavenly graces. Shall we be like infants, that cry when a pin pricks them, but cannot tell where? Say, God knows our wants: what then? The sullen child says, My father knows that I want bread, I will not ask him though I starve. God hath promised to hear, but only those that call upon him. He so orders things, that he seldom gives till he be asked; it is a poor pains, but to ask and have. "Ask of me, and I shall give thee," Psal. ii. 8. The woman that would be rid of her importunate tempter, is plain with him, I will tell my husband.

7. Flee the temptation; at other times, Fight, Timothy; now, Flee, Timothy, 1 Tim. vi. 11. When such an enemy pursues, it is high time to fly. Rather will Joseph lose his livery, than blench his mistress's honour, his master's in her, his own in both, God's in all. He cannot be excused, that lives where

he may in likelihood be faulty. To be safe from evil works, is to avoid the occasions.

8. If we cannot fly, yet let us deny. David solicits; had Bathsheba denied, that great sin had not been committed. Had she been mindful of her covenant with God, and her matrimonial fidelity, the inordinate desire had been checked, and in time choked. But ambition was the bawd to lust: and the conceit to be the king's mistress, to command him that commanded Israel, prostitutes her soul before her body: her facility furthers the sin. The first motioner of evil is most faulty: but as in quarrels, the second blow makes the fray, and the law takes special notice of that; so in sins, the second blow, that is, the consent of will, is by the law of God most culpable. Lust is a sin of two; if but one party be wise, both escape: he that is sure of either, may be secure of both. Women are the weaker in nature, yet stronger in desires; and though many hold it an impudence to woo, yet they hold not the innocence to deny. The woman at first tempted man, and therefore looks ever since that man should tempt her. She was an agent in his first ruin; in all the rest she would be a patient. The heat of man's constitution disposeth him to be the first profligate: now his chastity lies in the hands of women. If she have the grace to refuse, what he had the fault to offer, they are both delivered. Lust would be the most common sin of the world, if, like other sins, it could be done alone. Indeed, it is best never to be put to a denial; but by a fair carriage to put temptation out of hope. Wisdom forbears some lawful things, because they may be occasions of things unlawful.

9. Modesty; which is the only visible virtue, the chastity of the looks; a transparent glass, through which we see a clean and uncorrupted heart. This sets the face in a right posture; far from pride, and not nearer to wantonness. The beauties of both mind and body meet in the centre of modesty. An affected and coyish demureness is incident to them that be bad; but true modesty is seldom found but in innocence. Modesty is the outwork of the citadel, that keeps the enemy even from the walls. For a great example of this virtue, we cannot look too much upon Joseph. Foreign stories make honourable mention of many famous for chastity. Of Amabeus, who had a beauteous wife, yet abstained from her; perhaps he loved his harp better. Of Xenocrates, and of Spuria, a fair young man, who disfigured his face of purpose that he might not be desired of women. Of Hippon, a Greekish woman, that drowned herself to save her chastity. (Valer. Max.) None came near Joseph; who neither abstained from his own wife, that were a folly rather than a chastity: neither disfigured nor destroyed God's workmanship, which were to pull down our house, because the eye of a passenger covets it. But in the heat of youthful blood, when his lady solicits, promises reward, threatens ruin; convenience of place, opportunity of time, all the helps of hell concurring; then to resist! O here was fire falling upon wet tinder, that soon went out. The fathers commend him for these four great virtues in this one act. For temperance, that he would not be enticed by his mistress. For justice, that he would not wrong his master. For fortitude, that he overcame many assaults. For prudence, choosing rather to leave his vesture than his virtue.

10. Marriage. "It is better to marry than to burn," 1 Cor. vii. 9. Burning is the disease, for which marriage is the proper medicine. This is that ordinate fuel, whereon such fire should feed. St. Hierome's sophistry on that place is absurd; Marriage is called

good, because it is a lighter evil : for lust can never be good, being a transgression ; and marriage cannot in itself be bad, as it is God's institution. Not that every tickling should draw us to marrying ; but a burning, an astant flame : for it is one thing to burn, another to feel heat. Some pontificians have cast bitter aspersions upon marriage, taxing that for uncleanness which is ordained an antidote against uncleanness. But that is a blasphemous doctrine, and must needs imply, that God himself was mistaken, and that upon a more serious deliberation of the blessed Trinity. Jehovah Elohim, Gen. ii. 18 : there was a greater consultation about making the woman, than about making the whole world. But it is objected, that in marrying they break their faith. *Ans.* They do not break the faith because they marry ; but because they wax wanton against Christ, and so marry, 1 Tim. v. 11. They are first incontinent, suffer themselves to be abused ; and then to cover their offence, and to keep them from public shame, they marry. To accept of marriage only as a cloak to hide their former naughtiness, this is the sin condemned. Howsoever they think, marriage is an ordained remedy ; strange lusts will give place to true conjugal love. Let the husband love his wife, the wife love her husband, (and they have reason, for they took each other for that purpose,) these unnatural fires will out.

These be the rules of prevention, to escape uncleanness : but if any be defiled, they must take another receipt : true contrition of heart, the floods that come from a broken rock ; washing themselves in the laver of repentance, that they may be clean. David in a zeal of justice against the rich oppressor, takes an oath to cut him off : God is more favourable to David, than to take him at his word. David says, The man shall die : Nathan says, Thou art the man, but thou shalt not die. Beside uncleanness, he had shed innocent blood ; and the strict law requires life for life. But oh, the wondrous power of repentance ! as if it could dispense with the rigour of justice : Thou shalt not die. In David we hear the voice of the law, awarding death unto sin ; in Nathan, the voice of the gospel, awarding life unto the repentance for sin. Whatsoever the sore be, this is the remedy. The soul that hath sinned, shall die, saith the law. The gospel comes in with an exception : The soul that hath sinned, and not repented, shall die : never any soul applied this remedy, and died. Blessed is the man, not that hath not sinned ; where is he to be found ? but, whose sin shall not be imputed, because he hath repented, Psal. xxxiii. 1, 2. It is only unfeigned repentance, that can cleanse our souls from these known evils.

Without this, God's hand will as surely overtake us in the punishment, as Satan's hand hath overtaken us in the sin. But, for comfort to the wounded soul, there is no sin so foul, but the blood of Christ can scour it off. Uncleanness is a deep stain, sized into the soul by her dwelling in the body : there is no means to get it out, but by the blood of the Lamb. Even the garments of the saints need washing ; and what can make them white ? only the blood of the Lamb, Rev. vii. 14. It was the Jewish scoff at Christ, He could save others, not himself. St. Ambrose replies, He only can heal my wounds, that neglected his own. His garments were dyed red, Isa. lxiii. 1, to make all ours white. But neither can this be had without faith, nor faith be assured without repentance. It is a happy thing for a man to improve the days of his peace, for the prevention of future vengeance ; to seek only to be safe by being good. Next to this Divine providence, our best guard is our innocence, next to that our repentance.

For him that hath fallen, to pray, Lord, deliver me ; for him that hath not fallen, Lord, preserve me, in Jesus Christ. Take here two characters.

The unclean person stands like one tormented with a dreadful disease ; there is not a limb or joint about him, but suffers with the distortion of that one part. If some spot or token of his soul's infection should break out and appear in his face, no leper would change complexions with him. If he had a hundred eyes, he could bestow offices on them all, to purvey for his lust. He loves to be looking on pictures ; and when he cannot reach the substance, he courts the shadow. He sends his eye to the market, and money is his eater. The pestilence is in his breath, it infects every place he comes in. His body is rotting apace, but his soul is already fallen to pieces. His mistress is his idol, and he would never learn any prayers, but for doing his devotions to her. For God, he either thinks or wishes that he could not see in the dark. He is born to be a woman's slave, not her lord and husband : he dares not marry, for fear (contrary to other men's minds) of being paid his own debts. If he do bestow himself, he commonly solders up some cracked piece ; and in marriage is more jealous than before he could be luxurious. He and his strumpet make up a faggot for hell-fire ; and must burn together in torment, as they have done in turpitude. Before he dies, he is become all stench ; his soul stinks to God, his body stinks to himself, his name stinks to the world. It is just that he who leaves God for a harlot while he lives, should lose God, and his harlot, and himself, when he is dead. Reason left him long ago, and he hath ever since lived beast. Commonly he dies of Hercules' disease, a fire in his marrow. He may come to be sorry, seldom to repent. At last, he is brought to his couch, or crutch ; and there every body leaves him.

The chaste is a pure man whether in wedlock or virginity. If married, he loves his wife, not because she was rich or fair, but because she was and is good ; because he once loved her, and still loves himself in her. All change he abhors ; for he married not only for pleasure, but posterity. It is her soul he sets his love upon ; he knows the body to be but physic for lust, a shell for progeny ; therefore chose her not for that half whereby she is a woman, but for the better, wherein she is a man. Sensual affection looks only to the shape ; rational hath respect to the soul and mind, forgetting the sex, or leaving it to the sense. Souls have no sexes ; therefore they that love in soul, their love admits no more impurity than inconstancy. If he be single, his mind keeps his mortal fabric sweet ; his conscience hath got the better of his concupiscence ; he is so far from doing, that he dares not think amiss. His mirth is so clear, that you may look through it into virtue, not beyond. He had rather seem not to understand a bad motion, than to hold conference with it. He censures all charitably, and abhors suspicion ; he thinks none should do ill, because he means well. He entertains none but honest thoughts ; if loose ones look in at the window, he presently shuts the door. He neither with unseasonable sleep rusts his soul, nor with immoderate diet teacheth his body to rebel. He is one of those that be not defiled with women, for they are virgins ; and follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. Rev. xiv. 4. His soul is Christ's betrothed spouse, and he accounts death but a messenger, to bring her home to her Husband. He is so clean, that the angels love to be about him here, and he shall be received among them hereafter.

"Walk after the flesh." This walking is the axle-tree, whereon the whole frame of the text moveth. There is no man can walk without lust, but the good

man does not walk after lust; if it go with him, it shall not go before him. It is the natural man's way, the Christian's trouble in the way. If he be enfolded out of virtue's path, either he doth not give consent, or he doth not give full consent, or he doth grieve for consent. Either he doth not walk, or he walks not far, or he walks against his will, and soon correcteth his steps, Psal. cxix. 59. The wicked man is taken in his walk, Psal. lxxviii. 21. But he that doth purpose beforehand not to sin, and in the act doth strive against sin, and after the act is sorry for sin; though he step awry weakly but not wickedly, God in mercy spares him, because this is none of his walk. He that is in the flesh cannot please God, Rom. viii. 8, so long as he keeps that way; but as water that hath been frozen with cold, may afterward be heat with fire, so he may come from a carnal to a spiritual course. Things of the flesh are of three sorts: some good, as the knowledge of arts; some indifferent, as honour and riches; some evil, as the works of sin. We walk in the former, and do well, keeping the right end; in the middle, not amiss, keeping the right manner; in the last, we go amiss, and there is no pretence to excuse us. We make the good become evil to ourselves, when we employ our learning to justify error. We make the indifferent very evil, when we prefer temporals to spirituals; as the tongue of the feverish infected with cholera, makes sweet things taste bitter. I observe four things in this carnal walking. 1. Their slavery to it. 2. Their constancy in it. 3. The specification of it. 4. Our remedy from it.

1. Their slavery. To walk is their errant diligence; to walk after it, is their servile obedience. The flesh leads, and they follow like dutiful servants. All service is from sin, this is the service of sin. If man had not sinned, he should not have served. Ham was born of the same parents, only his sin brought him to a slavish condition, Gen. ix. 25. This was just with God: but for man to make his eldest son lord of all, and the rest no better than his servants, is such a tyranny of custom, (as if they were all illegitimate,) that in the book of God we can find no such distinction. There is a service of superiority. The good prince thinks himself but the highest servant of the commonwealth. He troubles his thoughts, he breaks his sleep, about the business of state; sets his shoulders under the weight of government; and his superiority in ruling it, is but subjection for the conservation of it. There is a service of equality. "By love serve one another," Gal. v. 13; he that doth not, is like a loose tooth in the mandible, better out than in. There is a service of inferiority; which is either, 1. Voluntary, when a free-man makes himself a servant; and such a servant may make himself free again. Or 2. Temporary: he that works for us by the day, is so long our servant; at night he is free. Or 3. Factory; undertaking such a work for such wages, during such a time: he is a servant. Or 4. Captive, such as he taken in the wars; which St. Augustine (De Civit. 19. cap. 15.) will have called *servi a servando*, because they were saved in slaughter. Or 5. Native, such as are born servants, being the children of servile parents. Or 6. Venditive, that have sold themselves; concerning whom God set down a law, Exod. xxi. So Ahab sold himself to work wickedness, 1 Kings xxi. 25. But Paul seems to acknowledge this of himself; I am carnal, sold under sin, Rom. vii. 14. We answer, there be two ways of selling unto bondage: one compulsory, as the brethren sold Joseph; so the regenerate are sold under sin, but against their wills. The other voluntary, as the wicked sell themselves to Satan for very vanity; instating themselves upon the flesh,

that they tell (without asking) who owns them, by the superscription of their livery, so that sin by the commandment becomes exceeding sinful, Rom. vii. 13. As a headstrong and unbroken horse, the more he is curbed by the bridle, the more he breaks out. (Pareus.) Wine will inflame any man, but he that hath a feverish body is more fired with it through his infirmity. (Lycan.) There is a buying and selling: "Ye have sold yourselves for nought, and ye shall be redeemed without money," Isa. lii. 3. But this is in a diverse sense: they are sold for nought in respect of God, because he hath no honour by it; and redeemed for nought in respect of themselves, they paid nothing for their redemption, but not so in respect of Christ, for he bought us dear. But these have wilfully sold themselves to the service of sin.

2. Their constancy in it. Walking is a continued act; and acts continued make habits. Two sorts of philosophers had their names from walking: the Stoics, who derived their doctrine from Plato; and the Peripatetics, who had Aristotle for their prince. (Lactan.) Besides their ambulating life, severing themselves from common society, they had a certain peculiar and dogmatical way, whereunto they confined themselves. But all their ways were but fantasies and errant opinions, without any truth of rule, especially without the rule of truth. Our blessed God hath given us a blessed way; "and as many as walk according to that rule, peace be on them, and mercy," Gal. vi. 16: a perfect rule indeed; which we have good occasion to seek, good direction to find, good encouragement to walk, good reward at the end.

Walking intends a perpetuated motion, not for a pace or space, but holding out: therefore is the wicked conversation called a way; for that is a man's way, not which he steps into, but walks and travels. Some have spoken much of the way, but out of the way; while they called every act of sin, a way; for the Scripture only means it of practical and habitual sin, Prov. iv. 14. So then, to walk after the flesh, is an addiction to sin, conflate of many lusts. This is a true distinction: Every vice is a sin, every sin is not a vice: every wry step is an error, it is not a way, not a heresy in manners. Once being overtaken with wine, makes not a drunkard. Vice cannot consist with virtue, because it is diametrically opposite; but a vicious act doth not destroy virtue, whether moral or theological. Peter's denial did not destroy his faith, nor David's uncleanness his charity. These were their sins, they were not their ways; their usual walking took another course. Actions are done by the powers of the soul and body, but habits have their residence in the very powers themselves, both of the sensitive and intellectual part: as wantonness or drunkenness in the former; pride, hypocrisy, diffidence in the other. If we compare them before God, vice is more grievous than a sin, because it is habitual malice; if before men, sin is more heinous than vice, for vices are not punished by magistrates, but only sins. But they ever beget one another; many evil actions beget an evil habit, and an evil habit every day begets evil actions.

3. The specification of it. The flesh hath many ways for them to walk. Take them by couples: there is a reeling way, and a railing way. The former is the drunkard's walk, that leads him from the lake of wine to the lake of brimstone: this is he that never abstains till he be athirst, and never drinks but double, for he must be pledged. The other is the swearer's walk, that in every place sends up defiance to the Lord of hosts. He infects all company, as thunder sours wine; and often dies

raving and blaspheming, that is the end of his journey. There is a ruffling way, and a scuffling way. The former is the proud man's walk: as beggars hang their rags on the hedges, to tell they have been there; so these leave every where certain monuments and flags of their arrogant folly. The devil cannot miss them, for he is sure to find them in his own walk. The other is the litigious man's walk; he passes through all the judiciary courts on earth, to the infernal court of hell. The way of peace he knows not; there is no awe in his heart, while there may be any law on his side. And when all his substance is run out in fees to his advocates, at last (without the especial grace of repentance and restitution) himself goes for a round fee to the devil. There is a burning way, and a turning way. The former is the envious man's walk; anger is but a passionate fit of the irascible part; but malice is an inveterate anger, a fiery habit. Another's welfare is his most capital offence: yet his envy, like Phalaris' bull, makes that first become a torment to himself which he prepared for others. He fires himself before he goes to hell, as if he meant to season and harden himself for that unquenchable burning. The other is the hypocrite's walk, whose religion lies in wait for the inclination of the prince; standing water, that neither ebbs nor flows, but according to the moon, the time. He is very earnest in what he undertakes, and reviles the opposite; yet he can be of any religion for a need, therefore his heart is truly of none. Of all men, the jealous and the hypocrite are possessed with a strange madness; they are very diligent and curious, yet hope to lose their labours. There is a thorny way, and a miry way. The former is the deceiver's walk: a common bursar, where the fraudulent trader, the pestilent usurer, the impudent church-robber, every day fetch their turns; conferring how to turn the commonwealth into a private wealth, and to make all priests of one order, mendicants. To speak impartially, this is a habit, men walk in it to their graves. A way it is, but none of God's ways: an end it hath, but none of comfort's ends: an answer it hath, but none of truth's answers: a reward it hath, but it is the retribution of vengeance. Men think they may do this without trouble of conscience; but God keep them from dying with such a conscience. The other is the adulterer's walk, but that it is somewhat too fast for a walk; for if his acts could answer the number of his desires, nature could scarce supply him with desired objects. Could his wishes take effect, popery might have many nuns, it should have no maids. The flesh hath many more ways and walks, which Paul himself is fain to conclude with an &c. Gal. v. 21.

4. For our remedy, first, let us beware of walking in sin, Psal. i. 1. It is dangerous to cross their way, mortal to walk in it. Look to the habit of sin, be sure to mortify that: it is not enough sometimes to forbear the action; it will be rare, if a bad tree should not yield bad fruit. Cut thy hair, it will grow again: mow the grass, it will spring again: lop a tree, it is a tree still. Not to lust when a man is sick, not to steal while he is asleep, not to quarrel while he is in prison, not to swear while he is at church: no thanks; the root is still within. If the wicked restrain one evil, the godly will kill ten; if Saul slay his thousand, David will slay his ten thousand. He that strikes at sin, let him be sure to strike home; do not favour it, for if it escape, it will have no mercy on thee; but he so much the more exasperated, because thou attemptest, and didst not speed it. He that hath wounded this lion at the heart, shall never fear the strength of his paws, nor

teeth of his jaws, nor hideousness of his roaring. "Mortify your members that are upon earth," Col. iii. 5. First, he calls them members, because they be either as dear to you as your members, or because they are brought into action by your members, or because they are the united limbs of conspiscence, as members are parts of the body. Your, for properly our sins are our own, and nothing else. Mortify, apply something that shall make them dead. Let not sin alone till it die of itself, but kill it while it might yet live: to give it over when we can no longer commit it, is no repentance. It will put you to some pain; men do not ordinarily die without pain; and sin hath a strong heart, it is not easily killed. It is one thing to sleep, another thing to die; with small ado we may get sin asleep; by rocking it in the cradle of indulgence, and lullabying it with voluptuousness, till it stir not in the conscience. But to get it dead, that it may not live in us, this will cost anguish and trouble. Mortify these ways for two reasons. 1. They arise not from any noble part in us, from no divine principle or gracious instinct, nothing that can declare greatness and true spirit in man; they are but the base and degenerate works and walks of the flesh. 2. They only make us odious to God; it is not mean clothes, nor a deformed body, nor a torn cottage, nor homely fare, but only sin, that makes a man contemptible. Proud of vices? a Lazar may better be proud of his ulcers, a beggar of his vermin, or a scavenger of his lay-stalls.

Secondly, let us learn another walk, even to walk with God and be perfect. This is no time of sitting; Christians do not lead a sedentary life, it will breed obstructions in the heart. Our Saviour himself dearly earned that voice, before he heard it, "Sit thou at my right hand," Psal. ex. 1. No time of standing still. "Why stand ye here all the day idle?" Matt. xx. 6. Why do ye stand? you have feet; walk: here, in the beginning of your journey: in the day; the night is for rest, the day for labour: all the day; one hour were too much: idle; a man may stand and do some work, but stand ye idle? There is a medium betwixt sin and glory, and that is grace, a royal road, a milky way: walk this way, or expect not this end. God did enough to bring the way to us, who could never else have brought ourselves to the way: would we have him bring down heaven and glory too? We are in the bondage of sin, as the Israelites were in Egypt: Canaan was theirs, heaven is our promised land; if neither of us fall to walking, nor admit a motion and removal, they through the desert, we through amendment of life, neither can arrive at their home. If thou think thyself too good for this journey, God will think thee too bad for his glory.

God is the God of order, not of confusion; and nature is not suffered to run out of one extreme into another, but by a medium. Suppose it now midnight, and the sun with the antipodes: he does not presently mount up to the height of our heaven, and make it noon-day. But first it is twilight, then the day dawns, then the sun rises, and yet looks with weaker eyes before he shines out in his full glory. We do not to-day sweat with summer, and be shaken with the fury of winter to-morrow; but it comes on with soft paces: the day grows shorter, the sun's force weaker; cold dews, and white frosts, precede the extremity of hardness. Indeed Christ is able, in a moment, of sinners on earth to make men saints of heaven, as he wrought upon that one dying malefactor; but he seldom doth so suddenly advance men in the degrees of sanctification. That ordinary way, whereby men walk from the state of sin to the state of glory, is the state of grace. You have seen some

make sudden leaps, and of furious sinners become zealous professors in a trice. Of such we may be charitably jealous. Men do not go to heaven by a leap; holiness shoots not up, like Jonah's gourd, in a night. Few men know the instant of their conversion, as the papists proudly demand the special times of their innovations, and who resisted their errors at the first rising? But as popery crept in part after part, in every part by gentle degrees, in every degree with pretence of truth; till it advanced the banners of painted ceremonies, with a mighty noise of excommunications, louder than the cataracts of Nilus; and howsoever it came in, we find it here; so our conversion is by soft and scarce sensible beginnings, albeit not part after part, yet degree after degree; in every part by gentle soakings in of goodness, in every degree by maturity and growing up to ripeness. As we cannot see the growing of a tree, yet know that it doth grow, by the magnitude of bulk, and branches, and fruits; so we may perceive our conversion to God, which walking on must confirm.

Walking is a good ordinary pace, between violent running and lazy creeping; a moderate course, between Jehu's march and Mephibosheth's. It is better for a man to go soft and sure, than for a gird to run himself out of wind, and afterwards to stand still and breathe him. Walk not slowly, for fear of coming short; not faster than we may hold out to the end, nor slower than we may come in good time to our everlasting rest. Any traveller may be called aside a little, to speak with his friend, or to look upon a novelty, so for a step and minute be out; but still his way lies before him; whereto recalling himself, and going constantly on in the proceedings of grace, he shall be blessed.

They "despise government." It is no wonder, if they that follow the flesh condemn authority, and would have no other governor than that of their own choosing. He that hath set up this Dagon for his god, would have nothing to do with the ark, nothing for the ark to do with him. It is not enough for Egistus to abuse the bed, but also to shed the blood, of King Agamemnon. The adulterer is fit to make a traitor. Rome hath sent us too many prodigious proofs of this: that have at once lusted after the beauty of our women, and thirsted at the blood of our princes. Palpable demonstrations, that the enchantment of adultery hath begotten instruments of conspiracy. And as a Jesuit is but a new word for a traitor; so seminary and seditious are but divers terms of the same man. Who more despise the magistracy among us, than the sons of riot, that take in the freight of lust at a tavern, and then with wind and tide sail to practise it? Being questioned for this, they turn men of war, stand at defiance, and rhyme away the awe of government with the ballads of scandal. A man would think, that none who profess the gospel of Christ, should impugn the ordinances of God; or if they did despise the spiritual ones, as men that have no care of their souls, yet not the visible and temporal ones, as men that stand in fear of their lives. If there were none such, I might well have spared my sermon, yea, the apostle might have spared my text. But when this ulcer comes to be searched, many more will be found guilty, than be now suspected by others, or suspect themselves.

For method, here be two general things considerable. 1. The excellency of the thing despised. Government. 2. The gravity of such as throw contempt upon it, despisers. The former will appear, both by the authority that ordains it, and by the necessity that requires it.

For the authority: this is from God himself. He gave man a fourfold revivment. 1. Over the creatures,

Psal. viii. 2. Over himself: before his fall by a potent freedom of will he governed all his actions; after his fall some relics of this dominion appear: reason still retains some fragments of her regiment over the sensual part, though here she be but like a queen in the midst of none but rebels. In the body, some parts are made to govern and direct the rest, as the head; some to obey, as the members. 3. Over his household: the master is a little king in his family, as the king is a great master in his kingdom. 4. Over the state; whether monarchical, of one; or aristocratical, of many and those the best; or democratical, which is the popular state. All which are immediately or immediately of God, Rom. xiii. 1. "Thou couldest have no power at all against me," saith Christ to Pilate, "except it were given thee from above," John xix. 11.

Against this divine institution there be some objections; to clear all which, hold we this distinction. There is the power itself, the assumption of it, and the execution of it. The manner of assuming it may be from the devil: either by bribery, as it is likely Felix came in, Acts xxiv. 26; so that he could not sell cheap, who had bought dear. Or by cruelty and intrusion, as Abimelech ascended the throne by the stairs of blood and fratricide, Judg. ix. 5. Or by invasion, as the conqueror makes himself king. Or by usurpation, as Athaliah kept the kingdom from the right heir, Joash. So also the manner of using this power may be from the devil; as to set up superstition for religion, and cruelty instead of equity. Here neither the bad manner of acquiring, nor bad order of tyrannizing, are from God: yet the authority itself is of God. The hand doth violently extort another's good, or smite with the sword: these abuses are from sin, but the hand itself is given of God. The sight is sore, or adulterous, yet the eye is of God. The truth is plain: By me kings reign, saith the Lord, Prov. viii. 15: let us hear what error objects.

Object. 1. "They have set up kings, but not by me; they have made princes, and I knew it not." Res. viii. 4. *Ans.* They chose the king without God's approbation, they set not up the kingdom without his institution. Evil princes are said to reign not by God, either in the mode of governing, when they rule the people not by that law which should rule the king; or in their mode of coming to the throne, when God calls them not to reign; or they reign for themselves, not for God; they reign not for God's honour, but their own humour. God made the member, he made not the ulcer. When the Israelites chose Jeroboam their king, that treacherous revolting from their lawful sovereign, and rebellious adherence to a usurper, an idolater, was none of God's doing, he condemns it; yet the act was his, 1 Kings xi. 35. So Hierome says of Saul's election; that it was by the error of the people, not by the will of the Lord: it is true, the manner was the people's fault, but the matter was God's purpose; he meant to raise up a king, only takes the occasion by their headstrong importunity. So still doth it happen, that bad manners breed good laws. Without question the thing was good: monarchy, the best form of government; but good things may be ill desired. So while they affected a king, they rejected the Lord, 1 Sam. viii. 7. Therefore seeing they choose to have a king, God will choose the king they shall have. As he gratifies them in the monarchical condition, so he punisheth them in the monarch's person.

Object. 2. St. Peter calls it an "ordinance of man." 1 Pet. ii. 13; how is it then of God? *Ans.* He calls it man, because the subject wherein this authority sticks is man; or because it is exercised in the affairs

of man; or because it is for man's good. The fruits of the earth are brought forth by the industry of man, yet they cease not to be the gifts of God. The forms of administration may be of man, the original institution is of God.

Object. 3. If every power, then the tyrannical, is of God; as the Mahometan, pontifical, diabolical. *Ans.* The principality is, not the tyranny. Wealth is always good in itself, and God's gift; yet the unjust acquisition, and miserable usurpation, make it bad to such owners. Riches are not bad, except to the bad. And were the pope an orthodox bishop, we would not deny his authority to be of God; but his challenge of universal dominion is not power, but the abuse of power; which he hath by his own ambition, Satan's instigation, not God's institution. And for the devil's power, it is by God's permission, not without his limitation; no other than a hangman's office, to correct and punish whom the Divine justice appoints. When he boasted of the kingdoms, They are all mine, Matt. iv. 9, this was but his lie, he had not one foot to bestow.

The power of government is then ordained of God, and that in a special manner, by direct precept. Sickness indeed and war, famine and poverty, are ordained of God, but not by commandment. "Promotion comes neither from the east, nor," &c. Psal. lxxv. 6; nor from the suffrages of people, nor lives of ancestors, nor conquest of swords; but from the Lord. By him are kingdoms disposed, kings inaugurated, crowns of gold set on their heads, sceptres and states established, angels with their wings shadowing their thrones; that their majesty may be higher by the head than the rest of the people. That one man should rule millions, restrain, constrain, correct, command; how could it be, but that God himself hath imprinted the characters of a divinity in him; but that there is a divine constitution in a human person? "It is God that subdueth the people under me," Psal. xviii. 47. Saul is in David's cave, the soldiers would now have him carve his own revenge; they allege God's promise and this advantage concurring: but take it at the worst, "Thou mayest do to him as it shall seem good to thee," 1 Sam. xxiv. 4. Now, that might not seem good to him that seemed evil to God. But their incentive to blood David makes a preservative from blood; "The Lord forbid I should do this thing to his anointed," ver. 6. Doubtless he had work enough to defend both himself and his persecutor; himself from the importunity of their instigation, his master from suffering violence. Say, he could rule his own hands, it is not easy to rule a multitude. What was the charm to allay the fury of those raging spirits? He is the Lord's anointed: nothing else, this was enough; that holy oil was an antidote for his blood. Saul did not lend David so impenetrable an armour when he was to encounter Goliath, as David lent him in the plea of his unction. Not one of the discontented outlaws durst put forth a hand of violence against him. The image and impress of that divine ordinance strikes such an awe into the hearts of men, that it makes even traitors cowards; so that instead of smiting, they tremble, like them whose office is to suffer, not to do. "Fear God. Honour the king," 1 Pet. ii. 17. There was never man that feared God, but he also honoured the prince.

For the necessity; without government we were worse than beasts. It is the bond of the commonweal; the life-breath which so many thousand creatures draw; who otherwise would prove a burden to themselves, a booty to their enemies. In the host of heaven there is a regiment: under God the Supreme, be orders and degrees of stars and planets;

without which composition it could not be called an army. There is a regiment in the body; they are laxate and palsy members, that move not but by the direction of the head. In the family is a regiment; the servant acknowledgeth his master, the child his father. Among irrational creatures is a regiment; the bees have their king, the cranes their leader, and they keep their night-watches in disposed orders. All the drove follows the principal beast, and the sheep are not led by every ram, but by their own elected guide.

Thus nature teacheth, that we are all bound to subject ourselves to government. Man is a sociable creature, but there would be harsh society among them without a ruler. None could say, This is mine; and Cheapside would not be safer than Salisbury Plain. The first rule that nature dictates to man by experience, is to seek a ruler. We may say of all other creatures, They are born their crafts-masters: nature itself was their tailor and tutor, they came in apparelled and armed; and by their estimative faculty, they are their own caterers and cooks, physicians and builders. They can at first entrance choose their own meats, build their own nests and burrows, and being distempered, skill their own medicines. But man came in without a rag to his back, or a dinner drest to his stomach, or a house to put his head in; no weapons, no ableness to use them; his understanding like white paper, nothing written on it: all which really teach him to seek a protector. Therefore a commonwealth without a governor, is like a body without a soul: where is no king, they are all kings. It were strange, if every member of the body should move by a several soul: how long could that man hang together? The son hath a great loss in the death of his father, the wife of her husband, the servant of his master; but in the funerals of princes the whole land reads not so much the prince's as their own mortality. One saith truly, While death strikes the eminent, it aims at all. I know their fame is immortal, their goodness immortal, their souls immortal, but their bodies are mortal; there is so much of man in them, that they must die. They are lent to us for our sakes, but we must restore them again for their own sakes.

"He is the minister of God to thee for good," Rom. xiii. 4. Either for our natural good, preserving our lives, which bloody men would soon ruin, who fear not so much hell as the halter; like beasts that are more afraid of the flash of the powder, than of the bullet. Or civil good, preserving our goods and possessions; else robbery were law, and men, like dogs, would try all right by the teeth. Or moral good, in commanding and commending virtue, which hath praise of the power; or in punishing vice, he bears not the sword in vain. Or spiritual good; the magistrate by coercive power enforcing men to the duties of godliness. These seats would be empty, the preacher want his relative, hearers, the sacraments would be vilipended, the service of God resigned to the service of Satan; but for government. The sabbath would not be distinguished from common days, the markets be fuller than the temples; the wicked, like sullen children, would not forsake their play for their meat, but for the rod of correction. Many saints in heaven might now confess, that they had not known God, but for the king. First, compulsory means brought them to the feast, whereof once tasting, they would never leave it. "Compel them to come in," &c. Luke xiv. 23. It is a good storm that blows the wanton and secure mariner into the haven. We could not converse together, had not God set authority over us, to repress our mutual violences.

Lewd wretches have not the fear of God, therefore

God brings them under the fear of man; that being subjected to rulers of their own kind, their outrage might be sent from temporal death to eternal. In that notorious apostacy of the Jews, when so many execrable enormities were committed, the Spirit still prefixeth, "In those days there was no king in Israel," Judg. xvii. 6. We read of a poor Levite wanting means; why? there was no king. If God had been their king, his law had provided for the Levite. If Moses had been their king, his sword would have cut out a portion for the Levite. We are beholden to government for order, for peace, for religion. For order; where is no king, every man will be his own king. For peace; he that is his own king, will be another's tyrant. For religion; every Meah would have a house of gods, beside God's house. We are worthy of nothing but confusion, if we do not bless God for regular dominion. No wonder if the Levites go a begging, while there is no king in Israel. The tithes and offerings were their due; had these been paid, none of the holy tribe needed to wander for maintenance. Where both legal and regal authority appoints the Levite his right, the wickedness of man will defraud him. But what should become of the Levites, if there were no king? And what of the church, if there were no Levites? No king, no church; no civil government, no ecclesiastical. How should the impotent child live without a nurse? It was God's promise unto his church, Kings shall be thy foster-fathers, and queens thy nurses, Isa. xlix. 23. How should not the sheep be a prey to wolves and foxes, but for the shepherd? What life or temper can be kept in the body that is headless? Therefore, that the riches we have gotten by honest industry may be assured to our posterity; that we may sit under the shadow of peace, and teach our children to know the Lord; that the lamp of our lives be not snuffed out with violence; that the good man may build up temples and hospitals, without trembling to think of savage and barbarous sacrilege to pull them down; that our devotions be not molested with uproars, nor men called from their callings by mutinies; that our temporal estate be kept in liberty, our spiritual estate improved with piety, and our eternal estate be given us in glory; that our lives may be preserved, and our souls be saved; for such a king of men, bless we the God of kings.

This truth is plain enough, no reasonable man would be for impugnors; yet we must be content to hear what the synod of hell can plead for disobedience.

Object. 1. Subjection came in with sin; but Christ hath taken away sin, therefore also subjection. Innocency knew no superior but God; and the subjection of Eve was her punishment, this could not antecede her sin. Her fault, says one, not her nature, deserved the name of slave. *Answer.* Subjection is twofold; servile, and civil. The vassalage of a slave, bound only to seek his master's proper good, was not before the fall: civil obedience for the common good, was. The former is a curse, such a one as Noah bequeathed to his impudent son; not in itself considered, but by reason of the fear and sorrow united to it, which innocency knew not. Civil subordination was before the fall: "Increase and multiply;" this did put a plain distinction and inequality betwixt the father and the son. Eve was subject to Adam, before either of them was subject to sin. She might have dominion with her husband, but he had dominion over his wife. Not that the Sabeck law accords with the Divine law, as if no queen might govern a kingdom; for the God of spirits hath often put great spirits into that sex. The queen of Sheba was a famous governess; and that masculine virtues may shine in a

female head, this land cannot forget the memory of so long and sweet experience. Yet this hinders not, but that man is fittest to govern. The ruler was to bring for his sin-offering, a he-goat; the private offender, a she-goat, Lev. iv. 22. 27: to show that the male suits the ruler best, and the female the ruled. (Theodor.) Thus innocency had a superiority.

Object. 2. Every believer is even now in the kingdom of heaven, but in heaven there is no king but Christ. *Answer.* In this respect they are also called kings, yet the king that doth not find them subjects, judgeth them traitors. There is a spiritual regiment, standing in grace, peace, and joy, Rom. xiv. 17: here is no distinction of persons; neither father nor son, master nor servant, king nor subject, but Christ is all in all. There is a civil regiment, which cannot consist without distinctions and orders; here must be masters and servants, &c. If all were commanders and rich, every man must be driven to curry his own horse, and cleanse his own stable. As it is but a trunk which is all body, no head; so it is a monster, which is all head, and no body. But they say further, The faithful have God's Spirit their guide, therefore need not human direction. *Answer.* It is one thing what we do, another thing what we ought to do. Yet could we live without transgression, we could not live well without protection.

Object. 3. The children are free, Matt. xvii. 26; now if free from tribute, then from subjection. *Answer.* Christ there spake of himself, who was by birth heir to the crown, therefore free; yet to avoid offence he paid it. And the freedom that he gives us is from the law, Gal. v. 1, from sin, death, and hell: a liberty of conscience, a spiritual enfranchisement; not an exemption and immunity from civil obedience. Licentiousness is not liberty, but slavery: this makes the wicked to affect their own insensible bondage, and to dote on their own libertine delights: as a madman loves his chains, because they rattle, and (as he thinks) make a brave noise. He that made us free, taught us another rule by his own example: he obeyed his parents in the flesh with humility, the emperor with piety, the law with integrity, his heavenly Father to the death. So the Christian is, as Tertullian says, an enemy to no man, much less to a ruler.

Object. 4. Civil government is full of cruelty; and the sword of justice not only spills the life, but often kills the soul, by cutting off the time and means of repentance. *Answer.* Nay rather, the malefactor that is not moved at the sentence of death, despairs the possibility of amendment by longer life. Thievisch Achan had suffered his sacrilege to lie fretting into his soul, had not the lot discovered him to death. Leisurely sickness and languishment is but the coach-way to repentance, legal doom is the post-horn. How easy is it for men to delay the preparation for death, so long as they have hope of life! Sooner do you hear of a malefactor's contrition at the gibbet, than of a usurer's in his bed: as a violent fire can thaw that ice, which lies long unmelted by a winter's sun. Cataplasms and fomentations draw not out the plenary, letting of blood does it. He sees, by the evidence of the fact, intelligence of the jurors, truth of the witnesses, impartiality of the judge, an image of that higher tribunal, whither his sin will send him when they have done with him. Here the god can hold him but to the session, the session is not long ere it come to sentence, the sentence is soon answered with execution, the suffering of death is short; all these passages take up no long time. But then comes another judgment, where his conscience gives in testimony, all his crimes appear upon record, Satan sollicit justice, God cannot be unjust, the doom is certain, the

execution eternal. Therefore with a humbled soul and broken heart, he cries for mercy before he comes to the seat of justice; beseecheth Christ to procure him a pardon, and God to accept his Son's satisfaction. In this assurance he smiles death in the face, is free in prison, and never felt himself truly to live, till he is come to die. Thus he that could not live innocent, dies penitent; and seeing his body cannot be saved alive, he endeavours that his soul may be saved in death. As he hath followed Satan our common enemy in sinning, so he now defies him in repenting; and by his unfeigned tears disappoints that murderer's hope of his damnation. More malefactors than that one have gone from the gibbet to heaven; and from an ignominious place, after a more scandalous fact, been received up to glory.

Object. 5. But how if the prince be bad, an enemy to truth and goodness, a ravisher, a persecutor, raising powers for the extirpation of the gospel? Here, if ever, a subject may renounce all allegiance; for here is power against power, man against God, and the subject of both left to follow either. *Answer.* In this strait some, for fear of the king, shipwreck their faith, and these are traitors to God; others, by a defensive sword in their hand, rebels to the king. There is no question, but God must be obeyed even against the king, when the king commandeth things against God. The one threatens a prison; the other, hell. What then? shall we resist him with violence? No, God never warrants that practice, no, not against a prince that denies him. There is an active obedience, and a passive. I may not execute his impious commands, I must suffer his unjust punishment. As one expresses it, We must obey evil rulers, when they command things not evil. The vices of men cannot frustrate the institution of God; he never so ungracious, honour must be given, if not to the governor, yet to the government. Peruse Matt. v. 44, and Rom. xii. 17; this will tie the hands of Christian subjects. Samuel offered not to depose Saul, though the express sentence of God had cast him off, and he was excommunicated by a higher power than ever came from Rome: Saul lived and died a king.

The captive Jews in Babylon, wrote to their brethren in Jerusalem, to pray for the life of Nebuchadnezzar, Baruch i. 11. This was Jeremiah's counsel, Jer. xxix. 7, and Daniel's practice, Dan. iv. 19; vi. 21; all his speeches savoured of most perfect obedience, even to a king that not so well entreated him. Let him be a Darius, and make a decree against God; then he will enter into his house and pray, open his windows and pray, not pass many hours but pray; though every hair on his head were a life, ready to redeem his duty to God with the loss of them all. What resistance did the primitive Christians make to those barbarous outrages, but praying for the emperor's life, when under the emperor's command they were bleeding to death? Neither did they suffer because they were not able to resist; but it was their doctrine, it is more lawful to be killed, than to kill. We are not wanting in the strength, either of riches, or of numbers. So Tertullian. We have means sufficient: they filled all places of that idolatrous empire, islands, cities, castles, all but the profane temples. One night, and a few torches, could have afforded them an ample revenge. Mercy on us, had but the Jesuits such an advantage! Tertullian to these pagan tormentors. The emperor is more ours than yours; as being appointed by our God, and upheld by our prayers and obedience.

Christians never prove losers, but when they unjustly fight for their own preservation. Provide we the buckler of patience, not a sword as ready to give as ward the blow. "He that loseth his life for my

sake shall find it," Matt. x. 39: here is the way, either to die by living, or to live by dying. When the decree was gone out by Ahasuerus, Esth. iii. 15, this was their refuge; prayer and tears: I shall be able to weep, I shall be able to groan. We petition, O Augustus, we do not fight. Thus Augustine. The apostles could work miracles, yet they resisted not the ordinate powers. This charge Paul imposeth on the Romans, Rom. xiii. 1, even while tyrannous Nero was their emperor; a monster, whom divers held to be antichrist. Saul is in David's cave; the soldiers think that God sent him thither on no other errand, but to fetch his death. If Saul had seen his own danger, he had given himself for death, and expected to receive what he meant to bestow. But wise and holy David gives way neither to his own passion, nor his soldiers' solicitation; but only makes this use of it, the trial of his loyalty, and the means of his peace. It had been as easy to cut Saul's throat, as his garment; but his coat only shall be the worse, not his person. Nor should the cloak have been maimed to seek his own revenge, but for a monument of his innocence. The very piece of his garment shows he meant no hurt to his person; yet this violence strikes David's heart, 1 Sam. xxiv. 5. He feels remorse for touching that, which did once touch the person of his lord. How unlike are those spirits of Rome, that teach and practise, encourage and reward, yea, canonize the violation of majesty itself! David regrets for cutting a royal robe; they make no account of shedding the royal blood, sheep to cut the throat of their shepherd.

Evil princes are indeed a punishment; I gave them in my anger, Hos. xiii. 11. How miserable it is to have an intemperate ruler, appears by the wisest preacher: "Woe to thee, O land, when thy princes eat in the morning!" Eccl. x. 16: following the pleasures that attend on majesty, and not the pains which belong to magistracy. There is a miserable desolation threatened to Israel; the staff of bread and stay of water, the man of war and the man of peace, the judge and prophet, the honourable and ancient, the cunning artificer, the eloquent orator, all shall be taken away. How comes it? "I will give children to be their princes, and babes shall rule over them," Isa. iii. 4: there is the judgment fulfilled. "Set thou a wicked man over him," Psal. cix. 6: among all other curses which he calls from heaven by the Spirit of prophecy upon his malicious adversaries, running like oil into all the joints and bones of themselves, their wives, and children, this leads the army, as Judas led the soldiers; Set a wicked man to rule over him. They that were weary of Solomon, were wearied with Rehoboam. Yet must not all this expose them to contempt; Samuel would not pray with Saul, he would grace him before the people, to continue credit to the magistracy. There is some good attained to under the worst prince. Even by the power given to the devil, Job was tried that he might appear to be righteous; Peter was tempted, that he might not presume on himself; Paul was buffeted, that he might not exalt himself; Judas was condemned, in order that he might hang himself. Such is the ordinary gloss on Job xxxiv. Julian sent his subjects to heaven in earnest, while himself went to hell merrily and in jest. But blessed be our God, we have no cause to complain; we have such a prince, whom whosoever praiseth not, either does not love him, or does not know him. Only let us bless him, and bless God for him, that we may all be blessed in him.

Conclusion. That religion then cannot be right, that pulls down princes; seeing neither Moses in the Old Testament, nor Christ in the New, nor Levite nor prophet, apostle nor disciple, either counselled or

practised against government: which should decide the point, that hath cost the lives of so many Christians, and still threatens more tragedies to come. They that in this argument found the weakness of their pens, have fallen to their penknives, multiplied the school into a camp, arguments to armies, teaching all their proselytes dismal conclusions. Thus they fight against God in his lieutenant, and the root of all civil order they desire to root out. They complain of us for suppressing them, that will not let us live in quiet by them. What security can Sarah with her Isaac have in the house if Hagar and her son be not beaten out of doors? The peace of our state, nor scarce of any state in Christendom since Charlemagne's time, hath not been violated, but the pope or his ministers have had a hand in it. To say nothing of their private turbulence, what pestilences they be to the houses that harbour them, where they rule all with the lady, it is their sauciness with the crown which our state suffers under. They do but turn the text: kings over subjects, Luke xxii. 15, and they over kings. They will be Donatists, Anabaptists, Libertines, pagans, any thing, so they be not subjects. How did they more than despise, even despite that queen of blessed memory! whom strangers came to see, as the queen of Sheba did Solomon; foreigners revered, subjects loved, all princes living admired, and themselves outwardly flattered: by whose gracious hand God wrought those wonders, that the most potent kings can hardly reach. Honour filled the circle of her crown, her brow with majesty, her heart with piety, her hands with pity, her lap with plenty, her throne with equity. All those virtues centred in her breast, which severally had commended the great ladies of the former world. Yet how execrable were the treasons at home, the rebellions and invasions abroad, which they contrived against her! Now when she is in glorious peace, have they not raked into her grave, and railed on her royal name? She that lies buried, not in cold earth, but in the warm and living monuments of all religious hearts among us, is still persecuted by their barbarous violences. But as all their malice could not harm her person while it was mortal on earth; much less can it reach her soul, which is now immortal and blessed in heaven. Lord, they have not despised her, but they have despised thee: revenge thine own cause; confirm the diadem where it is, and let not the man of sin pull down, what thou the God of righteousness hast built up.

Despisers. The main antagonists of sovereignty are the Anabaptists and papists: who, howsoever otherwise they dart fire one at another, yet here, like Herod and Pilate, they shake hands; or those seditious captains in Jerusalem, fight against the magistrate as their common enemy. Thus Samson's foxes have aversé heads, but are coupled together by their tails.

1. The Anabaptists did strike at the head of all government; and with the sword in their own hand, sought to wring the sword out of the magistrate's. They inveighed against authority, and yet took authority upon themselves. As I have heard a man reproved for swearing, presently rap out an oath that he would not swear. It was Munster's ordinary doctrine, that he had conference with God about it; that he charged him to kill the magistrates, to destroy the wicked, and constitute a new world. These cry down all rule; as the heathen against God's anointed Son; "Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us," Psal. ii. 3. But at last finding themselves fooled by themselves, and that kings would not be disputed out of their dominions, yea, that themselves could not be kept in

order without some prelation, they began to qualify the matter; as men that can get nothing by law, will come to composition. Regiment they will allow, if magistrates will be content with their allowance; which is not only, like David's ambassadors, half their regal robes cut off, but authority itself grubbed to the skin; not only lopping off the superfluous branches, but hewing the root till it be past all growing. That he hath his institution from God, his constitution from the people. Thus with a paring knife they so shred his government, till, like the cozening tailor that shrunk a freeze gown to a dozen of buttons, they leave him only a titular prince, and keep the principality to themselves. Let all their refutation be but a mere hissing at.

2. The papists are more moderate in show, little less pestilent in deed. Their laity shall be subject to a magistrate, but to one of their own choosing, and that only till their refusing: so authority is no sure knot, but, as jugglers, they play at fast and loose. And upon the least exception to the piety, yea, obedience of the prince, (a strange eatheism, or catachresis rather, that teacheth kings to obey their subjects,) they cast him out from his royalty, discharge and absolve the people from their allegiance. This practice is according to their common destination, not differing from the former of the Anabaptists; The government from God, the governor from men: therefore they dare do any thing against the king, nothing against the kingdom. Execrable sophistry! as if he that opposed the governor did not oppose government. Would this answer pass in Rome. The popedom, as it is the succession of Peter, is of God, but the present pope is of man? Or this, God forbids me to wrong my neighbour, yet (Jesuit) I may wrong thee? This was fit doctrine, for Machiavel himself would not have been ashamed of it. But Daniel, that was a counsellor of state to two monarchies, and a private counsellor to four kings, ascribes this power of translating or entailing crowns to a family, to none but God, Dan. v. 21: it is he, not the pope.

By their rule the pope indeed is king, and all kings but his viceroy, to be placed and displaced according as they please or displease him. And for their clergy, they shall know no civil obedience at all. But were the sword as well able to plead the causes of kings in the field, as the pens of divines are in the school, their crowns would sit more quietly on their heads. "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers," Rom. xiii. 1. If every soul, then yours also, saith St. Bernard to an archbishop: who hath exempted you from this universality? His conclusion is, If any one aims at exception, he attempts deception. Why did our Saviour submit himself to Canaphas, to Pilate, pay tribute to Cæsar, and Paul appeal to his judgment-seat? Is Christ's vicar started above his Master? Peter's successor better than Paul himself? What an alteration did Josiah make in the face of the church, purging the idolaters, changing the office of the Levites, commanding a passover! Hilkiah was the high priest, and executed these things under him; but all was done according to the command of Josiah. Was Josiah such a king in Israel, and is not our king in England? What hath the Hilkiah of Rome to do here? So Constantine said to his bishops, You in the church are bishops, I in the church am king; you for the word and sacraments, I for authority and precedence; you overseers of the people, I the overseer of overseers. The one to preach the word, the other to bear the sword: as Paul calls the magistrate, the Lord's sword-bearer. He holds his prerogative given him from above. What one word of

Christ's commission to his disciples, savours of encouragement to rebellious attempts? Go into the world, preach, baptize, bind and loose, remit and retain, feed, take the keys, receive the Holy Ghost. Go into the world, not overrun it, shaking the pillars of it with conspiracies, the foundations with seditious. Preach peace, not proclaim wars. Build up the kingdom of heaven, not thunder ruin to the kingdoms of earth. Baptize to repentance, not wash the people in their own bloods with persecution and vengeance. Bind and retain, not with shackles, prisons, and wards. Feed the lambs, not fleece them, nor flay them, making massacres of king and subjects. Take the keys, not princes' crowns. When he said, Ye shall be brought before governors and kings, he did not mean that governors and kings should be brought before you; that emperors should kiss your feet, wait at your gates, in weathers stormy enough, but not more stormy than the pontifical brows; that they should take their crowns (I say not at your hands, but) at your feet, holding your stirrups while you mount your palfreys, and eat bread like dogs under your tables. Christ refused to divide an inheritance, Luke xii. 14, yet these men will undertake to divide kingdoms. But there is a divider over them, that hath written in the book of his prescience, the final division of their universal supremacy. And as it is true of their persons, as Petrarch says, Short is the life of men, shorter that of kings, shortest that of pontiffs; so let the like breach fall upon their successions, till the seat of antichrist be razed to the ground.

3. Proud and ambitious self-admirers think themselves fitter to rule than obey; these despise government. Saul is chosen king, the most and best applaud the choice; yet some sons of Belial murmur against it, 1 Sam. x. 27. It was not the greatness of his parents, the goodness of his person, the selection of his lot, the approbation of Samuel, the sound proof of his courage, that could shield him from contempt, or win the hearts of all. They saw he chose not himself, they saw him unwilling to be chosen, they saw him worthy to be chosen; if the election had been carried by voices, and those voices by their eyes, Saul had been still the man: yet they despise him. His parentage was not inferior, his state equal, his person above his estate, his mind above his person; yet they despise him. But dogs will bark at the moon; and what all men commend, you have some Thyrsites take delight to blast. Malcontents will devise slanders if they can find none, like coistrels, that first fill themselves with wind, and then fly against it. Their blood is of a yellowish colour, like those that have been bitten by vipers; their gall flows in them, thicker than oil in a poisoned stomach. But the best is, their own malice sucks up the greatest part of their venom, and therewith they burst themselves. There was never prince, to whom some Belialists took not some exceptions: it is not possible to please or displease all men; some being as deeply in love with vice, as others are with virtue. It were ill with princes, if their state depended on the good liking of their subjects. But there be none but base, that are thus censorious; and the sun will shine never the less glorious, though such sullen eyes scorn to look upon it.

4. Deniers of due homage are despisers; as, 1. Fear, Prov. xxiv. 21. Not slavish fear. It is one thing to fear because you have offended; another thing to fear lest you should offend; in the one case there is a dread of punishment, in the other an anxiety for the reward of obedience. So Ambrose. This fear is reverence. If any man fears not the

king, the king hath cause to fear him. 2. Honour; not such as shall make a god of him, like Herod's flatterers, and their successors, the pope's sycophants; yet enough to advance him above all other men. 3. Fidelity, such as Ithai bare unto David, 2 Sam. xv. 21: that is an ill hand, that when a blow is coming, will not lift up itself to defend the head. The safety of the head, is the head of safety. The king is the light of our eyes, the breath of our nostrils, even the life of our lives: any man will hazard a joint to preserve his life. Subjects unfaithful at the heart, may be without suspicion of their prince, but they be held rebels in the court of heaven. We are bound to be subject, "not only for wrath, but for conscience' sake," Rom. xiii. 5. In all the time of David's prosperity, there was no news of Shimei; he looks like a fair subject. But he that smiled on David in his throne, curseth him in his flight: now his unsound and treacherous heart discovers itself, in a tongue full of venom, a hand full of stones. Prosperous success hides many a false heart, as a drift of snow covers a heap of dung; but when that white cover melts, the filthy rottenness will appear. There is no security in that subject's allegiance, that hath not God in his conscience. The nearer such are to the governor, the more perilous; and as no favourite of greatness can be without envy, (as in chess, the pawn that stands before the king is most set upon,) so the good one, like Joseph, so endears himself to the king of Egypt, that he may be gracious with the King of heaven; and the bad one, like Haman, makes use of his power to mischief; till by plotting against the church, he lose all comfort by the church. All this man's glory shows on him but as if the sun shone in a puddle. 4. Obedience, Josh. i. 17; to do what he commands, and go whither he sends. The servant that does not what he is bidden, despiseth his master. The law is a dumb magistrate, the king a living law: he that disobeys the one, despiseth the other. 5. Paying of tribute. "Render tribute," &c. Rom. xiii. 7. Render it; it is not a gift, but a payment. A man feeds the stomach, that it may nourish his whole body. Pay for the setting up of the state, lest there should happen the pulling down of it. He that feigneth himself poor to avoid a subsidy, is worthy to be made as poor as his subsidy; because he would not restore him a part, by whom he keeps all. 6. Prayer. Let prayers and supplications be made for all men, especially for kings, 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2. The heavier burden requires the more strength: Aaron and Hur must hold up the hands of Moses, if they would prosper. We have cause to desire that that river may never want water, which must relieve the whole country. No army but would have their general's good success. We call our peace, the king's peace: our peace is but the effect of his, as his majesty is a resultance from God's majesty.

What shall then become of them, that turn their prayers into curses? Exod. xxii. 28; though their wishes be but whirlwinds, which, breathed forth, return upon themselves. This was an unwilling error, that Paul willingly recanted, Acts xxiii. 5. "Curse not the king, no not in thy thought: for a bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter," Eccl. x. 20. With the mouth a wicked rebel dares not curse him, for fear of the lash; but thought is free: such is his thought, but not God's, to whom the conscience is a legible book. The birds of the air shall discover it; either by some miraculous demonstration, as just revealers: or by picking out his eyes, as just executioners: or that judgment shall be swift against them, as if it had wings. Shimei curseth his king, is pardoned by

succession, by Solomon after his father: he hath now quite forgotten his sin. But at last it comes home, by his going abroad; and the tongue that cursed the Lord's anointed, now pays the head to boot. The vengeance of traitors may sleep, it cannot die. Saul had gotten victory of the Ammonites, which made him a complete king: and now the thankful Israelites inquire after the discontented mutineers, that refused allegiance to so worthy a commander, 1 Sam. xi. 12. Their seditious deserved death, however Saul had sped at Gilead: the very purposes of treason must not escape impune: that God, who hinders the action in his mercy, will punish the intention in his justice. But that happy conquest whetted them to a more eager desire of this just execution.

Certainly, of all nations in the world, we have cause to despise the despisers of our government. We that have a king, not more noble than wise, not more wise than good, how can we wish other than punishment to his contemners? We have the benefit of peace, dwelling safely under our own vines, 1 Kings iv. 25; the benefit of those riches which make a well-governed state glorious. What do we want to the consummation of our prosperity, but thankful hearts? For me to measure it, were to show you the image of a great mountain in a small ring. Religion, peace, honour, security: those four cardinal blessings to uphold a state, as the four cardinal virtues uphold a man. Now to disgrace authority, is the means to overthrow all felicity. Tribute is given to tyrants, commendation only to good princes. The justice of our governor hath not spared the greatest offenders; yet his mercy hath made us more indebted to him than his justice. May his mercy never hurt himself, we have no cause to complain. Even to his enemies he hath been pitiful, striving to overcome their malice by his goodness. Yet like those people, that in a daily ceremony go out of their doors with their faces unto the east, and curse the sun, which gives them light and preserving influence; so his adversaries, beside their cursed writings, base calumnies and blasphemies of his honour, have sought by treachery to stock up the root whereon themselves grow; sacrificing their sacraments, religion, prayer, and the holiest things they have, to execute Satan's will, and expiate anticrist's fury. They have turned massing into massacring, *patres* in *patricidas*, ghostly fathers into bloody murderers.

The huge and supereminent colossus of all, was the powder-treason; the utmost point of all villany; beyond which, it is an unknown land; no man can devise what should be between it and hell. The butchery over all France of above sixty thousand protestants, might be pictured in the pope's palace by the painter's art; but what colours could have expressed this confusion? As a learned divine hath amplified it: What stain could shadow the blood of so royal princes? What red describe the gore of so noble Christians? What black, the darkness of that day? What azure, the terriblest of that fire? What invention imitate the noise of that infernal blow, louder than many canons; and the shrieks of so many innocents, with the misery of infants yet unborn? This was a death never to be painted to the life: nor pen, nor pencil, nor art, nor heart can comprehend it. What an infamy strikes upon our age, to bear the date of such impurities! To have it recorded to posterity, in such a time was such a treason! The earth shall not hide it from the heavens, nor the heavens abstract it from the earth: it shall be the detestable hatred of all generations to the end of the world.

Yet still hath the Lord protected our government,

by preserving our governor, even against the malice of our enemies, and (which is worse) the wickedness of ourselves. Therefore let us praise God for our government, and we praise him for all: let us love and serve our governor, and we love and serve God who hath given us all. Let us serve him with our fields and vineyards for his maintenance, with our lives and strength for his defence, especially with our prayers and supplications for his safety.

VERSE 10.

Presumptuous are they, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities.

PRESUMPTION is a deliberate and wilful sinning, against conscience, example, or warning. Deliberate, with premeditation; for every rash act or word is not presumption, Matt. xxvi. 74. Wilful; not when we are overborne by compulsory means, 2 Sam. xv. 11. Against conscience; not when our persuasion apprehends the thing (that is evil) for good, 1 Tim. i. 13. Against example, when men see others plagued for such offences, 2 Kings i. 12. Against warning, as Pharaoh after so many admonitions would not dismiss Israel. This is to presume. Some men sin, and thinks not of it; which is to stumble and fall on plain ground. Some men sin, and knows not of it; as he may have a mole on his back, and yet think his skin clear. Some men sin, and is forced to it; this is, as when he rows upward, and the stream carries him downward. Another sins, and is persuaded he does well; as children are sent abroad in such frosty mornings, as rather obstruct than purify: so the silly papist does his devotions before a crucifix; and too many rob the church to relieve the poor. There is a mischief done on set purpose: He that presumptuously slays his neighbour, thou shalt fetch him from mine altar that he may die, Exod. xxi. 14. Pluck him from the altar, his blood shall not save him.

Presumption hath been no rare sin among men: the first stone of which demonstration, we lay in the tower of Babel; where mortal men, in the face of Heaven, dared to the combat Omnipotency itself. Multitudes and combination give encouragement to presumptuous attempts, and every one is proud to be forwardest; Come, let us build us a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven, Gen. xi. 4. They were but newly come down from the hill to the plain, and now in the plain they purpose to build up a hill. They were as near to heaven in the mountain of Armenia, as their tower could make them in the valley of Shinar; but, as if the benefit of nature were too contemptible, their ambition must have an artificial mountain of their own raising. Come, let us build; fondly reckoning without God; as if nothing could hinder what they intended to do; as if both time and earth had been theirs. Build a city: if they had taken God with them, this had been commendable; a city is the seat of order, and so could not displease the God of order. But a tower reachable to heaven! how sottish was this arrogance, how impious this presumption! who would think, that little ants creeping on this greater molehill, should think of climbing to heaven by multiplying of earth?

Korah conspires against meek Moses; he had seen others fearfully plagued for such rebellions; himself had particular warning to decline it; the people were charged to depart from their tents, Numb. xvi. 26; who would not have, that those mutineers, seeing

their adherents fly off, as from monsters, would now relent? Yea, when God proclaims a strange and immediate vengeance, howsoever before they set a face on the matter, one would think their hearts should now have misgiven them. Yet, as if Moses had never wrought miracle before them, as if no Israelite had perished for rebelling, they stand in their doors, impudently staring, as if they would outface the revenge of God. Here was high presumption. So doth pride and infidelity obdure and blind the heart, that those who are naturally cowards become unnatural rebels. So Pharaoh, being tired and undone with succession of judgments, at last lets Israel go. Gone they are, and Egypt seemed so glad to be rid of them, that they hired their departure. Yet no sooner were their backs turned to go, than Pharaoh's heart was turned to fetch them back again. It vexeth him to see so great a command, so much wealth, cast away in one night; and he will redeem it though with more plagues. There is no remedy, this presumption will not let him be in quiet; he must after them, to fetch his own destruction. Who would not have looked, that the hand of Benjamin should have been first upon Gibeah, and requited the morsels of the abused concubine, with the heads of the ravishers? yet, instead of pursuing the sin, they defend the sinners; and will rather perish in resisting, than live in doing justice, Judg. xx. 13. How horrible was this presumption, to defend a rape unto death, with arms unto blood! As if they were in love with villany, and out of charity with God, they are champions for Belial.

1. There be some that presume of safety in sin, not doubting to fare well, while they fear not to do ill: as if this world were to last ever, and the corn and tares were never to be parted; because the same ground feeds, and wind blows on them, for a time, Eccl. ix. 2. But, say they, God is merciful. He is infinitely merciful, but withal infinitely just. He is just even to those humble souls that shall be saved; and he will be merciful, while presumptuous sinners go to hell. It is to be feared, that many die with a fond presumption of mercy in their minds, as the Israelites with meat in their mouths. But Christ died for us, we put all on his reckoning. *Ans.* But they for whom he pays, will not presumptuously lavish on his score; not caring what they spend, because he is able to pay for all. His blood is a charter of pardon, but withal a covenant of direction: *Cruce Christi pendens, cathedra magistri docentis*. The cross of a Christ hanging there, is the chair of a master teaching there. He that refuseth to live as that covenant prescribes, he may perish as a malefactor, that is hanged with his pardon about his neck. But repentance makes all even, otherwise God is not so good as his word: At what time soever a sinner repents. This the common people make their neck-verse. Indeed there is that and many other gracious promises made to repentance; but in the whole book of God, which is now published complete, and promises no second edition, we find no infallible promise of repentance. He that hath this oil in his lamp, shall enter in with the Bridegroom; but he that forgets this oil, and can buy none, must be shut out. Joseph and Mary lost Christ not a full day before they missed him, yet were four days ere they could find him: some lose him forty or fifty years, yet when they are sick, hope to find him in half an hour.

2. There be some that attempt things without warrant, or expect things without promise; this is the common presumption of the world. And they that know they cannot live without feeding, nor change places without moving, yet will hope to be saved without practical obedience. Nor let us secure

ourselves from this assault, for the devil hoped to have fastened it on our Saviour himself; persuading him to show a tumbling trick, for the winning of faith and credit, Matt. iv. 6. As if he had said, Here thou art in a famous city, on a glorious temple, upon an eminent pinnacle; all men's eyes are fixed on thee; there can be no readier way to spread thy glory, and proclaim thy Deity, than by this precipitation. All the world shall see and say, there is more in thee than a man: and for danger, there can be none; what can hurt the Son of God? have not the angels charge by Divine commission, to guard thee? Christ seems to gratify him in this; but beats him with his own weapon, snatched out of his abusive hands; "It is written, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord." True, God hath taken this care, and given this charge; he will have his children kept, but not in their sins: they may trust in him, they may not tempt him: he meant to encourage their faith, not to imbolden their presumption. When there be mediate means, to cast ourselves upon an immediate Providence, is not faith, but audacious disobedience.

We have some that be called The wits; they disdain to hear a sermon, unless the preacher can teach them some abstruse learning; as if they were only to be made philosophers, not Christians. It is a wonder if they ever come to the Lord's supper, because they see no more dainties but bread and wine. Sure, if they had known of it, they would not have been baptized in the church, because they had water enough at home. Presumptuous men, are they wiser than God? Faith comes by hearing, and salvation by faith. Rom. x. 9, 17: these be the stairs for them to climb heaven, or all their wit shall never bring them thither. They know a shorter cut, have found out a new way in their wisdom; but God keep us from that wisdom. Some vulgars, not out of an opinion of their own knowledge and sufficiency, but for mere tardity and averseness from the labours of religion, make their chamber or the field their church; because the preacher can say but this, Repent, and believe; and this they do, therefore hope to be saved as well as the best. Senseless presumption! as if they hoped to keep, what they willingly cast away: as if the soul which hath been so many years gathering rust, should be found bright when death draws it out of the scabbard; or that land could bear wheat, which was never tilled. Nay, but hear, read, pray, meditate; and that with frequency, with fervency: presume not to be good by any other way than God hath promised to make thee good: lest thy soul going out of thy body, find, with wonder and amazement, how it was mistaken in the body. We may challenge God on his promise, we may not strain him beyond it: presumption is the enemy of faith.

3. There be some that take their salvation without all question, and are so sure of heaven that they never doubt the contrary; and this is presumption. Every good grace hath its counterfeit: if in the faithful there be a modest but infallible assurance of their blessedness in Christ, the carnal will be blown up with an impudent arrogance, as if their footing was as sure in heaven as any man's. Which way went the Spirit of God from me to thee? said a false prophet to a true, and smote him withal, 2 Chron. xviii. 23. Which way? Even by that injurious blow, by that proud speech, it departed, if it had been there before. "God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men," Luke xviii. 11: as if there were no question, but the Pharisee was one of God's special favourites. Will he accept of heaven without entreaty, throw he? or change places with any saint there without boot?

That we may not be cozened with this imposture, observe some differences betwixt presumption and

assurance. First, presumption is natural, this assurance is supernatural: we were born with that, we are new-born to this: that was the legacy of Adam, this of Christ. Secondly, presumption submits not itself to ordinary means, assurance refuseth no means of being made better. Thirdly, presumption is without all doubting, assurance feels many perplexities: he that doubts not of his estate, his estate is much to be doubted of. Fourthly, presumption is joined with looseness of life, persuasion, with a tender conscience: that dares sin because it is sure, this dares not, for fear of losing assurance: that makes no more of sinning, but at once gets a pardon for the old and a licence for the new; this is like some sovereign waters, which not only cleanses the ulcer, but cools the heat, stays the infection, and by degrees heals it. Persuasion will not sin, because it cost her Saviour so dear; presumption will sin, because grace doth abound. The one turns grace into wantonness, the other turns from wantonness to grace. Humility is the way to heaven. The publican went away rather justified: while he durst not open his eyes to look up unto heaven, he opened the eyes of Heaven to look down upon him. They that are proudly secure of their going to heaven, do not so often come thither, as they that are afraid of their going to hell.

Let us come to particulars, that pointing the finger, we may say, This is a presumptuous man. Nathan's parable made David sensible of the sin, but he found not the sinner in his own bosom, without a "Thou art the man." Presumption hath neither the fear of the Lord, nor a regard for the world; it fears nor God nor man. Luke xviii. 2; and is here fitly ranked with despising of government. If Samson break the city gates, what wits can hold him? Those whom conscience cannot bind, man's law will hardly hamper. God knows how, when, and where to revenge his own cause; but man, whose eyes be limited, must be informed of offences, before he can find matter for justice: therefore preachers are not only to teach men obedience to God, to save their souls, but also to governors, to save their bodies and estates. I will therefore, for a taste, single out some instances of presumption.

1. Incurable beggars, such as make themselves a *non obstante*, and, in spite of all laws, will not be confined to any regular course. Presumptuous wretches, that have set themselves both without the covenant of God and the government of man. Silly officers are afraid to meddle with them, because they are poor; but they be deceived, for these be not the poor, but the worst robbers of the poor that be; we may rank them with usurers, enclosers, engrossers, and oppressing landlords. This is the reason that the poor indeed do want it, because these counterfeits snatch it; men that labour hard, often lack bread for their families, whilst these that refuse all work, are full. I speak not against the poor, but for the poor; not to harden your hearts, but to rectify your hands: give, and be blessed for it, but not to maintain impiety, and dishonour to your country: give to the poor, not to them that rob the poor. Let me dissect this carcass of presumption.

(1.) There is no likelihood that many of them were ever christened; if they were, scarce any of them ever come to know what Christianity means. The church and they are everlasting strangers; nearer than to the doors, at some dole or funeral, you shall not have them. They name not Christ, but when they beg of you, and know it not for any other purpose. They can marry without a priest, and divorce themselves without a canonist. There need no ecclesiastical censures, they excommunicate

themselves from all churches. No minister hath the charge of their souls, for they are of no parish: all the articles of their faith be the terms of their canting language. Thus they live without Christ in this world, and, without him, perish in the world to come.

(2.) Vagrants they are, and will so remain; it is a death to them to be confined to any set dwelling: ask them where they dwell; alas, they say, they have small dwelling; yet they have the largest dwelling of all, for they dwell every where: to keep one town, is their bondage; their liberty, to roam abroad: worse than the harlot, she cannot abide long in her own house, Prov. vii. 11, they can abide long in no house. Birds fly abroad all day, but so that they may come to their own nests at night; the horse knows his own stable, dogs their own kennel; these beasts only take up the next barn; no men could make a truer description of the kingdom, were they learned, for they have travelled it over and over.

(3.) Government they know none, but a rebellious one of their own ordaining: to pay tribute or custom to the grand rogue more truly than subsidies are paid to the king: to swear by their Solomon, and then not to break their oath; but to tear God's name in pieces, is no breach of their religion: not to beg out of their limits, though they starve.

(4.) All their end of this idle life, is but because they find profit and sweetness in it; therefore they wander, because they would not work. He that before he gives them relief, sets them to labour, shall never after find them at his door. Now considering God's law, that every man should eat his own bread, and that our indulgence is the nurse of their idleness, who get more by lying still in a corner than an honest poor man doth by his labour, we make their sin our sin in maintaining them. Alms are good, but they must not be given to the dishonour of Christ; he commends to us the maimed, the lame, the blind, Luke xiv. 13, the aged and impotent, the widow and fatherless; to relieve these shall make us blessed. But they that look for a reward for maintaining the dissolute, shall be answered with, Who required this at your hands? Where find they more cherishing than in popish houses? Not to merit of God, as they teach, and we might suppose; but to make them their own against a day of rebellion, when they should use them. But as a finger being cut off from the hand is of no use, so no possible good can come to the common body by them. They laugh at others, who take great pains to leave their children small portions; whereas these leave theirs all the world to rogue in, and all the people for their fathers.

(5.) The curse of God is visibly upon them, whereby they are given over to all licentiousness. To thievery: they come to pilfer, not to beg; and only then beg, when they cannot pilfer. To horrible uncleanness: they have not peculiar wives, nor range themselves into families. To be a vagabond was Cain's plague, Gen. iv. 12, and is in its own nature a curse; yet these turn it into a blessing. "Let his children be vagabonds, and beg; let them seek bread out of their desolate places," Psal. cix. 10. In this curse they bring up their children. This is such a straggling presumption, as will not be confined but in hell. They delight to go ragged and naked, not so much in a voluntary penance, as to move compassion. But turn your charity from these, and seek out God's poor, not the devil's: impotent poor, not impudent poor; and rather give to those that work and beg not, than to those that beg and work not.

2. Popish emissaries, the intelligencers of Rome, and the factors of antichrist; that know themselves

sent on the errand of hell, designed to treacheries, set in the vanguard of conspiracy, like lost men in the forlorn hope; what are these but presumptuous sinners? I deny not other attractives and inducements; but they are all the handmaids to presumption. Whether it be the opulence of our land, or the beauty of our women, or the malice they bear our nation, or the foolish affectation of martyrdom, and to be registered in the Roman rubric: it is not unlikely, they are tickled with that advantage, which the friar told his novice their priests had over their laity, to this effect: We keep their counsels, they keep none of ours; we have part of their lands, they have none of ours; we have charity towards their wives, they toward none of ours; they bring up our children, we bring up none of theirs. It is reported to be the saying of a great marquis, that he had in his country three monasteries, which were three miracles: one of the Dominicans, which had abundance of corn, and no lands; another of the Franciscans, who were full of money, and received no rents; a third of St. Thomas, whose monks had many children, and no wives. But what temptation soever brings them, treason cannot be without presumption. Their supreme head sends them like base members on such desperate services; and they must obey him, whatsoever Christ says. If he bid them seal their treason with a sacrament, they must eat their God upon a bargain of blood. St. Peter says, "Fear God, honour the king," 1 Pet. ii. 17; his usurping successor says, Fear God, kill the king. All their labour must be spent, to make Christ's coat fit to their body politic. Their vows may seem heavenly, but their employment is earthly: in meddling with the business both of church and state, they mingle together heaven and earth.

What, doth their conscience warrant them, upon opinion of merit? Can this bear them out to be false keys to open the cabinets of princes, and pry into their counsels? Did ever man hope to deserve thanks of God, by doing that which he knows will offend him? They see laws made against their pernicious attempts, and that justly; for there is no law made against the papists, but some notorious treason went before, to cause such a law. They that venture their bodies and souls in so rotten a vessel of piracy, are they not presumptuous? He that runs on high bartlements, gallops down steep hills, rides over narrow bridges, walks on weak ice; and never thinks, What if I fall? but, What if I pass over and fall not? is he not presumptuous? They see before their eyes such designs continually cursed of God and plagued of men; yet what say they of the powder-traitors? Alas, unfortunate gentlemen; it seems they blame the ill fortune, not the ill attempt: had it succeeded, it had been commended. Yet they will on: what can discourage senseless presumption? show him the way where any foot hath trod, he dares follow, though he knows none ever returned. What if a thousand have miscarried, yet why may he not escape?

Thus presumptuous are they in their deeds, but how desperate in their writings! They mingle them with heresies, as Hannibal, to entrap his enemies, mixed their wine with mandrakes, whose operation is betwixt sleep and poison. (Averroes.) Or as Avicenn was made away, by anointing the book with poison which he was to read. (Greg.) If they wrote nothing but lies, all would reject them: if nothing but truth, they could not deceive us. All their blasphemies and falsehoods are in the vulgar tongue, like Rabslakeh's, 2 Kings xviii. 26; but the gospel of salvation they look up safe enough from the people. Let the best learned use their writings, as Christ did his potion of gall; he tasted and refused. Gentle writings are not so dangerous, for thy be dead errors; and a living cur will do more harm than a

dead lion. What trust should be given to those men, that will presume to cast away themselves, to do us a mischief?

3. Duellists or single combatants; that more fear to have the world call them cowards for refusing, than God to judge them rebels for undertaking: blanch it with what terms of honour they please, the court of heaven will censure it presumption. Where did God ever bid a man hazard his life for his name? What seconds soever he gets, Christ will not be that man's second. Where is no commandment, no promise, what can justify that act from presumption? This is to cast a man's self out of his Maker's protection: he takes charge of us but when we are in our ways, in his ways. This is none of God's ways, therefore should be none of ours. The doctrine of Christ doth most strictly forbid it, and why should not Christ be heard of Christians? Thou shalt not revenge thyself. Thou shalt do no murder. Did he die for us, and shall we not hear him speak? Men may be overcome if they fight, they shall overcome if they fight not. How many souls had escaped going all gore-blood to their judgment, if Christ might have been heard!

But they say, We fight not so much against an enemy, as our own ignominy; the world will baffle us. *Ans.* What world is that, whose censure or baffling we fear? That, which God says shall not be saved? That, whereof the devil is prince? That, which reproached and condemned Jesus Christ? That, which always hated and persecuted the good? Are we in amity with that, which is at enmity with God? Do we call Christ our Captain, and march under the colours of this world? Have we not in baptism forsworn it? Shall we care more to discontent the world, than to wrong our Maker? What then is the ground of it? Mere opinion, and that of men more gallant than wise, that have more heart than brain: *Facile redimunt qui sanguine famam*, says Martial; i. e. that spend their cheap blood to recover that which wise men never lost, reputation. They have lost some credit in opinion, and send their souls after in earnest; as the child throws away his bread, because one hath snatched away his apple. Wine and choler beget a brawl, death and confusion must nurse it. They little think what ransom Christ paid for that soul, which (without his call) they let forth at a bloody window.

Oh that something would make the sons of men be wise, to think how poor a recompence the fame of a brave combat is for everlasting torment! Whether they thus die or kill, they have committed murder: if they kill, they have murdered another; if they die, they have murdered themselves. Surviving, there is the plague of conscience: dying, there is the plague of torments. If they both escape, yet it is homicide that they meant to kill. Whatsoever be the success, there is presumption in the offense. If men knew how sweet was heaven, and how intolerable hell, they would be more obedient upon earth. But what have divines to do with the matters of soldiers? Their profession is peace. True, but we speak from him, that is not only the Prince of peace, but also the Lord of hosts. He is the God of peace to them that seek peace; but upon them that follow courses of revenge, he will revenge too. They fight one against another, God will fight against them both. Who is the valiant man? he that dares draw his sword against the command of his Maker? he of whom his own passion makes a poor slave? No; but he that can parlon an injury, do good to an enemy, despise the world, obey the Lord; he that can master himself, and loves God's honour, not his own humour.

4. I could single out many others, that will attempt hard matters because they be great and rare, that love ventures of more hazard than use. You have heard of some that undertake a long journey by sea in a wherry; as the desperate mariner hoisteth sail in a storm, and says, none of his ancestors were drowned. Some, that rush fearlessly into infected houses, and say the plague never seizeth on valiant blood, it kills none but cowards. Some, that languishing of sickness, will drink away their diseases; and so make haste to despatch both body and soul at once. Some, that run headlong into danger, and fear not; saying, it comes with a fear. Some, that without asking leave of God, count upon trade, and gain, and purchasing, and leaving great estates, Jam. iv. 13; not measuring their intendments by their powers, but wills. If all fall right, they thank themselves; if otherwise, they do not blame themselves. No man promises himself more, nor distrusts himself less, than the presumptuous. Some, that have distilled away their estates in alchemies, projecting for the philosopher's stone; presuming they shall have that which may do all the world good; and promising their friends beforehand gold in whole scuttles; but at last his glass breaks, and himself with it. Some, that presume to foretell the changes of states, the event of all the great undertakings of princes, the fortunes of war, what weather we shall have all the year; what merchandise will be dear, what cheap; (and yet for all this knowledge, themselves miserable beggars;) so familiarly, as if God had written all these things as plain in the stars, as he did the ten commandments on the two tables.

Some, that can tell the secrets of kings, the mysteries of state, and yet never were of the privy-council. Yea, some will be no strangers to the records of heaven; as if that great Master of the Rolls had given them his keys, to turn over his books and copy them out at their pleasures. This is a drunken presumption of our times. They are not few that say in their hearts, We will sin, and repent, and be forgiven: if we do well, God is just to reward us; if ill, he is merciful to pardon us. Thus it is a question, whether God be more wronged by their sins, or by their praises; whatsoever they undertake, they presume God will defend them. But while we want his word, in vain we look for his aid. In our safest and most honest courses, we need his providence; but to run into confessed dangers, without our Keeper, is sottish presumption. What God enjoins, that he undertakes, that he maintains: why should we expect him a guide in our own errors? These be the worst self-flatterers, self-deceivers, that suggest to their own hearts the false hope of Never too late; as if they could make time stand still, who waits not the leisure of princes; or command repentance, which knows no sovereign but the King of heaven, and goes not at the bidding of an angel.

How desperately presumptuous are they, that dare defer the procurement of mercy and forgiveness, till the extremest pinch, as it were betwixt the bridge and the brook! How deplorable is the false confidence of the world, when to make their reckoning at the last day, is the last and least thing that they make reckoning of! That which should be the whole business of our life, these hope to despatch in half an hour. Nothing is so easy with them, nothing so difficult with all others. To reconcile God, and make him their friend in a moment, whom they have provoked, and kept their enemy so many years, this is that which nothing but presumption durst ever yet undertake. I have heard of castles built in an instant, by enchantment; I never believed it: such castles of vain hope do these men build in the air of their own empty imaginations.

Dehortations. 1. It is a sin to which we are naturally prone; therefore the more dangerous. The house of Rimmon was Naaman's fear; Lord, keep me there. Soon is a man invited to make much of himself, hardly to his own affliction. Despair is a thing grievous to trembling nature; not often doth that archer of hell head his arrows with such displeasing assaults. Besides, this hath often turned to a hearty conversion: like a violent fever, that hath boiled up all the cholera and corruption of sin, so that a man becomes the better after it. But to presume, this is sweet to flesh and blood: Ye shall be as gods, foiled innocence itself. They that undertook to build Babel, did it to get them a name; not affecting the neighbourhood of heaven, but to be famous on earth: their aim was not commodity, or safety, but glory. Satan hath not a more tried shaft in all his quiver, than to persuade men to bear themselves boldly upon the favour of God. Thou art elected, redeemed, assured; what needest thou be so strict in thy courses? Be not such an adversary to thy own liberty: thou mayst sin, and be safe. As if the grace that saves us, and the obligation of duty that binds us, were not several parts of the same covenant. Therefore as the wise man eats moderately of the dish which he best likes, because he knows there is more danger of surfeit in that than in all the rest; so let us be most shy and heedful of that sin, which we know will soonest take us, and take God from us. We are all readier to laugh with the merry philosopher, than to weep with the mourner. Pleasure never knocks twice at our door without entrance; sorrow shall not in, so long as we can keep it out. We have ten fingers, and but two eyes: our conversation admits ten sins, before our contrition lets fall two tears. Open but the door, presumption (like a bold guest) comes in of itself. Repentance, like a modest virgin, sits weeping in the streets for want of harbour; no bosom hath lodging for such a guest. Only when we feel ourselves sick, we send for her as a physician, to heal the wounds that pleasure hath made. But rather of the two, let pleasure be shut out of doors, and repentance be laid between our breasts.

2. God especially opposeth this sin, because this sin especially opposeth him: it calls the Almighty forces against it, because it bends all its forces against the Almighty. Diffidence distrusts him, carelessness forgets him, unbelief denies him, ignorance does not know him, infirmity does not see him, wantonness passes by him; but presumption resists him. Herod is blown up into a god: he did but take that title, he did not make that title; yet because he did not repel the applause of a god, the worms declare him a miserable man. There be sins that hurt only ourselves, sins that hurt also our neighbours; but this, as if it had the Syrians' charge, 1 Kings xxii. 31, lets drive at none but the King of all the world. Pride ever looks at the highest; the first man would know as God, the offspring of the new world would dwell as God: presumption regards no limits. What harm could be in laying one brick upon another; in building a city for society, a tower for safety? God had not indignation at the matter, but the manner; not that such things were undertaken, but proudly undertaken. "The soul that doeth ought presumptuously, shall be cut off," Numb. xv. 30. This is the kindness that presumption doth a man; it will never leave him till it hath wrought out his final ruin. Though Pharaoh's back were sore with stripes, yet he must still presume; he cannot be quiet without his full vengeance: as filching leaves not the pilferer with raw sides, but brings him to a broken neck. Haman can be content with no advancement, till he be lifted up fifty cubits, to his own gallows. Korah

will not disgorge his haughty rebellion, till the earth hath swallowed him up quick. That rich man reckoned up a large bill of particulars, great barns, much goods, many years; but the sum was short, one night, Luke xii. 18—20. He that reckons without God, shall be sure to reckon twice.

3. It is a foolish sin. Balaam knew that he could not earn Balak's gold; yet his fingers itched, and he will go, if it be but to look upon it: so presumptuous is avarice, and presumption so foolish! Korah knew by exemplary proof, that there was no contesting with Moses, yet his proud heart will venture: so presumptuous is pride, and presumption so foolish! Aaron and Miriam knew themselves short of Moses in honour, yet by emulating him they would provoke God: so presumptuous is envy, and presumption so foolish! Those antique builders purpose a tower to reach heaven, and what if the height had answered their desire? some hills had been as high as their hopes, which yet are no whit the better. The nearer heaven, the more subject to the violence of heaven; *Propius ad Jovem, propius ad fulmen*. The nearer to Jupiter, the nearer to the thunder. Politic wickedness would keep out of God's fingers; it is blockish impudence that runs upon his pikes. Yet these aspirers dare venture it: so presumptuous is vainglory, and presumption so foolish! How far will men presume in the world to get them a name; and how ridiculous that name proves when it is gotten! Diana's temple was one of the wonders of the world: one, to get him a name, builds it; another, to get him a name, burns it. Thus Alithophel hath a name, Judas hath a name, Beelzebub hath a name, the powder-traitors have got them a name, but they are famous for infamy. It were some happiness for such names if they might die, for they will stink while they live. How much better is it to do good works! this shall make our names good and honourable on earth. To believe and obey: this shall testify our names written in heaven.

Presumption is a firework made up of pride and fool-hardiness; it mounts into the air with a hissing noise, and the matter being spent, the fool's fire dies; it comes down again with a stink. It is a compound of easy credulity, apt to believe impossibilities; and of headlong temerity, apt to attempt unconcerning hazards; and of blind folly, not foreseeing the miserable events. Rash in undertaking, artless in proceeding, desperate in the ending. It is indeed like a heavy house built upon slender crutches: like dust which men throw against the wind, it flies back in their own face, and makes them blind. Wise men presume nothing, but hope the best; but presumption is hope out of her wits. The presumptuous man begins with rashness, and ends with shame; like one that gets up without a bridle, and comes down without a stirrup. It delights to sit on the top of a mast, where falling asleep, the downfall is confusion. As some wild boy, that hath gotten a horse wilder than himself, with much ado backs him, sits him in fear, and comes down with a mischief. He will sail upon that shelf, where his eyes have seen another ship perish. By arrogating the greatness which he hath not, he loseth the goodness which he had. He will offer to teach them, whose office is to teach him; and when himself is wounded, he will dress his surgeon. He looks for reverence from his betters; and that when he speaks, three women should hold their peace; and they, for noise, are sufficient to make a market.

His feet carry his heart, and his tongue carries his feet, and both leave out the head in their project. He does not care to do good, but he glories in having rule; he presumes himself to be better than others,

because he sees himself higher than others. So Innocent. He forgets those to-day, to whom he was yesterday beholden. He comes to council uncalled, gives his opinion unasked. If the prince motion, who shall do such business, the devil could not answer more roundly, I am ready, 1 Kings xxii. 21. He censures that man ignorant; and calls him (though it be his own name) audacious; that undertakes a business without his direction. If his advice be not consulted, the design is given for lost. He is the worst Jesuit's client in the world, for he will never be brought to confession. Yet pardon the silence of his tongue, for his life speaks him. When he offers to shoot, he calls for no bow but Robin Hood's.

This is that sin which, as Cassian says, *æquare angelum Deo, hominem angelo*; i. e. would have deified angels, and angelized men. He makes laws when he should learn them, and vents philosophy ere he have read his grammar. He imagines to outmount eagles with the wings of a bustard, and will not tarry till he be fledged. He will be a challenger at the Olympics; and there he leaves his carcass and a base report behind. Xerxes threatens to proclaim war against Greece; one of his presumptuous familiars answers, that they would never tarry the message, but he should find empty walls when he came. Another, that they wanted sea-room for his ships, and land-room for his soldiers. Another, that his soldiers there would grow pury and resty for want of exercise. But Damaxatus bade him not presume; *Multitudo quæ tibi placet, tibi metuenda est*; i. e. Thy army is too huge to manage: so accordingly he retired with dishonour and loss. (Valerius Maxim.) How did the very heathen explode this vice in their proverbial speeches! to this effect, Either less mind, or more power. Either add to your power, or subtract from your words. Speak not great things. (Plutarch.)

Presumption is a mischief made up of many ingredients, to which every vice contributes something, as the gods did to Vulcan toward the making of his Pandora. As many vices challenge part of her, as cities did of Homer. Ignorance says, She is mine. Pride says, She is mine. Temerity says, She is mine. Vain-glory says, She is mine. Cowardice says, She is mine. Impudence says, She is mine. Profuseness says, She is mine. Either presumption is beholden to all these vices, or all these vices are beholden to presumption. And yet, there is one above all, that hath more right to her than all. The devil says, She is mine; and there we leave her.

"Self-willed." The natural and unsanctified will of man is hard to tame; worse than the "wild ass, that snuffs up the wind at her pleasure; they that seek her will not weary themselves; in her month they shall find her," Jer. ii. 24. There is one month in the year to take her, but what season can rectify this? Other creatures God hath left to be tamed by man, but man he hath reserved to be tamed by himself. No prince can tame the will: he may load the body with irons, vex the sense with pains, yea, surcharge the affections with sorrows; yet still a man's will is his own: in his will he is a king, even while his body is below a slave. No bonds of law can hold this Samson: an orator here is more potent than an emperor. Temptation, like an unhappy bride, may corrupt the will; when power may command, and go without. *Valentior fortuna est voluntas*, says Seneca; i. e. The will can make a man's life happy or wretched, when fortune cannot do it. It is the desire of our will only, that makes us miserable, and so much the more miserable, by having that desire satisfied. The self-willed man needs no greater

enemy than he is to himself. *Sais ipse viribus ruit.* It sets itself agoing; and when it is once on the wheels, it runs faster than Satan himself can drive it.

Stubborn, obstinate, such as will break before they bow; perverse, curst-hearted, that will do evil though they be sure to come by the worst. An inflexible heart, that disdains comparison for hardness with the nether millstone. A delight in evil, because it is evil; an habituating of errors into manners; a turning of infirmity into necessity, by a desperate custom. Hugo speaks of some that are not better by correction, some that are worse with admonition, some that promise amendment and never mean it; as if they could flatter and delude God himself.

It is distinguished from the former thus: Presumption was never before cast down; therefore bears up itself proudly, and goes on to do evil. But this is a sin that hath been formerly corrected; broken before, yet proceeds in wickedness. That was wholly presumption; this hath not a little of desperation. When a man hath made such a progress in sin, that he hopes for no pardon, he cares not what mischief he doth. As a desperate malefactor, that fears not to multiply villainous acts, because he knows he shall be hanged whensoever he is taken.

The chief cause of this sin lies in the will of man. As in the actions of God, the true cause is to be sought for in himself; and of the works of Satan, the cause is in Satan; so man's will is the cause of man's wilfulness. No man denies but God hath a suffering, forsaking, disposing hand in it, Psal. lxxxi. 12; Acts xiv. 16; but it is called a self-will, because it comes immediately from a man's self, regards to please nothing but himself, and fights against that which opposeth himself. It contradicts the will of God, with a Let my will be done. The fountain of all perverse actions is man's inhuman will. This is the efficient cause of evils; but what makes the will so perverse? what is the efficient cause of that? The will forsakes the Creator, and adheres to the creature, and so becomes evil. And, as Augustine says, not so much because that is evil to which it turns itself, but because the very turning itself is depraved and perverse. Now when God lets go the will, Satan catcheth it; and then we can hardly be rid of him, who is both willing to stay, and whom we are not unwilling to keep.

But hath not every man a will to be saved? Yes, a confused and inconstant will, in general: there are none but wish well to themselves: and they that live like the children of hell, would have heaven when they die. But they do not will such a course of life as may bring them to blessedness, but rather the swing of their own lusts; therefore when they would be good they cannot. When it wishes it cannot, because when it could it would not: therefore through its will to evil it lost also the power for good. So Augustine. This is a will that addicteth itself to sin, holds it with all the powers; that does mischief with such a mind as is ready either to destroy or to perish; which would have God either not to know sins, or not to be able to avenge them, as Bernard expresses it. It would have him either unable, or unwise, or unjust, and indeed no God at all. Rather than he will leave his sensual pleasure, he could wish the justice, and wisdom, and power of God to perish. So much of devil is in this will, that it would ruin the infinite Maker.

This sin will appear in the full malignity of it, by the remembrance of some instances. I will, for a taste, call out seven.

1. The malicious and spiteful. Observe this in Korah and his confederates against Moses and Aaron: "Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congre-

gation are holy; wherefore do ye lift up yourselves?" Numb. xvi. 3. Every word is a lie. All Israel holy! In so much infidelity, idolatry, mutiny, disobedience, what holiness was there? If this were sanctity, what do you call impiety? They had scarce wiped their mouths, or washed their hands, since their last rebellion; yet these pickthanks say, all Israel is holy. And for Moses, he dejected himself; it was God that lifted him up: he was as far from ambition, as they were from sanctification and humility. He sends for them, they come not, and their message is worse than their absence. "Is it a small thing that thou hast brought us up out of a land that floweth with milk and honey, to kill us in the wilderness, except thou make thyself a prince over us?" ver. 13. Egypt shall be commended, rather than Moses shall want reproach. Injustice, cruelty, treachery, usurpation, are objected to him, that knew none of these by himself. He did not take an ass from them; was this injustice? He prayed for them while they rebelled against him; was this cruelty? Of slaves he made them free; was this treachery? God himself immediately made him their prince; was this usurpation? Moses could not be faulted, but they were self-willed. Innocence is no shelter against evil tongues: malice never regards how true any accusation is, but how spiteful. Have we none that follow this pattern? none that with venomous teeth break the bag of poison which they bear in their mouths, till it run out in scandals? If the matter were true, yet such a report is uncharitable; being not true, it is blasphemous. Little do they meditate of that quenchless fire, which must burn that tongue that knows no other language. "Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling-block before the blind," Lev. xix. 14. While a man evens the ignorant, he stumbles the blind; and he that slanders the absent, curseth the deaf: there is little hope of mercy for either. This can be no other than a self-willed vice.

2. They that despair of proffered grace, and with both hands put back the goodness of God, are wilful sinners. Repentance is set before us, like a Simon of Cyrene, to ease our burdens: desperation, like an Egyptian, doth aggravate our labours. When we are plunged into the inundation of sin, hope would hold us up by the chin, despair would sink us to the bottom: he that rejects his upholder, and admits his overwheeler, is he not wilful? Hope makes a gracious concession, Repent and be saved. Despair returns a wilful answer; No, I cannot repent, I may not be saved. O miserable Judas, whom, as Leo expresses, repentance did not lead back to God, but despair drew on to the halter.

It is wicked enough to presume upon sin by the example of others; sanctified humility argues against it. Because David fell into adultery and was forgiven, therefore may I commit the same sin on hope of the same success? Pious fear concludes, He was plagued, though he was pardoned: if I sin by his precedent, I may well be plagued with him, not pardoned with him. The unthrift left his father's house, yet at last returned, and was received; but if I wilfully forsake God, it is doubtful whether I shall ever return; and if I would, whether I be ever received. Peter denied Christ, and it cost him many bitter tears; but should I deny him, what rivers were able to wash me clean? To presume, is bad; but being fallen, to despair of rising again, is worse. Others have been recovered, why not I? Is not Christ the same? It comforts a diseased man, to know that his physician hath cured others more dangerously sick of the same disease. How should it comfort us, to remember that God hath forgiven sinners as grievous! it has been

said, the misery of the whole world is not so great, as is the mercy of God alone. His bounty is not shut, but our hand of faith is not open. Therefore men are not cured, as one expresses it, not because God is not merciful nor skilful, but because the patient is wilful. As therefore it is a good rule in all our undertakings, *nece temere nec timide*; i. e. to be neither too bold nor too cold: not too backward, like those timorous Israelites, There be the sons of Anak, Deut. i. 28; nor too forward, like those over-venturous Israelites, that went against their enemies without asking leave, ver. 43. So in all our fallings, not to weigh our errors in the balance of contempt, lest they appear too small, and not worth our sorrow; nor yet in the balance of despair, lest they seem too great, and beyond pardon. But let us sorrow in hope, and hope in sorrow, and we shall find mercy in both.

3. Contemners of the word. "I have written to him the great things of my law, but they were counted as a strange thing," Hos. viii. 12. They were not strange or hard to be understood, but men were wilful, and would not understand them. Preaching, of all professions, hath the least hope to prevail, for it deals with the will of man. The lawyer hath only to do with reason, convincing by arguments; the physician only works upon the body, by proper medicines; the tradesman goes no further than the eye, the musician takes the ear: there is no difficulty in prevailing with any of these, because there is in them a natural propensity to receive that is good. Sound reason, fit medicine, fair metals, sweet music, every man likes. But divinity deals with the will; and that such a will, as hath naturally no disposition to goodness, yea, an opposition against it; an averseness, a perverseness in evil: yet to work this will to goodness, is her office. This is a hard task, for men are self-willed; stubborn fishes, which when we seek to catch, they catch us.

The spider was weaving a curious net to catch the swallow: she comes, and bears away net and web and weaver too. We may as well command the east wind to blow west, as convert the will from her natural course. In the law of jealousies, if the woman were guilty, that drank of the bitter waters, she would presently swell, Numb. v. 27; if otherwise, she was well enough. So guilty sinners, after a draught of these bitter waters, reprehensions, will swell against the priest: innocent souls are cheered and cleared by it. The divine eloquence of Paul could not escape this affronting; Demetrius and the craftsmen made a faction against him, Acts xix. 24. Craftsmen indeed, and so most citizens may be called craftsmen; too crafty for the poor minister, if he speak against their great goddess Diana, snerleage. What, attempt to convert men from covetousness? Persuade the will to be just, and charitable? Nay, rather perish religion, fall churches, be dumb all devotion, be forfeited all the treasures and conduits of grace, to the uttermost work of salvation, and loss of heaven to boot: men will have their wills. Against these refractory wills hath the Lord set us to fight: we are warriors, but to bear a rich conquest of wills on the point of our spears to heaven. The falcon soaring in the air, and spying her game below, strikes wing, and comes down with such a force, that the air suffers violence: the nearer she comes, the swifter she flies, and makes her point bravely when she stoops. Preachers are your servants, to halloo the game to you, the humble service of Christ, and subduing your wills to his: fly to it, follow it close; so you shall fly well, stoop well, stop well, live well, and die well, and make a blessed point.

4. Blasphemers. No excuse shall acquit common

swearers from being wilful sinners. Custom says much for it, and yet that much is nothing. Children have the wit to swear rashly, before they have the discretion to speak distinctly. Oaths in young men are but the effects of hot blood, and arguments of a brave resolution. Old men swear in choler, to maintain their reputation: what they utter above belief, they borrow an oath to make credible. It is the common opinion, he that will not swear, hath not the credit of a man, especially not the spirit of a gentleman; but I am sure, he that doth, hath not the spirit of a Christian. It is held a cold and dead narration, that is not interlaced with some blasphemous mention of our Maker and Saviour. If his life, heart, and blood be not taken to grace it, there is no blood, heart, or life in it.

Is not this wilful? What gain, what delight, what advancement doth it bring us? Yet these be the common incitements of sin. Covetousness gets money, pride bravery, lust sensual pleasure; swearing brings nothing but horror and distraction. If it could procure credit to our relations, must our honour's foundation needs be laid in the dishonour of God? Did the Lord Jesus suffer such variety of pains, to minister unto men variety of oaths, or to satisfy for the variety of sins? How should they have part of that merit, which in every part they have so abused? Oh that that name, which is reverend to angels, and terrible to devils, should be tossed about among the sons of men, without fear or reverence! A complaint, which we have cause to fill up with tears, more than words. Have we so learned Christ, to swear by him only? Will neither the benefits received, nor those we expect, charm our lips from such rebellion? It is a sin, from which of all evils we have most power of abstinence, to which of all evils we have the fewest temptations, therefore what can it be but wilfulness? Let us think, first, from whence it ariseth; from the first cause of evil, Satan. Secondly, what it bringeth; as many plagues as there be leaves in the book of God, the evil of temporal punishments. Thirdly, whither it tendeth; unto the last effect of evil, damnation.

5. Liars, that speak against their own conscience. Every lie is bad enough, yet some are of infirmity. So Abraham dissembled his wife, to save his life: Isaac was taken with his father's fear, and lied to Abimelech: David to Abimelech, being hard driven seeks to succour himself with an unwarrantable shift: the midwives of Egypt, Rahab of Jericho, lied. All these were weaknesses. But to lie, with a set purpose and malicious intent, is this self-willed sin. A liar is one practised in the trade, as was Ziba, 2 Sam. xvi. 3. So Paul calls the Cretians liars; and as much hath been said of the Grecians; *Græcia mendax*, i. e. lying Greece. The spawn of Rome hath the primacy for lying; truth or falsehood is all one to them, so it may make for their turn. The Jesuit seems to be ambitious of the devil's prerogative, and fain would be the father of lies. Among the Indians, he that told a lie thrice, was condemned to perpetual silence: take it on Alian's credit. Happy were it for the church, if such ecclesiastical liars were so silenced. Now a simple lie is so evil, that it can be made good by no circumstance: no, not by the glory of God, in the conversion of a world. Whatsoever the school speaks from St. Augustine, of their *peccata compensativa*, compensative sins; as for a man to tell a lie to prevent a rape or murder: as the two women hid the spies of Israel, and intelligencers of David: denying them whom they had concealed, to save their bloods, Josh. ii. 5; 2 Sam. xvii. 20: these they call sins that make amends, or recompense themselves. But shall a man "speak wickedly for

God?" Job xiii. 7. Is he ever driven to such a pinch, that he stands in need of our lie? Even this is evil; but to lie with a meretricious forehead, steed with impudence; this is that self-willed sin, which shall be shut out of heaven among the dogs. Rev. xxii. 15. The whelps of that Roman litter have thus barked against all the professors of the gospel, cast frontless imputations upon them; traduced the living, belied the dead; against the truth, against the evident truth, against the truth that themselves knew; so grossly, that some of their own blushing pens have confuted their shameless calumniation. Let them have the meed of noted liars, not to be believed speaking true.

6. Perjurers. To lie is wicked, to swear is ungodly; but to swear a lie, most execrable. The Jews' oath included seven things; Let bread, water, fire, house, wife, league of grace, and sepulchre be denied me, if I swear not the truth. Others, with a stone in their hand, throwing it against the wall, and saying, *Si sciens fallo, sic me percutiat Jupiter*, i. e. If I wilfully deceive, thus may Jupiter smite me. All judgments created are too narrow to conceive the guilt of perjury. It dissolves all commerce among men; if there be no truth in us, there is no trust unto us. It makes God an idol, ignorant of the truth, or else a patron of falsehood. Yea, it sends up to heaven a desperate challenge of atheistical defiance, and offers to take God and truth out of the world. An oath is the end of all disputes; he that violates that, breaks open a gap for ataxy and confusion to invade the world. Wilful every way; when a man either swears that to be true, which is false; or that to be false, which is true; or that to be true, which he thinks false; or that to be false, which he thinks true.

Words were first ordained for discovery, not for concealment: they that invert the formal intent of words, do wilfully cheat. An oath is the remedy of contention, they that cancel that seal of confirmation, are sworn rebels to all goodness. Ye that be so mad of running to Rome, learn this art before you go; inure your stomachs to digest perjury; study equivocations, as young scholars do fallacies: or else, as the poet says, *Quid Romæ faciam? mentiri nescio*, What shall I do at Rome? I cannot lie. How intolerable is this before a judgment-seat! He that enters into a statute, conceives the extent of it to be executed on his body, lands, or goods; therefore sleeps not till he be sure to perform the defiance and condition. An oath is a kind of statute entered into and acknowledged before the high Judge of all the world: the condition is, to say the whole truth, and nothing but the truth; this is to be extended on goods and lands, peace and liberty, body and soul. Oh how self-willed, how obstinately mad are they, that cast away all these, by casting away the truth!

Though Phalaris' command, and threaten the brazen bull, no terrors should drive us from the horns of the altar; still let us hold fast the truth. The witness serves, as Augustine says, that the judge, who is not a discernor of the heart, may not make any mistake in judging. If he be false, he laughs in his sleeve to think how many wise men he hath deluded. Juvenal thought perjury a disgrace for Romans; *Quamvis Cappadoces faciant, equitesque Britanni*. The Asians were renowned for perjury, and it seems by the poet, there were such knights among the Britons then. Let those wilful damners of themselves take any base course, rather than this. Any thing is better, as one expresses it, than to say before the judge, I saw what you did not see. They are called post-knights; whether because they stand ready at some noted post for their hire, or because

their names are set upon posts, like villains on record, or especially because they ride post to hell. Every man is one letter in the alphabet, one element in the state. Judges are as vowels. Witnesses as half vowels or consonants; to speak when others speak to them, to sound something with others, nothing with themselves. Mutes be such as cannot plead for themselves, for whom are appointed advocates. But false witnesses are diphthongs, double-tongued, that breathe hot or cold, as you bespeak them; these mar the sense, and are to be thrown out of Christ's cross-row. Oh that our land had no such monsters, that on an hour's warning could lend Jezebel an oath, to rob poor Naboth of his life and vineyard!

Perjury! why, all disclaim it; but I would to God none would use it. How do subtle tradesmen insnare themselves, when they swear with equivocation, having some secret reference to the unknown mysteries of their profession! Let them know, there is a perjury out of the place of judgment, and this is it, what shifts soever they devise to juggle with their own conscience. This is an infallible rule, what cunning phrase or ambiguous assertion soever they swear withal; God, who is the witness of the conscience, so takes it, as he to whom they swear, by common construction understands it. And the buyer departs nothing so laden with the injury, as the seller's soul is with the weight of perjury. Sacred ever and inviolable be the religion of an oath; and do not think men are to be cozened with oaths, as children are with counters. The false swearer hath a large share in all the plagues and curses of that flying roll, Zech. v. A share! yea, it is marvel that he doth not engross the whole. So prodigious is this sin, that if it be rewarded according to its merit, it seems any proportion under; whole volume of punishments. "I will bring it forth, saith the Lord," ver. 4. God's will, cuts off all hope of impunity; his forth, cuts off all opinion of secrecy.

7. Sacrilege is a wilful sin. Against knowledge, men know it is injustice; against conscience, their own heart tells them they do ill; against God, who made them; against their pastor, who feeds them; against the gospel, that should save them; every way self-willed. The body of this city hears this often at the public congregation. What is their answer? Alas, we so often hear it, that we never mind it. Desperate wilfulness! we expect that God should hear us, yet we will not hear him; that he should bless and prosper our estates, when we perjure him. Our churches be full, but our purses be empty. Great audiences and small benevolences, are like many sheep and a little wool. Men give us the hearing, and that is all they give us. We empty our books, we empty our veins, we empty our brains; yet we must leave our posterity beggars. Is it your praises that we hunt for? it is time that our mouths were stopped with earth, if we should think of any other end than the honour of God. If you give us any glory, you endanger us to vengeance, and so require us evil for our good. But God forbid you should profit so little by us, as I am sure we do by you.

But sacrilege shall find no excuse at the day of judgment. I shall relate a story, on the credit of a reverend bishop of this land, who knew and saw it. There was a gentleman that had the tithes of a parsonage inappropriate, by right whereof he demanded tithe wool of a parishioner, who was very rich, and the owner of many hundred sheep. He sent him a very small quantity; the servants showed it their master, the master his neighbours, who all acknowledged that he did him wrong. He demanded more; the other denied more, and vowed in his choler, that if he were driven to pay more, he would never keep

sheep more, and so deprive him of that profit. The law compelled him; whereupon he put away his sheep. After which, he presently fell into such decay, that when this gentleman was buried, (which was not long after,) he, among the rest of the poor people, stood to receive such alms as were given at the funeral. (B. Babington upon Levit.) He was not alone in this exemplary punishment; thousands have fallen to poverty for this very sin of sacrilege. So dearly doth God pay himself of those that detain his dues; yea, even while they are transmitted into profane hands. From them that will not pay the tenth, he takes away all the nine. But, O self-will- edness, thou cause of all this sin and ruin; that dost still harden the hearts of men, and putteth equity out of all hope of recovery; when politicians turn good Christians, usurers build churches, and poets come to sermons, then we will hope that God shall have his tithes.

Considerations. 1. Will is one thing which differenceth a man from a beast, and makes him capable of misery or blessedness. Life, sense, appetite, do not of themselves make a man either wretched or happy; (Bern.) but only the will; therefore if the will be naught, man is in worse case than the beast; as by a good will, he is in far better.

2. Will is a rational motion, presiding over sense and appetite. Reason a director; so man had it; reason a follower; so man hath it; reason a companion; so man should have it. It is not always moved according to reason, never without reason: the will doth many things by reason, and yet against reason; as it were by its instrumentality, contrary to its direction. Reason is given to the will for its instruction, not its destruction: now if will refuseth the counsel of reason, what can hinder ruin?

3. Nothing can offend God but the will, and the will can offend him without any thing else. The good or ill which infants, men either distracted or sleeping, do, shall not be imputed to them; because, says Bernard, they are neither in possession of their reason, nor retain the use of their will; but if the will transgress, there is no excuse: since, observes Augustine, it has nothing free except itself, it is not justly judged except from itself. A dull ingenuity, a frail memory, an unquiet appetite, a heavy sense, a languishing life; none of these make a man guilty, nor their contraries innocent; because these come not from the will. But a man wills the knowledge of another's wife; he never attains it, perhaps never attempts it; yet is he an adulterer. A man would steal if he durst: he is a thief though he have stole nothing.

4. Nothing can please God but the will. Praises are but stinking smoke, except the will be good; that can make them sweet perfumes. Alms are neglected rubbish, except the sanctified will makes them precious jewels. The will supplies all defects: the tongue cannot pray, the will is heard; the hand is lame and cannot work, the will performs it; according to Augustine, whatever the will wishes to be done, God reckons as done; nothing whatever is so easy to a good will, as its own act, viz. to will: yet when all fail, this pleaseth God. But where the will is evil, it must answer for all. Whether the will driveth, the whole man lieth. (Cas. in Psal. xlii.) Let us then abhor self-will- edness, and submit our wills to his will that made them. If men will have their wills, know that God will have his will too; and that will of his, which men would not fulfil in obedience, they must fulfil in vengeance. 'Oh how much better is it for us, that his will be obeyed, who wills all men to be saved?

5. Consider the virtues opposed to these vices;

and first of the former. Presumption is an extreme, the other contrary is desperation; betwixt them both the mediate virtue is hope. Despair is hope stark dead, presumption is hope stark mad; this enrageth it, the other strangles it. Presumption does more than hope allows, desperation does that which hope forbids. Presumption asks no leave of God, despair fights against God, hope would be with God. Presumption is a braggart, despair is a coward, hope is modestly valiant. Presumption challenges the earth, desperation sinks to hell, hope is bound for heaven. Presumption is altogether for merit, despair is altogether for misery, hope is altogether for mercy. Presumption would be crowned, desperation would be condemned, hope would be saved. Presumption looks forward, despair looks downward, hope looks upward. Let us not presume, because God is just; nor despair, because God is kind; but hope, because God is good. Desperation takes the next way to hell, presumption goes a little about, but both these extremes are reconciled in hell.

Hope is a virgin of a fair and clear countenance; her proper seat is upon earth, her proper object is in heaven; of a quick and piercing eye, that can see the glory of God, the mercy of Christ, the society of saints and angels, the joys of paradise, through all the clouds and orbs; as Stephen saw heaven opened, and Jesus standing in the holy place. Her eye is so fixed on the blessedness above, that nothing in the world can remove it. Faith is her attorney-general, prayer her solicitor, patience her physician, charity her almoner, thankfulness her treasurer, confidence her vice-admiral, the promise of God her anchor, peace her chair of state, and eternal glory her crown.

6. Against self-will- edness I oppose humility and meekness; a submissive heart, yielding to be disposed by God's wisdom, and to be governed by his will; throwing a man out of himself, and laying him at the feet of his Maker. He that fights against his own will, as against his worst enemy; and had rather lose his own heart, than his heart should lose God; this is a man of blessed meekness. It is not pusillanimity, but the greatest courage, for it overcomes a man's self; not that the will ceaseth to be, but to be rigid and refractory. It is better to have passions well-ordered, than to have no passions at all. Blessed are the meek; while they live they shall be quiet on earth, and when they die they shall be safe and glorious in heaven.

The self-willed is a slave to the worst part of himself, that which is beast in him governs that which is man: appetite is his lord, reason his servant, religion his drudge. His five senses are all the articles of his faith; and he had rather be a famous man upon earth than a saint in heaven. He likes nothing for any goodness, but because he will like it; and he will like it because others do not. If an unreasonable shower eases his recreation, he is ready to fall out with heaven, and to quarrel with God himself; as if he were wronged, because God did not take his time, when to rain, and when to shine. He is a querulous cur that barks at every horse; and in the silent night, the very moon-shine opens his clamorous throat. All his proceedings are so many precipices, and his attempts peremptory. He hath not the patience to consult with reason, but determines all merely by affection and fancy. There is no part about him, but often smarts for his will. His sides be sore with stripes, and thank his will for it. His bowels are empty, and complain that his will robs them of sustenance. Yea, not seldom, his will breaks the covenant, and his neck pays the forfeit. He is the lawyers' best client, his own sycophant, and the devil's wax, to take what impression he will give

him. To have his will upon his neighbour in a suit of law, he will hazard his salvation. Saul inquires of the Lord, and he answered him not : he seeks to a witch, and she answers him, 1 Sam. xxviii. 6, 7. He must have his will : if God will not answer him, Satan shall. *Flectere cum nequeat Superos, Acheronta movebit*, says the poet ; i. e. When he cannot move the gods above, he will move those below. Wilfulness hath no hope to prevail with the Lord, therefore solicits the devil.

Though we be sinful, let us not be wilful. Weakness finds pity, wilfulness deserves penalty. We sin too often against our wills, too often beside our wills, too often with our wills ; but let us not be self-willed. Let us subdue our lusts to our will, submit our will to reason, our reason to faith ; our faith, our reason, our wills, ourselves, to the will of God. He chargeth us to keep his laws ; we have not kept them : having sinned, he calls us to repent, and offers pardon : how gracious is this goodness ! O let our humble sorrow, and answerable faith, at least say, Amen.

When God first made man, he set all in a perfect harmony : by one act of rebellion, all was put out of frame. To reduce this shattered family into some order, there was a council called ; reason, will, memory, imagination, affection, and sense. Every one knew his office : sense was to perceive for all ; affection to like or dislike for all ; will to desire for all ; imagination to invent for all ; memory to record for all ; reason to judge for all. Sense was to be the eater ; affection the taster ; imagination the steward ; memory the secretary ; will the controller ; reason the judge, to approve or disallow for all. All the rest were contented with their places, saving only the will ; and she took it in scorn that reason should be above her. Hereupon they began to contest about it, and the contention grew hot. Reason gave many reasons, why she should be chief : first, because it was so from the beginning, and innovation in any state is dangerous. Secondly, if all should not be ruled by reason, there would soon be a dissolution and confusion of the family. Sense would be out of taste ; affection would mistake, loving where it should hate, and hating where it should love ; imagination would provide nothing but noxious things ; memory would set down nothing but bad items ; yea, will herself would employ all the rest to mischief, should not reason direct. But for all this, will would not be disputed out of her usurped regiment ; so they fell to siding : sense and affection presently close with will ; memory did not yield suddenly, but perceiving what power will had over her, and that she could remember no more than will would have her, she also takes her part.

Reason hath now none left but imagination, and that stood to it stoutly. Still the quarrel increased : crafty imagination finds out this trick ; that they two should reign by turns, and divide the life between them. Will should rule all the waking part, and reason all the sleeping part. Will was contented with this motion, but reason disclaims that she should have nothing to do but when man was asleep. Will knew there was no way to win imagination by force, yet she might be corrupted, being an officer that would take bribes. Temptation prevailed with her too ; so that now by a general consent, will is made queen-regent, and reason but her servant.

Yet reason would not so give over her just title ; but having one friend that was not called to council, she solicits her to plead her cause : this was conscience. At whose approach they all began to tremble, and by her arguments were moved to dislike their choice. But when will saw them begin to

shrink, with an austere look and frowning brow, she commands them on their allegiance to obey no other princess but herself. Conscience taxeth her of pride and usurpation ; because the high Sovereign had appointed reason for his lieutenant and viceroy, to govern this little isle of man. But will replies, Argue as long as you please, I am will, and I will have it so. Then she charged sense to stop the mouth of clamorous conscience, and affection to blind the eyes of reason. Thus while honesty cannot speak, and wisdom cannot see, will is crowned absolute queen.

*Ecece voluntatem ; Dominum cognoscite vestram.
Sic volo, sic jubeo, stat pro ratione voluntas ;*

i. e. Behold the will, acknowledge your mistress, who says, So I will, so I command ; the will is in the place of reason. Where reason is subjected to sense, and appetite sways conscience, and tyrant will does, undoes all ; that state unhappily must perish.

This is that self-will, which rules in all men by nature : but the Supreme Emperor takes pity on some, and sends down a new governess to them, grace. She at once opens the eyes of reason and the mouth of conscience ; deposes will from her usurpation ; degrades both her favourites, sense and affection ; does not put them to death, but makes them good and serviceable to reason : turns vain imagination into divine contemplation ; changeth the disposition of will ; of wild and haggard, makes it obedient and gentle. Yet is will thus derowned against her will ; often she rebels even against grace, and sometimes gets the better ; and will always make one, though she cannot be alone, and chief in the regiment. *Divisum imperium cum Jove Cæsar habet*, as Virgil said ; i. e. Cæsar shares the empire of the world along with Jove. This war is in the sanctified ; in the rest, will herself, or self-will, is the great mistress, and rules all, till she bring all to ruin. How can it be otherwise, when the feminine powers are more potent than the masculine ? From all our enemies, especially from our own natural wills, good Lord, deliver us.

"They are not afraid to speak evil of dignities." There is no one absolute king among men, but he that is the King of all gods. Therefore earthly monarchs must walk by a rule ; which if they transgress, they shall be as surely accountable to him, as they are accountable to none but him, that ordained them. If they command unlawful things, follow Augustine's counsel, Despise the power, by fearing a power that is greater. The devil hath power, and power from God ; but it is a power of permission, not one of commission ; therefore to be resisted. The magistrate hath power ; which if he abuse, that is by permission ; but the power itself is by the commission of God. Therefore it pleaseth the Lord to officiate his ministers in this employment ; with due reverence to instruct the prince in governing, as by Divine authority to conform the subjects to obedience. When Saul was chosen, because the observance of a king was uncouth, Samuel is set to inform them, 1 Sam. x. 25 ; otherwise, novelty might have been a warrant for ignorance, and ignorance for neglect. There be reciprocal respects between the prince and his subjects ; which not being observed, government languisheth into confusion ; these Samuel teacheth them. He was their judge, he is still their prophet ; he must instruct, though he may not rule, yea, he will instruct him that shall rule. Conscience binds every Samuel's endeavour, to keep even terms betwixt the king and people ; prescribing to the one moderation and equity, to the other humbleness and loyalty. Divinity is a mistress for the highest masters

of men; and the Scripture is the best man of counsel for the greatest statesman in the world.

Now because government is then best when it hath one head and many hands, the supreme hath need of subordinate powers. It was the Egyptians' emblem, whereby they figured government, an eye and a sceptre. The prince is but a man; therefore he must see by others' eyes, and execute by inferior hands. The burden of authority is too heavy for one man's shoulders; "I am not able to bear you myself alone," saith Moses, Deut. i. 9. Therefore his father-in-law casts him a model for a polity in Israel, Exod. xviii. 21; which, howsoever at first it passed under God's correction, yet after being seen and allowed by him, and being practised by Moses, it became of good policy, sound divinity; of private counsel, a general oracle, serving for substance all times and places. Solomon was the wisest king, yet he had his grave counsel, sage, experienced men. Ahasuerus would do nothing in the removal of Vashti, but by the consent of the seven princes. The house will not stand without these pillars; and where they are sound, we may say of that kingdom, as the traveller reported that he had seen, in England a beautiful king, in France a beautiful kingdom, in Spain a beautiful senate. There may be a great sacrilege committed in Israel, and yet Joshua not know of it; some errors will escape his best vigilancy. That sin is not half cunning enough, that hath not learned secrecy. It is no blame to authority, that some sins are committed privately. Only the eye of Omniscience is able to find men out in their close wickedness. There is no family, no society, so holy, but it may be blemished with some malefactors. It is enough for the magistrate to punish manifest offences; we cannot expect that the sight of the eye or reach of the hand should be infinite.

There must be therefore counsellors of state and captains of war, peers, judges, magistrates, yea, and inferior officers; rulers of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties, and of tens, Exod. xviii. 21: as we have chancellor, chief justice, judges of assize, justices of peace, customers, constables. That instrument is not in tune, where any of these strings be false. Joseph was Pharaoh's right hand, Gen. xli. 43. Though the prince, like the sun, yield his light and comfort to the state; yet bad magistrates under him, aiming at their own private ends, like clouds or malignant stars, may hinder the influence; yea, they are like bad winds, that wither that part of the state: whereas the errors and distempers of princes have been qualified by virtuous deputies, 2 Kings xii. 2. Now, because there is no power but from God, therefore not the least of these subordinate and ministerial governors must be despised, without peril of his displeasure.

In the discharging of this artillery of hell, against the glories and powers which God hath ordained, we may consider four particulars: the bullet, the musket, the powder, and the mark. The musket is the malice of the heart; the powder, the spitefulness of the tongue; the bullet is blasphemy, disgracing of magistrates; the mark or butt is dignities.

This piece is charged with three deadly bullets; libelling, murmuring, mutinying.

1. Libellers think it a point of wit to traduce magistracy; and what they dare not own for fear of censure, they dare invent without fear of hell. Scandals of great men have seldom any fathers; they kill, and make no report. Like the Pasquin in Rome, the image on Tiber bridge; that does all. It is a base and penurious argument of wit, to disgrace those in private, whose innocency they may envy, cannot tax. In ancient comedy, the persons of men were represented and abused; but they were barbarians.

The faults of great ones are to be reproved by the reverend fathers of the church: the stage and poet, with jests and satires, may not attempt it. It is dangerous to play with that which angers God. I know that some vices are beside their malice, ridiculous; and the sottish humours and passions of men are shamed in being presented. But that is a treacherous hand, that steals away from statesmen their reputation; while they blemish their sufficiency, they covertly condemn the state that chose them. Thus may the council, the king, yea, the King of heaven, be wounded through the sides of a mean magistrate. There is nothing that the law allows, but the malcontent censures; what it forbids as dangerous, that he pumps his wit to justify. Where the gate stands open, he is seeking for a stile; and what he cannot convince, he will irritate. Thus, like a grasshopper at Christmas, he looks back upon harvest with a lean pair of cheeks, and curses that which he never had the grace to apprehend as a blessing.

2. Murmurers, though they disperse not written scandals of the magistracy, yet mutter out repining exceptions against their actions. Such were in Israel: the people want water, and instead of praying to God, they murmur against Moses, Exod. xvii. 3. Alas, what hath the righteous done? He made not the wilderness dry, nor the waters bitter. But he was their conductor; yet, as he led them, so God led him: the pillar guided Moses, as Moses guided the people; yet they murmur at Moses. How mad is impatient man, when he wants his natural desire, and spiritual grace withal! If men cannot have their wills, to invade the inheritance which the right heir keeps from them; or suppose they be injured, and may not have redress in that manner and measure themselves prescribe; presently they murmur against the magistrate. And what prince can hope to be free, when Moses could not escape? Never prince so merited of a people: he endangered himself to Pharaoh's utmost cruelty; he brought them from a bondage worse than death; he interposed himself betwixt God's anger and them: one would think, that no death could have opened their mouths to speak evil of Moses. Yet such is the hard condition of authority, that if men fare well, they applaud themselves; if ill, they repine against their rulers. Moses wanted water as well as they, yet they ask Moses for water; What shall we drink? The body cannot be distempered, and the head at ease; the king must needs feel the people's misery. If they had seen him furnished with full vessels of sweet water, while they were turned over to the bitter, there had been some colour for murmuring; but the ruler wants water no less than themselves. Murmur not ye, as they did, lest ye be destroyed of the destroyer, as they were, 1 Cor. x. 10: let their vengeance make us tremble. Be silent unto the Lord, Psal. xxxvii. 7, lest he answer you again in fury.

3. Mutineers so speak evil of dignities, that they raise up evil against dignities. Korah stirs up a faction against Moses; Why dost thou make thyself a prince over us? Numb. xvi. 13. A man could not think of an honour less worth his emulation, than the principality of Israel. They were a people that could give nothing, a people that had nothing, a people whom their leader was fain to feed with bread and water; they paid him no tribute but ill words; his command was only a burden to him, yet was it an eyesore to them; "Ye take too much upon you," ver. 3. Nothing can be more pleasing to the vulgar, than to hear their governors taxed and themselves flattered. This mutiny soon brought in a rout of rebels. He that poisons the people with a mal-

opinion of their prince, is the most dangerous traitor. To rip up the faults of kings, is bold impiety; but to charge them with faults they have not, is shameless blasphemy. So Absalom spoke evil of his own father, 2 Sam. xv. 3.

No music is so sweet to the ears of the giddy multitude, as to hear well of themselves, ill of their princes. Absalom need not wish himself on the bench: every man says, Oh what a courteous prince is Absalom! What a just ruler would Absalom be! How happy were we, if we might be judged by Absalom! "Thy matters are good." It might be some monopoly, some pestilent patent of engrossing, some malicious accusation; yet all is good matter with Absalom. "There is none to hear." Their own eyes saw this to be false; daily were causes heard and judged, offences heard and punished. If some officer were so corrupt, that an appeal was just, shall the king be blamed? must the prince answer for every act that his subject does? David had more of such blasphemers: Shimei curseth him to his face, 2 Sam. xvi. 7. Durst he do thus among his armed troops? yes, it is the mark which our apostle sets on these reprobate blasphemers; "They are not afraid to speak evil of dignities." Doubtless, that clamorous tongue had secretly traduced the good king long before; therefore is now given up to the rage of frenzy; that the mischief it did owe his heart, might now be paid him. What can they look for, that slander the footsteps of God's anointed, but the name and doom of Shimei?

The greater the persons, the more censurable be all their actions. What can a prince do so acceptable to the good, but few men will misinterpret it? Every tongue is ready to speak partially, according to the interest he hath in the cause or patient. If a statesman have done a private person some but imagined wrong, how doth he clap, leap, and rejoice at his own downfall! It is not possible that dignities should be free from imputations; their innocence can no more protect them than their power. This shot flies not at random, like the Syrian's arrow at a venture, 1 Kings xxii. 34; but is charged and discharged on set purpose to dishonour God, in wounding the honour of his anointed.

The engine that carries this mischievous burden, is the tongue. It flies lightly, but it injures heavily, says Bernard. It is but a little member, but the nimblest about a man; able to do both body and soul too a mischief. How many on account of free tongues have chained feet! If you ask what cast such a man into prison? his lavish tongue. Paul tamed his whole body: he that undertakes such a work begins at the heart, then next of all to the tongue. Shall I think that he fears God, that tears God? or fears God, and does not honour the king? Some dogs bark not for malice, so much as for custom; yet this at best is but a currish quality. To toss the weaknesses of magistrates in common discourses, though they wish them well as they say, argues a proud heart. The disease sometimes appears not to the patient himself; yet when he talks idly, the physician knows he is sick. A man blasphemeth God or the prince, scandalizeth the nobles; yet says he means well, and is friends with God and the world; but does not his talking idly declare him to be sick? will the law understand him otherwise in trial, or the Lord in judgment?

"The tongue is a world of iniquity," Jam. iii. 6. If so little a part be a world of mischief, what is the whole! Shall a man discharge his piece at an unlawful mark, and then say he meant no harm? "The tongue is a fire;" like fire indeed; for heat, it is as hot as fire; for colour, it is as red as fire; for agility, it is as nimble as fire; for ambition, it is

as aspiring as fire, it hath a spite at what is above it. Like the Italian needle, that being thrust into the body, kills invisibly. Lord, keep my lips from evil, and my tongue that it speak no guile, 1 Pet. iii. 10. Keep it, who can? None but the Lord. Let the tongue pray that the tongue be tamed, says Austin. He suffers man to tame all the creatures, but man himself he reserves to his own taming.

The powder that chargeth the tongue, and carries this shot of blasphemy, must needs be malice; a tumour of curst-heartedness, the saltpetre of a rancorous hatred, boiled in cholour to an extraction of mischief. This is a disease that tormenteth all abundance, and imbitters men's contentments. When Haman reckoned up all the glory, promotions, riches, banquetts, graces of the king, favours of the queen, respect of the nobles, that were done him; yet he concludes, All is nothing, so long as Mordecai sits in the king's gate, Esth. v. 13. Mordecai's eap was not the cause, but Haman's malice: nothing can serve, but he must be his enemy's hangman; but though he meant it not, he built his own gallows. It is just, that malice should first hurt a man's self, as fire in his bosom burns him before it touch others. How dares the malicious come before God in prayer, that judgeth hatred manslaughter? He presents himself, if not with hands, yet with a heart imbrued in blood. The Jews gnashed at Stephen with their teeth, Acts vii. 54. This is to show the tricks of hell beforehand; gnashing of teeth: they shall have enough of it there.

This is that murderous shot, forged in the furnace of hell, and charged in the stomachs of popish emissaries, to be discharged against the honour of worthy magistrates, yea, glorious princes. Who cannot but know, that their tongues are full of this virulence, when their books are stuffed with little else? As if they would proclaim to the world, how villainous that religion makes them, and that they are bound to traduce kings. Instead of proposing the lives of saints to imitation, they are still exposing the lives of princes to suspicion, yea, to conspiracy. To this without authority? No, but in the name of the pope, as that Philistine cursed David by his gods, 1 Sam. xvii. 43. Yea, hath not the pope in his own name cursed them? His excommunications, execrations, rejection of princes, what is this but to speak evil of dignities? Indeed this hellish zeal hath been so hissed at, that some of them are now somewhat ashamed: therefore, like the devil in the serpent, the pope makes use of another's tongue; the Jesuit undertakes it for him, that large spoon which the Roman hierarchy devised to eat with the devil; who though he were found out since the invention of gunpowder, hath not done less mischief. The whole trade, study, and profession of that order, is to curse princes. But, Lord, though they curse, bless thou, Psal. cix. 28: thy blessing shall do us good, when their curses hurt none but themselves. Let dignities comfort themselves against these evil speakings, as David did in the persecution of Shimei; "It may be the Lord will requite me good for his cursing this day," 2 Sam. xvi. 12. It may be, yea, it hath been, and we trust it shall be, that God will bless us the more for their cursing. It may hitherto be written as a motto on the king's crown, *Fidentis et ridentis*. He sees and lives; his enemies perish, himself prospers.

The butts at which all this pestilent ordinance levelly, the apostle calls dignities, *δόξαι*, glories. They are also called gods, not by nature, but by office; *κατὰ τὴν κλήσιν*, for their calling; *κατὰ τὴν τάξιν*, for their order and place; *κατὰ τὴν τιμὴν*, for their honour and respect. God hath not only set them as vicegerents in his own room, but also enabled them

with gifts for so great a designment. Though not many noble and great be called to the grace of sanctification, yet they are to the grace of administration. When God called Saul to be a king, he "gave him another heart," 1 Sam. x. 9; he lifted up his thoughts to the disposition and pitch of a king. The calling of God never leaves a man unchanged; nor does he employ any in his service, whom he does not enable to the work he sets them about. Especially, when he makes dignities, sets them to supply his own place, and to the representation of himself. It is no wonder, if princes excel the vulgar in gifts, no less than in honours: their crowns and hearts are both in one hand; and if that did not add to their spirits, Numb. xi. 17, as well as to their states, there were no equality.

Yet when Saul was chosen, "and all the people shouted, God save the king," there were some sons of Belial, that despised him, 1 Sam. x. 24, 27. It is a vain ambition that seeks to be loved of all. When God commands us to have peace with all men, he adds, "if it be possible," Rom. xii. 18. Favour is more hard to attain than peace: many forbear to trouble us, that yet do not love us. Goodness cannot be without exceptions; therefore is not to be sought abroad, but in ourselves, and the conscience of our well deservings. But what shall we say to those men, that will be scanning of kings, and censuring all their actions, yea, charging their innocence with aberrations? How plainly hath God interdicted it! Exod. xxii. 28. How doth St. Paul disclaim it! Acts xxiii. 5. How did Solomon threaten it! Eccl. x. 20. Rulers were no Christians in Paul's time, yet how earnestly doth he persuade to obedience! With what reverence did he appeal to Caesar! With what humility and apprehension of happiness. Let the king live; with what deprecation of evil. This dream be to thine enemies; did Daniel speak to the king of Babylon, a king that served not God! Dan. iv. 19.

How are we blessed of God, and have cause to bless God, for our government; unparalleled by any about us, unexcaped by any before us! Good kings are no ordinary blessings; a worthy general is worth half an army; such as Moses and Joshua were, whose faith fought more for the camp than the camp fought for them.

Government is not only civil, but ecclesiastical; not only Moses must be obeyed, but Aaron must not be despised. I would to God, these dignities did never disgrace themselves; that they would not be forward to rob the church who are set to patronize it, and make themselves examples of sacrilege. Oh that our consciences could say this is false, or that demonstration made it not too true! Thus they that are set in judicatory places, grow into contempt, by doing things contemptible. Yet may not their dignity be despised, under pain of a higher censure than theirs, even of God himself. The Lord hath often done good to his church, even by those instruments whom for their sins he means to cast into hell-fire. It is hard indeed to find *bonum iudicem* and *malum hominem*, a good judge and a bad man, under one skin; if they could be joined, yet when the bad man goes to hell, what shall become of the good judge? But personal corruption cannot bar primitive institution. The sins of governors are their own, the government is God's, and must not be despised.

Yea, there is an inferior dignity, yet a dignity; every minister is, or at least should be, a governor of his flock. But now the sheep are such perilous beasts, that they will govern the shepherd; children will teach their fathers to speak, and rectors must be regulated. Such is the contempt of this dignity,

that it is a high favour if the preacher may be heard in the pulpit; out of it, there is not the most illiterate mechanic, but thinks himself a wiser and a better man. In all things he is held the meanest of the parish, till it come to any payment or tax, and then they will honour him so far as to rank him with an alderman. But for his government over his charge, this is held but a mockery: when they speak of a minister, the ordinary question is, Where doth he serve? But, Where doth he govern? this would be a nonsense in the world's opinion. Indeed we are your servants for Christ's sake; yea, we will be your footstool, or if you can, devise a vassalage lower. But let us tell you the truth; if you honour Christ, you cannot despise us; and if ye do despise us, you do not honour Christ; and if ye honour not him, he will never honour you. And while you calumniate our persons, or abridge our just means, you are so far from honouring us, that you rob us; and while you rob us, you rob Christ of his glory, and your own souls of comfort; and you shall sooner blow up hell with trains of powder, than break the chain of this dependent truth.

Inferences. Glories they are, why then should they not be glorious? Let their pomp, their apparel, their diet, their dwelling, be all magnificent; let nothing be wanting to their state, upon whom depends the state of all. They come within this compass, that speak evil of these things; they curse the king, who curse royalty. Again, dignities they are, therefore should be worthy; and that in two respects; worthy of their admittance, worthy in their performance.

I. Worthy of admittance: when they be chosen to govern others, that have not learned to govern themselves, the republic rues it. "Woe to thee, O land, when thy king is a child!" Eccl. x. 16. "I will give children to be their princes, and babes shall rule over them," Isa. iii. 4. Children in understanding, not in respect of innocency. A fool cannot be harmless; they are truly good, who best know why. In the election of magistrates, let God be consulted; without whom, Samuel himself will take seven wrong before one right. Do not think every one sufficient, that thinks himself so. Ambition is an argument of unworthiness: the olives, vines, and fig-trees refuse this honour; brambles will catch hold on the sleeve for preferment, Judg. ix. 9-15. Let him never speed that sues. They that are worthy must be sued to; they are sooner found in retirement, than popularity; as Gideon was in the barn, David at the fold. They know offices to be callings, and will not meddle with them till they be called to them. Let such be preferred, not as would have places, but such as places would have.

But, O misery of our times! dignities be made, not by the worth, but by the weight; not who deserve best, but who bid fairest. Money can provide a man a place, no matter how he be provided for the place. If you ask a thief in an office, how earnest thou in hither? he must answer with that Roman burgess, With a great sum of money, Acts xxii. 28. Churchmen are condemned for buying of benefices, and that commonly by those that are the sellers of them. They make that punishable in us, which they hold allowable in themselves; as if they would compel us to go to heaven, while themselves are content to take the other way. I know it is fearful enough, to have the charge of souls bought and sold, with a Who gives most? But is the fault only in benefices? do not lawyers buy offices and civil dignities? This is not simony; is it not worse? That wicked precedent of corruption had two names, Simon and Magus; if the buying of benefices be simony, the buying of offices may well be termed magic. These places prepare for

judicature, and so it lies in them to hasten or delay justice, to guide or misguide the proceedings. He that hath bought his place dear, will hardly afford the client a reasonable pennyworth of justice. This is not to come in at God's door, but at the devil's window. Such be unworthy dignities.

2. Worthy in their performance, and executing the place. They must be, first, no dastards; they had need be heroic spirits, that must oppose the current, yea, the torrent of vices, and do justice when a great man says, No. How was Gideon's army diminished! upon the proclamation, Let the fearful be gone, two and twenty thousand slunk away, Judg. vii. 3. Yet this is not enough; more cowards must be cashiered. If ours were so served, I fear of so many thousands there would scarce be three hundred left. The Athenian judges used to sit in Mars-street: to show, that though they wore Apollo's robes, yet they had martial hearts. Constantine was termed that man child, Rev. xii. 5, for his courage and resolution for the truth. A soft and flexible nature is not able to say injustice nay, when it comes with high looks. Cowards are slaves to those above them, sycophants to those equal with them, tyrants to those under them. Commonly, courage comes from blood and breeding; eagles produce eagles. Blessed is the land, whose princes are the sons of nobles! Eccl. x. 17. Not but that God can alter this, and raise as worthy men from cottages as from palaces. Gideon was a thrasher, David a shepherd, yet both mirrors of valour, reckoned among the worthies. But a timorous magistrate is a hare in a lion's seat; the frown or check of a great one is able to fright him from his conscience. So we have seen a natural tied to a post with a straw, which he durst not break. These dare meddle with none that dare meddle with them.

Next, not proud and disdainful. Some when they have got an office, look big upon their old acquaintance: as if their dignity were a dropsey to puff them up. Now they think, they may swear by authority, and oppress by licence; their place will bear them out in it. When we see such a one upon the bench, we may think truly, he would better become the bar. These hold religion a disparagement to gentry, and fear nothing more than to have a name that they fear God. Their place to such is held a chair of honour, and a stool of ease, and a firm of commodity, and a sword of revenge; not a calling of labour, wherein they must do much good, or receive much blame.

Lastly, nor must they be covetous; it is too base and sordid for honour to be covetous. What is not cheap with him, to whom money is dear? He will sell the truth, sell his friend, sell his country, with Ahab sell himself, for money. Such, if they be officers, study new pulleys and winches to derive larger fees: their words be casting nets, no fish escapes them. If lawyers, they will sell both their speech and silence, their clients' causes and their own consciences. While the golden stream runneth, the mill grindeth; when that spring is dry, they advise them to put it to compromise, and let their neighbours end it: the fools might have done so before. (Bern. to Eugen.) But let dignities take care that the people may grow rich by them, and not they by the people.

The good magistrate sits on the judgment-seat, with as great (though not so slavish) fear, as Olanes did on the flayed skin of his father Syllanes, mailed by Cambyases on the tribunal; or as the Mahometan council, when they think the great Turk stands behind the arras, or at the dangerous door. When greatness of power, or nearness of friendship, brings

an unjust suit before him, requesting his favour in it, his heart replies within him, How shall I judge so, and answer the Lord when he comes to judge me!

Thus should dignities walk worthy; as Paul said to Timothy, See that no man despise thee. As they would not be condemned, they must not deserve contempt; if they do, God can pour contempt upon princes. The lowest officers are not here excused; for if the inferior fail in their duties, it will trouble the supreme to repair it. The fixed stars be the greatest and highest, and have their light and influence; yet is it the sun and moon, the lowest and nearest orbs, that govern the world. Be the bishop never so learned, if the parishional priest be negligent or ignorant, the people are still untaught. What can the eye do, if the hand be unserviceable? It is the ground-wind, not the rack-wind, that drives mills and ships. In the clock of justice, the least pin or wheel being irregular disorders all.

Conclusion. Dignities be difficulties: and the rent of labour considered, the good man hath but a hard bargain of his honour. I wonder not, if the wise man be rather haled out of his privacy to such preferment; for he weighs the charge as well as the credit, the danger more than the gain, of high places; knowing the chair of honour to be as ticklish as Eli's stool, off which he may easily break his neck. I cannot blame Saul for hiding himself from a kingdom; especially so troublesome a one as Israel then was. Honour is heavy enough when it comes on the best terms, much more when all men's eyes are cast upon one, most of all in a distempered state. To put to sea, is not without danger at any time; but what safety can he expect that launcheth out in a storm? The quietest throne is full of cares, the unquiet of perils. These drove Saul into a corner, to hide his head from a crown, that he chose rather to lie obscure among the baggage of his tent, than to sit gloriously in a chair of state. Dignity in such a condition is compelled to fear, as well as to be feared, as Cyprian saith. They often drink wormwood in a cup of gold, and lie in a bed of ivory upon a pillow of thorns; that they may say of their glory, as he did of his robe, *O nobilem magis quam felicem ponum!* O noble rather than lucky rag! If the ambitious knew what cares, fears, and dangers dwell within the hoop of a crown, though it lay at their foot, they would not stoop to take it up. But the Divine arm that sets the diadem on their heads, doth there maintain it. If they uphold his kingdom, he will uphold theirs. If they will have God to be mindful of them in his mercies, Neh. xiii. 22, they must be mindful of him in their business.

VERSE II.

Behold angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord.

HERE is an argument *a fortiori*, against them that inveigh against authority; in that they take more upon them than the very angels themselves. First, they are weak; the angels are powerful. Secondly, they are wicked; the angels are holy. Thirdly, they are bound with the fetters of mortality; the angels cannot die, and are at perfect liberty. Fourthly, God hath subjected them to magistrates; the angels know no superior but Christ and God himself. Yet these men rail against rulers, the angels do not;

these dare, the angels dare not. The impotent are most audacious.

But this seems marvellous, that the apostle should acquit the angels from being contumelious against magistrates. For why should they be enemies to that sacred order, whereof they know God to be the Author? Why should they rise up against that power, which is joined with themselves in the same ministry and deputation?

These doubts have made some of opinion, that this is meant of the evil angels. But that exposition must needs be full of absurdity; for why should he excuse devils from blasphemy, whom he knows to be the fathers of blasphemy? or make Satan so favourable and modest, as if he durst not meddle with kings? Whereas his malice is deadly against all men, but most impetuous and violent against princes. Every kingdom on earth is an eyesore to the kingdom of hell. Government conforms men to civil obedience and peace; both which are hateful to the fountain of sin and sedition. It is his main policy, to bring in anarchy and ataxy. Give him but way to break our ranks, he will soon rout and vanquish all our forces. He fears not to curse nor cross any king upon earth, that is not afraid to blaspheme the King of heaven.

It must therefore be understood of the good angels. But why are they justified from the blasphemy of princes? Kings are their special charge, they are the invisible guard of majesty; protection they afford, never malediction. *Answer.* Let us distinguish of the time, and all will be easy. In those times, the magistrates were cruel, bloody, savage wolves, sucking the gore of Christians, haters of the gospel, enemies of Jesus Christ. Now the holy angels had the custody of the church, the tuition of every believing soul. Therefore those tyrants, that so persecuted their charge, must needs be hateful to them. Yet they so qualified their just displeasure, that while they abhorred the princes, they honoured the principalities; they hated the men, as the instruments of the devil; revered the dominion, as the ordinance of God. This moderation is in the blessed angels; yet such fury is in human, or rather inhuman, beasts.

This I take to be true sense. For the power and might of angels, how far one is more puissant than many men, and how innumerable those armies be, I refer you to some of my former tracts. (On Heb. xii. 22.) Their power makes for our comfort, being exercised in our protection. In our infancy, devils assault our cradles; but angels beat them off, as Abraham drove the fowls from the sacrifice. In our strength, devils strive to pervert our goings; persuading us to leap from pinnacles, to attempt impossibilities or dangers; angels then keep us in our ways, Matt. xviii. 10; Psal. xci. 11. Devils would devour our substance, children, servants, as they did spoil Job; angels defend us from their rage, as they did defend Jacob, Gen. xxxii. 1. The pestilence rageth in the streets, angels keep it from the tabernacles of the righteous. Devils seek the ruin of kingdoms; as Satan that tempted David to number his people, by which he lost such a number of his people; angels fight for their defence, as that angel did for Israel against the prince of Persia, Dan. x. 13. Angels were the ministers of the law, an archangel the messenger of the gospel; he that was Gabriel, which signifies, the strength of God, came to bring news of the God of strength. One angel slew one hundred eighty-five thousand enemies in one night; one angel cheered millions of souls by the tidings of one day. This is their might, and this is their ministry ordained for our good by the God of mercy.

"Whereas angels," &c. Angels do reverence to the institution of God; and are so far from accusing bad governors before the Lord, that they honour their principality in the world. Indeed evil magistrates have plagues enough waiting upon them; more than pleasures or flatterers. Heliogabalus thought by the policy of his head, to prevent the extraordinary hand of God; he provides himself silken ropes, golden swords, poison in hyacinths, a turret plated with gold, and brodered with precious stones; thinking by some of these engines to have ended his irksome life; yet he died the death that God had appointed him. But angels are not enemies to sovereignty; there is order among themselves, some are higher, some lower; and they obey one another, if not from commandment, yet from counsel.

The world could not consist without order: this sublimary globe depends on the celestial; superior causes guide the subordinate. At the first was one confused heap of materials, but then it could scarce be called a world. God's fiat, which did put an order, visibility, and harmony to things, made it a world. Inequality is the ground of order: "one star differs from another star in glory," 1 Cor. xv. 41; and this was with God's approbation in the review. If the elements were of equal force, none more operative than another, the world would be like a sea becalmed; fire should have no predominance; nor heat, the parent of generation, above unactive moisture; nor summer be distinguished from winter. There must be a disparity among men; all may not be rich, nor all rulers; but some to command, some to obey; some for the throne, some for the mill. Unisons make no good music, nor is equality any degree to perfection. The host of heaven knows and keeps the rules of subjection and superiority; there be two great lights; the sun to govern the day, and the moon the night. But for this orderly disposition, all would fall to ruin.

The angels "bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord." Of this that our apostle sets down here generally, St. Jude gives a particular instance: "Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee," Jude 9. Give me leave a little to insist on this example. The occasion of this strife was about the body of Moses. Why, what did Satan care for the body of Moses, when his soul was gone to glory? That old politician had a reach in it. Moses, though he were often despised living, was highly revered being dead; and they that said of him while he was in the mount, "As for this Moses, we know not what is become of him," Exod. xxxii. 1; could wish, when he was taken to the mount of heaven, Would we had our Moses again. If therefore the devil could have found out Moses' sepulchre, he would have brought a number of idolaters to the worship of his bones.

From hence arose this disputation betwixt the lost and the blest angel: Satan examining the cause, why the body of God's so famous servant should be buried in oblivion, offering himself to the search of that holy dust; Michael withstands him, and reproves his sauciness in seeking for that which God's infinite wisdom had concealed.

Moses, doubtless, was buried with honour; the same God, that by the hand of his angels carried up his soul to glory, did also by their hand carry his body to sepulture. Angels bear up innumerable souls to heaven; we never read them (unless probably here) the bearers of human bodies to their graves. Yet thus was Moses honoured: those hands that had taken the law from God himself, those

eyes that had seen his presence, those lips that had so often conferred with him, that face which did so shine with the reflection of his glory; may not now be neglected, when the soul is gone. God took charge of him enclosed within his mother's ribs, kept him from those Egyptian butchers in her arms, preserved him among the bulrushes, maintained him in the world; therefore he will regard the carriage of him out of the world. None of his friends shall be troubled about his funerals, God himself will be at all the cost. Such is his love and care of his own, that it never ceaseth, neither in life, nor in death, nor after it. Herein he directs us by his own example, to bring the bodies of our friends to the grave with honour. Birds die; we find not many of their bodies; it is likely that they go into holes, and there end. Nature requires burial.

If men had been employed in making this grave of Moses, the place might have been known. But he dies in the mount alone; angels wrap up his corpse, dig his grave, cover it again; and, it is likely, perform his obsequies with the solemn hymns of heaven. God purposely conceals this treasure, both from men and devils; that he might both cross their curiosity, and prevent their superstition. Yet that Divine hand, which locked up this jewel, keeping the key himself, afterwards brought it forth glorious. When Christ was transfigured, this body which was hid in the valley of Moab, appeared on the hill of Tabor, Matt. xvii. 3: to give us assurance, that the bodies of saints, when they are deposited, are reposed; and shall be as surely raised in glory, as they were laid down in corruption. Let all this teach us four things.

1. That Satan is so far from having power over us living, that he cannot touch our bodies being dead; yea, he cannot find them, when God will conceal them. How tame and poor a thing is that roaring lion, when the Lamb overrules him! He cannot touch a beast of our herds, nor a hair of our heads, nor a dust of our bodies, but by permission. He must first beg leave, and the Lord will give him no leave to do any harm to his chosen.

2. As the angels did wait at the sepulchre of their and our Lord, so I doubt not but, for his sake, they also watch over our graves. With how joyful arms do they take up our souls, that have care of our insensible ashes! O, let us not defile these our bodies in life, which even in death are thus honoured.

3. Satan is the author of superstition. God forbids it, his holy angels hinder it; who be they that maintain it? If the Lord had liked the adoration of his servants' relics, he would never have hidden the body of Moses. There could not have been a fitter object for such a devotion than the body of such a saint. Judge then, with what impudence the church of Rome defends her idolatry to shrines and fragments. God is careful to keep his children from it, they are zealous to persuade their children to it. He hides the whole body of a saint; but if they can get but the finger, or the toe, yea, a nail, a hair, a very straw, they call in their blind customers as to a fair, and happy be those lips that may kiss it. How ridiculous is it, that a shaving of our Tyburn should be so revered at Tiber; that a piece of the contemptible gallows should be worshipped at Rome! Justly herein are they become the spectacles of folly to all the world. John Baptist bath so many heads, that they cannot tell which is the right. God made him but one, Herod left him none, the papists (as if he were another Hydra) have furnished him with a great many. Christ's cross is so multiplied, that that which one ordinary man might bear, if the pieces were gathered together, would now build a

pinnacle of a hundred ton. Yet they will tell us, that every shiver came by revelation, and hath done miracles; but this to me appears the greatest miracle, that any man should believe them. It is folly to place religion in those things, which God on purpose hides from us. It is not his property to restrain us from good. If relics had been allowable, Moses' body should have been public to all visitants.

4. After all this, the angel does not revile the devil, nor curse him with execrations; but remits revenge to the owner, puts over his payment to his Maker; "The Lord rebuke thee." Now if an angel will not curse a devil, a professed and malicious enemy of goodness, of whose amendment there is no possibility; how shall we dare to blaspheme those, who (though for the present sinful enough) may be brought to repentance, and find forgiveness!

They "bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord." From this angelical moderation, we learn three things: First, not to accuse. Secondly, not to rail. Thirdly, to be afraid of such sins.

1. Not to accuse. This is one of the most significant names of the devil, to be an accuser of the brethren. Love covers a multitude of sins; malice discovers what should be concealed. Ham makes sport with his father's nakedness; Shem and Japheth will hide from others what they will not see themselves. These are the sons of Noah, yea, of God: Ham is not worthy of the one, and hath quite lost the other. Not content only to be a witness of his unnatural sight, he proclaims it, and accuseth his own father. Sin doth ill in the eye, but worse in the tongue. *Cur aliquid vidi?* i. e. Why saw I any thing? was the poet's complaint: his tongue had not thus complained of his eyes, if the trust of his eyes had not been betrayed by his tongue. To have *conscia lumen*, i. e. conscious eyes, might be his fate; but to have *patula labia*, i. e. open lips, was his fault. Ungracious Ham saw, and laughed: his father's shame should have been his. He is a graceless man that makes sport with the cause of his sorrow. This was bad, but to blab it was far worse: as all sin is a deed of darkness, so to be blabbed in darkness.

Howsoever, it is our fashion to make ourselves merry with the sins of our brethren, yea, (which is more unnatural impiety than Ham's,) to publish the nakedness of our spiritual fathers to their enemies; and it is a rare merit that breaks up without some jest or tale of a priest: yet our tongues offend more in this, than did their hands; the report of sin is often as bad as the commission. A Christian sees his brother fall with sorrow and silence. Shem and Japheth hear and grieve, but dare not see: they will not go forward to behold it, but backward to hide it; and without daring to look back, they will rather adventure to stumble at their father's body, than to see his shame. Grieve they did to think that they who had so often come to their holy father with reverence, should now in reverence turn their backs upon him; and clothe him in pity, who had so often in love clothed them. But such was their goodness; they did, and said nothing. As this commands them, so let it teach us. The sins of those we love and honour, we must hear of with indignation, believe with unwillingness, acknowledge with grief, hide with honest excuses, and bury in silence. For commonly they infect others by example, but always prove us to be uncharitable.

But is it lawful for no man to accuse? Enemies may then pass without censure among us, as murderers do in some states without apprehension: where no man will stop the homicide, for fear of being counted a hangman. Yes, there be some deputed for this purpose. Paul mentions the house of Chloe, from

whence he had information of the Corinthian disorders, I Cor. i. 11. Answerable to which, we have the office of churchwardens; they are the house of Calve, bound by oath to present misdemeanours, that sin may have a just censure. I know that this place may be abused, not only by connivance, but spleen. He that with a particular heart-burning presents his neighbour, though his accusation be just, his affection is unjust; and in doing that he sins, which he had sinned in not doing. The complaint may be true, and the complainer false. The one is punished, the other cannot be commended. When Paul bade them salute with a holy kiss, he implied, there is a kiss that is not holy. Informers of penal statutes make often just complaints; but because their end is not the correction of faults, but fishing for the mulets, or wreaking their spleens, they do the office of devils. Yea, there be false Zilas, that unjustly accuse honest Mephibosheths, to get away their lands and places. These outdo mischief itself.

But let them accuse to whom it belongs; yet alas, there is an All is well, that swallows all vanities. Drunkenness, uncleanness, swearing, profanation of the sabbath, go abroad all the year; but when the visitation comes, they are locked up with an All is well. This is not that charity which covereth sin, but a miserable indulgence that cherisheth sin. In the creation there was an *Omnia bene*, all things were exceeding good: in our redemption was an *Omnia bene*. He hath done all things well; he hath made the blind to see, and the lame to go: here was an *Omnia bene* indeed; but there never was an *Omnia bene* since. But for private men, falsely or maliciously to accuse their brethren, is to be Satan's deputies. We have a proverb, It is a shame to belie the devil; but they are just shame that belie the saints. If we will accuse any, let us accuse ourselves. It is for a Pharisee to accuse the publican, I am not as this man: the publican doth not accuse the Pharisee, but himself. Satan doth continually accuse us to God; if we humbly accuse ourselves, his bill shall be thrown out of the court.

2. Not to rail. This is indeed properly the language of hell. Angels do not rail, devils do: angels do not curse, devils do. You need no other proof, who be the children of Satan, than railing invectives. You may know what countrymen they are, as the maid said of Peter, for their speech bewrayeth them. The language of heaven is praise and hallelujahs, no execration was ever heard there. The language of hell is cursing and gnashing of teeth. Alas, that such a language should be heard upon earth! Think of it, ye inhuman scolds, and graceless blasphemers; who are able to turn the calmest Thames to a tempest; who, as if you had been bred only among bears, know no other dialect than roaring, cursing, and banning one another: it is the tongue of hell you speak, as men beforehand learn the language of that country whither they mean to travel. Ishmael was a foe to all men, and no man was Ishmael's friend. You have abused all; sworn away the fear of God, the love of man, the guard of angels; what friends can ye now expect, but they that speak like you, devils? If a man be evil, why do ye curse him? It is Satan's desire to wish a man worse: and it is your own common saying, Do not curse him, he is bad enough. If he be good, why then do ye curse him? Your curse is an arrow shot against a stone, it shall wound yourselves. Some having begun to curse, though they meant it at man, yet suddenly divert it to Satan; but let them read and tremble. "When the ungodly curseth Satan, he curseth his own soul," Eccles. xxi. 27. The devil delights to hear us curse him; that fox never fares better than when

he is cursed. But put away all bitterness, and if you must be bitter to some, be bitter to your own sins. Rend your hearts, whose tongues have rent the glorious name of your Maker. Remember the penitent publican, Luke xviii. 13; because he had thought sin, he smote his breast; because he had spoke sin, he taught his tongue to confess; because he had acted sin, he struck with his hand, the instrument of action.

Now, if it be so wicked to revile equals, what is it to rail at princes! which is the heart of the text. Will you see the odiousness of this sin in one example? Shimei cursed David, "Come out, thou bloody man, and thou man of Belial," 2 Sam. xvi. 7. It was bad to curse, worse to curse a king, but to curse an afflicted king worst of all; to add weights to him that was weighed down, and to persecute him whom God had humbled. Every word was a slander; he calls him a usurper, a man of blood, and that of Saul's house; how false! God sent for him out of the fields to be anointed, how was he an intruder? The man after God's own heart, is branded for a man of Belial. He that regretted for but the cutting off Saul's garment, is reproached as a man of blood. If his hands were stained with blood, it was not of Saul's house. It was his servant, not his master, that bled by him. But malicious men care not for truth, but for spite. Did not David shed the blood of that Amalekite, who did but say he shed Saul's? How did he bewail the death of so bad a master; wishing that no dew might fall where that royal blood was poured out! 2 Sam. i. 21. How indulgent was he to the house of Saul! How did he honour Mephibosheth at his own table! How did he revenge the blood of Ishbosheth, though his rival, upon his murderers! Who could less deserve these aspersions than David? Had Shimei been other than a dog, he had never so rudely barked at a harmless passenger. That head deserved to be tongueless, that body to be headless, that thus blasphemed the Lord's anointed. Cursing is for hell; but let all those learn to bless, that look to be heirs of the blessing.

3. We must be afraid of these impieties, as being away before the Lord. A good man would not admit them, were he sure that God would never take notice of it; but before the Lord, who dares rail on his delectable image? There is a fear from entire nature; this was in Christ: every creature fears the ruin of itself. There is a fear from corrupt nature; which is a slavish dread of the punishment, not of the sin; this is in reprobates. There is a fear of grace, which works in all men and angels, a care to please their Maker. Corrupt fear dreads the penalty, loves the sin. Gracious fear dreads the sin, and escapes the penalty. The fear of the Lord is pure, because it keeps the heart from being defiled. When God said, Who shall seduce Ahab? 1 Kings xxii. 20, not one angel in the whole host of heaven gave him an ill word, though he were a wicked prince; not one is willing to undertake this office. Only the father of lies puts himself forward, I will do it.

The good angels fear to do evil, yea, the very devils believe and tremble, Jam. ii. 19; and shall not man be afraid to sin? Shall a piece of mortal dust be thus insolent? O we want their eyes, to behold the infinite majesty of that God whom we offend. We know not the sweet pleasures of heaven, and the beatifical vision of the Trinity, as the angels do: if we did, how would we fear to lose it by our sins! We know not the torments of hell, the eternity and extremity of that fire, as the devils do: if we did, we would fear to incur it by our sins. If the king threatens a malefactor to the dungeon, to

the rack, to the wheel, his bones tremble, a terrible palsy runs through all his joints. But let God threaten the insufferable tortures of burning Tophet, the wicked (as if either they were just, or this were false) stand unmoved. Be not deceived, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God," who is even "a consuming fire," Heb. x. 31; xii. 29. Hear this, ye that dare rail, and be not afraid; that dare blaspheme, and not tremble; that dare rebel, oppress, riot, adulterate, plot revenge, and what not, without fear. The angels are afraid, yet they are in heaven, and sure of the best: the devils are afraid, yet they are in hell, and know the worst; you are betwixt both, and know not which of both shall be your receptacle. O "pass the time of your sojourning here in fear," 1 Pet. i. 17; fear the works of darkness, as you fear the place of darkness; fear the Lord, that he may love you, and love him, that he may delight to do you good.

VERSE 12.

But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption.

WHEN sin grows insolent, it is time for preachers to be fervent: sinners must not live like beasts, and be flattered like men. If the princes of Israel pamper their flesh with the food of riot, the prophet will not stick to call them the fat bulls of Bashan. The apostle is not afraid to put the deserved title of brutes upon these graceless deceivers. Never was that man mealy-mouthed, that was full of the Lord's errand. Do we herein displease any? Should we please men, we were not the servants of God, Gal. i. 10: should we please beasts in the shapes of men, we were the servants of Satan. Shall we walk in the spirit of falsehood, and prophesy of wine and strong drink? Micah ii. 11: this were to be a beast for company. But, as we hope you have no will to be such hearers; so, blessed be God, we have no skill to be such preachers. Bishop Latimer in his *ultimum eale* to the court, protested that if he should say nothing the whole hour together, but the very words of his text, Beware of covetousness, his sermon might be thought witless, not needless. We may say the like of the vice in my text, intemperance: it were not lost labour, nor mispent time, to say nothing else, till we had all amended that. But as some seed is sown among thorns, which prick the sides of the sower: so, much by the high-way, which, for want of mould and root, the fowls of the air, boom companions, peck up. "The bellows are burned," Jer. vi. 29, but the wicked are not turned. It seems, the prophet had burned a hole in his bellows, gotten the consumption of the lungs, spent his spirits, and lost his labours. This is our unhappiness, but more yours. Ministers (as Christ did to the Jews) offer the world wine; and the world (as the Jews did to Christ) return them vinegar. What we give with the right hand, they take with the left: we are born for the good of many, few are born for the good of us. But howsoever we speed, God's message must be delivered: we dare not but call sinners by their names, unatural men, natural beasts.

These damnable seducers are here described further, by

Their resemblance, As natural brute beasts.

Their ordinance, Made to be taken and destroyed.

Their ignorance, Speak evil of things they understand not.

Their vengeance, Shall perish in their own corruption.

First, for their resemblance: wherein I consider two things; what they are like, Beasts; wherein they are like them, In sensuality.

I. What they are like, Beasts. The wicked have many homely comparisons in the Scripture. Sometimes to reprobate silver, Jer. vi. 30, which will buy no commodity: sometimes to doted trees, good for nothing but the fire, Jude 12. To dung; yea, they are not souseful: for it serves to manure the ground, they to infect it. Often to beasts; wherein the Divine justice shames them, flinging filth in the faces of his degenerate creatures. *Papae ita comparant, quam esse, as it is said; i. e. it is better to be a beast, than a man compared with beasts.* The spirit of beasts is made of the air, and into air it resolvet; it knows nothing but the present, makes no reckoning of hereafter, nor shall hereafter be called to a reckoning for it. They have grovelling faces, earth is their *ultimum*, or final end. Man's body is of a nobler fabric, his very constitution naturally creets him to a higher aim. Besides, his soul, a partiele of the Divine breath, is able to discourse, argue, conclude, infer; conceives by reason a future life, to which this but prepares, and which it begins.

Let a beast do a mischief: suppose a lion kills his prey, he retires to his den, and quietly feeds, without fear of answering for this fact. When man hath done a murder, there is a fury within him, loo der than cracks of thunder, sharper than stings of scorpions, a conscience awaked by the cry of blood: no beast ever knew what conscience was. Thus man, having more noble endowments, shames his creation by living like beasts. You have read many fables and apologies, wherein beasts are feigned to speak like men; but who would endure that theatre, where men be seen to play the beasts? Such is the power of sin, it can transform men into beasts: so, in a moral sense, are all those metamorphoses to be understood, wherein the poets transshaped men into beasts. While idolaters turn beasts into gods, they turn themselves into beasts.

2. They want not their resemblances, and the similitude holds both generally and specially. Generally, in three things.

(1.) The whole intendment of the beast is sensuality: so wicked men are wholly led by sensuality. Their soul is made a slave to their sense: and while this rebels, she that worst may, must hold the candle. She thinks of praying; but if the flesh will have it so, there must be singing and dancing: she persuades to fasting, but the flesh hales on to rioting. All her morning care must be to provide the body a dinner: nor is she only made the body's caterer, but even too often his pander.

(2.) Beasts cannot foresee the future, nor provide for the future: they have no providence; but the expectation of the day ends with it: they count not of weeks and years, but only rise and roost with the sun. So these brutish animals make no other provision. If you say, they can lay up victuals for tomorrow; so do divers beasts: the little ant fills her granaries in harvest for the winter store. In this they are but even with beasts; and for the foresight of vengeance to come, they are no better. Yea, some beasts can prognosticate a storm, and run to shelter: these men provide no refuge, but think to bear off the judgments of God with head and shoulders. Hares have their mases, and foxes foreacquaint themselves with burrows, whither being hunted they run for succour; these have not a hole to hide their

heads. Therefore when conscience begins to thunder, and the torrent roars with an inundation of sorrows, they fly to the fiddle, to the tavern; which is as if, when it rains, a man should run into the Thames to keep him dry. They know no more how their time passeth away, than a beast is able to tell the clock. Therefore commonly their departure is so sudden, that when they look for a pleasant peal, behold it is their passing-bell.

(3.) Beasts are not ashamed of their deeds: where is no reason, there is no sin; and where is no sin, there can be no shame. These have reason, yet are not ashamed of their abominations, Jer. viii. 12; and therein are beasts, or worse. Yea, the very dog, though he cannot blush, will go away as if he were ashamed, when he hath done a shrewd turn, and is taken in the manner. But these have a meretricious forehead, stupid and steeled with impudence, shame-proof: there is not so much blood of grace in their hearts, as will serve to make half a blush in their cheeks. Their end will be worse than frontless Gehazi's: for want of red, his skin was spotted with white: he strove to outface Elisha, let him try to outface the leprosy.

Specially, for some particulars; there is a near similitude of their conditions. As they have matched themselves, so take them by couples.

(1.) The goat and the whoremonger, a pair of unclean beasts, fit for no place but the ragged mountains and deserts. They think wantonness nothing else but the mere appetite of nature. But who be they that shall be set on the left hand, with a Go, ye cursed? Goats.

(2.) The hog and the covetous, a pair of odious beasts. They are both rooting in the earth, that is their felicity: both rooting up the earth, that is their mischief: both love to wallow in the mire; none so sordid as the avaricious: both will break through all fences, if they be not yoked: both are grunting and insatiate: neither of them both do good while they live, some good may be got from them both when they are dead.

(3.) The wolf and the oppressor, a pair of ravenous beasts. Both love to suck the warm blood of innocent lambs, both to fill their holes with rapine; both bark at the moon, any light that may discover their mischiefs; both are greedy to swallow more than they can digest; both howl when their hopes are disappointed; both live by the spoil, the wolf of other beasts, the oppressor of his own kind: both do so well match together, that it was good for the land if they were both hanged together.

(4.) The palfrey and the swaggerer, a pair of unbridled beasts, Psal. xxxii. 9. The horse will cast his rider, and being down, give him a farewell with his heels. For men being reprov'd, to kick at the messengers of God, is a gallant, yet but a jadish, quality. When a bridle of prohibition is put into his jaws, he frets and fumes, as if he were so great that God must not cross him. But all he gets by it is, that when a snaffle cannot rule him, a stronger bit shall be put into his mouth. As we have seen a proud horse, that will not be stopped in his career with the sharpest bit; but runs on headily till he comes to some wall or ditch, and then stands still and trembles. Death is that terrible ditch which will stay his fury; he is a headstrong beast whom that ghastly foe cannot break.

(5.) The fox and the cheater, a pair of crafty beasts. Both love to do mischief, neither loves to own it: robbery is both their trades: they live by it, neither indeed can they live without it. The fox will stand by the river, and let his tail play in the water, till the fishes come flocking about it, and then

with a jerk he swoops them out. His hole is his study, and the fold his stage, where he plays his part. Herod was such a fox, but Christ could hunt him out. The Jesuits are such foxes; they will not look towards the booty they aim at; yet all their labour about your conscience is but to get a benison to their own college. There should be no robbing of the living, to give the dead; (Chrysost. in Luke xi.) but these foxes will allow you no rest, till you give something for requiems: if a rich papist do not buy some souls out of purgatory, they doom him to hell. This with them is a pious fraud, but by the same reason the fox is a pious beast. Would many of our shops were not the burrows of such foxes: there is no subtlety like that, which deceives a man, and hath thanks for the labour.

(6.) The bear and the harlot, a pair of cruel beasts. Both lie at stake, both are to be baited by officers of justice: both their flesh is sold for money, both are to be avoided as dangerous to society: the poor beasts have but abused bodies, the one withal a torn conscience, for their pains. A harlot in her malice, is worse than a she-bear robbed of her whelps. She is a thief in her pleasure, but a devil in her anger. She sets a price on her body, she sets no price on her soul: that she sells, this she gives away for naught. Both these beasts stand in fear of punishment.

(7.) The viper and the traitor, a pair of pestilent beasts. Such a generation of vipers were the Pharisees, who wounded the church with their stings, wherein they were bred. Jesuited emissaries had first their birth and breeding in the indulgent bosom of England; yet, most unnaturally, they betray their own mother to misery and ruin. They are infectious plagues to the families that harbour them; the bane of many poor souls, beside their own.

(8.) The asp and the slanderer, a pair of stinging beasts. So the Psalm matcheth them, "The poison of asps is under their lips." Rom. iii. 13. The asp sucks not her eaeochemical poison from her food, but hath it bred in her own nature. The calumniator derives not his railing venom from the object, for that is commonly good; but makes it in his own bosom. Slanderers are also compared to scorpions; to avoid whom, men use to place their beds in water; yet the politic serpents have a device to reach them. They get up to the top of the house, where one takes hold, the next hangs at the end of him, a third upon a second, a fourth upon the third; and so making a rope of scorpions, they at last wound the man. (Elian.) Among scandalizers, one begins a whisper, another makes it a report, a third enlargeth it to a dangerous calumny, a fourth divulges it for truth. So the innocent man's credit is maimed, and he cannot find out the villain that did it.

(9.) The frog and the murmurer, a pair of croaking things. Both of them are bred of the mud, they come from no noble matter. Some write that it raineth frogs: we might think so too by the number of our malecontents; men that will find fault with every thing, whom God himself scarce knows how to please. No fair weather nor rain, peace nor war, can satisfy them. There is no work of God, but opens their clamorous throats. When Baalam was sent to fetch the worthier of Enripedes or Æschylus out of hell, as he passed in Charon's wherry, he heard nothing but the croaking of frogs: whereby the poets insinuate what a number of querulous and litigious persons be in hell.

I might add many more; as, first, the spaniel and the flatterer, a pair of dissembling beasts: both feed their master's humour, that he may feed their hunger; both bewire a man with fawning on him. But

let the great one use his sycophant, as he does his spaniel, and try if he will love him the better for beating him. Secondly, the squirrel and the busy-body, a pair of nimble and pragmatical beasts; but the squirrel is the nimbler and wittier: some write of her, that because she cannot swim well, when she would cross a brook, she gets a piece of the bark of a tree, puts it into the water, and herself into it as in a boat; and then holds up her bushy tail instead of a sail, that so the wind may drive her over. The pragmatical hath an oar in every man's boat, an eye in every man's window; is here, and there, and every where, but where he should be: is still busy, yet never hath thanks for his labour. Thirdly, the civet-cat and perfumed gull, a pair of sweet beasts: only this scent is natural in the one, in the other artificial; and what the one beast disburdens in scorn, the other takes up in pride.

I might couple the tiger and the persecutor, the boar and the church robber; or tell you of tumblers, beasts that have brought up their bodies to show tricks; of lurchers, that live by pilfering; of setters, that will bring the booty to the thieves' hand, panders of filthiness. There be moles, blind, earthy muckworms; weasels and vermin, and innumerable human beasts, or bestial men. But who would dwell long among beasts? I am weary of this brutish comparison. Only there is one among men, for whom I can find no sample among beasts; the drunkard. I know not with what beast to match him; he is such a beast, that no beast will keep him company. The nearest to him is the swine, let them two be yoked together.

Now if men think scorn thus to be compared, let them forbear to deserve such a comparison. Yea, let me further aggravate their shame: there be men that exceed even beasts in sensuality. Beasts drink not but when they are dry: the drunkard never taries till he be athirst. What beast, but he, pours in more, when he hath already too much? Incontinent man knows no limits, but is infinite in his desires. In many things men are so much worse than beasts, as they ought to be better.

How well soever we think of ourselves, the Scripture sends us to divers beasts for our learning. The very ants are our schoolmasters, to teach us providence. The dog is loving to his master, and watchful for his safety. The horse is valiant, startless at the drum, neighs at the trumpet, is forward to the battle; to shame our cowardice. The lion is a precedent of temperance; after a full meal he ties himself to a three days' abstinence: he is liberal, and leaves part of his prey for inferior beasts; condemning those churlish men that eat their morsels alone, and put the reversion in their cupboard. He is full of nobleness, he scorns to seize upon the yielding; whereas men prey on prostrate fortunes. So moderate in his revenge, that he will do a man no more injury than he receives from him, as some write. The ape is quick of apprehension, apt for imitation: lewd men will not learn to do good either by precept or precedent. The elephant is kind; if he meet a man that hath lost his way, he will both guide him, and defend him. (Plin.) The ox knows his feeder, to teach us thankfulness. Thus, if they may not be guides, to direct us; they shall be, after a sort, judges, to condemn us; as the dogs condemned that rich man, who were less covetous of their kindness than their master, Luke xvi.

Sensuality is the vice here condemned; a brutish conversation of men; who only desire to live, that they may eat and drink; which is indeed to live *more brutum*. He that hoards corn in the time of dearth, shall be cursed, and he deserves it; yet his

winnowed store shall at last break forth: but drunken engrossers diminish our plenty, and stow it where it shall never do good. How many thousands, hard driven with poverty, or by the exigence of war, might be relieved with that which these spend like beasts. How just a punishment is famine after such a satiety, and pestilence after famine; turning the sanctuary of life into the shambles of death! Lam. iv. 10. Lyeurgus, to cure the people's drunkenness, caused all the vines to be cut down; he might better have made a well in every vineyard, and married in every cup a watery nymph to fiery Bacchus. Immoderation makes wine poison; yea, worse; for the worst poison helps some, but the drunkard's potion hurts all. Some plead that they are able to bear it out; but to be a strong drinker is but to be a stronger beast. The excess is a sin, whatsoever the success be. Whatever be the purpose before, or the event after, yet not the strength in bearing it, but the abstinence from taking it, is praiseworthy. How foolish is it, for a little tickling of the palate, for a running banquet, to hazard eternal comfort!

"Made to be taken and destroyed." A fearful saying! what, created to be destroyed? If we understand it only of beasts, the matter is not great; for they can perish but once, and from their destruction ariseth our preservation. If they be noxious, we are preserved from their mischief; if edible, by their nourishment. When they spend their lives in our service, this was but their end; they were made for the purpose. But that man should be made to be marred, created for destruction; this is terrible, and (if not warily understood) uncomfortable. Some beasts are made to be taken, not destroyed; some to be destroyed, and not taken; some both to be taken and destroyed. 1. We take the horse and ass, we destroy them not; but teach them to carry us, or provision for us. We put their backs to the burden, not their throats to the knife. 2. There be ravenous beasts and venomous serpents, hostile to man, malicious dangers of our life; we seek to destroy them, not to take them. We send our bullets and arrows, the messengers of death, into their bowels; we abhor their carcases. 3. There be beasts for eating and using, as sheep and kine; these we take and kill: the pasture fats and fits them for the table; we feed them, to feed on them. Reprobates are ordained for both: when they have done the devil special service, drawn in his yoke, wrought out their own perdition; then that merciless butcher cuts their throats, and makes himself a meal of their souls.

But let us hold this conclusion: as God made no man for sin, so nor immediately for hell. As one says, *Deus hominem condidit, homo se perdidit*; i. e. God creates man, man destroys himself. But how then is it said here, "made to be taken and destroyed?" This is a point that I did not willingly seek, nor unwillingly find; it stands in my way, and I durst not pass it by unnoticed. For method, I. I will lay down some infallible grounds. 2. Answer the objections that quarrel with them. 3. Give the sum or clear conclusion. 4. Lastly, apply it to ourselves.

Grounds. 1. God is an absolute Lord over his creatures, and hath as just right of their disposition, as he had power of their creation. Is it not lawful for him to do what he will with his own? Matt. xx. 15. Man challengeth authority over his goods, and he may set this vessel on his cupboard, that other on the dunghill. We are God's vessels, he made us, he owes us, hath an incomparable right over us; may he not then dispose us? Man in his family, takes in this servant, turns that out of doors; and this, because he will do so: it were then desperate boldness to deny God the same faculty in his own house. In

the world, man kills this beast, lets alone the other, yet is not counted unjust: now a fly is more worth in respect of us, than we can be in respect of God. In a heap of clay, the potter sits working, and makes of the same lump in his hand, one part a cup for honour, the other for dishonour. Far greater is the liberty of God's perfection, and the perfection of his liberty.

2. God is always most just, nor can he do other than what is perfectly good. Goodness is not the rule of his will, but his will is the rule of goodness. As a father expresses it, He does not will a thing because it is good, but for this reason it is good, because he wills it. His judgments are sometimes manifest, often secret, always wonderful, never unjust.

3. The will of God is the cause of all causes, in which we must make a stand; and neither beyond it, nor without it, seek for any reason. It is so; why? because he would have it so. Why would he so have it? there is no cause of the first cause. The sea, be it never so deep, hath a bottom; the heavens, be they never so high, have a top; but of the will of God there are no limits, no confines. God in all his works seeks for no cause out of himself. The rich man chooseth the object of his charity at his own pleasure; this beggar he makes his heir, not that; and without injury. Yet here may be some cause out of himself; the person whom he adopts, may be more pleasing to his eye, or obsequious to his commands. But the Lord's choosing hath no impulsive cause out of himself; he did not elect men because he foresaw they would be good, but they are made good by his election. Nor did he reject others without respect to their sins.

4. The Lord hath purposed to pass by some men, for the manifestation of his justice in their deserved ruin: it is his will to suffer some to fall into sin, and for their sin to condemn them, 1 Pet. ii. 8. That which is against the will of God, comes not to pass without the will of God: he willeth that to be, which he willeth not to do; and though he esteem not evil to be good, yet he esteemeth it good that there should be evil.

5. He hath not ordained any to destruction without the respect of sin; for look what condemneth men in the world, for that did God purpose to condemn them before the world. Not that sin is the cause of this decree, but that this decree is not separated from the regard of sin. He doth not simply and absolutely ordain his creature to hell, but he decreeth punishment with relation unto sin. So then this conclusion is firm, Man is not condemned because of God's decree, but because of his own sin.

Objections. 1. If the will of God be the energetical, operative beginning of all things, then also the beginning of sin. *Ans.* God's will is the cause of all things being and existent, Eph. i. 11: a thing is not first, and afterwards God wills it; but he decrees it first, and therefore it is. Now sin is not properly an existence, being, or action; but a defect. There is a being, or existence, really and positively; and one that is in reason only; under which are contained not only notions and relations, but also privations. Sin hath not a positive being, yet is it not nothing; but necessarily follows the absence of righteousness. God made not sin, yet he justly condemneth for sin.

2. But if God suffers man to do evil, is he not the author of that evil? *Ans.* No, for he is not bound to hinder it. He doth not give grace; who can challenge him? Is it not his own? He doth not infuse corruption; he doth not withhold the occasion. The rider gives his fiery horse the reins, we say he puts him on; the hunter lets slip his dog, we say he puts

him on the game. A house is ready to fall, leans on some outward supporters; take away these, the house falls of itself. God forbids sin, the wicked are the more eager on it. As in the middle region of the air, the heat grows stronger by the antiperistasis or revulsion on every part, and from hence proceed the thunder and lightnings; the clouds being condensed by the heat round encompassed. So the wicked heart, struggling with the good law, becomes more turbulent and fiery in sin.

3. If God have decreed some to destruction, it must follow of necessity, and so man is condemned against his will. *Ans.* No, for God's decree doth not impose a necessity upon the will of man. Indeed there is a hypothetical necessity, of consequence: if God deny men his grace, they will sin and perish; but this is their own will: those whom he hath chosen, shall never be damned; yet with their own will they are saved. The elect angels do necessarily obey God, yet not by constraint, but willingly. It is one thing to throw a sheep into the river, another thing to show her grass on the other side, and allure her to swim to it. God, says one, does not compel that to be done, which he condemns when done. God's decree doth altogether order every event; by inclining the will gently in things that be good, and forsaking it in things that be evil. If men will offend, he is just to punish; if they will return, he is merciful to forgive. As he saves none but in respect of Christ, so he condemneth none but in regard of sin. That all mankind was lost, we may thank ourselves; blessed be the goodness of God, that any be saved in Jesus Christ.

4. The Scripture speaks of the salvation of all men; how then are some made to be destroyed? They urge these places, John i. 29; iii. 17; 2 Cor. v. 19; 1 John ii. 2. To which we oppose, 1 John v. 19; John xvii. 9. These we reconcile out of St. Augustine, The "whole world" is the church, and the whole world hateth the church. The world hateth the world; the malignant world hates the reconciled world; the damned world the saved world. But "God will have all men to be saved," 1 Tim. ii. 4. *Ans.* All is taken either distributively; then it signifies every particular person. "All," that is, every one, 2 Thess. i. 3. Or collectively, and then it signifies any one, not every one. Christ healed every disease, Matt. ix. 35, that is, any disease, or every kind of disease. Every man is a liar, saith the prophet: now if every man be a liar, then is he a liar that speaks it; and if he be a liar that speaks it, then is it not true which he speaks; so, in that sense, to say that every man is a liar, must be a lie itself. Or, God wills all to be saved, that is, of those that are saved; for none are saved but by his willing it. (Hieron. in Eph. i. Com.) Or Paul in this, and such other places, speaks according to his own affection, and charitable judgment; as he calls them in divers churches, men elected; which was his charity, not his certainty. But still God hath his peculiar people, Tit. ii. 14; therefore the rest are common: and at the last day many shall be turned back with an I know you not, Matt. vii. 23. He is lost who is born; no one is saved who is not born again. (Austin.) Hell was not made for nothing; some must perish.

Conclusion. This then be the sum; God did not make any man for the only purpose to destroy him; but these speeches must be understood by way of consequence and effect. I came not to send peace, but a sword, and fire, upon earth, saith Christ: and to set men at variance, Matt. x. 34, 35; Luke xii. 49. Yet, certainly, this was not the end of his coming; neither sword nor fire was his intent, but peace: these are produced by accident: and through the

malice of Satan and men, do necessarily follow it; therefore he saith, I came to send fire. So the apostle, seeing men so desperately wicked, speaks of their making, according to their present being: as when we see a man perishing, we say, he was born to this fortune; yet his mother did not bear him to such a purpose. This ordinance he setteth down either by revelation, the Spirit of God so informing him: or by probable conclusion, reason so leading him: "They that do such things, shall not inherit the kingdom of God," Gal. v. 21. But for us, we must not peremptorily conclude the destruction of any man, though obstinately wicked; because God is so indulgent to the intervention of repentance. In those dreadful thunders of the law, where every sentence sounds like the sentence of death, every line is an axe laid to the root of the tree, every word able to affright the reader; even there, repentance creeps into the text, and makes room for herself among all those terrors. In the midst of all those astonishing curses, she finds a merciful place. She turns the stream of anger, the torrent of plagues; and like a strong east wind, divides the Red Sea of God's wrath, till his judgments, like those waters, stand on heaps, while repentance walks through the midst, and escapes. This is that secret reservation, which the Divine mercy hath wrapped up in his mercies; an exception to the general rule of his justice. This suspended Nineveh's doom, Jer. xviii. 8, and stretched out her respite of forty days to the allowance of forty years. A prophet tells a king, "Thou shalt die, and not live," Isa. xxxviii. 1; a Hebrew pleonasm, for sureness' sake: who could conceive a more absolute speech? Yet was there a condition involved, and his days were lengthened. God said to Abimelech, "Behold, thou art but a dead man, for the woman which thou hast taken," Gen. xx. 3. Yet the event was otherwise, to show that there was an exception enclosed, Unless thou restore her undefiled. To apply all to ourselves:

1. We were never admitted into God's registry, to turn over his rolls, and to see what names he hath written for death, and what for life. Therefore because we know the doom of none, let us pray for all. And (to show how mercifully our Maker means to comfort our hearts) we may be sure of our own election, sure of others' salvation; we can be sure of no man's reprobation. We cannot say, This man is ordained to be destroyed: we may say of him that brings forth good fruits, This man is ordained to be saved. We may be sure of others' salvation by charity, of our own by faith; of others' by their fruits, of our own by the witness of the Holy Spirit. It is true indeed, that neither can apostacy, or turning unto sin, alter God's decree for evil; as the papists make God's election to depend on man's work: as if he should say, Indeed I determined you to salvation, but had I known you would have proved so wicked, I would never have done it; now I reverse it. Nor can repentance or turning from sin alter his decree for good: I meant you lost men, but now I see you return, I will accept you to mercy. Far be both these thoughts from us. True conversion may change his sentence, it can never change his purpose.

2. Let this humble our proud hearts, and teach us to pass the time of our sojourning here in fear. "They were broken off because of unbelief, thou standest by faith. Be not high-minded, but fear," Rom. xi. 20. Thou speedest well, insult not over him that speeds otherwise, *Utique merere vindictam, tu non meruisti gloriam*; i. e. Both have deserved vengeance, thou hast not deserved honour or mercy; if either be spared, it is altogether of mercy, without merit. Charity is the fruit that grows on the tree of election.

"Put on, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies," Col. iii. 12. We are adjured by our election, selection, dilection, to be merciful: elect before time, holy in time, beloved at all times. God hath chosen the humble: "He regarded the low estate of his handmaiden," Luke i. 48. Humility was not the cause of this choice, but this choice comes not without humility. I will mistrust that heart, which in a haughty contempt of others, magnifies himself: it is likely, that man hath chosen himself, not that God hath chosen him. When the lots were cast for a kingdom, many an Israelite stood fair, and flattered himself, Why not I? Modest Saul hid himself, yet God gave him the crown. It ill becomes a man, even that hath merited honour, to be proud of either his honour or merit. But when an undeserving beggar is picked out, and graced above his fellows, if he be proud, his honour will sit unhandomely on him, because his beggarly heart is still in him. Generally, he that presumes most, speeds worst.

"Work out your salvation with fear and trembling," Phil. ii. 12: not with pride and insulting, nor with horror and despairing; but with fear and trembling. By humility in good deeds, and fear of evil deeds, a man may work out salvation: the other will work him out of salvation. It is the devil's most dangerous assault; You are sure of your election, know your own name to be written in heaven, and by that title are better than princes; why do you not take it more upon you, and bear up your head higher? No, Satan, pride cast thee down from heaven, it will never lift me up to heaven. "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven," Matt. v. 3: the proud in spirit have no such interest; yea, theirs is the kingdom of hell. "I am not as other men are," saith the Pharisee, Luke xviii. 11; and the clock of his tongue went truer than the dial of his heart; not like other men indeed, for he was like none that should be saved. God hath chosen the weak to confound the mighty, 1 Cor. i. 27, not the mighty to domineer over the weak. An angel was sent to a city of Galilee, Luke i. 26: this is God's fashion, to seek out the most despised, on whom to bestow his favours and honours: the cottages of Galilee are preferred to the palaces of Jerusalem. Pride hatcheth its own ruin; there is never any danger in humility. (Bern.) A tall man comes in at a high door, and he stoops: the door is far higher than the man, yet he stoops; you will say, he needs not stoop: but I hope there is no harm in his stooping. A man may easily bear himself too high upon God's favour, but his humility shall never hurt him. "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his," 2 Tim. ii. 19: and upon this foundation thou standest; yet "let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall," 1 Cor. x. 12.

3. Let us shun the means that may bring us to condemnation. Let God alone with his counsels, look we to his oracles. What he wills us to do, let us do it: what he wills us not to know, let us not seek it. There be three courses which may bring a man to the sentence of reprobation. I speak not so much of God's purpose before the world began, as of his sentence when the world shall end. First, infidelity: he that will not believe, deprives himself of all possibility to be saved. Nor is it enough to believe that God sent Christ to save the world, but also to save me. Historical faith may overcome ignorance, but it is applying faith that can deliver us from vengeance. Every one that says he believeth, is not sure to be saved; but he that never will believe, is sure to be damned. Secondly, impenitence: even

believers do sin, but repentance is always blest with forgiveness. But they that live in known sins, without relenting hearts, cut themselves off from the hope of mercy. He that plays on purpose to lose, is not likely to win. Be resolved against transgression, as you would be resolved of your salvation. We are chosen to be holy; they that never come to be holy, were not chosen. Thirdly, apostacy: if men turn wholly from God, it is an argument that God did never wholly turn to them. There is a double apostacy: first, of faith; and this is desperate; that man was made to be destroyed. There remains no more sacrifice for his sins, Heb. x. 26: because he hath sacrificed his sacrifice, abandoned his expiation. Secondly, of obedience; and of this backsliding who is not guilty?

There be three forsakings condemned by the canons and councils. When a soldier forsakes his captain, a wife her husband, and a priest his charge. Which made St. Ambrose and Augustine resolve, that they would never commend a wife to a man, nor a soldier to a war. Now we are all these respects to God. Christ is our Captain, we his sworn soldiers, that have in baptism took his press-money: if we forsake his colours, we are perfidious, and worthy of martial law. He is our Husband, we his spouse, solemnly betrothed before men and angels; we have vowed our loves to him, and to him only: if we break this covenant, and admit adulterous embraces, we have merited a divorce. His commandments are our charge, he hath made us spiritual priests to his Father. Now if, instead of this holy sacrifice, the calves of our lips, the incense of our hearts, the charity of our hands, we shall offer to other gods; either idols of the water, sensual lusts; or idols of the fire, malice and revenge; or idols of the air, vain honours and secular glories; or idols of the earth, worldly riches; how fearful is the end, even to be destroyed! But let us hold our colours, keep our vows, be faithful in our charges; so (surely) we are made to be saved.

4. Let us be charitable in all our censures of all Christians, yea, even of living pagans, for they may be called. Paul was guilty of Stephen's innocent blood; the church had then small hope of his conversion. Yet even he that sent Stephen before, was ordained to follow after. For this Stephen prayed, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge," Acts vii. 60. This prayer was heard, that St. Augustine is bold to say, If God had not been so entreated by Stephen, the church had not been so blessed with Paul. And Fulgentius: Whither Stephen went before, killed by the stones of Paul, thither Paul followed, aided by the prayers of Stephen. Paul helped to make a martyr, and he was made a martyr: he that consented to another's blood in zeal against Christ, did after yield his own blood to be shed in zeal for Christ. Of whom then should we despair? we know not a greater sinner than Paul was by nature, we know not a better saint than Paul was made by grace. The foulest rags on the dunghill may be made white paper. A leprous sinner, more spotted than Naaman, may, by washing in the Jordan of penitent tears, become like an innocent child. The barren fig-tree may be recovered; the wild olive, by a new grafting, may bear excellent fruit; the unhappy boy may make a good man; a foul morning may prove a fair day. There is no wound so desperate, but it may be healed, if the Physician of heaven will undertake it. Lord, make them good that are not, and them better that are, through the goodness of him that is best of all, and sufficient for all, even Jesus Christ.

5. Let us make sure our own election, and we are happy. This we cannot do without a gracious life,

and the holy fruits of obedience: other persuasion is but presumption, and all certainty but a stupid security without this. Esau hath killed venison, and now comes in blowing and sweating for his reward: he makes himself sure of the blessing, as if he had it before he kneeled for it. What cares he now for selling away his birthright, which he shall doubly redeem with the blessing? He sold that in hunger, he shall buy this with pleasure; he parted with that for pottage, he shall recover this with venison. But what does all this blustering confidence come to? where is his recompence? His father's answer is no more but "Who art thou?" He looks for a benediction, and finds nothing but a repulse. Wicked men, when they think they have earned God, and come proudly to challenge favour, receive no answer but Who art thou? The hopes of the wicked fail them when they are at the highest; whereas God's humble children find those comforts in extremity, which they durst not expect. An Esau may come in full of the hope of the blessing, but Jacob goes away full of the joy of the blessing. When Joseph brought his two sons to his father for a blessing; and set the elder by his right hand, the younger by his left; he wittingly stretched his right hand to the younger, his left to the elder, Gen. xlviii. 14. The wicked, like Manasseh, press to God's right hand; but he, like Jacob, crosseth his hands. So God dislikes a peremptory presumption, so he blesteth a humble persuasion. No man can be perfectly confident; as no righteousness can be perfect without sin, so no assurance can be perfect without doubting. Take the evenest balances, and the most equal weights; yet at the first putting in there will be some inequality, though presently after they settle themselves in a just poise. Sin is a cloud that often hides the sun from our eyes, yet is it still a sun: the vision or feeling of this comfort may be sometimes suspended, the union with Christ is never dissolved. God will make us feel that we have offended him; but after that sense and humiliation, he will show himself pleased with us in Jesus Christ.

They "speak evil of the things that they understand not." Not to understand, is the infirmity of a man; to speak of that he understands not, is the part of a fool; but to speak maliciously evil, is the part of a devil. They will not understand, they will not be silent, they will not speak well. If they will not know, let them hold their peace; nay, they will speak; but then let them give good words; nay, they will speak evil. To be ignorant, and to speak evil; these be both bad single and asunder; but much worse in composition, when they are found together. First, I will consider them apart.

1. Ignorance. What is there that differenceth a man from a beast, but reason? No wonder, then, if these be here called beasts by the apostle; they were so termed long before by the prophet: "Man that is in honour, and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish," Psal. xlix. 20. He had the honour of a man; but by losing his knowledge he becomes like a perishing beast; when his knowledge degenerates from reason to sense, from man to beast. Knowledge is threefold. First, natural, which is common to man and beast: this consists in seeing, feeling, and such sensitive apprehensions. By this the beast hath as prudent an election as man: he skills his own diet, his own physic, builds his own house, avoids noxious things, always as well, often better than men. Secondly, rational, which is proper to man; a light of understanding, joined with an election of will; by which he is not only able to choose or refuse, but also to discern the civil or uncivil use of things. Thirdly, spiritual, which hath a

higher fountain, even the Spirit of God. Sense is a mere beast's, reason a mere man's, divine knowledge is the Christian's. This man clearly knows the Author of his creation, the means of his redemption, distinguisheth temporal from eternal things; and there sets his heart, where time is no more able to remove it, than the things of time are able to fill it.

Supernatural things are far from these men's understanding; and because they are unwilling to understand the things of grace, they shall fail to apprehend those of nature. A just plague! He that refuseth the wisdom of a Christian, shall lose the prudence of a man. These foolish monsters are not rare: often do we see asses, whose backs be laden with gold, feed upon thistles. A beast (I dare not call him man) hath thousands in his purse, yet stints himself to a threepenny meal, and starves his family; that instead of their living, they leave their dying from him; they are famished. Yet no beast will pine while his den is full of meat. How horrible is this curse! because he would not know as a Christian, he shall become more sottish than a man, yea, than a beast. The philosopher being asked, what was the heaviest part of the earth? answered, That which bears an ignorant person. Better unborn than untaught. Come that ye may hear, hear that ye may learn, learn that ye may practise, and pray that ye may do all.

2. Evil speaking. Good words never hurt the tongue; and this is a proverb even in their mouths that have not many more good words to say. Evil speaking discovers an evil heart, as the striking of the clapper doth a broken bell. In much speaking there is foolish speaking: a fool can never be concealed but by holding his peace. But the dog that snarls and barks where he should fawn, is beaten out of doors for a cur. David sent messengers to salute Nabal, and he railed on them, 1 Sam. xxv. 14; "Who is David?" Good words, Nabal: there is nothing more cheap. But how should Nabal appear what he was, but by his foul language? He that considers the quality of David's followers, must grant it worthy of a fee, that Nabal's flock lay safe in Carmel; but more, that David's soldiers were Nabal's shepherds. That his sheep were safe, he might thank his shepherds; but that his shepherds were safe, he might thank David's soldiers. This kindness deserved part of the feast; yea, even to be set at the upper end of the table, as his principal guest. Not to touch his flocks, was a favour; but to keep them, a merit. Our preservers are a second kind of creators; and well may we afford our superfluities, where we owe ourselves. Yet Nabal refuseth to give any thing but what he was wont, bad words. David asks him bread, and he gives him stones. If he would not part with his riches, yet he might have yielded fair speeches, and been never the poorer. But how should he speak any other language, to whom blasphemy is his mother tongue? When poor wretches beg of such men, this is all their aim. Yet better fare they that can say, Be warmed, be filled, Jam. ii. 16. But if those verbal almoners shall hardly answer for their uncharitableness, what shall become of them that curse and rate the needy souls: whose charity is cruelty, trampling upon those that God hath humbled? If they be thus punished that heal only with good words, how shall they be tormented that wound with evil!

3. Combined: they are both bad enough asunder, but together most mischievous. Bitter censurers are either proud, or guilty, or fools. Proud: I am not as this publican, Luke xviii. 11. What had the Pharisee to do with the publican? O, his own jewel of

sanctity wanted the due lustre, till such a foil set it off. Guilty: they that accused the woman deprehended in adultery, had not been so hot, had themselves been innocent, John viii. 9. But now, their mouths were full of her iniquity, and empty of their own; till Christ wrote them deeper in their consciences than his finger did those characters in the dust. Fools, as here, blame what they know not. The truth of God shall never want enemies, while the father of falsehood wants not blasphemies. Where did Christ's ministers ever set their feet, but the devil also landed his soldiers to encounter them? Old father Simeon might truly think, that as all eyes before had not been like his eyes, waiting for the consolation of Israel; so nor all arms afterward should be like his arms, ready in the temple to embrace it. No, Christ was appointed *ἀνταγωνιστὴν ἀν' ἀνθρώπων*; i. e. a sign that should be spoken against, for a mark of contradictions. This was no news in Stephen's time: that noble Protesilaus in the Grecian fleet, the foremost champion of the Christian church, that fought for the name of Jesus unto blood, told them to their faces, that they had always resisted the Holy Ghost, Acts vii. 51. The tongue is a sword still unsheathed; and many will speak that dare not strike. Take here two observations.

1. The nature of truth, and the nature of man's intellect, are agreeable, if this latter be not forestalled with prejudice. But, as Augustine says, To an unsound palate bread is bitter, which to a sound one is sweet. He that is resolved to be ill, refuseth to understand goodness; therefore dislikes it before he knows it; as one censures a book before he opens it, or reads a sentence. These deceivers had read the rudiments of licentiousness with the spectacles of self-love; and now to hear of authority and civil government, and above all, that the Holy Ghost should sit in the chair, to cross and unteach their principles, this makes them fret and chafe. Would they but yet allow it a day of hearing: no law condemns a man till he comes to his answer: no, they will speak evil, they will not understand. These be they that stare upon the ministers of the gospel as prodigious, hiss at them as ridiculous, shun them as infectious, account them picaular, pestilential, execrable fellows: "but Wisdom is justified of her children," Matt. xi. 19. The Lord will show, with great advantage of glory, through all this reluctance, how little he needs the help of his friends, or ears for the malice of his enemies. Those who are unwise in sin shall be made wise enough in punishment: the eyes that wilful malice hath shut, hell-flames shall open; and the tongue that would condemn what it knew not, shall feel what it would not.

2. This is a most unhappy fault, when the tongue overruns the eyes, speaks and never takes advice of the heart. The Jews thought the gospel a stumbling-block; the Greeks foolishness, 1 Cor. i. 23; the first, that it did block up their way; the other, that it was too poor for their learning; yet neither of them knew what it was. The golden Indies were offered to divers princes: they vilified it, and never saw it; yet the wealth was worth their labour that undertook it. The gospel is a hidden treasure, the world scorns it: alas, the world never understood it: they that have found it, do justly scorn the world in comparison of it. Some think it will impoverish them; they know not that, beside the kingdom of glory, it even centuples their estate here on earth, Matt. xix. 29. Others think it makes men melancholy: they know not that it rejoiceth the heart, Prov. xii. 25. This was the rashness of Rome, and the shame of their Tridentine council; that they condemned the protestants for heretics, and yet

never would hear what they could say for themselves. What is this, but to speak evil of the things they understand not? In the fourth session it was decreed, that no man should give any other interpretation of the Scriptures, than what was consonant to the doctrine of the Roman church. Thus instead of measuring their doctrine by the rule, they measured the rule by their doctrine; and condemned they knew not what. When we teach, that it is impossible for man to merit of God, or before him to be justified by his works; they cry out that we condemn all good works.

Thus sin doth not want entertainers: he that will be sober when others bezzle, that will pray when others play, or reprove a swearer, is branded with the name of puritan: alas, they speak evil of that they understand not. Shall this indignity cast upon holiness make it vile in our eyes? No, but as Tertullian reasoned, That must needs be good which Nero persecutes; so, it must needs be excellent that such malicious fools would disgrace. They have sworn to keep the commandments, and to deny the world; yet are not content with their own disobedience, unless they cast aspersions upon them that obey. God either open their eyes, or stop their mouths, that they may cease to speak evil of the things which they understand not. Let this teach us,

I. To seek understanding above treasures. Indeed doing makes a man blessed; and though he were able to dispute about every conceivable thing in existence, knew all that is knowable, secrets of state, rules of policy, mysteries of science; yet he might bless himself, without being blessed of God. But still the foundation of obedience must be laid in knowledge; for if a man take his mark amiss, he may shoot wrong all the actions of his life. Happiness is like a stake set up in the midst of a field, which blinded men grope after, to make the beholders sport in their wanderings. Knowledge must be the pilot of devotion; superstitious works are but the whelps of ignorant zeal. As Christ said of his murderers, Lord, they know not what they do; so our apostle here of the truth's adversaries, Lord, they know not what they say. He that knows what he does, and does what he knows, is likeliest to be accepted with God.

Worldlings cry up practice, to cry down knowledge; as cunning papists will extol St. James only to disparage St. Paul, or as idle protestants commend reading to disgrace preaching: they talk of a good meaning, when they are the worst doers in a country. This is the devil's sophism; if he can put out our eye of knowledge, the more we do the better he likes, as knowing all such works to be his own service. Knowledge indeed covers our earth, as waters the sea; but yet are there no dry rocks in the midst of the sea? The greater number are not unlike the horse in the story; which a man seeing in the market, liked, for his proportion, his pace, his colour; and having bought him, desired to know what fault he had. The cunning courser told him, none but that he was a dark grey: he meant that he had bad eyes; his colour might be grey, but the horse was blind. So many men have pace enough, if it were in the right way: their feet are swift, but to shed blood; their proportion is answerable, they are able to do well; their riches and means are sufficient; and they colour for it, having a form of godliness, a show of devotion: but their eyes be bad, dark and mopeish to understand that should make them truly blessed.

2. Seeing they speak evil of that they know not, let us speak well of that we know. It is a shame

that our zeal should not be as courageous to defend the truth, as their malice is violent to oppose it. He is a coward, that lets a good cause fall, when he sees another resolute in a bad. A reprobate may sometimes lend the truth his voice; but either he higgles with some hollow reservation, or lispeth with some faltering equivocation; or if his lips be of his heart's opinion, it is an extorted testimony; God hath wrung it out of him, by some conflict, arrest, racking, and conviction of his conscience. So the magicians of Egypt were forced to confess, This is the finger of God: so Julian was compelled to cry, Gadilean, thou hast overcome. They that will speak the evil they should not, shall be driven to speak the good they would not. Caiaphas shall approve that Christ in the chair, whom he condemns on the bench. Balaam shall bless those for nothing, whom he was hired to curse. Such transient revelations may glide through them; themselves in the mean time as wise as trunks. But this is a forced confession, the Almighty's advantage: "For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges," Deut. xxxii. 31. If they speak well of goodness, it is against their wills; but naturally they blaspheme it. For old physic to find fault with the new way of Paracelsus, or the old astronomy to be displeased at the opinions of Copernicus, there was some colour; for the professors of the former understood the errors of the latter, and could pick just quarrels against them. But for corrupt nature, called the old man, older in every one of our acquaintance than religion or reason, to condemn the doctrine of salvation before it be examined; this is that brutish malice here worthily exposed to contempt.

A free, voluntary acknowledgment of the truth, becomes the mouth of a Christian. Such as Peter's was, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God;" which was the revelation of God, not of flesh and blood, Matt. xvi. 16, 17. He that opened Simon's heart, to pour in that happy learning, untied Simon's mouth, to pour forth that happy language. As no man can see the sun, but by the light of the sun; so no man can call Jesus the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost, 1 Cor. xii. 3.

They "shall utterly perish in their own corruption." This is the common term of sin: what compasses and aberrations soever it fetcheth, this is the centre of it, destruction. There be divers circuits, thwartings, and contrarieties in sin; yea, all wickedness is in the extremes. Nothing is more opposite, than gripulous avarice and riotous profuseness, than cunning hypocrisy and notorious profaneness, than pride and nastiness, than presumption and despair, levity and obstinacy; yet are all these reconciled in one place, like men that go about several businesses in the morning, yet meet together at night. One kingdom is too narrow for them on earth, a little corner of a dungeon confines them together in hell. As several malefactors have done several facts, in several places; one hath stolen, another slain, a third ravished; one robs by land, another by sea; yet they are all brought to one prison, and executed on one gallows; the same destruction devours them all. There is but one, and that a narrow path to heaven; innumerable, and those broad ways, road ways, to hell. One of these iniquities might have served the turn, to bring these reprobates to perdition. Uncleanness would have done it, they needed not have been rebels: presumption would have done it, they needed not uncleanness: self-will was sufficient, without presumption: their ignorance, without their malice: their brutishness would have spared all the rest; any one was enough to do it. Only the number and

measure of torments is according to the multitude and magnitude of offences.

Some go to hell upon the rack, others on a down-bed: the former suffer much, that they may suffer more; as bulls are first baited, that afterward they may be killed. As the godly through many tribulations enter into the kingdom of heaven, Acts xiv. 22, so sometimes the wicked through many tribulations enter into the kingdom of hell. What a deal of pains doth the covetous man take for his own damnation! He scarce wears a good garment, or eats a liberal meal, or takes a quiet sleep; but torments himself to get that, for getting whereof he shall be tormented. Some slide thither on a bed of roses; they will pamper their bodies while they have them, suffer their affections to want no indulgence, will not give their conscience leave to speak, but drown it with the noise of jollity. But what benefit is it, to have one's throat cut with diamonds, or to be shot to death with pearls, or smothered with essia. Destruction is too dear a price for any sin. The condemned man will scarce eat the best dinner with a cheerful stomach. Yet this is the impenitent sinners' dire catastrophe, utterly to perish in their own corruption.

All I purpose to observe from it, may be reduced to these three conclusions. First, that sin naturally begets punishment; if they do these things, they shall be destroyed. Secondly, that forbearance is no acquittance; if not presently, yet they shall perish. Thirdly, that wickedness makes their own scourge; they shall perish in their own corruption.

1. No cause doth more necessarily produce its proper effect, than sin doth naturally beget punishment. This David could easily presuppose, when the land was plagued with a three years' famine, 2 Sam. xxi. 1: never came judgment from God, but some provocation from man went before: therefore seeing the plague, he inquires for the sin. The hand of Divine justice never makes man smart without cause. When we suffer, our question should be, What have we done? teaching our repentance to examine the foundation of all our evils. When famine is upon our land, one complains of hoarding, another of transporting, the almanac talks of planets and conjunctions; but the Christian complains of sin. He looks higher than the constellations, and sees a just hand scourging rebellions wickedness, overruling all second causes to be his executioners. Natural men are moles to spiritual objects; but the weakest regenerate eyes can pierce the heavens, and espy God in all earthly occurrences. Famine never cleansed the teeth, that were not before furred and fouled with excess. The pestilence never raged, but blasphemy, uncleanness, and such noisome sins begun the infection. The sword never prevailed, but sin did set an edge upon it. The fire never consumed, but sin blew the coals. God indeed is the Judge of all, but sin is the cause of all.

The wicked, here, are the beasts to be hunted, sin is the game; when that game is up, the takers are ready, and wait but the word; those blood-hounds are under collar, if God let them slip, they are instantly on.

(1.) Temporal misery is one taker; in whose terrible army march fear, disquietness, poverty, sickness, and innumerable sorrows. This often takes a man, when it does not destroy him. When it takes an elect vessel in hand, it scourges him like a quatern ague, shakes every joint, tames his proud heart; but withal consumes up his surfeits and corruption, and restores him a weaker sinner, but a better man. But it takes the wicked, like the stone or the racking gout; and that without both strength of resistance, or provision of patience.

(2.) Death is the next taker, compared to a horse, Rev. vi. 8; a fierce, strong, warlike, and speedy creature; whose neck is clothed with thunder, and he swallows the ground as he goes, Job xxxix. 19, 24. Hazeel could not outrun him; Absalom could not outride him; Pharaoh's chariot-wheels full off in the chase. Jonathan and Saul, swift as eagles, strong as lions, yet were slain by this taker. He takes any man, at any time, in any place; in bed, he takes men before they can rise; abroad, and gives them not leave to come home: he often takes the drunkard at his cups, the worldling telling his moanies; and these he takes with terror; even by the throats, as that unmerciful creditor arrested his fellow, "Pay that thou owest," Matt. xviii. 28. But you say, death takes also the godly: indeed they rather take him, for Christ hath made him their vessel.

(3.) Satan is the last and worst taker. Misery takes from prosperous sin, sickness takes from misery, death takes from sickness, Satan takes from all. Thou fool, this night shall they take thy soul from thee, Luke xii. 20. Oh who can tell the horror and astonishment of that soul, which no sooner leaves the body, but is apprehended by this taker. If we could conceive the least pang of that fever, how odious would our most pleasing sins appear to us! For a living man to be cast into a nest of vipers, asps, or scorpions, is terrible enough; yet, alas, all their stings be but as gentle ticklings to these dragons. This is that perishing, that utter perishing, which is here the wages of obstinate sin.

2. Forbearance of punishment is no argument of immunity; though not presently, they shall perish. The judgments of God are sure, if they be late; and as they are made for the taking, so they are destined to the very hour of taking, which they shall not escape. David made a road upon the Geshurites and Gezrites, destroying them with such a universal slaughter, that he left none to report what he had done, 1 Sam. xxvii. 9. How many hundred years had that brood of Canaanites lived securely in their country, since God had commanded their rooting out! The Israelites had their hands full, and could not meddle with them; the Philistines were their friends, and would not meddle with them; and now knowing no grudge betwixt them and their neighbours, they promise themselves a certain peace. Lo even then, least suspecting it, are they cut off by David's sword, and none left alive to tell the news. When the oracle of God was inquired for the reason of that long famine, the answer was, "It is for Saul, and his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites," 2 Sam. xxi. 1. Israel was full of sins besides those of Saul's house, Saul's house was full of sins besides those of blood, much blood was shed by that house besides this of the Gibeonites; where the causes be infinite, God doth justly pitch upon some; it is favour not to punish for all. Joshua had sworn a league with Gibeon four hundred years before; Saul breaks this league and oath: Saul dies, and forty years have passed since this injury; yet now the Lord calls them to a reckoning for it. That sin is not yet expiated, and so occasioneth this late vengeance.

How vainly do men hope to go away with their sins, because wrath is delayed! as if the Ancient of days, to whom all times are present, could forget them. No, when we have forgotten our sins, when the world hath forgotten us, he begins the suit for our arrears. With men, delay wears things out of memory, and cools the heat of anger; violent passions, like violent motions, are weakest at the furthest; but with God, there is nothing gained by pro-

traction. Sinners may make a truce with heaven, and a league with hell; but the Lord laugheth at them, for he seeth that their day is coming, Psal. xxxvii. 13; and is not the further off, because they do not look for it. Sacrilege steals, and goes away merry with it: it never troubles men, that they are privy to this injury: the law cannot touch them: so they live, so they die. But doth God forget it? If they can blot it out of his sight, there is then safety in prorogation. But as the slaughter of the Gibeonites was the sin of one generation, yet required in another; so doth God often make the posterity pay for the iniquity of their forefathers. Therefore our church teacheth us to pray, "Lord, remember not our iniquities, nor the iniquities of our forefathers." When these God-robbers are dead, and mouldered to dust, this shall be exacted of their children. Men owe us money, they die and leave it unpaid; we sue their heirs and executors for those debts, and do not think it injustice so to recover them. Take heed, ye parents, at least you that have grace enough to love your children; you bequeath them legacies of ruin, while you make up their portions with that unrighteous mammon, which you have gotten from the poor minister or neighbour. The torments of hell God will inflict only on the peccant person, but with temporal plagues he visits the succession.

The whole family of Eli was threatened with sickness, short life, and beggary, 1 Sam. ii. 36. This took effect apace, yet Abiathar is left; through the reigns of Saul and David he escapeth: hath God forgotten his sentence? No, even Abiathar shall be deposed by Solomon, and sent to Anathoth, and it is well that he escapes so, 1 Kings ii. 26. It was four-score years since that sentence was denounced, yet now it comes to execution. Abiathar is the last of that line; and he shall find that the sin of his father's house can neither be purged with sacrifice nor obliterated with time. Delay of the judgment that shall come, is neither any hinderance to God's justice, nor comfort to men's miseries. Shimei had reviled David in the conspiracy of Absalom, yet he pays for this in the reign of Solomon. Abishai would have requited him while the wound was green, and might not; Benaiah is commanded to do it now after long festering. Still the stones which Shimei threw at David, were to rebound upon Shimei, and split his heart. He was an example to these, as these are to us: he railed, so do they; he blasphemed the king, these speak evil of dignities; he perished for it, so do they. And if God so plague the insolencies against his deputies, how will he revenge blasphemy against himself! Tremble, ye cursers and swearers; so execrable is your sin, that God hath vowed not to hold you guiltless. If God pay slowly, yet he will pay sure.

Sometimes he allows iniquity a shorter breathing; and even while the viols call to dancing, or the trumpets to drinking healths, Belshazzar hath his sentence. No sooner were Adonijah's guests full of meat, but their ears were full of clangour, their hearts of horror: the trumpets at once proclaim Solomon's triumph, and their confusion. The feasts of the wicked end in terror; after the meal is done, ever comes the reckoning. No doubt but many a health was drunk to Adonijah, many a confident applause of their prosperous design, many a scorn of the adverse faction. But now the voider that takes all away, is fearful astonishment, and expectation of just revenge. How suddenly are all their hearts cold, all their faces pale! every man hath but life enough left to run away, 1 Kings i. 49. God can as easily prevent the mirth of the wicked, as mar it; but he suffers them to please themselves in the vanity

of their own courses for the time, that their conclusion may be more grievous. Bravery is but a poor target to bear off judgment.

3. Obstinate sin would make its own rod, were there none prepared. He that enters into a statute, and performs not the defenceance, we say, his own hand hath undone him. When we look upon the sin first, and then on the punishment, we confess the latter to be but the counterfeit of the former original. This is such a man's own child: why? it is so like him. Pharaoh had groaned under plagues enough; he saw his cattle struck dead with a sudden contagion, he saw his sorcerers (after all their contestation) struck with a scab in their very faces, yet his heart is not struck with repentance. Who would think it possible, for a heart of flesh not to yield at these judgments? We cannot tell whether to wonder more at the plagues themselves, or their success. The grace of God resisted, turns to desperateness; and wicked men, like some beasts, grow mad with baiting. They cannot be quiet, till they have wrought out their full destruction. Therefore the fearfulest plagues God reserves for the upshot; all the former do but make way for the last. Goliath might have fought in the battle, and escaped; but he must needs challenge his own ruin, by defying the host of God, yea, the God of hosts. His own sword shall serve to behead the master. What need David load himself with an unnecessary weapon? one sword can serve both Goliath and him. Goliath had a man to bear his target, but David had Goliath to bear his sword. So just is God, to turn wicked men's forces against themselves, and to make his enemies carry about with them their own destructions.

The Amalekite, a pickthank, thought to curry favour and to insinuate himself to the heir apparent, by bringing the news of Saul's death, 2 Sam. i. His thoughts project thus: To report the fact as done by another, were but to go away with the recompence of a lucky post; whereas to take the action upon myself, to say, I am the man, must needs endear me to him: David is beholden to me for the kingdom; my requital cannot but be richly honourable. Thus he laid a plot to destroy himself: his hand was not guilty, his tongue was; and he dies for it. If he did it, his fact was capital; if he did it not, his lie was capital: howsoever, for an unjust practice, he received a just sentence; yea, his own mouth condemned himself. Men think it a dainty cunning to beguile others, the fine policy of a pure and clean wit to do unsuspected mischief; as if this were not to carry brimstone to their own fire, and to make their own bed in hell. As the godly work out their salvation with fear and trembling, so the wicked work out their own confusion with lust and presuming. Yea, naturally all run on to their own ruin, unless they be supernaturally prevented by the grace of God.

To conclude; as we tremble at these judgments, let us abominate the sins. These reprobates are our examples; if we do as bad, we shall speed worse: and they will welcome their imitators into hell, You come after us, but you shall be preferred before us; and bear so much more torments than we have, as you received more warnings than we had. First, they were proud; and as pride is the highest sin, so it shall have the lowest fall: the proud scorn to be like men, therefore make themselves like the apostate angels. When they will not be men, they become devils, saith Chrysostom. Are there none such among us? Yes, their very habit discovers them: they that have put off modesty, will put on any garb of apparel. We should not lie in our words, but painted Jezebels lie in their very faces. As pride is the first step downward to hell, so humility

is the first stair upward to glory. Secondly, they were rebellious to magistrates; let us be obedient. Even the highest prelates of the church must stoop to him, whom God hath set above all. The Lord hath committed the souls of princes to his pastors, but the bodies of pastors to his princes. Thirdly, they were drunken and sensual beasts; let us be civil men at least. But, alas, happy temperance, whither art thou fled? Sobriety is scarce to be found in the world, but in books. Fourthly, they were unclean; and what nitre shall wash us? were every river of our land a Jordan, they could not cleanse it from this leprosy. But, alas, we can but plough the ground, it is God that must sow the seed: we do but soften the wax, it is he that sets on the seal. We have sinned, what should we do but repent? If we cannot, like the poor woman at her purification, Lev. xii. 8, offer a lamb, innocency of life, yet let us bring at least a pair of turtle doves, two mourning eyes. That we who have grievously erred by multiplied sin, may be received again to mercy by unfeigned sorrow.

VERSE 13.

And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it a pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you.

God is a just Master, and will pay all men their wages according to their work. They that do the business he sets them about, shall have a blessed recompence: none of his servants were ever losers by him. The ungodly indeed set themselves on work; yet, howsoever, he will pay them their wages, but it is such a reward (Rev. xxii. 12) as they would thank him to go without; a righteous wages, for an unrighteous service. God shall pay all: Satan may be his executioner, but God is the Judge. The executioner cannot lay on a stroke more than the Judge appoints. Wicked men, properly, do pay when they are paid: when God pays them, he pays himself of them; and this shall be to the uttermost farthing, Matt. v. 26. So the unmerciful servant was bound over till he should pay all his due, Matt. xviii. 34. At once they both receive their wages and pay their debts.

Wages is understood to be an equal retribution, a reward proportionable to the work; and is either *ex pacto*, what is covenanted, "Didst thou not agree with me for a penny?" Matt. xx. 13; or *ex merito*, what is earned, "The labourer is worthy of his hire," Luke x. 7. Equality of recompence defines wages: if it be too much, and above desert, it is munificence; if too little, and short of desert, it is injustice. The Jews might give forty stripes; they would give but nine and thirty, for fear of excess. They were commanded to restore fourfold: some of them, as Zaccheus, did quadruple it, for fear of the defect. But there is neither defect nor excess in a just reward. Man may fault in this, God cannot; he pays just wages, not a dram too light, not a scruple too heavy. Every man shall receive according to his works. "With the same measure that ye mete, it shall be measured to you again," Luke vi. 38.

This wages of unrighteousness must be considered: Such, for the quality: So much, for the equality. *In congruo*, for the fitness; *In condigno*, for the fullness: not an arithmetical portion, every man alike; but a geometrical proportion, every man his due. So

that we have two things; the manner, and the measure, of this wages.

The Scripture is copious in these retaliations. Nilus was instead of heaven to Egypt; the clouds did not so much favour them, as the river; this did moisten their ground, and quench their thirst; and their confidence was not in heaven, but in Nilus. Lo, Nilus was turned into blood, Psal. cv. 29: that which was their succour shall be their horror. He that measures the sea in his fist, scorns that a poor river should be his rival. In this element was the whole trust of their provision, and now this cannot be endured for the corruption. When their palates would taste it, their eyes abhor it. Their drought calls for the moisture, their stomachs cannot brook the annoyance. They are thirsty, yet cannot tell whether they should die or drink; die with heat, or cool that heat with blood. How fit is this wages! they made that one element their god, and by the loss of that one element they become miserable men. The fish was no small part of their sustenance; those die with infection, and infect more by being dead. But was this all the similitude? No, they had polluted that river with the blood of infants, and now it appears to them in this colour. As if it should say, Am I bloody? thank your own murderous hands that made me thus. It is your sin that hath turned my clear streams into this sanguine hue. The very waters will no longer keep their counsel. Never any man wilfully shed blood, but he had enough of it ere his end. If they look upon the waters, they see nothing but blood; when they drink, they taste nothing but blood. They shed some few streams, but are requited with whole rivers of blood. As if the Divine justice had said to them, as Tomyris did (afterward) to Cyrus, *Sanguinem silitisti, sanguinem bibe*, Thou hast thirsted for blood, drink blood. A red river was one plague, but a Red Sea, the greater. That annoyed, this overwhelmed them; that slew their fishes, this drowned themselves. For a water bloodied with innocents, to have a river turned into bloody waters, a Red Sea made redder by the whole host of Egypt, how fit a wages of unrighteousness was this! The corrupted river was both a monument of their former sin, and an image of their future vengeance. God paid them in specie, their own money.

Such another instance we have in that fit king of Moab, Eglon, whom Ehud slew, Judg. iii. 22. He had made his belly his god, and God sends a message into his belly: "I have a message from God unto thee." This he thought to have heard with his ears, and he feels it in his bowels. A message indeed, but such a one as did neither require nor admit an answer: no reply, but a groan and a gasp, and then everlasting silence. His sin had pampered those parts, and swelled them to an unwicly grossness; in those parts his destruction enters to let out life. Many delicate morsels, and choice creatures, had been buried in that bulky vault: Ehud's dagger is a hard and cold bit to close up his stomach. He can never digest this: now he pays for all his gluttony; this was the wages of unrighteousness.

This law of retaliation hath fallen upon the dear saints of God. Samson's eyes were the first offenders, and they are first pulled out, Judg. xvi. 21; they betrayed him to lust, and lust betrays them to darkness. In Gaza he was first captivated by a woman, and thither he is led captive in triumph. He that was grown blind in his understanding by doting wantonness, is now doomed to his own perpetual night. Because he trusted his locks in the lap of a harlot, he riseth up shorn and weakened. He that was a terror to armies, becomes a scorn to boys. Eli

could not have devised a way so much to plague himself and his sons, as by his partiality to their sins. He receives a variety of judgments, yet every one a just wages for his faults. First, his sons had despised God, therefore God lightly esteems them. Secondly, old age is commonly choleric, old Eli was indulgent, therefore not an old man shall be left of his house for ever. Because he had been faulty in his old age, therefore all his family shall die in their youth. Thirdly, his sons were enemies to God in their profession, therefore he shall see his enemy in the Lord's habitation. Fourthly, because he so mis-favoured his offending children, as not to punish them, therefore they shall be to consume his eyes, and grieve his heart, even to punish him. Fifthly, because he esteemed their life above his Maker's glory, therefore they shall die with dishonour. Sixthly, the authority which he had abused by connivance, shall be translated to another. Seventhly, because his sons were saucy, and of so wanton an appetite, that they durst take meat from off God's own trencher, therefore the remainder of his household shall come to beggary. Lastly, because he forbore to take vengeance on their iniquity, God shall revenge himself on him and them, and that severely, 1 Sam. ii. 30—36. Consider this, ye fond parents, that prefer the vanities of your children before the will of your heavenly Father; you cannot devise a speedier way to ruin them. Thus to be kind to them, is to be cruel to yourselves and them; to make their sins your own. God might have pardoned them, had you not pardoned them; now your indulgence makes way for his vengeance. We read not of any fault Eli had but this; yet which of the notorious offenders was plagued more? A man needs no more to make him and his posterity miserable, than sparing the rod. How just is this, when men will not see the faults they should, to feel the punishments they would not!

Absalom was fair, and he knew it well enough; the glass and flattery had made him acquainted with his own comeliness. His beauty was the matter of his pride, and his hair was no small piece of his beauty. Once every year he used to cut it; not as weary of the length, but of the weight: his pride could have brooked it longer, his neck could not. Now those locks which had been his glory, become his hangman. He had curiously plaited those tresses for his ornament, therefore God makes use of them for his halter. The part which man's unrighteousness abuseth to sin, God's justice employs to revenge. When it hath served our turn to offend God, it shall serve his turn to punish us. This latter service makes amends for the former trespass. The dishevelled hairs that loosely hung on Absalom's shoulders, shall do him the office to hang him. He came out of his father's loins, yet turned traitor to him; his hair grew out of his scalp, and turns traitor to his own head. When he was thus mounted to his unexpected gallows, his beast leaves him: it had done him service enough, to bring him to the tree of justice, and there resigns that unnatural burden, 2 Sam. xviii. 9. He reared a pillar, and called it by his own name; either because he had no sons, no living images of himself; and so to supply nature, he thought to survive in dead stones. But it had been great pity there should have been any of his breed: he that robbed his father of a son, slew Amnon, and would have robbed himself of a father, his father of a kingdom, deserved to die without issue. Or to preserve the memorial of himself; that the world, when it saw the stately pillar, might be occasioned to remember the goodly person of Absalom; as if the generations to come were wronged in losing the mention of Absalom. The world esteem-

ed him highly; and he had a higher opinion of himself; and he was famous, but for infamy: not that arched pile, but a rude heap of stones, cover his carcass. One death is not enough for him; he is hanged, pierced, mangled. He had lifted up himself against his own royal father, therefore was lifted up to a tree of execution. He had pierced his father's heart with many sorrows, therefore he is pierced with many darts. He had dismembered and divided Israel, therefore he is mangled and torn in pieces. He that cursed his parents, according to the law was stoned to death: he had done worse, even attempted to kill his father, therefore was buried under a heap of stones. Behold with terror the just wages of unrighteousness.

How righteous art thou, O God, in thy retaliations! *Non invenit guttam, qui non dedit micam; i. e. The rich man would not give Lazarus a crumb, Lazarus shall not bring him a drop, Luke xvi.* Saul slew the Gibeonites: nothing can expiate the blood of these heathen fathers, but the blood of the persecutor's children, 1 Sam. xxi. 5. Because they knew God, and would not glorify him, therefore their foolish heart was darkened, Rom. i. 21. Because their knowledge would not retain God, they shall not retain their knowledge. Men profane God's name, and he makes their names to stink. Why should they be mentioned with honour, that do not mention their Maker but to his dishonour? So we read of Lot's wife, Job's wife, the rich man, but no name; as if God had said, "Let their name be blotted out," Psal. cix. 13. Idolaters will set up a false god for the true, therefore the true God gives them over to the false. We forget duly to bless God on the sabbath, therefore go unblessed all the week. "If mine heart have been deceived by a woman, then let my wife grind unto another," Job xxxi. 9, 10. Few dare take such an oath, or make such a wish. We rob the ministers, and therefore commonly we are robbed by the lawyers. "Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard," Prov. xxi. 13. In vain they cry to us for charity, and for mercy we shall cry in vain to God. The measure we mete to others, is with much equity remeasured to ourselves. In every grievance of your sense, read the characters of the cause. When you receive your wages, consider your work: so you have done, so you are undone. When the dropsy invades the drunkard, it is but his wages. When the pestilence rageth in our streets, blasphemy and execration must confess that they have their due wages. Poverty is the wages of dishonesty. Blasphemers live swearing, and die raving; it is but their wages. These things if we preach, we are hated; if we do not, we shall be condemned: it is a woeful strait, when we must either incur the world's mal-opinion, or the Lord's malediction. But certainly, if men do these unrighteous works, they must expect this righteous wages.

The measure follows; no temporary suffering can be a sufficient wages of sin. Nothing but death can expiate some offences among men, blood must have blood; but death itself cannot satisfy God. All sin is infinite; not in respect of itself, but of the Majesty which it offends: now an infinite work must have an infinite wages. Through the creatures' incapacity, this cannot be infinite in intension, therefore must be so in duration. The quantity of this wages is begun in death, Rom. vi. 23, accomplished in torment, Matt. xxv. 46.

1. In death. There is but one door to come into the world, a thousand to go forth. Death hath his choice of ways to let out life; and while we are busily watching at one door, he comes in at another.

A furious horseman, with a pale and ghastly look, Rev. vi. 8: *pallido mors*, pale death; symbolizing that effect which he works both on the living and on the dead. On the living. I know, that many can talk of death without fear, because they think it out of hearing: they make a league with death; as the frantic merchant alone, would sell this commodity, and buy that, and make matches for hundreds and thousands, when there was nobody by to deal with him. Thus it is reported of an earl of Kildare, that playing at the board's end, and seeing his warrant of execution brought in, threw his cast, and said, Whatsoever that is, this is for a hurdle. Many have feigned to die in jest; but I doubt whether their heart and face were both of one piece. Some call for it, as the poor wearied man in the fable; but when it comes in good earnest, they have another errand for it, and are not able to look it in the face with the blood in their cheeks. When it gave Belshazzar that fatal summons, all his courtiers and concubines could not cheer his heart, nor all the wine in those holy bowls fetch colour into his countenance, Dan. v. 6. How do we see prisoners at the bar even die at the sentence of death, as if they could not live to the execution! Some Stoic would fain set a good face on the matter, and says in a bravado to his neighbours, he fears not death; and all, that the world may witness he is no coward. So Jezebel painted her face, and affronted Jehu out of the window; but had that artificial visage been off, a pale cheek would have appeared underneath it. Whatsoever is pretended, there is no unrighteous man but is afraid of this wages.

On the dead. It bereaves the body of blood and colour, spoils the complexion, whether it be of art or nature, renders a lifeless and wan carcass, lays it rotting in the mould, exposeth it a feast for worms, alters the fashion, consumes the beauty, turns the whole proportion into deformed rottenness. There lies the body in blended dust, receiving that insensible wages, which the sin of life earned; till the archangel's trumpet, together with the summons of the Judge, gives it a "Rise." Even this is a fearful wages, when it is paid in the proper coin, without the alloy of Christ's death to qualify it. As death is the contrary to life, so commonly they that live like Laban, die like Nabal, which is but the same word inverted. The very mention of death is irksome to them; as Louis the Eleventh straitly charged his servants, when they saw him sick, not to dare once so much as name that bitter and unwelcome word, death. Thus, like insensate stones, they sink down to their centre, and rather choose to feel what they fear, than labour to avoid what they must feel. So towards wink and fight; yea, they wink and suffer and fight not: a dismal wages!

2. Hell, and that in the worst sense; not the grave of the body, but of the soul. There is hell, a sinful life; and hell, the horror of conscience; and hell, which is hell itself, the local prison of the damned, as heaven is the triumphant mansion of the blessed. This is the full wages of unrighteousness, into which the desperate madness of ungodly men doth fall blindfold. There be some, that thank philosophy and their own reasons, they fear no such fable as hell. Socrates and Plato were great philosophers, yet they believed a hell, and hissed the contrary opinions, as belline, out of their schools. Yea, the very savages and infidels confess it: the instinct of nature, and a Divine impression, extorts from them this acknowledgment, that souls live after their bodies, either in bliss or pain. What are they but monsters, that seek to obliterate these indecible characters, and so dance he winked into perdition?

O were it allowed to the desperate ruffians of our days, that swear and curse, as if heaven were deaf to their noise, or as if they would make it deaf by their noise, to have but a sight of hell; how would it charm their mouths, appal their spirits, strike fear and astonishment into their hearts! The church and they would be better acquainted, which are now perpetual strangers. Superstitious recusants, irreligious profaners of the sabbath, that never serve God but once a year; their bed, or their boat, or the tavern is all their temple, except we see their faces at Easter: would they do thus if they understood this wages? No, could we foresee death and hell in their proper shapes, we would forerampoint ourselves, not to avoid the first death which we cannot, but to escape the second, which we may, through repentance and faith in Christ.

The devils besought Christ, that he would not cast them into the deep, Luke viii. 31. What is this deep, but hell? First, for the utter separation from the face of God, never to see his favourable countenance; then for the impossibilities of passage to the region of rest and glory. The very devils fear this deep; they feel themselves bound in chains, and reserved to this torment, expecting a further degree of vengeance. They know this to be the wages of unrighteousness: now the wages is not paid till the work be done. Still they are tempting men unto sin, and still they sin in that temptation: the misleaders into evil sin more than the actors; therefore the full measure of their damnation remains to the upshot of their wickedness: the day of judgment shall confine them to the deep for ever. This day, this deep, they tremble at; yet scottish men slight it. Were their understandings sensible of that burning lake, where soul and body must be crowded into a fiery dungeon, with torments intolerable and interminable, which can neither be endured nor avoided, durst they so boldly rush into sin? Who will thrust his hand into a fiery crucible, to fetch out the gold? Can the metal recompense the burning? We durst not continue our licentious and wilful sins, if we did truly believe the horror of these infernal and eternal flames.

Believe there is a hell! who does not? Yes, very many that say they do: it is hard for men to believe their own unbelief. They that be most dangerously sick, are least sensible of their own sickness. We their physicians perceive it, and tell them of it, and they hate us for it. But as when the seminary in Lancashire lost his glove, riding in his disguise, and one that found it rode apace after him to restore it; he mistrusting him for a pursuivant by his speed, (but most pursued by a guilty conscience,) quits his horse, leaps over a hedge, plungeth into an unseen marl-pit behind it, and was drowned; so men flee us that mean them no harm, and rather hazard themselves into destruction, than suffer the word of exhortation. I know that love should win us to goodness, rather than fear; yet fear is often the door that lets in love, as love casteth fear out of the door, 1 John iv. 18. Even the fear of hell hath made way for the love of Christ, and the love of Christ hath taken away the fear of hell. There is a story of one that gave a young gallant a curious ring, with a death's head in it, upon this condition, that for a certain time he should spend one hour every day in looking and thinking on it. He took the ring in wantonness, but performing the condition with diligence, it wrought a wonder on him; and of a desperate ruffian, he became a conscientious Christian. Imagine this discourse a ring, the wages of unrighteousness a death's head; yea more, a map of hell, an emblem of destruction: spend but one half-hour fixedly every day on these meditations, and (I doubt

not) by God's grace thou shalt find such an alteration in thy heart and life, that there shall be gladness in the church, peace in thy own conscience, and joy before the angels in heaven for thy conversion.

"As they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time." There is no greater danger in the world, than to live in the danger of the world. This is a care that troubles but few : how to get it, not how to use it, is the common study. Many waking hours are spent on the bed, how to be rich, how to be glorious ; not how to be good. God hath written divers books of holy instructions, and they are able to make a man wise to salvation : these contain rules how to be holy and happy, not how to be wanton and wealthy. Solomon had his ethics, his politics, his economics ; for the government of behaviour, of commonwealth, of family ; not one book of secular mysteries, though his wisdom were incomparable even in that kind also. Not a leaf in the sacred volume but hath matter against a voluptuous life ; none for it. To please flesh and blood is the doctrine of the devil ; this, man hath learned by nature ; he is born with this knowledge ; and the whole contents of the Scripture is by the law to forbid it, by the gospel to mortify it. Certainly, if it had been good to live in sensual pleasure, among so many divine rules, some direction would have guided us to this. But all that God says about it, is to forbid it, to threaten it, to condemn it, to cast it into hell. Indeed he neither condemns our affections, nor these objects, asunder ; but their composition, as they are married together. A man may covet (so as it be) the best gifts, 1 Cor. xii. 31. Desire more grace, seek more, never think you have enough ; be still poor that you may be rich, rich that you may be full, full that you may be glorious. You may desire worldly things long enough without finding any content ; but covet after righteousness, and you shall be satisfied, Eccl. v. 10 : Matt. v. 6. Be merry, pleasant, rejoice, but in the Lord : Christianity does not take away our joy, but gives it. It is the ram that dies, Isaac (our laughter) escapes. Be ambitious of favour, of honour, of a kingdom ; but of God's favour, of the honour of saints, of the kingdom of heaven. But to take pleasure in riot, as if a man's heaven lay in his stomach, and paradise were nothing but the delight of his sense ; this is that brutish opinion, the faith of epicures, which sends many, with that rich churl, from their delicate tables to eternal flames.

To riot is belluine ; there is their sensuality. In the day time, is desperate, for that is a work of the night ; there is their impudence. To count this a pleasure, (many have been overtaken with intemperance, but it was their sorrow and vexation, to these it is a pleasure,) there is their voluptuousness. They think it so, they do but think it so, they shall not so find it ; there is their sottishness. Their wickedness appears here like a conjuration. First, the spirit raised is riot. Secondly, the circle wherein it is raised is the day time. Thirdly, the sorceress that raiseth it is pleasure. Fourthly, the charm or illusion is conceit, they think or count it a pleasure, &c.

"Riot." This is the spirit : the grossest devil of all is the eating devil ; surfeiting stomachs turn men into beasts. We borrow pride from the lion, covetousness from the hedgehog, envy from the dog, wrath from the bear, gormandize from the wolf, sloth from the ass, riot and sensuality from the hog ; such be called boarish men. God sent them into the world men, and they come forth beasts. Only the beasts are in better case ; because they want the reason of election, and shall receive no sentence of condemnation. Drunkenness is so apt to misde-

meanours, that even against the violence of men not drunk, there lies an action called a riot.

There is riot in many things. First, riot in drink, when men drink in measures, without measure. We may change the verse ;

*Non habet ulterius quod nostris potibus addat
Posteritas ;*

i. e. Posterity has nothing more which it can add to our potations. Peace hath made many countries sick of a surfeit, but (were the assizes come) God would find this whole land guilty of a riot. Crates threw his money into the sea, resolving to drown it, lest it should drown him : the drunkard casts his money into a deluge of drink, both drowning it, and himself with it. Herein the miser and the rioter are opposites ; the one so loves money that he will not afford himself good drink, the other so loves good drink that he scorns money. *Cornua Bacchus habet*, says the poet ; i. e. Bacchus has horns : the riotous must be quarrelsome ; therefore some quarrels are called riots. When the iron is hot, the smith can fashion it to his pleasure : wine tempers the heart like wax for the devil's impression. Secondly, there is riot in meats : "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die," saith the epicure, Isa. xxii. 13 : one would think it should rather be, Let us fast and pray, for to-morrow we shall die. The poor man's labour is to get him meat for his stomach ; the riotous only care to get a stomach for their meat. Their whole vicissitude of studies is but meat for the belly, and the belly for meat ; as brewers provide barrels for their drink, and drink for their barrels. What wonder is it, if they in hell be most tormented in their tongues, that have most offended in their tastes ?

Riot is of a great latitude. To abuse any riches of nature to wantonness, is riot. So a man may riot in apparel : divers men are in all other things miserable, yet prodigal in their clothes ; and these shall be indicted of a riot. The daw values himself by his cockscorn, the fool by his garded coat ; and these take state upon them according to their garments ; and after a little custom persuade themselves that they are such indeed. The case of an instrument keeps it from soil, the cover of a glass from dust ; but gorgeous attire can neither prevent age, for they soon wax old themselves ; nor save from soil, for sin bred them, and they breed sin. Pagans over-gild their blocks, that they may be worshipped ; and men garnish their bodies for the same purpose. The dress of proud women is but Democritus's brazen shield set up against the sun, to amaze the eyes that behold it ; but faggots to the furnace of lasciviousness : in their best interpretation, they are but bushes which should signify beauty to sell ; for why is a sign hung out, but to invite men to buy ? as in Italy, the beasts that are to be sold, are decked with blossoms and garlands. But that which is worse, the plastering of their faces, ensparbling their eyes with spiritualized distillations, touching their lips with drinkable gold, filling up frets with fresh colours, as men keep roses all winter in covered vaults ; this is horrible riot. It seems they think God was a bungler, not his crafts-master, and that they are able to correct and mend his workmanship. But do they not lay on their colours so thick, that they size into their souls ? Does not a black soul often dwell under a white roof ? Methinks they should be jealous, lest the devil should come to them in the disguise of a tailor, trow-woman, or complexion-seller.

There is riot in play, where the greatest winner is in danger to lose the game. The Romans built a temple to ill fortune on a mountain hard by, that it

should not plague them at cards and dice. God made no man for play, but all for work: they that play when they should work, shall work when they might have rested. Not seldom doth riot break forth into wantonness and carnal delights; a sin so forth and customary, that it serves the city for an afternoon's recreation. Common strumpets are said to have no common patrons; and if lesser magistrates put them in hold, they have greater persons to fetch them out. Either authority is connivant, and will not see the faults; or corrupt, and loves to feel bribes; or, which is worse, doth not punish the sinner, that they may sin with her; which of all bribes is the basest. There is riot in any excessive delicacy; so the word here used is, to enjoy, not to use, pleasures: a sin hard to describe, because it hath so many shapes. In women it reigns most, because they have least to do. They must have delicate houses, rubbed and glazed, as if, like Abraham, they were to entertain angels; whereas, too often, it is but for their wanton lovers. The floors are so glistening, as if they would walk upon looking-glasses. They have delicate paces, going on the earth as if they went upon snakes, and feared to tread hard lest they should turn again, Isa. iii. 16. This is truly to riot by a delicious life; when every thing about them is so resplendent and contentful, that they have no mind to go to heaven. This is to fortify themselves, not against mortality, but against the thought of mortality; to quittance a heaven out of earth, yea, to exchange a true heaven for a counterfeit. How many souls have these artificial paradises beguiled! Through a hell upon earth God brings many to heaven, and through a heaven upon earth many bring themselves to hell. In the forenoon riot is merry, in the afternoon drunk, at night it goes to bed stark mad, but in the morning it riseth sober, in everlasting sorrow; that is the farewell of it.

"In the day time." This is the circle; whether we read it, *per diem, ad diem, or in diem*: here be three readings, and three senses. *Per diem*, that is, continually, day by day. Day and night is often taken for incessantly, Josh. i. 8; Psal. i. 2; 1 Thess. ii. 9: now the day includes the night; when we beg our daily bread, we desire provision both for day and night. It was a foolish superstition of them that refused the Pater-noster going to bed, because they thought it absurd to say, "Give us this day," whereas it was night. "Come, we will fill ourselves with strong drink; and to-morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant," Isa. lvi. 12. It is never night with them while the drink lasts, or their eyes can wake to guide the cup to their mouths. There is great difference betwixt infirmity and vice: the former is but an ague, neither mortal nor perpetual; the other dropsy, that drinks till it rots, and rots till it dies. There be sins in the righteous; there is nothing but sin in the riotous. If Nantippe's scolding so troubled Alcibiades, that heard her but seldom, what an affliction was it to Socrates, her husband, that must bide by it day and night! When a citizen complained what a pitiful journey he had in a moorish fen-country, a countryman replied, God help them that dwell there, as I do. A traveller often drinks that liquor with offence to him, which his host swallows with pleasure. This made the friar, that had drenched himself for experience, to impose it as a sore penance on them that had confessed that sin, Go and be drunk again. Custom makes that a pleasure, which is a torment; many do that in a day, for which they weep all their life.

Or ad diem, i. e. for a day; and this is indeed the term of all sinful pleasure; it is but a flash, a puff, and it vanisheth. It is expected with desire, with

delight entertained, and departs with discontent. Like some sprightly music, that advanceth a man's mind while it sounds, and leaves him more melancholy when it is done. A countryman observing the preparation for a great triumph, among many other questions, about the labour, the cost, the study, demands how long it should last: he was answered, For an hour: but he replied, Then the lease is very dear. Could they drink, with Cleopatra, the riches of Egypt at a draught, yet it is but a draught, and quickly down the throat. Turn but the candle, and that which keeps me in, puts me out.

In diem, i. e. during the day, so the word properly imports: this is impudent. "They that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night," 1 Thess. v. 7. And he that doeth evil hateth the light. But, alas, that is cowardly sin with them, that is ashamed to show its face. They dare the day to witness their ungodliness, and do their villanies, as the Pharisees gave their alms, and said their prayers, to be seen of men. As if they were ambitious to be like God, to whom the day and the night is all one, Psal. cxxxix. 12. The apostle intends it, not as a qualification of their naughtiness, but for a more full expression: In the day time, when others are at their labours, they then roar with riot. The day is made for work, the night for sleep: our lawful work in the day, is God's service; our natural sleep in the night, is our own indulgence: he that steals an hour from his sleep, robs but himself; he that trespasseth upon the day, injures God. If you say, rest enables us for work, yet work is the end, and the end is more noble than the means.

Again, all sin is the work of darkness, therefore most proper for the time of darkness: the riot that is bad at any time, is worse in the day time. In the night it only makes the devil sport; none but fiends are spectators at that interlude; sin is then but like a poor watchman in his night-gown. In the day it ruffles it like a swasher, marches with drum and fife, and bids defiance to authority. So it offends the good, enrageth the bad, and infects the indifferent; and that which might have escaped with forty stripes for the mere evil, shall have a hundred for the example. Sin at first was a single woman, and kept home; but by union to Satan she has two children, Temptation and Example. Ever since she cannot stir out of doors, but theseimps haunt her: when she would delight herself, either Temptation gets some to sin with her, or Example teaches some to sin after her.

Lastly, day sins are done with less shame, therefore more impious. Many that care not for honesty, yet stand upon their credit, and would not be detected of that they love to commit. But they are frontless Zimris, that bring harlots to their tents in the face of all Israel. Noah was uncovered, but in the midst of his own tent: sin is bad enough, though no eye see it; and unknown sins are attended with known punishments: secret faults have their secret guilt and shame. But four eyes saw the adultery, ten thousand millions shall see the torment. But that man is past all goodness, that is past shame. Sin bred shame, yet the mother is often curbed by the daughter; she dares not play her pranks so boldly while shame is by. Sin would kill all the agents of goodness in us, but that shame hinders her. Shame holds them in, though sin holds them under. There is some fear to offend, some knowledge of good and evil, some remorse, some conscience, while shame lasts. But if shame once departs, knowledge goes, and fear goes, and remorse goes, and conscience goes; none will tarry behind shame. Alas, for our age, to bear the date of such

Impiety, that it should be said, In such a year, when yet there was no plague, Shame died! Honesty died long since, and was buried in the suburbs; Charity lived not long after, and was buried in the city; Plain-dealing died then too, and was buried in the country; and now Shame is dead also: the sepulchres of suburbs, city, and country, being taken up by Honesty, Charity, Plain-dealing, what room is left for Shame's grave, except the waters? And it is thought, that amongst the watermen she first caught her death. If any man can find a place to bury her, I will bestow a sorry epitaph upon her:

If any man require my name,
Say, blushing tomb, that it was Shame.
When I did in a cheek appear,
Men did conclude that grace was there.
I many kept from doing ill,
Therefore ill-doing did me kill.
The swearer, liar, whore, may lead
A bolder life; for Shame is dead.
But when all dead rise from their places,
I, Shame, shall then sit on their faces.

"In the day time." Perhaps they slept a-nights; and followed the business so close by day, that they despatched it before night. Or it may be, they would husband their bodies, that they might hold out; for riot is a soaker, and it would drench them to follow it day and night too. Sin is the greatest folly in the world, and yet there must be some art and cunning to maintain it. The house that grows sere, needs supporters. But now have we none worse than these? The day contented them to riot in; day and night too is too little for some. Often do they curse the clock for haste, never blame themselves for lingering in riot. Revel they never so long, their last dance is loth to depart. They are angry, that they cannot, with Joshua, make the sun stand still, or keep the moon from going down, Josh. x. 12, not till they confound the Amorites, but till their Amorites work their confusion. They wish that the day might be corrupted, and that the night would take bribes. There be some feasts, where the guests think they are slighted, if they be not sent away drunk; and Time is no pleasing host to these if he will not allow them to surfeit.

But the night, the night is the guilty time; it would be a long assize, only to take the confession and indictment of candle-light. This would tell of doors ready to let in the adulterer; of thieves watching to break into houses; of Fauces, with their dark lanterns, ready to blow up states; of unthrifths revelling and drinking, till their monies and their wits be both spent together; of age-decayed dames basking on their colours, and spending many pounds of candles in pinning and trimming their dresses, that will not bestow one minute's light in reading any good book. Murder, treachery, conspiracy, felony now follow their business very close: many owls that cannot endure the light, now flutter abroad, and keep a hooting and routing in the dark. Those dare now frequent taverns and brothels, quarrel in the streets, rage and domineer, who would appear contemptible in the day. The sun, that eye of heaven, does scarce see so much villany as candle-light. Wittily conceived was that Italian, who wrought the supplication to candle-light, desiring her to disclose to him the rare secrets which she saw in her empery. The day would scarce believe what deeds are done by night.

I conclude. Both day and night let us banish intemperance out of our coasts: it will beg for some indulgence, but let a shameless beggar have a strong denial. If we will not grant it the day, it will crave but the night; sin hath no right to a moment of

time, therefore will take any; but when thou hast once allowed it a part, it will proudly challenge all. He that shall duly consider his sins, will find that he hath time little enough for repentance, none to spare for intemperance. Instead of rioting ourselves, we have cause to mourn for the riot of others. But, alas, all mortification is censured by the name of superstition, and he that forbears excess, is held an irregular, melancholy person. The most men's sorrows are like the mournings of an heir, who then smiles in his heart, when his eyes let fall forced tears. We may say of this kind of evil, as Christ said of that kind of devil, it will not out with prayer alone, but with fasting and prayer. It is not only human, but heavenly policy, to weaken our enemy before we fight with him. The lust that is fed with riot, will be too strong for us. Inveterate wounds or ulcers must have corrosives to eat out the dead flesh, ere they can be cured. We are ordained for holiness, not for licentiousness: the jollity of this world is so far from saving us, that it keeps us from being saved. O let not all the showers of sermons fall like rain in the horse-fair, or high-ways, to breed nothing but mire and puddles; hear not to become worse. But judge every hour worthy thy sorrow, which thou hast mispent in vanity: flee the sins against which I have spoken, and I have spoken not in vain.

They "count it pleasure to riot." Pleasure is the sorceress that raiseth up the spirit of riot; that special harlot of hell, which the devil hath dressed up to tempt the sons of men. She hath a melodious tongue, to enchant; a face of artificial beauty, to allure; eyes that roll with invitations, to bewitch; arms of wanton provocations, to embrace. She courts all men in the language of Absalom, but her heart is full of treason; and her project is to deceive them of the kingdom of heaven. Will for reason, is the usurper's tyranny; and pleasure for religion, is the epicure's divinity, whose belly is their god. Pleasure guides them in all their actions and courses: demand of a voluptuous man the reason of his doings, he will answer, It is my pleasure. Two questions would here be examined, for direction of our minds about pleasure.

I. Whether a man may take any pleasure in this world or no? Yes, certainly; one special use of wisdom stands in tempering our pleasures: to be delighted is not evil, but to be delighted in evil. As Paul says, "Be angry, and sin not;" so, Be merry, and sin not. Why hath God given man such choice of earthly commodities, but for his use? The whole world is a well-furnished table; if we shall wilfully fast, we shall be held for sullen guests. Some to avoid the danger of pleasure, have run from the world, changing populous cities for solitary mountains, and the society of men for beasts. As if the world were not in the desert, or the desert not in the world; as if a hermitage could hide a man from the devil, or he could not be tempted while he was alone, or an abstinent desire could not be in a neglected body. Did not Hierome find Rome in his heart, when nothing but rocks and bushes were in his eye? Do we not naturally more affect those delights which are restrained? Is not solitariness a main help to the speed of a temptation?

There is certainly a nearer and a fairer way than this. The wise man will be a hermit at home, and seeks rather to turn the world out of himself, than to turn himself out of the world. He can distinguish between the love of pleasure and the use of pleasure; and while others serve delight, he teacheth delight to serve him. If we see vanity, must we needs dote upon it? Our Saviour saw the glory of earthly kingdoms, yet despised it. The angels see the affairs

and proceedings of us mortals, but as strangers. Lot reaped profit from the goodly meadows of Sodom, he meddled not with their sins. Moses was in the court of Pharaoh, the confluence of all pleasures, yet his heart was suffering with his afflicted countrymen. Elisha saw the secrets of the Syrian state, but as an enemy. David is in the court of Gath, but as his refuge; he was no friend to the Philistines. The world looked upon Abraham, Job, and many other saints, and they contemned it; and cannot we look upon it, but presently we are bewitched with it? Can we not warm us at the sun, but we must make an idol of it? Must we needs either hide our faces, or bow our knees? either renounce all pleasure, or be the slaves of pleasure? What extremes are these! we may be merry, without being mad: let these contentments go and come like strangers: true pleasures be ours, if we be Christ's.

2. How may a Christian take pleasure in the world? By having respect to three things; whether it be lawful, expedient, or becoming. The pleasure must be lawful, there can be no safety in a sinful delight. That which is absolutely evil, can by no circumstance be made good. Poison may be qualified, and become medicinal; there is use to be made of an enemy; sickness may turn to our better health, and death itself to the faithful is but a door to life; but sin can never be made good. Pleasure therefore first must have the warrant, that it be without sin; then the measure, that it be without excess. If the cup be evil, we may not taste it; though good, yet not carouse it. Reason forbids us both to touch known poison, and to be drunk with wholesome wine. Pleasure is like sauce to our meat; we must not be too saucy. A little honey is sweet, much fulsome. We are not born to play or sport. Nor is the lawfulness only observable, but the convenience; a man may wear good clothes unhandisomely. The stuff may be good, yet while the fashion of the garment does not become him, it appears ridiculous. The place, the occasion, the company, the opportunity, all must be fit. The house of mourning is not for mirth; soon did Christ turn the musicians out of doors, Matt. ix. 23. In the time of visitation, while the plague or famine lies sore upon our neighbours, shall we give ourselves to sport and joviance? Isa. xxii. 12, 13. Let us be sure that our delights exclude not the presence of God. (We love the medicine, not for its own sake, but for the health it brings us.) The angels are sent about God's messages to this earth; yet they are never out of their heaven, never without the vision of blessedness. We may be merry, though God be by; we may please ourselves, so long as we displease not him. He that desires pleasure for itself, and is taken up with the sweetness of it, is already drunk. Whereas he that rests not in it, but looks through it to the Giver, referring all to the highest good, is safe, and as far from sin as from sorrow. It is not the use, but affectation of pleasure that offends; therefore all the danger or safety is from within. The body may be a recluse, and the heart a wanderer. I have observed some to look carelessly and strangely on such objects as transport others, and answer questions far from the purpose; it seems they did mind some other thing: it is happy for a man not to mind the world. We eat and recreate, not because we would, but because we must; and when we are best pleased, let us be most suspicious. Let us see pleasure in God, from God, to God: in God, lawfully; from God, thankfully; to God, that is, to his glory.

Now there are also two other queries; Why should men, why should Christian men, riot in pleasures?

1. Why should reasonable men delight in riot? It makes them the worse, the unhealthfuller, the

poorer, none the better. It is every way expensive, and cannot quit the cost. First, to the estate, voluptuousness is a waster: that merchant is likelier to grow rich, that turns his gallery into a warehouse, than he that turns his warehouse into a gallery. Honesty, Utility, and Cheerfulness, keeping house together, Honesty was to govern all, Utility to provide for all, and Cheerfulness to dress or prepare all. They had a great household, yet maintained their charge, relieved the poor, and laid up somewhat for their posterity. All things went sweetly on, while Cheerfulness was the cook, Thriftiness the caterer, and Honesty the steward. If any of the family were disordered, Honesty reformed them; if any lavish and unthrifty, Frugality recovered them; if any melancholy, Cheerfulness revived and cheered them. But after awhile, this Cheerfulness getting a little head, begins to exceed in mirth, and falls out with Utility for short provision: he had invited a number of fiddlers, jesters, players, tumblers, dancers, and must have extraordinary cheer for them. Utility refused to allow it, Cheerfulness would have it, and the quarrel grew hot: while Honesty was called to moderate the matter, this rabble came in, took Cheerfulness's part, snatched the keys out of Utility's hands, ransacked the coffers, exhausted the treasure, turned Honesty and Thrift out of doors; sung, danced, and drunk, and threw (as they say) the house out at the windows. Thus the family broke; for just as Honesty and Utility went out, Beggary came in. Only these two erected a new house, repaired their estates; to whom, not long after, poor Cheerfulness came a begging; but might not be admitted as one of the family, only was sent for sometimes to make them merry, and lived on their alms. You see the moral of this apologue. Cato said, that was a pitiful commonwealth, where a trout was dearer than an ox; and I may say, that is a lamentable state, where a fiddler and a dancer is better maintained than a preacher. Not a few families have thus been ruined, I would the rest would take warning. Secondly, it undoes the credit; who will trust an unthrift? As it is true of spiritual, so of worldly things, To him that hath, shall be given. When Death, Love, and Credit would part, they appointed places to find one another. Death says, You shall be sure to find me in great battles or epidemical plagues. Love says, You shall find me among shepherds, where is no talk of dowries. But Credit told them plainly, They that once part with me, shall never find me again. I need not add, how it overthrows the health; to rot and to riot, differ but one small letter. Howsoever the voluptuous flatter themselves with having the merrier life, I am sure they have the shorter life. They are but crazy, that have a fen about them; how rotten are they that have a fen within them! He is a right spend-all, that besides all spends himself. The philosopher that would ask of the frugal citizen but a penny, begged of the prodigal a talent: and he had his reason for it; because of the one he might beg often, of the other he was like to receive but once, so soon would his estate vanish. The temperate may die, the riotous cannot live; sickness is the daughter of intemperance. Yea, the inordinate life is scarce patient to tarry for sickness, but perisheth by misfortune: often in a brutish manner they go sleeping and senseless to hell, having neither reason, grace, nor time to repent, or so much as cry, Lord, have mercy on us. There is no sin which hurts not the sinner, but of all, riot is the most despatching; so soon doth it bring men to their end, so often doth it kill them in the act of sin!

2. But more; why should Christians seek pleasure in intemperance? We have not so learned Christ,

St. Paul tells us of them weeping, whose belly is their god, Phil. iii. 18. We cannot speak of them without passion and compassion; oh that our prayers and tears could recover them! Why should we seek the pleasures of the world, that have a world of pleasures without it? One delights in turning over his white and red dross, another glories in his vain titles; one takes pleasure in a dainty dish, another in a witty jest; one in a kite, another in a dog: shall these pleasures be our envy, or our scorn? Why do we call ourselves Christians, and rejoice like worldlings? That man solaceeth himself in his earthly possessions, because he hath not a foot of inheritance in heaven; another sports with his hawks and hounds, because he hath no fellowship with saints and angels; a third tells over his bags of gold, because he hath no graces to number; another studies delicate dishes, and provides him sweet wines, because he never tasted the cup of salvation; another prides himself in his titular dignity, because he hath no hope of future glory; a last hunts after nothing but mirth, and is then farthest from it, when he thinks himself deepest in it: he cares not how vain his sport is, so it be pleasant; and if he can while away the time, and chase off melancholy, he thinks that day spent happily. If the world be a man's god, pleasure must needs be his religion.

But shall the Christian be thus cozened? Shall not we disdain these frivolous and lawless delights, that have solid and everlasting comforts? Far better were it to spend our time in tears, than thus to be transported with wanton pleasures. To a holy soul, earthly pleasure is like an importunate fiddler, that without invitation impudently thrusts himself into his chamber, draws and plays, and will not be denied. He may give it the hearing, and that is a high favour, but he dares neither reward nor commend it; yea, he thinks it harsh music, and in his heart secretly condemns it, because he hath far better of his own. When he hath tuned his soul with meditation, he feels a sweet consort within, betwixt God and himself; his part being praise and obedience, and God's part toward him the peace of conscience. This world is like a bad fool in a play; the gross spectators laugh at those jests, whereat the wise man is ready to hiss: he entertains that with scorn, which the rest do with applause. We have the true fountain of joy, let us never stoop to these riotous puddles. Our ends are not the same, why should our ways be so? Some have God, not the world; some have the world, not God; some have neither God nor the world; and some have both. First, some have God, not the world, as Lazarus; his heart was full of divine comforts, while his body lacked crumbs. Secondly, some have the world and not God, as Nabal, who possessed a world of wealth, not a dram of comfort. Thirdly, some have neither God nor the world, nothing but misery here, nothing but torment hereafter. Fourthly, some have both, as Abraham, who was rich while he lived on earth, and dying was glorious in heaven. Let us use the world, but enjoy the Lord; be thankful for these blessings, but rest our hearts on Jesus Christ.

They think it a pleasure, they shall not find it so. Conceit is the charm. Wicked joys are like those locusts, upon whose heads were (not crowns, but) as it were crowns (not of gold, but) like gold; their faces were (not, but) as it were faces of men; their hair (not indeed, but) as the hair of women; their breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron, Rev. ix. 7-9: all these, shadowy, and similitudinary: but, there were stings in their tails, ver. 10; not as it were, but true stings indeed. These idolatrous parasites offer sacrifices to the world, as the Philistines did to their Dagon; "Our god hath delivered into our hands our

enemy," Judg. xvi. 24: they did but think it was Dagon that helped them, it was not. Let us resolve things to their first matter, and so consider them. What is a sumptuous building, but a little burnt earth, or hewed timber? What is a beautiful creature, but the same earth we tread upon better tempered? What is gold, but a vein of the ground better coloured? What, rich apparel, which man takes up in pride, but that the worm hath egested in scorn? Fame is but smoke, metal but dross, and pleasure but a short vanity. Howsoever too many think all this to be but the voice of a melancholy scholar, yet they shall feel and confess it undeniable truth. The devil is like a juggler, that puts the world, like a piece of money, into thy hand, and bids thee hold fast; whereas he by a legerdemain hath formerly got it away, and when thou openest thy hand there is nothing.

We have seen some as happy as the world could make them, yet of all men the most discontented. Large possessions, goodly houses, beautiful spouses, hopeful children, full purses; yet their life hath been neither the longer nor the sweeter, nor their hearts the lighter, nor their meals the heartier, nor their nights the quieter, nor their cares the fewer; yea, none more full of complaints. Among men generally, the poorer the merrier. While I see men at once find wealth and lose their mirth, as if they could not cease to be poor but withal they cease to be happy, I cannot but conclude, that riches and content are like two buckets, while one comes up full, the other goes down empty. Yea, I account none so miserable, as they that grow rich by sin, or great by flattery. When wealth comes on the best terms, it is but vain; when upon ill conditions, it is a curse. What is a silken coat, when there is a stinging conscience within? or a high title to advance the name, when there is a hell in the soul? Oh that men could see, how much better it is to be poor than evil, and that there is no comparison between want and sin! It was a Christian choice of a reverend man, Let me rather be in hell without sin, than glorious and wicked upon earth. Vain pleasures, if they could be sound, yet are short; if they could be long, yet they are not sound. Their best is but as a good day between two ages, or a sunshine betwixt two tempests. Laughter concludes in tears; a little pleasure for so much repentance is but a hard pennyworth. The voluptuous man's ground bears no flowers, but either they prick the fingers or offend the nostrils: if they be sweet, they have their thorns; if fair, yet not without annoyance. The worldling speaks of the Christian, Alas, poor beggar! but the Christian finds him rather worth his pity than his envy; Alas, poor worldling! Moses rather chose to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasure of sin for a season, Heb. xi. 25. I wonder at the faith of Moses; but presupposing his faith, I wonder not at his choice. When the devil shall make this proffer, All these will I give thee; return him Peter's answer. Thy gold perish with thee. "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy," Psal. cxxv. 5; but a world of sensual joys shall never bring man a good harvest. They rejoice, saith one, in false pleasures, they perish in real torments. Men call for pleasure, as the Philistines did for Samson, to make them sport: and it pulls down the house upon their heads. Youth, Health, and Wealth being met, would have a dance; and Pleasure must be their minstrel: but in the first change, those three wanton damsels were taken up by three unhappy mates, Age, Sickness, and Poverty: Youth was surprised by Age, Health by Sickness, and Wealth by Poverty; at which sight, Pleasure fled away, and Time delivered them over to Sorrow.

Uses. 1. Let us think upon this world, as it deserves, with contempt. How little can it do for us, and that little with what deceit! What is thy heart the better, what the merrier, for all these pleasures wherewith it hath befriended thee? When did it offer honey, but a sting withal? milk and slumber, without a nail and a hammer? Pleasure is like a flattering host, that promiseth good cheer, but the reckoning pays for all. He that compares the welcome with the farewell, shall find he had better have fasted. Believe them that have bought their experience dear; it is better to avoid sin before we have tasted, than after we have surfeited. Look we up to that heaven which God hath promised and Christ hath purchased: being but one-half upon earth, let the better part converse above; from thence it came, and thither it is ordained to go. Let us get that resolution, that we are only willing to live, because our time is not yet come to die; pitching our desires upon those pleasures, which have neither bounds nor end; which are certain, though future; while these are fickle, though present. Man's heart will not be empty of thoughts; if heaven have taken up the rooms, the world is disappointed. We confess the happiness of salvation, and wish it; but we fasten on this world. We fill our mouths with heaven, but our hearts and hands with earth. Paradise is a joyful place; yet when death comes, we are loth to go thither. But if a man were travelling a miry way, on a rainy day, in tempestuous weather, were he not mad that had rather go on still, than yield to be at home? The more hold we take of this world, the more we lose hold of the Lord. *Tene certum, dimitte incertum*; i. e. Hold fast what is certain, let go what is uncertain. Let us turn from vain pleasure that seeks us, and seek that pleasure which shall for ever content and never cloy us.

2. Instead of taking pleasure in riot, let us rejoice in Christ. Worldlings offend, that laugh when they should mourn; and Christians offend too, if they droop when they should be cheerful. God hath done great things for us, wherefore we rejoice; and we sin if we rejoice not. They err in false mirth, and we in causeless heaviness, if, while we enjoy the God of salvation, we are sorrowful. Is there any joy without God? And where can God be without joy? When the Lord hath made us happy, he will not thank us to make ourselves miserable. Shall we freeze by a warm fire, or starve at a feast? We find God reconciled, Christ our Advocate, the Holy Spirit our Comforter; we have peace in our conscience, in heaven an inheritance; we should be both angry and ashamed at ourselves, to ask our hearts that question, Why art thou sad, O my soul? If we be in Christ, our very bread is a symbol of the bread of life; and our wine, of that cup we shall drink in heaven. What should discomfort us if Christ be with us? All our joy is not reserved for the next life, some is afforded us on earth; God's greater light doth not extinguish the less. Friends, children, wine, oil, health, liberty, competency, are not given us for discontent. We may not make them God's rivals, but rejoice in them as God's blessings. In themselves they are nothing, in him they are worth our joy. If God had not thought them blessings he had not bestowed them; and how are thy blessings if we delight not in them? Because we may not take pleasure in every thing, shall we therefore take pleasure in nothing? They wrong Christians that forbid them mirth: the gospel is not such dull metal, but the tidings of joy to all believers.

"Spots they are and blemishes." In every sin there is not only guilt, that binds over to punishment, but defilement which makes the sinner not less

filthy than guilty; and even when the guilt is remitted the filth remains still. A child by his own unruliness hath gotten a hurt or maim; upon his prayers and tears he is spared the punishment; his father may forgive him, but it requires time before the surgeon can heal him: the hurt is not so soon cured, as the fault is pardoned. David cries, I have sinned, and God answers, I have taken away thy sin, 2 Sam. xii. 13; yet there still abides a spot for David's tears; which he must weep thoroughly to wash off. Spots and blemishes; the words are but two, put together with a conjunction, and I will not put them asunder with a division. The argument of my discourse is corruption, putrefaction, sores, and diseases; so that it may be called a spiritual sermon. No man looks upon ulcers with pleased eyes, yet the surgeon must see them. We love to behold goldsmiths' stalls well adorned with choice of plate, of jewels; not dunghills; yet the cock in scraping the dunghill found a jewel. We like to see beautiful creatures, not horrid beasts and serpents; yet the painter made a famous piece of Bucephalus, and the crocodile was so curiously shadowed, that in Egypt it was taken for a god, and worshipped. We delight to view flowers of various forms and colours, not weeds; yet to paint a weed to the life, is held a good art. Whatsoever I want of the art, I shall do my endeavour to resolve this short character into divers conclusions.

1. All men are spotted, originally from their parents; of actual spots themselves are the parents. So foul are all by nature, that they can neither be good nor see good. If thou ask how thou camest by it; thou art beholden for it to thy father, he to his father, all to Adam, Adam to Eve, and Eve to the devil. There is no evil which our natural uncleanness would not admit, if God restrained not. Every actual sin is a spot to the soul; a lustful look is a spot to the eye; a bribe taken is a spot to the hand; he that unjustly gets or keeps away another's right, is worse than a thief burned in the hand. Church dues detained is a spot to the estate, that cannot be washed out from the sacrilegious man or his heritage; every oath or lie is a spot on the tongue; every malicious thought is a spot on the breast; every riotous draught is a spot on the throat; every idolatrous eringe is a spot on the knees. You will say these spots are not visible, not seen on the body. No, for hypocrisy is a white skin drawn over them, which from our dull eyes hides their appearance. But to God they are visible, to whom all hearts are more transparent than any diaphanous glass is to us. And at the last day, all these spots shall show themselves (when all secrets shall be legible) in their odious forms. Now as it is in some mortal infection, the spots appear not in the flesh, but strike inward to the heart, and kill it. If all our internal spots should break out, we could not endure one another. The whole world would be an hospital, and every man a leper. God calls for sacrifice, the priest presents it, but it must be without blemish: we have no sacrifice to offer but ourselves, and how will he accept a spotted man, that required an unspotted beast? This is one step.

2. The whole world is spotted, that is another step: in the universal blemishes of nature let us read our own. When I consider the great and good work of God in the creation, making all things for man, and I man for himself, I think of the people's acclamation to the same Workman, in a new and greater work of our redemption; "He hath done all things well," Mark vii. 37. He hath done, such is his power; all things, such is his wisdom; well, such is his goodness. First, we have the work of Christ, He hath

done; then the universality of the work, all things; lastly, the nature of that universality, well. When I look upon the present world, I find a great alteration; foulness and corruption in those creatures, which were from God of so pure a constitution. He made the world so fair, that he loved it; but when man had took it in hand, he began to loathe it. "All flesh had corrupted his way," Gen. vi. 12. Corrupted, that is the turpitude; all flesh, that is the latitude. The morning saw all things very good, the evening of the same day saw spots and blemishes in all creatures. To charge God with this degeneration, is the highest blasphemy: coldness may sooner arise from fire, than any evil from the fountain of goodness. Indeed there is a penal evil; and this he acknowledgeth his own, Amos iii. 6: there is a criminal evil, which we call a radical, causal one; this is ours. This last is an unrighteous action, which pleaseth man, and displeaseth God: the other is a just suffering, that pleaseth God, and displeaseth man. The punishment of sin is not properly an evil, but a good action of justice; dishonouring the guilty creature, to honour his holy Maker. As we say of war, it is a destroyer of nature individually, but a preserver of it universally.

Of this foul and spotted evil, God is not the author, but the avenger. How then came these spots? "An enemy hath done this," Matt. xiii. 28, sowing tares upon the wheat. Which shows, first, that good was before evil, for it is *superseminatio*, i. e. a sowing upon: good had the priority, though evil hath now got the superiority. Next, that evil is an accident, not a nature; but such an accident as hath quite spoiled nature, as rust mars the gold. That as we say of a prince, though he be a god on earth, yet he is but an earthly god; though a god before men, yet but a man before God: so our whole natural condition, which was angelical in respect of the beasts, is now but (as it were) bestial in respect of the angels. I do not intend by this, according to the dotage of some new philosophers, that every irregularity on earth puts a star out of order in the firmament; that every adulterous act here, sticks a blot upon the moon there; that our pride and ambition hath brought the sun lower than it was, that he either slacks or mends his pace as we grow dull or forward in God's service. For the stars keep their courses, Judg. v. 20; the moon hath no more blemishes than she had a thousand years ago; the sun is neither come nearer, nor gone further off, but keeps the same line wherein God bade it run at the first: the heavens are as clear, and the planets as regular in their courses, as ever; the celestial bodies admit of no qualities. If all our sins were set as spots on the sun, it had been as black as pitch before this time. But this I say, the whole creature groaneth under the bondage of our corruption, Rom. viii. 21, 22: and the world was once so foul with our iniquities, that the Maker scoured it with an inundation of water; and again, it is grown so filthy, that he will purify it with a deluge of fire, in the day of judgment.

3. But if every man be spotted, who shall then enter into heaven, seeing into that city no unclean thing shall come? Rev. xxi. 27. This is true, yet many that have been unclean persons, are since admitted. They went not in impure; Such ye were, (as could not enter,) but ye are cleansed, saith Paul to his Corinthians, 1 Cor. vi. 11. They were all naturally unclean, yet many of them are now in heaven; but before they entered, they were washed. I list not to uncover the spots of God's saints; let them be buried in the dust with their bodies: yet

their souls are in heaven; how got they thither? They washed them and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, Rev. vii. 14. Washed, therefore they had been foul; made them white, therefore they were of a stained colour before. If God should look for a spotlessness here, whom should he look upon? Is any man's heart pure? no, he shall have cause to his death-bed of redoubling that prayer, "Create in me a clean heart, O God," Psal. li. 10. And his confessor may still preach to him that text, "Wash thy heart from wickedness, that thou mayst be saved," Jer. iv. 14. And who can say he hath clean hands? Say his heart were clean, say his hands, yet be his feet clean? They stand next the earth, therefore are aptest to soil. For this purpose Christ washed his disciples' feet, and thus commented on it, and interpreted his own action; "He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet," John xiii. 10. Out of the bath a man comes washed all over, yet some gravel will stick on his feet.

He is not of an earthen constitution, that hath no earthly affection. Christ took our flesh, took it without spot, without spot he kept it; no man else ever received it so, or kept it so. Hate the garment spotted by the flesh, Jude 23; yet the flesh itself is this garment, and it spots itself with itself. Job was a holy man; yet he confesseth after all this washing, that his own clothes would make him abhorred, Job ix. 31. David holy, yet he desired to be purged with hyssop, Psal. li. 7. The church is said to have no spot, Cant. iv. 7; yet every particular limb of that fair and spotless body, every soul in that church, is full of spots. Yea, Christ himself hath spots, not by nature, but by imputation; not his own, but ours; he took all our stains and deformities; he became sin for us, 2 Cor. v. 21; for us he was made full of spots, that we in him might be spotless. The grace of God may go a great way in our souls, and yet not leave us without spots. Mercies may fall in abundant showers on our hearts, and yet not mollify all our hardness. Those holy fires may consume a great deal of our dross, not all. Corrections are a bath to purge us from the foul corruptions we gather by walking in this dirty world; yet Israel confesseth, they were not cleansed from the iniquity of Peor to this day, Josh. xxii. 17. God may heal our wounds, and yet leave scars; purge our blood, and yet leave spots. But there is no spot so foul, which repentance cannot wash off: this shall make a man lift up his face without spot, Job xi. 15. And St. Paul prays for his Thessalonians, that they might be presented blameless at the coming of Christ; which he would never have begged, if he knew it never could be granted. Not to have no spot here, but to have no spot imputed hereafter, is the happiness of a Christian.

4. We have all spots, but these are spots; for the apostle speaks not of their actions here, but their persons; not the blemishes of the men, but that the men themselves are blemishes. This is a high degree of sin, to be wholly turned into sin. The leopard is full of spots, but the leopard is not a spot, nor is the spot a leopard. Many a body is diseased, but the body is one thing, the disease another; but when the whole body is turned into a disease, it in a manner ceaseth to be a body. When the clouds let fall their showers by drops, we call it a rain; but when all those drops are met in one channel, it is no more a rain now, but a flood. They have committed so many sins, that for the number and continuity of them, they cease to be sinners, and are very sins: as the prophet Micah calls it not the idolatry of Jerusalem, but the Jerusalem of idolatry, Micah i. 5. The case seemed desperate, when there was no

oundness, nothing but corruption; and David says, There is no whole part in my flesh; and Job is said to be so full of ulcers, that a pin's point could not be thrust between them. If this were other than an emphatical expression of their malady, it was strange that the whole flesh should be one coagulated ulcer. Yet was this bile but upon the flesh, and there was life within; but here the whole soul and body becomes one botch: as Lucan spake of a wounded body, *Totum est pro vulnere corpus*: i. e. No more a body, but a wound; no more sinful creatures, but creatures that be sins. If there were not several degrees of sin on earth, there should not be several measures of torment in hell. When travellers ride together in a dirty way, all are dashed, but some more or less than others, according to their more or less circumspection or advantage. Vice is said (in the fable) to have in her garden a subterraneous vault; out of which she could convey foul water, to soil the curious spectators; which was of different operations in the staining. They that were defiled with the aspersions of wantonness, were sooner dried; they that with pride, covetousness, ambition, quite spoiled their garments; they that with envy, treachery, homicide, sacrilege, could never get out the spots, but were fain to cast their clothes into the fire. Spots may be sized in so deep, as not to be purged but with the fire of hell.

5. To whom do these appear spots and blemishes? (1.) To God, who hath pure eyes, and can abide no unclean thing. He hates filthiness in his own, though he does not hate his own for filthiness, because he respects them in Christ; but in the reprobate he so abhors the sin, that he hates even the sinner for it. It was for the sin of man, that God repented he made man: thus it offends the First Person. These spots drew from Christ a sweat of blood in the garden, and the blood of his life on the cross; so they offend the Second Person. They also grieve the Holy Ghost; who looking for the fruit of joy and peace, and such sweet perfumes, finds the stench of sordid corruptions.

(2.) To the angels: they despise not a diseased body, nor an infected house, if a holy soul dwell there. "No plague shall come nigh thy dwelling, for he shall give his angels charge over thee," Psal. xci. 10, 11. They are set not only to keep us and the plague asunder, but still to keep us though we light in a house together. They do not scorn to take Lazarus's soul out of an ulcerous body. It is not sickness, but sin, from which they turn their faces. But now, should angels stand by sinners in their acts of uncleanness? Must an angel wait upon a proud fop, while he is dressing himself by the glass? While men ply their drunken carousers in taverns, do they look that their angels should fly up and down the room? Iniquities be sport for devils, but an eyesore to the angels; they that rejoice at a sinner's conversion, do rather grieve at his aberration.

(3.) To good men, whom nothing pleases that displeases their Maker. While the world is laughing, David is mourning for them: Mine eyes gush out rivers of waters, because they keep not thy law, Psal. exix. 136. Men turn from lazars and lepers, and refuse to visit visited houses; yet *Tutius morbi, quam vitii consortium*: it is better dwelling with good men in an unwholesome climate, than in the purest air with unclean persons; as Lot, in a good land with a bad set.

(4.) To bad men; for howsoever sinners love to be evil themselves, yet they would have others good to them. Nero, that took such pleasure in shedding blood, when his own turn came, complained. He that delights in polluting the marriage-bed of

others, would not have his own abused. The thief would not have his own goods stolen; the proud man is said to carry a dagger, to stab him that is prouder. No wicked man doth wish to suffer what he takes pleasure to do. We read of four lepers that kept company together, 2 Kings vii. 3, but it was upon a desperate adventure; neither could endure the other's leprosy. He that hath the most corrupt lungs, complains of another's offensive breath. "Naaman, the captain of the host of the Syrian king, was a great man with his master, and honourable, and a mighty man in valour, but he was a leper," 2 Kings v. 1. A great warrior, an honourable courtier, yet a leper! The leprosy was a nasty and loathsome disease, yet this odious and wearisome condition lights upon a great person. Now, what was all his glory with his leprosy? They that honoured him, avoided him; and he was abhorred of those that flattered him. The basest slave of Syria would not change skins with him, though he might have his honour to boot. So men given to villanies are shunned of those that are little other than villainous. These spots are infectious, more than the plague-tokens; and though they please other dissolute souls here, yet they shall curse them in hell, because their example is the cause of their greater torment.

(5.) To the creatures; for God made them to serve man, and to wait upon him in the service of God: now when man turns himself out of God's service, all the creatures in serving him are (as it were) turned out of God's service too, and grieve that they are compelled to wait upon a wrong master.

(6.) They are offensive to the very damned in hell; which seemeth strange, but it is true. That rich man, Luke xvi., not out of charity to his brethren, but favour to himself, requested that warning might be given to his brethren; lest as his example increased their sins, their sins should advance his torments.

(7.) But now, lastly, do they not offend themselves? No, the sick man may feel, the dead does not. Who knows the spots on his own face, but either by the reflection of a glass, or by the relation of others? The leper cannot choose but abhor himself: how little pleasure did that Syrian peer take to be stooped unto by others, while he hated to see himself; while his hand could not move to his mouth without his own detestation! But this is a spiritual disease, festering inwards: when the conscience is unclasped, and these spots break forth; as when the bottomless pit was opened the locusts flew out; and sin shall write her inscription on the doors, not as in visited houses, Lord, have mercy on us, but in the chambers of despair, All mercy is fled from us; it will be fearful.

6. Sin is of a defiling quality; like a bemed dog, when it fawns upon us it fouls us. It may in this one thing be compared to fire, it converts matter into itself. Stain a cloth, or dye it into another colour, yet still it remains a cloth: the body turns meat into itself, is not turned into the meat: only as fire can convert a burning material into fire, so sin turns a man into sin, that he is no more a man, but a very spot. Corporal leprosy has been healed by natural means; and blemishes that art cannot cure, yet it hath devices to hide. But for these blemishes, there is nothing in nature to cure them, nothing in art to cover them. If honour could do it, Naaman had been no leper. A noble sinner is but a noble spot. If riches, Nabal had not been branded for a churl; but heaps of wealth laid upon heaps of wickedness, make but a great dunghill. Can perfumes? Civet indeed will make a dog smell as

sweet as his master; but a vicious life doth more stink through a garnished body, than a rotten body doth through perfumed garments. Can beauty? No, even when there appears no blemish in the outward skin, yet, through a lascivious demeanour, the beauty itself becomes a blemish. Nay, can profession itself hide or heal the spiritual leprosy? Rome dresseth herself in the robes and titles of the chaste spouse of Christ, yet is she not still that scarlet whore? The Jesuits have been saucy with the name of Jesus, are they not still that mystery of iniquity? Saul did prophesy in the college, was he not still a blot in the world? Many are beautiful as the sons of the morning in their profession, that are still black birds, children of the night, in their conversation. As Sigismund the emperor said of Julian the cardinal, legate at the council of Basil, when he was highly commended to him, *Tamen Romanus est*, i. e. Yet he is a Roman; so we may say of a hypocrite, when he is praised for his zealous devotion, *Tamen macula est*, i. e. Yet he is a blemish. Men of foul and corrupt manners shall find nothing in nature or art, that shall keep them from being, and being called, spots.

7. Open and notorious offenders ought to be denied these holy feasts, to be put from the sacrament; and instead of communicating with us, to pass under the censure of excommunication from us; till in penitent tears they have cleansed their pollutions. Spots in the life are worse than spots in the face: if such sluttish aspersions appear on the skin, will any man come to the church before he hath washed his face? These are not members, but spots of the body; we pare off such excrescent blemishes that the body may be perfect. They may be in the decree of God members of Christ, they are not so yet in the judgment of man: we call not a wart on the flesh, a part of the body. Indeed it is true, as Augustine says, It belongs to the servant to invite, but to God to separate; yet the minister calls in some, whom the Master casts out, Matt. xxii. 13. We may not put the sign of Christ's body into a drunken hand; nor offer the symbol of his blood to a bloody and malicious heart; nor the sacrament of peace, and love to them that hate both love and peace. We do not only say, Come not hither if ye be such; but we must not suffer you to come hither if we know you to be such. We wash our hands before we take our temporal food, and shall we not cleanse our hearts before we receive our spiritual? The dead body of Christ was wrapped in clean linen, and is not his living body worthy of a clean conscience? The body and blood of the Lord doth make us holy, and is it not our default if the same should make us guilty? Read and compare John vi. 54, with 1 Cor. xi. 29. How contrary are these effects of the same thing in divers men! even as life and death, heaven and hell, salvation and perdition, eternal joy and eternal fire. Oh that man for a little filthy lust, the pleasure of his sense, or indulgence to his affections, should convert heavenly food to his own bane! He that comes a penitent, departs an innocent; they that come with all their unwashed blemishes, with a thousand woes return; the supper of life is to them a bloody banquet.

Observe what preparation was required for receiving of the law, Exod. xix. 10. For time, three days; if so much time must be spent in preparing to take it, our whole life is short enough to prepare a reckoning for it. That was the word of a command, Paul calls it the ministration of death; this is the word of promise, the promise of Christ and salvation with him. If that required three days, which was all terror, what time of preparation is due to this that is all comfort! When our souls are at the best, yet our ap-

proach to God requires particular addresses and new preparations; it is well if the whole Lent can prepare our hearts for Easter; and they that do not fit themselves before they come, had better have kept away. For matter, all Israel must be sanctified; what was the cause? Seven weeks they had been out of Egypt, yet all this while Egypt was not gone out of them; the Egyptian vices, together with their fleshpots, stuck still in their memories, in their appetites. They had passed by many waters, of the Red Sea, of Marah, of that which gushed out of the rock; yet the infection of Egypt was not washed off; therefore they must be sanctified. Doth not this charge lie as close upon us? Now is the time (Easter) we draw near unto God in a special manner: he often preacheth to us, and we hear him; we often call upon him, and he hears us; but now we come one step nearer, as it were to take him by the hand, and convey him in these holy symbols to our heart. Sin is never safe, but then most dangerous when we bring it into the presence of God. If it comes along with us to the communion table, it shall not only frustrate what we do, but endanger us to a worse estate than we brought thither. At all times we must be holy, but then especially when we present ourselves to the holy eyes of our Maker. Who dares kiss the king's hand with a foul mouth? We wash before our private meals at home daily; but when we are to eat with some great person, we scour our hands with balls. We cannot be too holy when we come to feed with our Saviour, Rev. iii. 20, yea, to feed upon him. When he is a Guest, we are but the host; but when we are his guests, he is both the Host and the feast, even the cheer itself. Now if they must be so sanctified to receive the law, how holy should we be to receive the grace of the gospel! Yea, not only their persons, but their very clothes, must be cleansed; as they that come out of infected houses air their garments; their clothes smelt of Egypt, and must be washed. But why their clothes? and why washed? Garments are not capable of sin; if they were, water would not cleanse them. The danger was neither in their skins, nor in their coats, yet they must be washed, that they might learn by the cleanness of their clothes, with what souls to appear before God. Because they were more in danger of being foul than of being bare, they are washed to begin their age in purity.

At this solemn time men use to put on their best garments; a custom which we approve, rather than reprove: it is fit our reverence to the presence of God should be seen in our very vestures. Devotion takes no pleasure to dwell slovenly; like Galba's wit, under a deformed roof. Christ doth not condemn external cleanness, when he prefers inward holiness, Luke xi. 39. It is not the beauty of the skin, but the uncleanness of the heart, that comes under censure. A crystal glass doth well, but we do not use to put mud into it. But what is a neat suit with foul and ragged linings, a white skin with a filthy soul? Rather than not to have the face fair, too many use lotions and colours to blanch it; as one says, God made the face, and the devil paints it. Yet, both within and without, we should be cleanly. But especially God looks to the pureness of that part which resembles himself. He made every creature after his kind, Gen. i. 24; man in the image of himself. A whitened or adorned clay is not his image; the God of spirits looks to the spirit, that that be holy and humble, both. For some will be holy, and not humble; but all the pureness of their minds will not bear out the stiffness of their knees. If they want reverence, pretend what they will, I shall hardly credit their holiness. Others seem humble, but they

forget to be holy ; so some guests sit down with the rest, but they have no appetite.

In a word, receive him with cleansed hands and joyful hearts. Let not Christ be forced upon you, but stretch out a thankful hand to receive him. If thou art not a receiver, thou art a deceiver, thou cozenest thine own soul. And let Christ be present mentally, when he cannot be had sacramentally. But when the feast is prepared, and we invited, let us come. Let us avoid spots, that we be not defiled ; bewail our spots, that they may be pardoned ; and resolve against all spots hereafter, that we may be comforted.

8. We may not abstain from the sacrament, because there be spots and blemishes in the society. It is true, these spots should be removed ; say they are not, shall we therefore remove ourselves ? To them the holy bread is bane, to thee it is salvation. The unworthy receiver " eateth and drinketh damnation to himself," 1 Cor. xi. 29 ; to himself, not to thee. If we communicate with evil men, and not in evil things, we have no harm. Woe were us, if we should live in the danger of all men's sins ! we have enough of our own, we need not borrow of others. Every man shall bear his own burden ; ours is not so light, that we should call for more weight, and undertake what God never imposed. It was enough for him that was God and man, to bear the iniquity of us all ; it is no task for us : alas, we faint under the least of our own. Nor can others' sins become ours by toleration or connivance, but by imitation and indulgence. If each man's known blemish be every man's, then is every son of Adam as public a person as his father was. We were all in Adam, stood or fell in him ; there must be some difference between the root and the branches. My father's sin is not mine, much less my neighbour's ; " The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father," Ezek. xviii. 20. Unless a spotted soul could blemish the sacrament, it is to my believing heart the bread of life. The church of Thyatira had many blots, yet the Holy Ghost lays on them none other burden but this, " That which ye have already hold fast till I come," Rev. ii. 24, 25. He bids them not leave the church, but hold fast their own.

But " a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump," 1 Cor. v. 6. It is true, by the infection of it ; but it only soureth them that partake it, not those that dislike it. Am I become an adulterer, because an adulterer communicates with me ? Am I guilty of excess, because he that was yesterday drunk, to-day eats with me soberly ? Charity would think that no man brings his sin along with him to the sacrament ; but rather, hath formerly exonerated his soul by repentance. While we dislike, resist, reprove, and mourn for it, it cannot be ours. The Corinthians had these love-feasts, and in them gross and sinful disorders ; yet Paul doth not say, Abstain from the sacrament till they be reformed. No, he corrects the abuse, but he commands the act : That you come together for the worse, I praise you not ; but that you come together, I praise you. God hath commanded us to hear and receive ; where did he ever say, Except you must come among sinners ? Their uncleanness can no more defile us, than our holiness can excuse them. We are invited to a feast ; if but a napkin or a trencher be misplaced, or a dish ill carved, we fly off from the table in a fume, and never stay to thank our host. Oh that men would be but sober, and either less curious or more charitable !

9. As all sins are spots, so some have a more special resemblance, as carrying in them a natural poison and filthiness. Such particular instances we find in the Scriptures, wherein God discovered the spots

in their consciences, by sticking spots on their bodies. The Egyptians and magicians contest with Moses, and are struck with a scab on their faces, Exod. ix. 11. It is against men's lusts that we fight, and for their lusts they contend against us ; spots they would defend, and therefore God lays on them such spots from which they shall not defend themselves. I never knew men oppose God's messengers, but once before their death they complained of their gettings. Miriam's foul tongue is punished with a foul face, Numb. xii. 10. She would have been as glorious as her brother Moses ; now every Israelite sees his face glorious, hers leprous. The venom of her tongue would have eaten into the reputation of her prince, therefore the venom of leprosy eats into her flesh. Both Moses and Miriam had need of veils, the one to shadow his glory, the other to hide her deformity. And indeed, deformity is the fit cure of pride : she scorned Zipporah the Midianite for not being so fair as herself, now the Midianite will not change complexions with her. Pride and envy are two fatal spots, they seldom escape infamy ; the Divine justice will cast filth in their faces. Let them that be proud because they are well-favoured, think on Miriam : the beauty that is held with affection, shall perish with contempt : God hath spots for the proudest face.

Of this cup drank Gehazi ; seeing he would needs take part of Naaman's money, he shall take part with him in his leprosy, 2 Kings v. 27. These were heavy talents for Gehazi ; he had far better have kept a light purse and a homely coat, with a sound body and a clean soul. The talents were never heavy till now ; two of Naaman's servants bore them for him before, now Gehazi must bear them himself alone. He desired a load of treasure, and he hath loaded himself with a curse : he would have two suits, and he hath got a third to boot ; one more than he looked for, an unchangeable suit ; that shall last as long as his skin, that shall clothe him with shame, and be ever loathsomely white, noisomely unclean. The sins of Gehazi were covetousness, fraud, sacrilege ; and all passengers shall read these in leprous characters. What be more truly the sins of this city, than these three of Gehazi ? Sacrilege, in which it hath justified all the world ; covetousness in our hearts, fraud in our hands, who complains not of ? These be the spots of our souls ; and hath not God answered them all, over and over again, with spots on our bodies ? Have we not been plagued for these injuries, with stinging leprosy ? Have our own persons only bore the punishment ? No, but as Gehazi's sin was not only read in his flesh, but in his posterity's ; so even the children have drunk of the fathers' cup.

Lastly, for application : our land is too full of these spots ; it is more populous of blemishes than of inhabitants. There is a tale of St. Bridget, that she heard the blessed Virgin saying to her Son, Rome is a fruitful land : to whom he answered, it is so indeed, only fruitful of tares. (Catal. Test. Verit. tom. ii. pag. 800.) If a man were in Tartary, he might see abundance of men, but all black-a-moors : we have store of Christians, but a greater number of them be spotted Christians ; yea, not a few be rather spots than Christians. Our sins multiply faster than our people. Oh that there were any comparison between their numbers ! for one man hath a great number of sins. We had but some families of papists ; now they talk of whole colonies, streets, and lanes, and parishes of the brood of that spotted harlot. Drunkards were as rare as wolves, now they are as common as hogs. Harlots were like owls, only night-birds ; now they keep open house, pay scot and lot with their honest

neighbours. With spotted lives we profess that unspotted Lamb.

We know there is a spotted fever that rageth and rangeth among us, (Ann. 1624.) in which we may read our spotted courses. How justly doth God retaliate to us our sins; spot for spot, blemish for blemish; for the hidden spots of our souls, these visible spots on our bodies! I do not censure the persons sick of that disease; God forbid: there be greater sinners that escape than some that suffer. A good man may die of that plague which was bred by others' sins. Of a poisoned fountain in the way, the innocent passenger may miscarry as well as the guilty, the true man as the thief. Yet from a general visitation we may gather a general instruction. By a fever that discovers itself in spots, God punisheth our undiscovered sins; thus he cries quittance with us. The spots declare the sickness to be a malignant and pestilential disease; and by these tokens the physicians see more clearly what to do. You will say, There is comfort in that: but most commonly all they can do comes to nothing; there is no comfort in that. It is some benefit for a man to know his enemy; but withal to know him too hard for him, is small benefit. It is a poor step toward recovery, when our spots do only tell us that we are worse than we thought ourselves. Indeed it is well, if God's marks upon us can be our marks to God, and like symptoms of death direct us to the Fountain of life; if this judgment can make way for mercy, as a strong wind clears the air for the sunshine. To say, the house is visited, God's tokens and marks be there, the spots are upon them, keeps off friends; for few men dare visit where God hath visited. But though they dare not come, under pretence of being pestiducts to others, yet the Lord fails not to visit his with compassion, as with affliction. Many a man hath been saved that had God's marks upon him; but he is a wanderer, in a woful state, upon whom God hath not set his marks. Paul professeth that he bore about in his body the marks of the Lord Jesus, Gal. vi. 17, and this was his joy. David hath it, Show some good token on me for good, Psal. lxxxvi. 17. There is then a token for good, a token of goodness; and the heat of a fever working on the body may be but the chafing of the wax, that God may set the seal of salvation upon it. Howsoever, let us pray for them that have these spots on their bodies, God comfort them; and no less heartily for ourselves that have these spots on our souls, God amend us.

Uses. 1. Learn to see thy spots. Many have unknown sins, as a man may have a mole on his back, and himself never know it. Lord, cleanse me from my secret faults, Psal. xix. 12. But have we not spots whereof we are not ignorant? In diseases, sometimes nature is strong enough to put forth spots, and there she cries to us by these outward declarations, that we are sick; sometimes she cannot do it but by the force of cordials. Sometimes conscience of herself shows us our sins; sometimes she cannot but by medicines, arguments that convince us out of the holy word. Some can see, and will not, as Balaam; some would see, and cannot, as the eunuch: some neither will nor can, as Pharaoh; some both can and will, as David. We may know the malice of a man by his confession, yet we do not know whether there be not as much malice remaining in him after his confession; we are sure of his hatred, not of his repentance. Many a one knows his fault, yet loves it. It is poor comfort to know much danger, and not to know that that is the worst. A woman is eased by being delivered, and she forgets her pains at the birth of a son; but could she read his future story, how ill a man, perhaps how ill a son, he would

prove, I doubt whether the case of her body would recompence the grief of her mind. What am I the better to know my calamity, if I know not the way to comfort? Such a knowledge would but increase sorrow, and be a purchase clogged with more encumbrances.

Yet is it the first degree toward recovery, to see our spots, though upon the sight we have a touch of despair. There be some virtues that cannot be exercised but in trouble. We must be poor and want, before we can exercise the virtue of thankfulness; we must be miserable and in anguish, before we can exercise the virtue of patience; so we must be sinners and have spots, yea, we must see those spots, and feel those sins, before we can exercise the grace of repentance. If we did not cry, we should die, and by our crying we come to live: though we dig deep, yet the gold is worth our labour. What must we do next?

2. Confess these spots. Our corporal blemishes we hide from men's sight, and that with modesty: none but beggars expose their sores, to move compassion. And we do not amiss to hide our infirmities also from public view; seeing every sin doubles its own malignity by being offensive. But if we hide our spots from God, we and our spots shall perish together. The spots that God hateth, are the spots that man hideth. He that carveth a piece of wood, covers the spots, Wisd. xiii. 14; as the painter hid the scar in Agamemnon's face: and many living pieces are painted for the same purpose. Yea, there be some that study to be spotted; as if they thought themselves then fairest when they are foulest. Jacob practised an invention to procure spots on his sheep; and these invent, meditate, project how to procure spots in their souls. And yet when they have them, they are as careful to hide them; if God can find them, so it is; he shall not know it from their mouth. These are idolaters of their own stains, in love with their own foulnesses, and conceal them as Rachel did her father's gods. But "he that covereth his sins shall not prosper," Prov. xxviii. 13. There is a voluntary confession, the language of a tender conscience; and there is a confession upon the rack, when the smart of our sides opens our lips. Jacob sought to bring spots on his lambs, and God did prosper his rods: when affliction can bring us to confess our spots, then God doth prosper his own rods. Until we tell the heavenly Physician our spots, he applies no medicine; unless we call that a medicine, which drives us to tell them. But without discovery of our disease, how should there be a recovery of our health? In the courts of human justice the safest plea is, Not guilty; but in the court of conscience, Guilty: Lord, have mercy on me a sinner.

3. It is madness to confess ourselves foul, and not to wash; therefore let us endeavour our own cleansing: that as our apostacy hath blurred our pureness, so our renovation may put out our apostacy; and as sin defiled nature, so grace may destroy sin. In our making there was work for God only; in our marring there was work for ourselves only; in our restoring there is work for God and ourselves together. To do this, sprinkling will not serve: so Agrippa stood within the shower of Christianity, and had some aspersions of it; he was almost persuaded to be a Christian: as the dew stands in drops on the blasted grass. If sprinkling could make a cloth clean, we should never stand to wash it. Nor is dipping sufficient: so Nicodemus had an immersion in the river of grace; but Christ tells him, Except he "be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," John iii. 5: he must have a better scouring ere he get in. Some look

into the church, but have not the power to tarry; here is a dip and away. Nor will half-washing do it, or washing by halves; like Ephraim's cake, half-turned, dough-baked, Hos. vii. 8. Men may be washed, and not clean. Hypocrites deceive many, but none so much as themselves. Indeed dipping or sprinkling shall be effectual, when the Spirit of God applies it. Once dipping in the pool of Bethesda cured, John v. 4; and the blood of the new covenant is called "the blood of sprinkling," Heb. xii. 24. "I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean," Ezek. xxxvi. 25. It is no more with God, but as the prophet said to Naaman, "Wash, and be clean," 2 Kings v. 13. But for us, when we put our souls to washing, let us be sure there is water enough; as John baptized in Enon, "because there was much water," John iii. 23. Our founts are made large enough to dip the infant, but charity dispenseth with ceremony. Let thine eyes gush out a stream of penitent tears, to bathe and purge thy conscience from these spots. I wash my bed, and water my couch with my tears, saith David, Psal. vi. 6; tears enough to run down from his bed to his couch. Many guests were invited to that great supper, Luke xiv. 22, yet there was room: he sends for more, takes them up from the hedges and highways, and rests not bidding till the rooms were full. So invite graces to thy soul; bid repentance, a heart-easing guest; bid faith, a cheerful guest; humility, charity, patience, zeal, till thy house be filled. Be not washed without and foul within: hypocrites are but painted tombs; look on them, they please your eyes; look into them, they offend your nostrils. Some have washed their faces, not their hands; so Judas's face kisseth Christ, but his foul hand betrays him. Some have washed their hands, not their faces; so Pilate washed his hands, yet with his mouth condemned the innocent. Some have washed their eyes, not their ears; they presume to understand so much of their own judgments, that they scorn to hear any preacher. Some have washed their ears, not their eyes; they come to hear, but their eyes are full of uncleanness. Some have washed only one side; like plaicees, you see a white side, turn them over, and they show you the black. Others have washed all but their feet; and those, for place and motion, are foul still. But let us leave no part unwashed on earth, as we desire that no part should be excluded from heaven.

4. To conclude, there is only one fountain to purge all these spots, the blood of the Lamb. For this purpose was Christ baptized, even to wash us. There was in him neither foreskin of corruption, to need the knife, nor filthiness, to need the water: he came not to be his own Saviour, but ours. We were all unclean; he would therefore have that done to his most pure body, which might be of force to cleanse our most impure souls. His baptism gives virtue to ours; yea, it doth not only wash the souls of men, but it washeth that very water whereby we are washed. By that act the water became clean and holy, and can both cleanse and hallow us. If the handkerchiefs that touched the apostle had power of cure, how much more that water which the sacred body of Christ touched! His first baptizing was with water, his last with blood; both of them wash the world from their sins. If we manifest them to him by a humble confession, he will take them from us to himself by a merciful translation. The spots of every believer belong to the body of his Saviour; for this purpose he came to the earth, even to assume them. So that when we deplore our spots, we do but present him with his own; and till we do so, we withhold his right. He doth challenge the sins of all humble penitents to be his by imputation, and by imputation

we challenge in faith his righteousness to be ours. O Christ, take from us that foulness of our own, which would condemn us; and give us that holiness of thine, which is only able to save us. Amen.

"Sporting themselves with their deceivings." These words asunder describe to us a varlet and a fool, and both together make up a devil. To sin in deceiving is the part of a lewd wit; to make sport with sinning, is the part of a foolish heart. It is easy to deceive, to deceive a friend, to deceive under the impression of friendship; to make this a sport, is most wicked. We have an Ahithophel in the one, a Hanan in the other, a Belial in both. First, consider them asunder.

"Their deceivings." He that is resolved to make no matter of his conscience, may easily find matter enough for his deceiving. But is there no deceit justifiable? Be there not pious frauds, compensative sins; as when a virgin is saved from ravishment, a man from murder, by a lie? There is no intentional good can bear out a formal evil. I know it is good to prevent sin, but not to prevent it with sin. The Egyptian midwives were taught by the fear of God to disobey that bloody command: to say, they had warrant for so foul a deed, they knew would be no excuse. God had said to their hearts, "Thou shalt not kill;" this voice was louder than Pharaoh's. Thus far I commend their obedience in disobeying; but to help themselves with a lie, I dare not commend their excuse. In not killing, they feared God; in dissembling, they feared Pharaoh. There was weakness in their pretence, goodness in their practice. Yet God blessed them, and rewards with good their very not doing of evil. But here, let not men lay the thanks upon the sin which is due to the virtue. Let us ascribe things to their right causes; their mercy was recompensed, their lie or deceiving was but pardoned. Michal delivered David through a window; thus far she did like David's wife. Then answered her father, that he threatened to kill her, if she freed him not, 1 Sam. xix. 17; here she began to be Saul's daughter. In keeping him from the guilt of innocent blood, she did well; but not in closing it up with a lie. But as she loved her husband better than her father, so she loved herself better than her husband. She saved her husband by a wife, and now she saves herself by a lie. Thus she loseth half the thanks of her good service, by devising a slander of her husband, to quit herself, and delude her father.

Thus David himself deceived Ahimelech, 1 Sam. xxi. 2: he that overcame the bear, lion, giant, is overcome with fear. Long had he gone upright, yet now begins to halt with the priest of God, and draws from him by a falsehood that favour that shall cost him his life. Oh what would he have given afterwards to redeem this oversight! Thus to Achish he feigned himself mad, and thought it the best use of his reason to dissemble the loss of the use of his reason. I find such acts of deception in the saints, I find infirmity in those acts, but malice, and avarice, and dishonest fraud, I find not.

Wicked deceit is another thing; that beguiles men of what they have, with a vain hope of that they never shall have. When the simple go to the market, the subtle then get money. Deceit is ever bad enough, but then worse when it is disguised with an oath. They that cannot tell how to begin praying, know not when to make an end of swearing. The Jews durst scarce mention the name of God in a truth, our deceivers stick not to call it into a falsehood. Some think that ἀγθία (truth) comes of λαρθίνα, (to lie hid,) for truth lies hidden; and deceivers endeavour all possible means to keep it hidden still. Like Potiphar's wife, they have only the

garment of an honest man, to prove their dishonest cause. Whosoever devised the sentence, Rome takes up the practice. They have pictures and pageants to deceive some, formal gravity to deceive others, false oaths to deceive all. There is a generation of deceivers, flatterers; whose profession is to catch dotterels: these by maintaining men's works, work out their own maintenance: the devil's special agents, that deform men by commending their deformities. Ravens feed but upon dead carcases, these upon living souls. Of all wild beasts, the tyrant is the worst; of all tame beasts, the flatterer. The tradesman deceives me of my money, but the flatterer cheats me of my virtue, yea, of my salvation. They are summer birds, they never sing in winter: take off the idol, gold, they kick the ass with their heels, instead of bending their knees. Vermin run not away faster from a house on fire, than they from poverty. Alexander Severus being certified how one Turinus, under colour and pretence of his interest with the emperor, had abused the people, promising things he never performed; fastened him to a stake in the market-place, and smothered him to death with smoke; the erier proclaiming, *Fumo pereat, qui fumum vendidit*; i. e. Let him die by smoke, who sold smoke. They that deceive men of their estates by adulterate wares or false promises, are the brokers of falsehood; but they that obtrude popish trash instead of God's truth, and deceive men's consciences, are the special agents of antichrist. The former have lost all worth of trust; but from the other, the wisdom of heaven delivers us.

"Sporting themselves." It is hard when the fool can find no bauble to play withal, but sin; casting firebrands, and arrows, and death, and then jeers it, "Am not I in sport?" Prov. xxvi. 19. If Samson fire the shocks of the Philistines, Judg. xv. 5, and Absalom Joab's barley-fields, 2 Sam. xiv. 30, is this in sport? We read, 2 Sam. ii. 14, both the commanders were cruel, both so injured to blood, that they make but a sport of killing. Custom brings sin to be so familiar, that the horror of it is turned into pleasure, and homicide is held but a sport. Cocks indeed, and dogs, often fight and tear one another, to make men sport; but that men should bruise one another to make sport for their own kind, is no Christian, if it could be a rational course. Ham derides his father's nakedness: it should have been his sorrow, he makes it his sport. It is ill for a man to make himself merry with that which angers God. While the Philistines will find nothing to play upon but Samson, Samson finds nothing to revenge himself upon but the Philistines. When the wicked laugh at sins with delight, God laughs at them, but with scorn. Yea, such sport on earth, is the only sport for the fiends in hell. While men be hammering sin, the tempter stands at their elbow; while they are acting sin, he sits in their bosom; all this while he is a working; but when they have done it, and make a sport of it, the devil himself makes holiday. The common pretence for the foulest abuses, is but sport. The sacred word of God is profaned: tax the violators of that majesty; alas, it was but in jest. Business of state may not be made the business of the stage; and shall that which God prizeth like himself, be sacrilegiously turned to a jest? More safely may the satyr play with the fire, or the fly with the candle. O charm your months from jesting with that which is given to save your souls. No fugitive abroad does so much harm, as a detractor or jeerer at home. They that write of creatures naturally disposed to the ruin of man, do as well mention the flea as the viper; because though the flea cannot kill, yet it doth what harm it

can; so these licentious jesters utter all the venom they have.

If sin were rightly considered, it were more worthy our tears than our sport; the fool laughs at it, but the saint weeps for it. David wept buckets of tears for his own sins, but whole rivers for others. The world is like Jonah; for him was the storm raised, yet he only was asleep: godly mourners are like the mariners, crying to God for mercy. Jerusalem made a sport of Christ, Christ wept over Jerusalem. If we weep not for the sins of the land, nobody else will: sinners themselves will not weep; they spend the evening in jollity, go to bed in security, and rise again without any further repentance, than that they call a cup of repentance, small drink to cool their intemperate heat. For their sakes judgments are upon us, and yet they of all men are least sensible of them. The fire of wrath is kindled, and they do but warm themselves at the flame. Who must come with pails of water in this combustion, but they that mourn in Zion, and for Zion? Turn to me, saith the Lord, with weeping, Joel ii. 12; where did he ever allow us to come laughing? A horrible incest was committed among the Corinthians, "And ye," saith Paul, "are puffed up, and have not rather mourned," 1 Cor. v. 2. Alas, that men should look merrily on that sin, which heaven beholds with sore eyes! Though Christ forbade the daughters of Jerusalem to weep for him, who was holy; yet he commanded them to weep for themselves, who were sinners, Luke xxiii. 28. He that knew what sin was, and felt it so sharply, is not reported ever to have laughed; often you have him weeping, the chief mourner. When he came to Jerusalem in triumph, yet he "wept over it," Luke xix. 41. Neither the solemnity of time, nor joy of the people, nor those loud acclamations, could either drown his voice, but still he lifted it up; nor dry his eyes, but still he wept. If we truly knew our sins, our sport would be turned into tears; yea, and the more we weep, the better we know our sins. As Solomon said, "He that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow," Eccl. i. 18; so he that increaseth sorrow increaseth his knowledge. A silver penny in the bottom of a bason of water seems as big as a shilling; it seemeth so, it is not so. But our sins steeped in tears seem as indeed they are; yea, indeed they are greater than they can seem. As wine drowns cares, so doth sport sins; they are little, easy, light, and slight to those that are merry with them; but when, instead of sport in our deceivings, we begin to bleed for that sport, then the remembrance of them is grievous unto us, the burden of them is intolerable. Now we that have turned our grace into sin, and our sin into sport, let us turn our sport into sorrow, that God may turn our sorrow into joy.

Thus we have considered them asunder, now both together; where we have two principal observations: 1. All deceit is sinful. 2. Religious deceit is intolerable.

1. Fraud is no laughing matter, and he that deceives another doth much more deceive himself; nor could he think it a sport, did he foresee who should have the worst in the end. Show me that false-hearted politician, that hath not consulted shame to his own house. Look upon Ahithophel, whose counsel was as the oracle of God; see him advising Absalom to abuse his father's concubines, 2 Sam. xvi. 21. What a hellish depth was in the advice of that Israelitish Machiavel! If Absalom be a traitor, yet he is a son; nature may return to itself; Absalom may relent, David may remit, what then shall become of us? Therefore he finds him out an act incapable of forgiveness, to secure the conspiracy.

Who would think that so lewd a man had ever sat at King David's council-table? Yet was he wise enough to advise others, not to be good to himself. Policy and grace have one Author, but they do not always go upon one errand, nor to one person. David falls to his prayers, Lord, turn the wisdom of Ahithophel into foolishness; and lo, one short ejaculation of innocency shall overturn this deep foundation of policy. God hath furnished his creatures with power to war, even against himself; but he is wise enough to confound their devices; and while they reap shame by the abuse, he will have honour by the gift. Vainly doth Ahithophel hope to strengthen evil with worse, to make treason fortunate by incest. He was one of David's deepest counsellors, yet one of David's shallowest fools, that said in his heart, "There is no God." Now what was the success? he meant to deceive David, he shall deceive himself. He strove for the highest renown of wisdom, and runs into the grossest extremity of madness. Hushai's counsel is allowed for better; and now Ahithophel is beaten at his own weapon, he can live no longer. He goes home a worse ass than that which carried him, and puts the halter about his own neck. In this glass let politic sinners read their own destiny; they are to themselves the most desperate fools. If the Supreme Judge could be deceived, fraud had some hope; but seeing he is just, it makes its own mittimus to hell.

Had Judas any better success in his deceiving, that betrayed Christ with a kiss? Luke xxii. 48. As Augustine saith, The war begins with a kiss, and by a token of peace the sacrament of peace is broken. From the fairest flower of courtesy, this spider sucks the deadliest poison of treachery. Joab's kiss was a preface to a stab, 2 Sam. xx. 9; and Nero kissed his mother even when he meant to bathe his hands in her blood; and Judas bath the same key to his horrid treason. It is bad to deceive the deceiver, howsoever some blanch it: for another's sin may hurt us, it is our own sin that condemns us; and because another man would do me a mischief, must I therefore do myself one? burn myself to keep him from the heat of the fire? But Judas thought to deceive him, who cannot either be deceived or deceive, that was both God and man: a man most innocent, and therefore would not deceive; a God omniscient, and therefore would not be deceived. To beguile a harmless man, was *doli improbitas*, i. e. dishonesty of deceit; but to offer this to the all-seeing God, was *doli impietas*, i. e. impiety of deceit. But what was the end of this deceit? he redelivers the hire of his treachery, and saves the hangman a labour, by making away himself. Christ was well acquainted with such deceivers: "Master," saith a Pharisee, "we know thou art true," Matt. xxii. 16; when he could have silenced him, Hypocrite, I know thou art false. Satan is that old deceiver; and was so successful with the first Adam, that he durst set upon the Second. He saw him depend upon his Father's providence in the matter of nourishment, therefore tries him in a matter of miraculous preservation: Throw thyself down, &c. Matt. iv. 6. He that can sustain thee without bread, can preserve thee in this precipice. The roof of the temple was a hundred and thirty cubits high; this was a pinnacle above the roof. From this pyramid the cunning sophister persuades him to make proof of his Godhead, by the break-neck of his manhood. The gloss of the deceit was to show a miracle, that he might believe him; the meaning was to break his neck, that he might laugh at him. This is the way to proclaim thy Dosty, to get credit in the world; men's eyes shall teach their faith, that there is more in thee than a

man; and for danger, there is none; what can hurt the Son of God? Wherefore serves the guard of angels, charged with thy safety? Thus in one act thou mayst be both safe and famous: trusting thy Father's providence, and those serviceable spirits, cast thyself down. How strong was this deceit, if it had lighted upon a son of Adam, that was not the Son of God!

2. But deceits are then most abominable, when they shroud themselves under the wing of religion; for such we shall prove these. There is no such devil, as he that looks like an angel. Copper would never deceive us, if it had not the tincture of gold. Thus the sons of Jacob dealt with Hamor, Gen. xxxiv. 13. Revenge is their meaning, that is bad enough; to hide their cruelty with craft, worse; but to hide their craft with religion, worst of all. The smiling malice is most deadly; and hatred glossed with dissimulation discovers itself in the most prodigious mischief. We will agree with you, if you will be circumcised. Here was God in the mouth, in the heart a devil. Never was any project so bloody, as that which is coloured with religion. The better vice shows, the worse it is; and the worse it is, the better it desires to show. A sacrament is intended, not to the good of the soul, but to the murder of the body. O religious deceit! Did the sons of Jacob deceive alone? no, they dissemble with Shechem, and Shechem with his people; Shall not their wealth be ours? ver. 23. The one pretended religion, and meant murder; the other pretended profit, and meant pleasure. They prevail with Shechem, and Shechem with the city. The conceit of commodity is a powerful oratory: not any love to the sacrament, no, not to Shechem, but the hope of gain, makes them prodigal of their blood in so painful a condition: they are content to smart, so they may gain. What was the end of this deceit? They receive a sacrament, and their bane withal; and their first drops of blood are a preparative to the whole stream. Thus they are paid for a purpose of deceiving. Do the other escape? no, their sin lived after the city was spoiled. It was a horrible impiety, instead of honouring a holy sign, to take advantage by it. How did those deceived Hivites die cursing that sacrament which had betrayed them! even their curses were the others' sins. I would the children of Rome were like the children of Jacob in anything else but this; but in this only they are like them, and in nothing else. Did they not eat their sacrament upon a bargain of blood? Do not their bloody practices make all reasonable souls abhor their religion? Is not religion their pretence, and murder their end? Why then is all this killing of kings, ruining of countries, massacring of cities, blowing up of states? For the catholic cause, they confess; and by the catholic authority, they cannot deny. O who can more than pity them, that forsake Christ the Prince of peace, and either choose no God, or a bloody one?

Take another example. Abner revolts from Ishbosheth in a discontent, and persuades Israel to the change; and fetcheth his motive from the oracle of God, 2 Sam. iii. 18. He knew this well enough before, and smothered it for his own turn; now for his own turn he publisheth it. He knew this decree for David while he opposed him; now he wins the heart of Israel by showing God's charter for him. If Ishbosheth's title to the crown were bad, why did Abner maintain it? if good, why did he forsake it? Was his conscience better informed? No, but his mind was changed. Saul's son had disgraced him, therefore now he is for David: he is become loyal for David's sake, and become David's for God's sake. No man ever heard Abner godly till then; and he had

not been so then for any conscience of goodness, but for opportunity of revenge. Pride hath made many English malcontents the almsmen of Rome : here their ambitious desires are crossed, therefore they fly hence in a snuff : treachery is their aim, and luther they bring it in the shape of religion. Oh that they could see how odious it is, to make devotion a stalking-horse for policy ! What was Abner's end ? Whom David dismissteth in peace, Job repays with death. Of all men, the religious dissembler shall be sure of plagues.

Thus Absalom first deceives the people, and therein his father, 2 Sam. xv. 6. The people by insinuations ; that considering his godly person and magnificent state, how affable he was to suitors, how humble in his greatness, how diligent in searching their causes, how full of pity to their complaints, how great his love of justice, and care of the commonwealth was ; they conclude, the world hath not so complete a prince as Absalom. Thus like a close traitor, he stole not his father's goods, but his father's people's hearts. He deceived his father by a vow, made forty years before, to be paid in Hebron, ver. 7. He carried peace in his name, war in his heart ; and to perfect his treachery, nothing will serve but a cloak of religion. The devout man hath made a vow a great while ago, and now the toy takes him, he must perform it. The good old king blesteth God for blessing him with so godly a son ; who indeed had never more deeply renounced all goodness, than now he talks of religion. This guilt of piety set on the rough metal of his conspiracy, takes with his father against his father, with the people against their king ; so his father sends him away with one blessing, and they entertain him with another. What is the end of this deceit ? The just meed of all traitors : his mule and his treason leave him hanging between heaven and earth. "Bring me word, that I may come and worship him," saith Herod to the sages, Matt. ii. 8 : another devout Machiavel, like the devil confessing Christ. How horrible was this villany, to mask itself under a show of piety ! Herod will worship him, that is the pretence : Herod will worry him, that is the meaning. The cunning hypocrite never intends so ill, as when he speaks fairest. What was the event of this politic deceiving ? First, God mocks him, then the sages mock him. God besots him, that he could not find the way to so horrible a mischief. Why else did he not send some of his bloody assassins to Bethlehem ? Why did he not employ his courtiers, rather than trust strangers ? Why, seeing the matter so nearly concerned him in his opinion, and the journey was so small from Jerusalem, did he not go himself in person ? why did he not rather prevent their journey, than hazard their disappointment ? All the courtesy he meant that new-born King, was but to cut his throat ; and will he trust foreigners with this inquiry ? Such a fool is the craftiest politician, when God will blind him. These messengers come no more back to Herod with their news. He had mocked the wise men, and now God makes the wise men to mock him, ver. 16. He sends to inquire of them, whom he sent to inquire of Christ, and they are gone. How doth he rage, and fret, and curse himself, for trusting strangers in so important a business ! How would he revenge their false play, how would he torment them, if he could catch them ! Thus he palpably finds himself gulled by those whom he meant to deceive.

Thus doth God's justice often punish illusion with illusion ; they that nourish a purpose to deceive, shall be deceived indeed. Think of these examples, ye that make religion your messenger, and mischief your errand. It is a disease whereof this generation

is sick at the very heart. Hypocrites make use of God for their own purposes : they frequent the church with the devoutest saints, but it is that the saints may take them for devout ; they pray with the godly, but to prey upon the godly. You shall not miss him at the lecture in the forenoon, but it is in hope to find some of you at his shop in the afternoon ; and then, he that received in so much truth at his ears, hath not one word of truth in his mouth. Alas, too many make that divine business but a colour for their own designs. Over-fair shows are a just argument of unsoundness ; no natural face hath so fair a white and clear a red, as that which is painted. While we see men notoriously zealous, we may be charitably suspicious. For wicked hypocrites care not to play with God, that they may mock men. The more foul a project is, the fairer visor it seeks : those monopolies that undo the commonwealth, have the most colourable pretences to benefit it. But as Christ said, "He that receiveth you receiveth me," Matt. x. 40 ; so in effect, he that deceiveth you deceiveth me ; and he must rise betimes that overreaches his Maker. Let me shut up all with discovering to you three sorts of deceivers.

1. The deceivers of souls. Such are the Romish seminaries. They tell you of a Saviour called Christ, but they mean the pope ; for his word must stand, when Christ's word is thrust behind the door. They say, his judgment is infallible : yet Pope John the Twelfth made deacons in a stable, a boy of ten years old a bishop, the Lateran a stew, degraded his predecessor's shavelings, made each of them confess, My bishop had nothing for himself, and gave nothing to me, prayed to Jupiter and Venus, and drank a health to the devil. (Luitprand.) Not a few of that race were as bad, yet papists will believe they cannot err ; are they not worthy to be deceived ? They say, that the church cannot subsist without the pope her head ; yet was that chair ten years empty. (Bodin.) We use to say, Great head, little wit ; but certainly, no head, no wit. Whence should their church have her wit, when she was bereaved of her head ? The Irish men are not troubled with venomous beasts, for this they must be beholden to St. Patrick : yea, he is said to have obtained of God, that no Irishman should abide the coming of antichrist : (Legend.) yet their great masters are ashamed of it, and never allege it to clear the pope from being antichrist. They will show pilgrims that go to Jerusalem a three-cornered stone, and make them believe it is that very stone spoken of in the Psalm, "The stone which the builders refused," &c. Psal. cxviii. 22. (Bibloni.) A monk, among other relics, boasted that he could show some of the hairs that fell from the seraphical angel, when he imprinted the five wounds of Christ on the body of St. Francis ; yea, gave out, that he had brought from the East some of the sound of the bells that hung in Solomon's temple. (Verger.) Be not these pretty deceivings ? But too gross to deceive us, too bungling for these times : therefore (as old tricks of cheating can do no good) they find out new ; which is a short cut, an absolute denial of all truth that is not for them. They do not dethrone kings, nor suborn paricides, nor pardon incests and murders, nor worship images, nor disgrace the Scriptures, nor forswear by equivocations, nor prefer the mother to the Son, nor set states in combustion, nor make the eating of flesh on forbidden days damnable, and uncleanness every day venial ; not they : though we know they do all this, yet when they deny it, they look we should believe them. A reverend bishop of this land dies an orthodox catholic, a professed protestant, as he lived ; yet they disperse books, and tell the world, he died in

the Romish faith. A common liar should not be believed: men know them so, yet trust them. O ye besotted English, why will you be thus deceived? The devil's hand is in it, their hand is in it, your own hand is in it; but above all, God hath a hand in it; who justly gives them up to believe a lie, that would not receive the truth, 2 Thess. ii. 11.

2. The deceivers of the church, that make it nothing to defraud their Maker. Joseph was twice stripped of his garments; first by the violence of envy, then of lust; the first time of necessity, the next of choice in convenience. His brethren took away his coat, to deceive his father; his mistress kept his coat, to deceive his master. First, the policy of Rome took one garment from us, which the policy of state took again from them. We had still a poor coat left, the remainder that escaped appropriating; now sacrilege keeps away that too. The first we could not save by law, this last we cannot redeem without law; and that is a remedy worse than the disease. That first rent had the colour of pleasing God; this other, of punishing us. The world doth charge us with pride and covetousness, and therefore surchargeth us with beggary and captivity. Joseph may plead, but is not heard; and our case is as bad; we may deny the justice of the fact, but we scarce dare accuse the offenders. Hannun misused David's ambassadors, and shaved off one half of their beards, and cut off their garments to the middle, exposing them to the derision of all beholders, 2 Sam. x. 4. The Israelites were forbidden a shaven beard, or a short garment; to despise their law, they are sent away with both. Man hath a double ornament to his body, one of nature, the other of art; the natural ornament is the hair, the artificial is apparel: in both these are David's servants abused. But is not David sensible of it? Doth he not feel himself dishonoured in their persons? Will he only hide it, and not revenge it? We are God's messengers to the world, and the world returns us so to God. Surely, as David could not but feel his own cheeks shaven, his own coat cut, in his ambassadors; so the Lord cannot but appropriate that injury to himself, which is offered to his ministers. By the universal law of nations, ambassadors are free; that office hath in the name sufficient protection, nor was it ever wronged without a revenge. Do not the notorious contempts cast upon us below, concern our great Master above? Is it possible he should not feel them, not revenge them? Yes, David revengeth it on Ammon to the full; for cutting his messengers' coats, Joab and his army cut their throats; and certainly, God will not let such indignity pass unpunished.

3. The deceivers of men, in regard of their estates; contrary to God's flat prohibition, Defraud no man, 1 Thess. iv. 6. Wherein and how far any man hath thus deceived, his conscience will tell him; unless by the long habit of deceit, he hath also learned to deceive his conscience. Fraud is theft, and a thief (we say) no man can endure to be any long time, for his conscience; out how if his conscience itself be turned thief? Howsoever deceivers think to get a patrimony of riches by fraud, as they pretend Jacob got the birthright; yet it will not be so lucky to them as Rebekah's pasty, they shall not (with Jacob) get the blessing by it. The crafty fox hugged himself to think how he had cheated the crow of her breakfast; but when he had eaten it, and found himself poisoned with it, he wished the crow her own again. Wealth got by deceit is like a piece of buttered sponge, (an Italian trick,) it goes down glib, but in the stomach swells, and will never be gotten out again. It is not stable; it will either be lost by

the gainers, or be squandered by their heirs. Turnus had been spared, but for his belt: when that was found about him, it cost him his life. So when other sins might find mercy, Christ seeing the cognizance of fraud, begins to strike; as Æneas said to Turnus, *Pallus, te hoc vulnere Pallas immolat*, Pallas with this stroke kills thee, Pallas immolates thee; one torture more for that. It is an observation set upon the house of Desmond in Ireland, that Maurice Thomas the first earl raised it by injustice, and by injustice Girald the last earl of that race ruined it. The gains a man gets by deceiving, at last he may put in his eye, and yet see himself miserable. Sin is the greatest cheater in the world, for it deceives the deceiver; yea, as Hannan built his own gallows, it makes a snare to entrap others, but is sure to confound the sinner. The seed of this sin, as of all other, is in every man by nature; the heart of man is deceitful; and while he thinks there is no deceit in it, even in that he is most of all deceived.

Find out this thief, apprehend him, convict him, condemn him, yea, execute him; yea, bury him, lest his very death deceive thee. It is one brand of the wicked, "When thou sawest a thief, thou consentedst with him," Psal. l. 18. Many see a thief abroad, and consent not; but the most dangerous thief is at home, within us, there we consent. Elisha had a thief to his servant, but he followed him at an inch, and found out his brokage. Thus pursue thy fraud, meet it at every turning, cross it with resolution, plague it with restitution; wish thy heart, as that Roman built his house, not close to do things unseen, but open to the view of passengers, to show that honest dealing dwells there. Fraud is both a robber, and robbery itself, a theft to others, a thief to a man's self: as *falsus* in Latin signifies both the deceived and the deceiver. It steals away his grace, his peace, his conscience, his blessing in this life, and his hope of glory in the life to come. The day of the Lord shall come as a thief too; and if it take a man with his thefts about him, no heart can think how terribly it will handle him. "We have wronged no man, we have corrupted no man, we have defrauded no man," 2 Cor. vii. 2. Thrice happy conscience that can speak this in sincerity! That steward hath not deceived God in his trust, and God will not deceive him of his reward, eternal blessedness in Jesus Christ.

"While they feast with you." A certain kind of feasts is much spoken of by the apostles Paul, Peter, Jude; love-feasts. This is a festival time, yea, the greatest of all Christian feasts (Easter); every sabbath is a feast; this, as it is a sabbath of sabbaths, so a feast of feasts. The day of the sabbath was changed for the honour of Christ's resurrection; and this is the day for whose honour the sabbath was changed. Something therefore I take liberty to speak of this occasion. Feasts may be distinguished into three kinds, holy, civil, and profane. The former must be, the next may be, the last should not be. The first are commanded, the second allowed, the third prohibited. The first is a feast to God, the next for man, the third to Satan.

I begin with holy feasts. Religion is not tied to time, yet cannot religion be publicly exercised without a due time allotted for it. It is necessary to consider every great blessing of God, and it is kindly and convenient to consider it in the day it was wrought; then to repeat it with thankfulness, is to do *opus dei in die suo*. Otherwise the revolution of time would eat out the memory of these precious benefits. The Jews, among many, had three solemn festivals every year, by God's institution: the passover, pentecost, and feast of tabernacles, Deut. xvi. 1. Of tabernacles,

in remembering that Israel dwelt in tents forty years. Even that walk of theirs must not be forgotten in their rest. So much memory of our weary pilgrimage here, as may stand with the perfection of our joy in heaven, shall be reserved. 2. The passover, to remember them of their deliverance from the Egyptian bondage: freedom from such a servitude deserves a solemn and set time of gratitude. 3. Pentecost, in remembrance of the law given on Mount Sinai. God wrote it, that it might be legible; wrote it in stone, that it might be durable; honoured the day with an annual feast, that it might be memorable. Thus the Christian church, among the rest, celebrates three principal feasts. Christmas, in honour of Christ's nativity, then was he born to the earth. Easter, in honour of his resurrection, then was he borne from the earth. Whitsuntide, in honour of the mission of the Holy Ghost, by whom we are new-born to the kingdom of heaven. And we still retain two names of the three, passover and pentecost. Such is the accordance of the two Testaments, that those two Jewish feasts and our two Christian agree, both in signification and in time.

1. For signification; their passover and pentecost are types of our Easter and Whitsuntide. For the former, God did pass over the doors where the blood of the paschal lamb was sprinkled. What signifies it? That God will pass over our sins in the day of wrath, if he find our souls sprinkled with the blood of Christ, that "Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world," John i. 29. That night Moses led Israel out of Egypt, this day Christ brings us out of the house of bondage. When he rose from the grave, this was the full conquest of all our enemies, for the last enemy is death. For their pentecost, it was a memorial of the law, which is a hidden gospel. And our Whitsuntide is a memorial of the gospel, which is a revealed law. The law was given on Mount Sinai, the gospel on Mount Zion: the law written in tables of stone, the gospel in tables of flesh: I will write my law in their hearts, Heb. viii. 10; so run the terms of the new covenant. On their pentecost, the law was given in fire and smoke, obscurity was mingled with terror. On our pentecost, the gospel was given in fire without smoke, befitting the light and clearness of the truth. Fire, not in flashes, but in tongues; not to terrify, but to teach. Thus the promulgation of the law makes way for the gospel: first we must feel the terrors of Sinai, before we have the comforts of Zion, the gracious consolations of the Holy Ghost. If therefore they had a festival for the law, the ministry of death; good reason we should have one for the gospel, which is the power of God to salvation. Christmas is a merry time, then we sing and feast. Easter is a solemn time, then we communicate and feast spiritually. Whitsuntide is a triumphant and flourishing time, not only for height of the season, but for the church's confirmation by the descension of the Holy Ghost: Because, says Augustine, we have not lost a departing Christ, and we possess a coming Spirit.

2. As they agree for substance, so for the very time of delivery: the ancient Jews kept our feasts, and we still keep theirs. First, their passover and our Easter is kept at the same time: so fitly to their coming from the bondage of Egypt, doth answer Christ's coming from under the bondage of death. "Even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us," 1 Cor. v. 7; that spotless Lamb, whereof one bone might not be broken. Next, their pentecost and our Whitsuntide, on the very same day. Their pentecost was fifty days after their passover, and our Whitsuntide is fifty days after our Easter; from which number of days it hath the name, pentecost. The very day

that God came down in fire and thunder to deliver the law, the Holy Ghost came down upon the apostles in fiery tongues, for the propagation of the gospel. Now as our feasts be the same, so be our sacraments. We do all eat of the same spiritual meat, and drink of the same spiritual drink, 1 Cor. x. 3, 4. The same, 1. In object; the same Christ in both: not one God in the law, another in the gospel; not a bloody one there, a merciful one here, as Marcion blasphemed. But "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever," Heb. xiii. 8. Only a darker Christ there, a clearer Christ here, but still the same. 2. The same not in the signs, but in the things signified. (August.) In the passover the Lamb of God was prefigured, in the Lord's supper he is exhibited: they saw him, we have him. 3. In identity of name. So circumcision is called baptism, and baptism circumcision, and the Lord's supper the passover. 4. The same in efficacy. Their effect is all one; their faith received Christ before he came, in as full virtue as we do now he is come. But if the body of Christ be really in the supper, why was not the lamb so transubstantiated in the passover? for Paul says, it was the same. They never say, in baptism, the water is turned into blood; why then say they so of the wine in the eucharist? "This is my body, which is broken for you," 1 Cor. xi. 24. There is the logical subject, *this*, this bread; the predicate, *my body*; the copula, *is*; and the exposition, *which is broken for you*. There is bread, and there is the body: the bread is not the body, therefore a holy sign of it. We receive a mystical, yet the true, body of Christ; not in the truth or substance of the thing, but in the mystery significant of it. Thus be our sacraments the same. Indeed they had also manna, and water from the rock; both which signified Christ: they were fed with sacraments. Their bread was sacramental, whereof they communicated every day: who complains of receiving often, when the Israelites received daily? Their drink was sacramental: surely from them the church of Rome never learned a dry communion. Twice hath the rock yielded them water of refreshing: the true Rock is Christ, and he yields it always. Out of his side issued that bloody stream, whereby the thirst of all believers is comfortably quenched. They thirsted with repining, let us thirst with faith: our spiritual Rock shall abundantly satisfy our souls; yea, even sustain us, till this water be changed into that new wine which we shall drink with him in his Father's kingdom.

We have seen the harmony and accordance between both the Testaments, now let us return to the feast of the day. Some difference may seem to be in the evangelists, about the time when Christ did eat the passover. Three of them say, on the first day of the passover; but we read in St. John's Gospel, "before the feast of the passover," John xiii. 1. To reconcile these, first, some say, that Christ did not eat the passover that year; and their reason is glorious, because himself was the paschal Lamb then to be offered. But this is frivolous, for it is manifest he did eat it. Secondly, some say, the passover is taken for the whole time of seven days, and that he did eat it one of the seven. But this is apparently false; for after the Jews had apprehended him, they would not enter into the judgment hall, for fear of being defiled, "but that they might eat the passover," John xviii. 28. Christ had that day (before) eaten it, therefore before the seven. Thirdly, others say, he did eat it one night before the Jews; and that he did so, to thrust a sword into Judas's hand, to accuse him for an innovator and law-breaker. But they that were fain to take up a false accusation against him, rather than none, would have triumphed in this. Besides, the

disciples would have questioned the reason of such an alteration, and the master of the house would have found some fault. And, which is above all, the Fulfiler of the law, and that so punctually, would not have failed in a chief point, so main a circumstance, and that so immediately before his death: and this supposition still is objected to by the Jews.

Briefly then we conclude thus: He did eat it on the due and true day, the fourteenth of the month. But then how failed the Jews? for both cannot stand, seeing Christ and they did eat it on several days. It is answered thus: Since the captivity, when the pass-over fell on the sabbath eve, they put it off to the sabbath day; so it was called a high day, because that feast fell upon it. For this reason they took down the dead bodies from the crosses; for if these two feasts had fallen immediately together on several days, they had had no opportunity to bury their dead. But why did not Judas accuse him of this? God so disposed it, that his heart being fraught with malice did not observe it. Some think it was left arbitrary, that whoso would, might eat it on the even, or put it off to the sabbath. Thus are the evangelists reconciled. "Before the passover," saith John; that is, before the people did eat it by their tradition. "At the passover," say the rest, that is, on the day of institution, when Moses commanded it. So Christ died in the feast of passover, that the type and the truth might agree together. They took him at night; arraigned, condemned, afflicted, and crucified him before the end of the next day: this was strange haste; but what bounds are there to desperate madness? They meant nothing but death to him, but God hath this day turned it into life to us.

Surely, even the angels in heaven keep these paschal solemnities with joy: the glory of that victorious Lion, who hath triumphed over death and hell, is even to them matter of rejoicing. It is the sabbath of the new world, our passover from everlasting death to life; our true jubilee, the first day of our week, and the chief in our calendar. Herein our Phenix rose from his ashes, our Eagle renewed his feathers, the First-begotten of the dead was born from the womb of the earth. Christ, like the sun eclipsed by the moon, got himself up by his resurrection; and, as the sun by the moon, he was darkened by them to whom he gave light. His death did justify us, his resurrection did justify his death. He buried the law with himself, and both with honour; he raised up the gospel with himself, and both with glory. His resurrection was the first stone of the foundation, "In Christ shall all be made alive," 1 Cor. xv. 22; and the last stone of the roof, for God assures us he shall come to judgment, by this token, that he raised him up from the dead, Acts xvii. 31. Satan danced on his grave for joy; when he had him there once, he thought him sure enough: but he rose again, and trampled on the devil's throne with triumph. This is the faith peculiar to Christians: the Jews believe him dead, not living; we believe that he is risen, and sits at the right hand of God. As Moses led the people to Canaan through the wilderness, so Christ led us to heaven through the grave. His resurrection is not only the object of our faith, but the example of our hope. We all carry mortality about us, and the strongest man is but like Nebuchadnezzar's image; though his head be of gold, and his ribs of brass, yet his feet are of clay: a stone thrown at the feet overturns this great image, and down falls man. But, "O death, I will be thy death." Durst death kill Christ? Christ therefore shall kill death. "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable," 1 Cor. xv. 19. But *spes vite*

immortalis est vita vite mortalis, as one saith, the hope of life immortal is the life of our life mortal. Death and the grave swallow all, and then burst; as crammed covetousness disgorgeth itself by a prodigal heir.

The Jews craved a sign, and had it, Matt. xii. 38, 39; yet then spake against it, or wondered at it. To us it shall be more than a sign, it shall have wonder, and wonder enough; but we will not lose our fruit or part therein for a world. Him, that this day rose from the clods, we expect from the clouds, to raise our bodies, to perform his promises, to finish our faith, to perfect our glory, and to draw us unto himself. I do not say, Come, see the place where they laid him, that is empty; but, Come, see the place where he is; Here is the Lord. I say not with Mary, They have taken away the Lord, and I know not where they have laid him: he is personally in heaven, he is mystically, sacramentally, yea, in a spiritual sense, he is really here. Himself said, I have earnestly desired to eat this passover with you: let us earnestly desire to eat this sacrament with him. God said once, Take and eat of every tree but one; but man then mistook the fruit, he did eat and fell. He now says again, Take and eat; this is my body, which is given for you: let us not mistake, but eat and live for ever. And the body of our Lord Jesus Christ which was given for us, preserve our bodies and souls into everlasting life.

As God spake to the fish, and it cast up Jonah, commanded the earth, and it delivered up Jesus; so he will speak to all creatures, and they shall not detain one dust of our bodies. There shall be a dry ground for this valley of tears, a land of the living for this Golgotha of the dead, a settled mansion for this movable pavilion. Christ had his Easter-day by himself; there shall be one general Easter-day for us all, when the wicked shall rise to contempt, the faithful to eternity of days. Here shall be no terror to affright us, no sorrow to afflict us, no sickness to distemper us, no death to dissolve us, no sin to endanger, for evermore.

2. The next are civil feasts: when the soul hath been feasted with God, the body may be feasted with the creatures of God; when the mistress hath dined, the servant may sit down. Every sabbath is a feast, but this is an exceeding day. When we hear the word, we have a good spiritual meal: but the sacrament is an extraordinary banquet; wherein the best cheer of heaven is set on the table, and the faithful soul feeds more liberally on Jesus Christ. We do not feast every day; that was the epicure's brand, he "fared sumptuously every day," Luke xvi. 19; so nor every day communicate: there may be satiety even in sacred things, and the soul cloyed as well as the body. Those love-feasts were before the Lord's supper, where the communicants brought every man his provision to one place, and they did eat together; giving thanks to God, and bestowing the remainder on the poor. Thus were they intended for the increase of love: but what foul abuses crept in, St. Paul notes and condemns; "one is hungry, and another is drunken," 1 Cor. xi. 21. Riot and intemperance is an ill preparation for so holy a business.

First, therefore, begin with God: a full body makes an unwieldy soul, but a fasted soul will keep a temperate body. First drink at Christ's wine cellar, before thou touch thine own. Not that I obtrude the popish custom upon you, which puts a necessity of fasting before; because forsooth they would receive their God into a clear stomach, next their heart. Cannot Christ come into the heart if there be meat in the stomach? This is as if a man could not come to the steeple for the sound of the

bells. Or as the merry cardinal said to his fellows in the conclave, when they could not agree about the election of the pope; Let us untile the house, because the Holy Ghost cannot get in to us through so many tiles. (Onup. in Plat.) A weak stomach helped by refection is as capable of Christ as a fasting superstition. Indeed if men can forbear, it were best to have the first morsel sacramental: but it is the soul, not the body, that receives Christ himself. In this point I praise this city, that they begin their feasts with a sermon, as Jethro began his with a sacrifice, Exod. xviii. 12. First serve the Lord, then eat the fat and drink the sweet, and give the rest to the poor. Some have been as fond on the other side; they will eat nothing that whole day after the sacrament; as if they wronged that holy food, if they thought it would not keep them a whole day. In former times, some would not wash a whole week after their baptizing; as if men should refuse to wash a day or two after their trimming by the barber. But these be fond singularities; let us keep the day holy, keep ourselves holy, in the strength of the Most Holy; that we may confess the virtue of this blessed sacrament in the sanctity of our future deportment and conversation.

Feasts have their reasonable allowance: the bounty of God reacheth not only to our life, but to our contentment; nor doth he afford us only the bread of sufficiency, but of pleasure, that we may more than live, even live happy. The blessed Virgin, at the marriage in Cana, perceived a defect of wine, and she tells Christ, John ii. 3. They had wine enough for a meal, not enough for a feast: and if there was not wine enough, there was enough water: water to quench thirst, if not wine to cheer the spirits. Yet she complains the want of wine, and is troubled with the very lack of superfluity. Christ gives her rough words, but answers her faith with gracious deeds; the feast shall be supplied with wine, if six pots full (of two or three firkins a-piece) can do it. To turn one of these vessels of water into wine had been a sufficient proof of his power, and perhaps enough for the present necessity; yet he makes wine enough to serve above a hundred guests, had they been then but newly sat down. It was a feast; that quantity at another time had been superfluous, which is now but necessary. That hand of infinite munificence regards not only our need, but our honest affluence. We are sullen guests, if we scant ourselves where God hath been liberal, and from the table of his bounty depart hungry. We are unworthy guests, if we riot upon his abundance, and turn his plenty into wantonness. To fast when he invites us to feed, is our sin; to be fuller than he allows us, is our sin and our shame; to be pleased no ways, neither full nor fasting, is our sin, our shame, and unhappiness. The Philistines in their feast called for Samson to make them sport: take heed that Samson be not your mirth; make not religion your fiddle. God doth not therefore so liberally give us temporal things, that we being full should abuse spiritual things. David vowed that he would not forget Jerusalem in his mirth; and in their mirth there be some that remember Jerusalem, but it is with a sacrilegious frump. Yea, too often, they do not only in their mirth remember Jerusalem, but they make Jerusalem their mirth; and holiness is wounded through the name of puritan. Call godliness by what name they will, it is too good to be jested with; and when profane men are thus in jest, God will be in earnest. And here we fitly fall upon,

3. Profane feasts: I call them so, where God is not placed at the upper end of the table; where he is forgotten in the beginning, neglected in the midst, at the latter end dishonoured. We find such feasts

in former times; we find them all concluding in horror. The house fell down upon Job's children, while they were feasting, Job i. 19. Their sin is not specified, yet their father feared, sanctified them, and interceded for them, after their meetings. The upshot of their last feast was destruction; I mean, on their bodies, I dare not say so of their souls. The fathers think otherwise; and allege for it this observation. At the first Job had "seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she-asses," Job i. 3. After his reparation, "he had fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she-asses," Job xlii. 12. But in his first estate, and his last too, he had but seven sons and three daughters. The number of his cattle was doubled, the number of his children remained the same. Children are dearer than riches; why then is his wealth doubled, and not his progeny? They say, his beasts, according to the condition of beasts, utterly perished; but the souls of his children were saved. So then, as he had twice as much substance, he had twice as many children also; ten whereof were with him on earth, and the other ten with God in heaven.

Nabal "held a feast in his house like the feast of a king," 1 Sam. xxv. 36. Commonly there is nothing more plentiful than a churl's feast. He was merry, and feared no mischief; as if he had never angered David. That mighty champion was at the foot of the hill, coming to avenge himself; yet Nabal was feasting without fear or wit, and drinking drunk with his sheep-shearers. Full little do sinners know, how near their jollity is to perdition. Judgment is often at the threshold, while drunkenness and surfeit are at the table. Abigail's wisdom suspended the present ruin, but this feast would not off of Nabal's stomach: the report of his wife puts him into a swoon the next morning, and within ten days after that swoon ends in death: and that heart, which wine had made as light as a feather, dies as heavy as a stone. Belshazzar made a feast for his lords, and drunk wine to it. On a sudden, his countenance was changed, and his knees smote one against another, Dan. v. 1, 6. What an alteration was here! a sumptuous and presumptuous banquet ends in trembling and astonishment. He had the most glorious cupboard of plate in the world, for which he might thank the spoils of the temple: we read of many bowls, not of much wine; but in our feasts, a great deal of wine is turned over with a few bowls. Nabal cannot abound, but he must be drunk: excess is a true argument of folly. We use to say, When drink is in wit is out: but if wit were not first out, so much drink would not be let in. But I have held you too long at a feast, unless my cheer were better. The Jews by a custom did challenge at their feast of pass-over the release of one malefactor, Matt. xxvii. 15; whereupon they chose Barabbas, and refused Christ. So do you at this feast, turn out Barabbas, lust, riot, malice, injustice, covetousness, uncharitableness, profaneness, and all those sins which make up a malefactor, a Barabbas; and then in another sense than Pilate meant, I shall deliver to you the Lord Jesus, not to be crucified by you, but presented in this holy sacrament as crucified before you. Thus you shall see his body broken, his blood poured out, not to his pain, but your comfort; not his death, but the remembrance of his death. He took the bitterness of this; that we might have the sweetness of this; he died for us once, that we by him might live for ever.

"Deceiving while they feast with you." Feasting hath ever been held a note of friendship; we invite none to our tables, but either such as are, or such as we would make, our friends. David speaks of a won-

der, of a monster: My friend that did eat of my bread, hath lift up his heel against me, Psal. xli. 9. Elijah would not do violence to the very raven that was his purveyor. But for a man to feed upon his neighbour's meat, and to eat his host in his heart, it is such a prodigy of unthankfulness, that nature herself is sick of him. Some sly politician, as Absalom, may make a feast for him whom he means to kill: some cunning usurer may make a feast for those prodigal heirs whom he means to undo; some ambitious aspirer, for them whom he means to undermine. "A feast is made for laughter," saith Solomon, Eccl. x. 19: yet all feasts are not for laughter, yea, some are for slaughter; not for society, but for satiety; not for delight, but deceit; not for love, but for lust. So the luxurious makes a feast, that he may lay his guests on the floor. The end of a feast is not seldom the beginning of a fray: therefore some interpret our English phrase, "To pledge," To defend; the drinker supposed to be in danger, and he to whom he drinks engaging or interposing himself betwixt him and harm. Feasts are not always safe; for if a man have no other enemy, he hath himself; his own riot may do him that mischief which another forbears. These were called love-feasts; their intent was feasting for love, yet some came for love of feasting: one was hungry, and another was drunken, 1 Cor. xi. 21. In these last was not the fulness of love, but the love of fulness. Thus the first institution did languish into corruption; and they became luxurious, some were drunken: uncharitable, others were hungry; the poor got nothing: and fraudulent; they had thieves among themselves, whose plausible insinuation made way for their pestilent circumvention. The hypocrite would bring his dish; but it was either to tempt a woman to his lust, or to deceive a man of his goods, or to spoil him of his wits. Let me conclude all with three observations.

1. It is odious to feast with men on purpose to make them drunk. It is usually said that we taught the Germans to fight, and they taught us to drink: and we have both proved apt scholars, too forward proficient: if they be tall fighters, we are stout drinkers. But shall men be so desperate, as not to think themselves welcome to a feast, unless they be sent home drunk? Many have lost their lives, because they would not be drunk; noble Uriah was made drunk, yet could not save his, 2 Sam. xi. 13. King David had abused his wife, and his project was to shelter it with the name of her husband. Uriah had protested against feasting at home, against uxorious delights: he could not be won with words, therefore now the courtiers must try him with wine. A king begins to him, and he must pledge it. I do not think that he intended any excess, but to obey. But wine is a mocker, it goes pleasantly in, but who can imagine how it will work? It steals in like a lamb, but then rageth like a lion: he that admits that traitor, shall complain of a surprisal too late. Well, even good Uriah is made drunk; the holiest soul may be overtaken; he is a rare Rechabite that never drank but when he was thirsty. There is hope now that these cups will send him home; so common is it for wine to prepare men to lust. Uriah was made drunk, that he might desire his own wife. What was the issue? The aim fails, grace is stronger than wine, the fury of the grape cannot carry Uriah to his own bed. The graceless tempter sometimes fails in his project. David meant by procuring the sin of another, to hide his own; he shall not. Often have we heard of those that sought to overthrow others, soonest overtaken themselves. Whose is the chief offence? Uriah's drunkenness is more David's sin

than his own: sober David is worse than drunken Uriah. Woe to him that gives his neighbour drink to discover his shame! yea, he shall discover his own shame. He that gives a man wine to deceive him, is first drunk in soul, before he can procure the other's bodily distemper. If we should compare them, the one is as a sinner, the other as the tempter; the one yields weakly, the other intends wilfully. Lot's daughters gave their father wine to provoke him, but themselves were first drunk with that lust of provocation. The husband is drenched, that his bed may be polluted; the adulterer is more intoxicated with sin, than the other can be with wine. Even the drunken temperance of some abhors that wickedness, which the sober intemperance of others desires. Say other purposes be left out, and nothing is intended but victory; is he the valiant man that can drink most? David's worthies were honoured for their deeds of arms, not for their great draughts. He that makes a man drunk to deceive him, to turn another into a beast, makes himself a devil.

2. To cheat men under the colour of amity, is the most execrable villany. Feasting implies friendship, friendship admits of no deceit. Boetius says, No more deadly pest than a household foe, or an enemy among your friends. Nothing is more easy than this deceit, nothing more unpardonable. Nothing more easy: my friend may sooner mischief me than I can mistrust my friend. Nothing more hateful, because he doth that as a friend, which he could not have done as an enemy. The manner of doing specificates and aggravates moral actions, saith the school; so doth the very instrument. If I strike a man with a sword, it is presumed that I meant to kill him; not so, if I strike him with a reed; because a reed is no probable instrument of death. He that deceives me under the name of a friend, shows that he took that name only to deceive me. There is no fence for the pistol that is charged with the bullet of friendship. Hilary compares it to a razor in the hand of a counterfeit barber; Prepared for ornament, says he, it is turned to murder. Uriah must be set in the forefront of the battle, 2 Sam. xi. 15: honour is pretended to him, murder is meant. He was a valiant soldier, and before he had the title of David's worthy, he dearly earned it. It was not a great lady's letter, nor that which 'got the captain his Burgesship, Acts xxii. 28, that gave him that reputation; but a noble courage in difficult exploits. David sent for him, made him royally welcome, and he was worthy of it; worthy indeed to have leaned his head near the golden sceptre, and to have died in his prince's bosom, not by his prince's proditron. But now that all this seeming favour and honour should tend to his ruin, oh how foul a deed was it even of that holy saint! His renown was as great as had been his dangers, and his valour beyond them both; and even in this last attempt that cost him his life, if his followers had not been more treacherous than his enemies were numerous, he had come off with victory. Now poor Uriah is not so much conquered, as betrayed; nor fell he by his enemies, but by his friends. Yet is he neither the first, nor the last, that hath thus perished.

David himself had such a plot put upon him by Saul: Be thou valiant, and fight the Lord's battles, and I will give thee my elder daughter Merab to wife; for he said, My hand shall not be upon him, &c. 1 Sam. xviii. 17. David was grown so gracious with the people, that the king durst not offer him personal violence; therefore he hires him into the jaws of death, by no less a price than his eldest daughter. What could be spoken more honourably, more graciously? A king could not offer a more noble gift than his own daughter, nor desire a more

gracious recompence, than to fight the Lord's battles. What a saint, what a friend was Saul! yet he did never mean so much mischief to David, so much unfaithfulness to God, as in this offer. A good man is never safe from the false-hearted; for when they make the fairest weather, then is the greatest danger. Whatsoever the colour was, Saul meant nothing to David but death. Yet doth this falsehood discover itself, for Merab was not given to David, but to Adriel. Seeing all these dangers could not effect what Saul desired, himself will not effect what he promised. Yet still he will be a friend, and he hath now another daughter for David; though the younger, yet the more affectionate; she was as sick of love, as her father was of hate, toward him. Saul is glad of this, his daughter could never live to do him better service: if she can betray David, David shall have his good will to marry her, ver. 20, 21. Thus doth this false-hearted king sacrifice his own child to his envy; and hopes that her honest and sincere love shall betray her worthy and innocent husband. It is so storied of a late emperor of Turkey, that he married his own daughter to a bashaw on the one day, and then, after a night's pleasure, sent for his head the next morning. Are there none that care not to cast away a daughter on their friend, for their own ends? Such is the rage of desperate malice, that rather than not ruin those they hate, they will do it through the sides of their own children. "Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful," Prov. xxvii. 6. No man so much hates his professed foe, as he does his dissembling friend, when that shadowed villany declares itself. We pray, from the hands of all our enemies, and (of all our enemies) from the hands of our deceitful friends, good Lord, deliver us.

3. To boast of all this mischief, when it is done, doubles the wickedness; to glory in their shame, Phil. iii. 19. Wicked men glory in that which shall everlastingly cast them from glory; and make that their sport on earth, which in hell shall be their torment. One glories in his strange attire, as if that were matter of pride, which makes him ridiculous. What glory takes the owl, that she is not fashioned like other birds? Another glories in his perfumed garments, and thinks every one that sees him or smells him, must needs be in love with him. Another, to hear himself talk, or to read his own lines; though he bungle up such stuff as tires the most patient ear. Yet the ass takes no pleasure in his own braying. Another, to bring out an oath with a grace, as if to offend God, and to poison his own mouth, were an honour to him. Another, to tell of his cheats, and how many he hath gulled; and yet the gull knows not that he hath most of all cheated himself. Another, to tell of his adulteries; and every time he boasts, he again commits the sin; yea, this report shall have a worse vengeance than the act. Herostatus burnt the temple of Diana in a bravery, and for a bravery he relates it. You shall hear the gallant swear that such a one is a brave, valiant gentleman: why? he killed such a man. So Cain was a brave, valiant gentleman, because he slew his brother Abel. Another, in giving weak brains a drench, to see them wallow in their filthiness: this is to boast how far they are become Satan's children.

Alas, that a man should make sport at sin! Doth the peacock glory in his foul feet? Do not his proud feathers come down when they are in his eyes? Every vice, for this very reason, its being a vice, is against nature: so Augustine. And are we enamoured of that which the very beasts hate? Takes the devil a pride or glory, that he is banished out of heaven? Doth he make a sport of his torment, or play with his

chain? No, but he rather curseth God, angels, and men, who live in the kingdom of light, while he is confined to the dungeon of darkness. What coward is there, that will brag or glory that he was beaten? If we could see the baseness of sin, we would have little desire to make sport with it. Now the Lord open our eyes to see, and sanctify our hearts to detest it. Amen.

VERSE 14.

Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: a heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children.

Loxg and late I am got out of that troublesome labyrinth: and now, like a traveller that hath spent some time in a bad country, where the conditions of the people displease him, he embarks himself, and hoisteth sails for another coast, hoping to speed better; and yet, alas, finds his progress from bad to worse; so, where am I now landed? Is the climate more temperate, are the inhabitants more civil, am I contented in my change? No, I have left the Sybarites, and lighted upon the cannibals; I am come (with Lot) from Egypt unto Sodom: from a knot of loose companions, to a rabble of adulterers. Before I found a land of deceivers, Jer. ix. 5, now I am fallen upon a land of adulterers, Jer. xxiii. 10: thus is the matter well mended. The sixth commandment forbids to kill; the seventh, to commit adultery; the eighth, to steal: a man's life is more precious than his wife, his wife than his goods. So the apostle's argument riseth *a minore ad majus*; before they did but cheat men of their purses, now of their spouses.

"Having eyes full of adultery." The theme riseth in full strength to the condemnation of adultery. For the particulars, we may compare them to a hunting: these graceless deceivers being granted the huntsmen, we have three occurrences. First, the hounds be their eyes. Secondly, the beast they hunt after, is the adulteress. Thirdly, the game is pursued, the dogs are at full cry; their eyes be full of adultery. Before I uncouple the hounds, or examine the particulars, let me say something to the matter in general. And that not much, because I have formerly handled this argument. It is a conquering sin, a cheating sin, a commanding sin, and a condemning sin.

1. It is a conquering sin, for it hath overcome the strongest. Some man perhaps says presently, Why then hath it not overcome me? Nay rather, why should it therefore overcome thee? even their falls should teach thee to stand. Bathsheba was no sooner washed from her uncleanness, but she goes into a forbidden bed, 2 Sam. xi. 4: she was never so foul, as when she was newly washed: yea, if she had not been washed, she had been clean: the worst foulness of the body is cleanliness to the best of sin. We read not of any fault of Bathsheba's either before or after, but that she was a good woman: yet she was a woman; the importunity of a king, and infirmity of sex, may plead for her. But what can be said for that prophetic king, and royal prophet? God hath not left it a blank, but a blemish in King David's chronicle; that every passenger may shun that rock, and steer his course another way. Otherwise what hope hast thou but to be drowned, when God's own favourite so narrowly escaped? Did not his holy profession teach him to abhor such a sin more than death? Did not his justice punish this sin in others with no less than death? Did not his place require

him to protect the elasticity of his subjects? Did not the countenance of his majesty imbolden the others' dishonesty? A princely tempter is like to prevail. Great persons should make their commands conscionable, their demands reasonable; for they sin by authority that are solicited by the mighty. Thus deeply might we accuse him, but that he did more deeply accuse himself. Be there any profane eyes that look upon this woeful example with content, as their pattern, or their excuse for adultery? (As some think of Ham, that he meant to take advantage of his father's nakedness, thereby to excuse himself for his continual drunkenness.) O those be dissolute eyes, and such as shall one day see David in joy, and themselves in torment. Good eyes behold it with fears and tears, as the woeful spectacle of human frailty. God notes it, and we repeat it, for a terror. What a powerful sin is that, which could overcome a David! If any man could have beaten Samson, how terrible would he have been to the world! One Joseph shunned his tempting mistress; now he would be a rare man. If thou be that Joseph, I will apply to thee that text of Solomon, "One man among a thousand have I found; but a woman among all those have I not found," Eccl. vii. 28. But if thou hast not been an innocent Joseph, yet now at least become a penitent David.

2. It is a cheating sin; for instead of repentance, it works the adulterer to labour a concealment. His study is not how to abandon the lewdness, but how to hide it from notice. He fears shame, not sin; the commissary, not God; the churchwardens more than the angels; and the apportion worse than Satan. He seeks a rag to cover his sin, rather than a plaster to heal it. Bathsheba conceives a child in sin, 2 Sam. xi. 5, and withal conceives a trouble how to hide the shame. He that did the fact, must cover it. Marriage is a common recompence and shelter for fornication; but adultery always breaks out like a desperate plague, that knows no cure. Therefore it makes the offenders such hypocrites, that they rather seek to conceal their wickedness from the eyes of men, than to pull the sting of sin out of their own consciences. As there be some acts wherein the hypocrite appears a saint, so there be some wherein the greatest mortal saint may be a hypocrite. Compunction and tenderness is turned into circumspection and care of secrecy. Instead of clearing their sin, they labour to cloak it; and spend those thoughts in concealing it, which they should have bestowed in preventing it before, or in repenting it afterward. A, if a client should be tedious and curious in making his cause good to his neighbour, and never think of a lawyer to plead it for him. Sinners endeavour to make all fair with the world, and forget their advocate, Christ. Not unlike the soldier, that was very diligent in scouring his musket, preparing his match, practising his postures, and fitting his furniture; and when he came into the field, had forgot his powder. Their thoughts are so taken up with the sweetness of fruition, and policy of contriving, that they quite forget the main, which is repentance.

3. It is a commanding sin; no iniquity that stands in the way must be refused, if adultery be once admitted. All the witnesses must be corrupted, yea, and allowed to take their own pleasure the same or any other way; the pander must not ask a reward, and take a repulse. Other maids stand in fear of their mistresses, but here the mistress stands in fear of her conscious maid. The servant's lips must be locked up with a golden key; if those setters once quest, the game is marred. The husband must be watched, dishonoured, impoverished, yea, perhaps butchered; for if blood stands in the way of lust, it is not spared.

There are no conditions so hard, to which the adulterer must not subscribe. David hath abused Bathsheba, the Hittite (her husband) is sent for from the wars; and after some needless and far-fetched questions, receives a royal present, and so is dismissed home, to cloak another's sin, 2 Sam. xi. 6—8. That train will not take, the good soldier is so used to his field-bed, that he rather chooseth a stony pillow under the canopy of heaven, than the delicate chamber of his wife, whom he thought as honest as he knew fair. David's wanton heart does not yet melt, by comparing his servant's chaste resolution with his own light incontinence; but he tries another trick. He that cannot be stirred with words, shall be heat with wine; this fire (he presumes) will send him home to his remedy. Here is a new plot, with a new sin; but it does not take. Drunkenness hath made many adulterers, yet shall it not move Uriah to lawful pleasures. What then? there must be another project. Where, O where will this mischief end? Adultery cannot be hidden without murder, murder shall be employed to hide adultery. The fact which wine cannot conceal, the sword shall. What a brood of sins hath the devil hatched out of this one egg of adultery! Uriah shall bear his own mittimus to Joab, and be the messenger of his own death. Joab must be a traitor to his friend, the host of God must shamefully turn their backs upon their enemies, much blood of Israel must be spilt, many a good soldier cast away, that murder must be seconded with dissimulation; and all this to hide one adultery. Who knows how far he shall fall, that hath once fallen thus far? Let him not flatter himself, This sin and no more; for when Satan hath him at that advantage, he will command him further service. Oh how happy is it for us never to begin the evil, whereof we know not when we shall make an end! Now the preventing grace of God keep us from the sin, that we be never delivered over to the shame!

4. It is a condemning sin, and carries its own sentence about it. It must needs abandon all love of God, for that and the love of a harlot cannot stand together. There be three sorts of love; the first is ever good, the second is ever bad, the last is good naturally, accidentally evil. First, the love of God is ever good, nor is it possible to sin in the excess; there be no limits or boundaries set to this love. Secondly, the love of any sin, as of adultery, is always bad. Thirdly, the love of sustenance, recreation, &c. (as they say of Mercury, that joined with a good planet it is auspicious, noxious with a bad one,) is good by nature, bad by intemperance. This love by the love of God is stunted, that it may satisfy necessity, not curiosity. A proud stomach that quickens itself by artificial receipts, it will not endure, but confines it to mediocrity. But unlawful love is allowed no mediocrity; a man must not be an adulterer by measure. "The fear of the Lord is clean," Psal. xix. 9; that and foul thoughts will no more stand together than the ark and Dagon; if the ark be there, Dagon must down; Dagon may stand when the ark is gone. No idol must be in the temple of God, but of all idols not Baal-peor. As malice is damnable, because it is so diametrically repugnant to God who is love; so God is also purity, and therefore nothing more directly contrary to him than uncleanness. There is no adulterer but will say, yea and not stick to swear, that he loves God; yet if he have but a crown in his purse, his harlot shall sooner have half of it, than he will lend God one sixpence: this the poor find too true. Perhaps after the cooling of his heat, loss of spirits, and abatement of courage, he may be a little sorry; but it is like a cold thaw at noon, that is congealed worse at night. Though it takes away present strength,

yet it leaves a desire; whereas grace takes away desire, though it leaves strength. It is like fire, that purgeth out the filth of uncleanness: like the sun, that deadens these embers by his greater force; like pure water put into a vessel, that thrusts out the stinking air whereof it was full before. Love God therefore, know him that you may love him, read that you may know him, pray that you may do all. Augustine, the famous doctor, was anxious to become a Christian; only this troubled him, that he must leave his fornication. (Confes. lib. 8. cap. 8.) As he sat in a garden, he heard a voice, saying, *Tolle, lege*. Take the book and read; and at the first opening of it, he was presented with that text, "Let us walk honestly, as in the day." &c. Rom. xiii. 13. This was enough; it wrought his heart to piety: whose soever the voice was, the conversion was the work of God.

"Having eyes full of adultery." Their eyes be the beagles that hunt after this game; where we have five observations.

1. There is no sense which is not at the heart's command; but the principality of those servants is varied according to the disposition of their mistress. If the heart be gracious, the ear hath the superiority; if vicious, the eye. Faith comes by hearing, to make the soul good; faith is confirmed by hearing, to make the soul better. Lust comes in by seeing, to corrupt the heart, and make it evil; lust is inflamed by seeing, to make it worse. Unless God come in by the ear, you shall not find him in the heart. So the harlot takes the heart by the eye. The blind is in better case than the deaf: for the former hath but lost the sense that might undo him, the other hath lost the sense that should save him. In the market a man's eyes do him more service than his ears: in the church, no matter though his eyes be shut, so his ears be open. "Mine ears thou hast opened," saith David, Psal. xl. 6, not mine eyes; yea, he prays rather for their shutting. "Turn away mine eyes from vanity," Psal. exix. 37. In the temple, a running or roving eye is a dangerous thief to steal away the soul. The popish service was only invented to take the eye: the deaf man may be one of their best catholics; there is nothing to do for his ears, unless he can understand Latin, or have some skill in music to distinguish tones of the organs. All is a pageant for the eye, as St. Paul hath fitted it with a word, *ὁράζοντες*, eye-service: which brings so many fools into their paradise. This makes it perilous to see their histrionical idolatries, because the soul is surprised by the eye.

If any object, that Paul was present at the pagan devotions, Acts xvii. 23: but we are not all Pauls. We have not all Paul's constancy; yea, rather, how many Peters there are! how many are guilty of Peter's flexibility! But is truth then too cruel, to forbid our bodily presence at superstitious services, for the preservation of our lives and liberties? Nay, rather admire the bounty of this mistress: you aim at the company of men, she tells you of a society with angels; you think of your rotten tenements, she wisheth you eternal mansions; you would be content with under-offices, she offers you dominion over cities; you plead for provinces, she for kingdoms; you are indulgent to a life that leads unto death, she counsels you rather to accept of a death that leads unto life. We read not, By seeing you shall be saved, but by hearing.

2. The eye is of all senses the quickest of apprehension: a port to land the commodities of hell, before the soul have warning. It goes out for prey, and brings it home in an instant. If that of Plato had been true philosophy, that the sight is formed

by darting out the visive faculties to the object, there had been hope of better safety. But seeing exerciseth itself by bringing the object within, according to Aristotle, and thus is the baneful impression made. That is a rare eye, like a pure beam of the sun, that can mingle itself with sordid corruptions, and receive no taintment. It is a most sharp-sighted faculty or sense, it can see the sky and stars so remote. Most efficacious; no sense so firmly imprinteth forms in the imagination: what it sees once intently, it sees many days after. Most sure or certain: I saw it; an evident testimony. One eyewitness is better than ten ear-witnesses. No sense is so ranging; now it is on the earth, in a moment at the moon. Therefore the suddenness of the last judgment is compared to the twinkling of an eye. None hath such variety of objects, and continual business; none is so often put in action, none is so quick of motion; indeed none so serviceable to reason: well guided, none so commodious; and none so pernicious, if corrupted.

The visible instruction is most potent: young King Philip, being but carried in his cradle to the wars, did greatly animate the soldiers. The visible temptation is most prevalent. Imagination in absence represents the pleasure afar off, and not prepared: before the eye, it enrageth the desire, and nothing wants but execution. Therefore the way to root a bad impression out of the heart, is to remove the object from the eye: out of sight out of mind. We think on absent things with colder affections. Indeed well-grounded love is more constant, and lovers have a secret cabinet in their memories, whereby they confer; yet unless the intercourse of messengers, letters, tokens, revive the affections, even their thoughts will grow remiss. How easily then may loose love, which hath no other nerves but blood and sense, be dissolved by a separation! Many a bitten lover says of his harlot, Would I had never seen her face: but he says not, I will never more see her face. He vainly wisheth what cannot be, and yet does not conscientiously resolve what may be.

3. The eye is the pander of a lustful heart; the window that lets in the infection, the first betrayer of the fort. To say nothing of the sons of God, allured to the daughters of men by their eyes; nor of Potiphar's wife, that by a cast of her eye drew Joseph into her heart; nor of David, the glance of whose wanton eye wrought so many mischiefs: Ahab's eye was sick of Naboth's vineyard, his heart was drunk with the grapes whereof he never tasted. Adultery sets her chair in the eye: they say, the master's eye feeds the beast; but here the beast's eye feeds the master. In the eye itself there is no such virtue: yet the master's eye is said to govern the family. Here the eye doth engender lust, lust adultery, and adultery (if nothing else) engenders vengeance. "Let her not take thee with her eyelids," Prov. vi. 25. *Oculi sunt in amore duces*, saith a poet; i. e. In love the eyes are the leaders. Upon this ground it seems Zeleucus imposed that law on the Locrenses, that the adulterer's eyes should be pulled out: sin entered at those casements, therefore he would stop up the windows: and when the steed was stolen, shut up the stable door. Piny writes of a chalky brimstone, that draws to itself distant fire: the wanton eye attracts this adulterous fire to the heart. All shapes, all colours are alike to darkness; no sense can distinguish betwixt foul and fair, but the eye. Dinah was a maid, and went to see virgins of her own sex; her eye was chaste, though idle; but Shechem's eye was both idle and unchaste. That great soldier called the Persian maids, *Dolores oculorum*; i. e. The torments or pains, of the eyes: there-

fore the same Alexander refused so much as to see Darius's wife, a lady of incomparable beauty; fearing lest he that had conquered the husband, should be overcome by the wife. What abundance of offices doth the eye bear in this little family of man! First, it is the body's watchman, and guides the hand to defend it. Secondly, it is the understanding's informer, whereupon she determines of substances true or false. Thirdly, the stomach's taster; for if the eye do not like the morsel, that refuseth it. Fourthly, the affections' purveyor, to bring in their desires. Fifthly, the heart's messenger, that runs on her errand almost as quick as thought. Sixthly, the fancy's intelligencer; the painter must see, before he can counterfeit. Lastly, a scout to the whole soul, and a sentinel to the whole body; and corrupted, a traitor to them both.

4. Satan's first project is to take the eye; if that be once his friend, he hopes well of all the rest. Indeed, if the door stand open to the thief, what safety can be in the house? The devil took Christ into an exceeding high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, Matt. iv. 8. Why so high, but for prospect? If all this glory were only represented to his imagination, a valley would have served; if only to the sense, no hill were high enough. Circular bodies, though small, cannot be seen at once. This show was made to both: the kingdoms about Judea to his eye, the glory of them to his imagination. A cunning devil in all; he meant that this glory should tempt the eye, the eye the fancy, and the fancy should tempt the will. If that sense be viciously employed, remember the devil is there. How many thousand souls have died of the wound in the eye! If sin be not let in at that window, nor the door of the ear, it can find no way into the heart. Death comes through the windows: when a man opens his eye lustfully, he cannot think what a train of sin will crowd in upon him. Had Satan come to David in the most lovely form of Bathsheba herself, and at the first in direct terms told him, he should enjoy her if he would murder her husband; without question, he would have spit scorn on that face, on which he so much doted. Now from the glance of his eye arose all that succession of mischiefs. He sins; and no less sin would serve his turn than adultery; and that is not enough, without the addition of blood. Yea, he is not only a sinner, but a tempter; he solicits Bathsheba to offend God, to break her faith, to dishonour her husband, to dishonest her body, to wound her soul, to put an asp to the breast of her conscience; and all this begun with a look. The man that was so heart-smitten for cutting off a piece of his master's garment, is now lavish of a noble servant's blood. Yea, because that worthy commander cannot fall alone, he grudgeth not the blood of his innocent people to accompany him. Could he have expiated that sin with his own blood, it had been but well spent; but to cover it with the blood of his faithful soldiers, was a crime above astonishment. How did the Spirit of God retire at a wanton look! Oh the deep fetches of sin! Satan were not that old serpent, if he had lost his windings; his craft is of as long standing as his malice. That sin at the first presentment would affright a man, which he juggles on by degrees. When the prophet told Hazael of the horrible mischief he should do to Israel, he replied, Am I a dog, that I should do this? 2 Kings viii. 13. Not yet; but in time the devil will screw him up to it. He that willingly runs into a known wickedness, knows not where he shall stop. Set a man on the top of some high tower, and bid him leap down, he feels horror in the precipice. Yet you may

persuade him to go down by the stairs to the very bottom. If we do not prevent this assault in our eyes, we shall too late complain of the horror and anguish of it in our hearts.

5. Where be the eyes that have not been faulty? If the eyes have sinned, why should not the eyes be punished? Punished they must be, with rottenness in the dust, with horrid and astonishing visions in hell, if some former penalty be not set on them here. The rich man in hell saw Lazarus in Abraham's bosom, Luke xvi. 23: that sight was his torment. How must the eyes be corrected for this wantonness? By tasking them unto tears; for ranging eyes, we must get mourning eyes; for eyes lifted up with pride, eyes dejected with shame and sorrow; for eyes full of incontinence, eyes full of repentance. How else shall we dare to lift up those eyes to heaven, which have been the brokers of hell, polluted with the aspersions of lust? O let these eyes, that have been the cisterns of corruption, become the fountains of compunction. Mary Magdalene's eyes had offended, her eyes shall pay for it, Luke vii. 38. She had been a notorious strumpet, a woman of a mercenary condition; if her eyes had not invited her to love others, yet they had bewitched others to dote on her. Lo, she would not look on that world but through a shower of tears, which she had so enamoured with her wanton looks. These organs have made our bodies stinking lepers, let them be turned into a Jordan or Siloam to cure our leprosies.

We magnify some waters distilled out of herbs and flowers, because they are good to heal sore eyes; but there is no water so virtual to cure the lust of the eyes, as the penitent water, which the limbeck of sorrow draws from those eyes. Some of the ancients have thought, that God did endue us with this dew of tears for no other end, but to wash away our sins. Because when we weep for any losses or crosses, we do not lessen our grief, but increase it; but when we weep for our sins, we do not increase them, but take them quite away. No tears can raise my friend up from the grave, they may raise my soul from the death of sin. From the bitter flowers of wormwood, the heat of fire distilleth sweet and wholesome water: the grace of God's Spirit, from the bitter remembrance of our sins, distilleth tears able to comfort our souls. When we are thirsty, we run to the well; when our houses be on fire, we run to the river: the sight of our eyes hath procured both these mischiefs to our hearts; the tears of our eyes must help them; they are able both to allay our thirst and cool our lust. This is not an eye full of adultery, but full of grief for adultery: such an eye shall look upon thy harlot with indignation and detestation; that in those tears she shall read at once thy present sorrow and her former sin. A graceless woman that had long insnared a young man who was now converted, saluted him in the old familiarity as he went by. He regarded her not. She replied, It is I. He answered, I am not as I was, I was not as I am. (Ambrose.) Blessed souls, that have got the mastery of their own eyes!

"Adultery." This is the game, the beast they hunt; where I observe three gradations.

1. The main attractive of the eye is beauty; and of this the fancy is informed by the eye; yet being so informed, then the eye is ruled by the fancy; and as that imagines her, so the eye sees her. Beauty is the glory of nature, a glimpse of the soul, a beam of the Maker's brightness; so ravishing the heart, that it is more present with the body it loveth than in the body where it liveth. Yet as the meat which pleaseth the taste, is but a mixture of well-compounded materials; the music that delights our ear,

is but a harmony of proportionable voices or instruments; so the beauty which so takes the eye, is but a just correspondence of the parts and colours of visible bodies. Why should not that spiritual beauty be far dearer to us, which is the image of God, the elements or lineaments whereof be righteousness and holiness? The body's beauty is but superficial, skin-deep, hiding that within which we cannot look upon without horror. Spiritual beauty is like a diamond, fair to the centre. Time will plough furrows on the fairest face, and fill it with wrinkles; but the wrinkles of a beautiful soul are done away with time; the older, the fairer. Many a woman's beauty hath been her ruin; but blessing never forsook a beautiful soul. When thou comest near to a fair face, thou becomest never the fairer for it; nay, thou appearest the fouler by being near it. But a virtuous soul, by a kind of exemplary influence, diffuseth into thee some ornaments; and is indeed, as they talk of that imaginary stone, by the touch of that pure metal, so diffusive of goodness, that thou shalt be the better for it. No miseries can blemish this beauty: "I am black, but comely," Cant. i. 5; tanned and sun-burnt with persecutions, yet still amiable in the beauty of holiness. In this, Sarah was a figure of the church; who was as fair at a hundred years old as she was at twenty; and then, the fairest woman of the world. It is said of Christ, that he was without form or comeliness, or beauty to be desired, Isa. liii. 2; yet even then, he was "fairer than the children of men," Psal. xlv. 2. Clean through a corporal beauty, a spiritual eye can see the very image of the devil; but a gracious soul in her worst estate is but like a slubbed diamond, which after a little polishing shines with a radiant lustre. "The king's daughter is all glorious within," Psal. xlv. 13; but who can persuade carnal minds to this? It is the image of Adam they dote upon, not the image of God. A fair skin surpriseth a fleshly heart; and he thinks there is no other beauty in the world, but that which toucheth his sensual desires.

2. But if a man's eye be delighted with beauty, may he not enjoy it with chastity? Why may he not think his own wife the fairest upon earth? She is so to him, if he so imagine her: opinion cannot err in matter of opinion. He sees her daily with the same eyes he first chose her. But the ranging eye cannot be so limited. Propriety in other things is a content, here it is a burden: and were not the adulterer's fair wife his own, he would give much to enjoy her; but being his own, he cares not for her. "Stolen waters are sweet," Prov. ix. 17; but will a man leave his own delicious wine, to steal a draught of his poor neighbour's water? It is a wife that he loves, but not his own: and this aggravates his wickedness, that the adulteress is not her own woman, but another's, under covert baron; not a straggling deer of the herd, a beast of the common, but one upon whom be set the marks of propriety. God hath set his mark, and resolves not to know her, if she knows another man. The church hath set her mark of solemn marriage, refusing to be the mother of that daughter which defiles the marriage-bed. The husband hath his mark of a holy covenant made before men and angels; and is allowed a divorce upon such a fedifragous forfeiture. To pick this threefold lock with a false key, to undo a knot thus tied before heaven and earth, will call God and man, heaven and earth, not only to witness it, but to take vengeance of it.

What a laborious, what a dangerous way the lustful finds out to his pleasure! as if no water could please David, but what is brought through a host of enemies; no content was worth their desiring, but

what was fetched from the gates of hell, snatched out of the devil's teeth, handed out of that burning furnace of unquenchable flames. Those delights are not esteemed, that are not troublesome: the malice of lust supposeth all ways of obtaining better than the lawful. Suppose the two sinners forgive one another on earth, will they not curse one another in hell? Suppose the church pass it over, either through ignorance or connivance, will not the Judge of all the world plague it? Say he is patient, will the wronged husband, brother, friend put it up? Doth not Absalom pay Amnon the wages of his sister's constupration? 2 Sam. xiii. 28. Two whole years that sly courtier smothered his revenge; but it was not for nothing; it was so much the more exquisite, by being longer protracted. If David will not punish it, Absalom shall; not that he cared for justice, but for revenge. Absalom did it wickedly, but God righteously; human partiality hath neglected it, inhuman malice shall punish it. God punisheth sin with sin, while Absalom punisheth sin with death. If either David had called Amnon, or Amnon called himself, to account for it, the revenge had not been so desperate. How often hath the adulterer been slain by the abused husband, when he least suspected it; righting himself unjustly, as he had been secretly injured! Abimelech was the son of a concubine, yet he murders all his father's legitimate children. If Gideon had lived to see that bloody day, how would he have cursed the knowledge of a luxurious bed! So some write, that Ulysses was slain by his own base son. The adultery of Paris was the desolation of all Troy.

I will not tire you with examples. It is an adulteress their eye is full of, they seek a like to themselves. These lusts they conceive by the mediation of the eyes, as Laban's sheep did their young, at the sight of the pilled rods, which Jacob laid in the watering troughs. *Placet interdicta voluptas*; i. e. forbidden pleasure is pleasant: they slight the fruit of the tree that is easily climbed. What is Ahab's kingdom to him, while Naboth hath a pretty vineyard? The cloyed husband sits carelessly looking on that wife, for which another languisheth. Herein David's plot failed him, when he had sent for Uriah; he imagined that the beauty of Bathsheba must needs attract a husband so long absent, that it was his grief to be detained from so pleasing a bed. Because that face, those eyes and breasts, had so enchanted him, and stolen his heart, that they could make him sin; he thought it could not be possible, but Uriah must be allured by them to a safe and warrantable fruition. He was deceived, though Uriah had another end: many a wanton stomach plays with that meat, which to the hungry affecter would be above all dainties. Nabal is churlish to that wife, whom holy David thinks himself happy in, and makes his queen. Oh the boundless vagrancy of irregular lust! whither will it go, where will it end? Will one harlot serve the adulterer's turn? No, could he renew his strength as fast as his desires, and multiply objects to both, a nation of women would scarce suffice one adulterer. It is a sin that sates up the conscience with the blood, dries up grace with the marrow; and when it can sin no more, yet it cannot repent. Happy soul that never knew it! and next happy that for ever after detests it!

3. Lastly, it is an adulteress they love, and that is but one bow short of Satan. Some have mistrusted, that it is not a reasonable soul, but an infernal spirit, that enlivneth such a licentious shape; to do that by a fair woman, which he could never do by his foul self. What hath not a guilty conscience cause to dread! The soul of the adulteress cost Christ his precious

lilies; yet had a crown, or little more, or sometimes less, is the set price of it. What need Satan tempt her, when for so small a value he may have her? We hate the Turks for selling Christians as slaves; how odious are they that sell themselves! Soon is their lively colour wasted, their blood parboiled; that were it not for superficial cheeks, and enticing dresses, the most graceless lecher would abhor them. But it is the devil's special care to keep them gorgeous. A soldier having a sword which he hath well proved in divers combats, and knows he may surely trust it, will be careful to scour and polish it. Woman hath done Satan singular good service; by her he overthrew the first man, by her the wisest man, by her the strongest man, by her many millions of men; no marvel therefore if he be curious in dressing her with ornaments, in disheveling her hair, and fitting her with all condumens; that she may still help to people his infernal kingdom. Fowls of the air, though with never so empty craws, fly not for food into open pitfalls. *Que nimis apparent retia, ritat avis*, says the poet. The bird avoids the nets which show too much. An adulteress is the devil's pitfall, a trap to catch our souls; let us not run into the gin with open eyes. Now the Spirit of grace keeps us from the strange woman, that we may be no strangers to the kingdom of heaven.

"Full of adultery." This is the pursuit of the game, full cry. The eyes do not engross all their uncleanness; they are not only full, and the other parts empty. The caterer fills his basket with provision; but this serves afterward to fill the mouth, and to fill the stomach. The eyes be first full, as the cistern; but the cistern serves all other offices of the house. Nor is this a fulness of satisfaction: for as "he that loveth silver shall never be satisfied with silver," Eccl. v. 10, so he that loves women shall never be satisfied with women. Unnatural desires are infinite; hunger is soon appeased with meat, and thirst allayed with drink; but in burning fevers, the more water is drank, the more it is thirsted for. They still love with the love of concupiscence, not with the love of complacency. The hunter hath killed to-day, he is fresh again for the game to-morrow. This guiltiness first takes the eye, but stays not there; the procurer provides for another, not for himself. The lustful heart is the great commander, that assigns all members their several offices. So the ear is full of luxurious discourses, the eye full of provoking pictures; both full, at an obscene interlude, of exemplary and visible carnalities. The bones are full of illness; they rest on that pillow of vices. The thoughts full of contemptible uncleanness; for it is not hard to be an adulterer by speculation. The mouth is full of filthy jests. They come to do evil by these necessities; yea, the evil is already in those necessities. Some flatter themselves that they are chaste of body; but their eyes, their ears, their thoughts have committed adultery. Therefore if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out. What the substance? No, but the vice of the substance. The liver is obstructed, and makes the body sick; what then, shall we pluck out the liver? No, but let the arm blood, take some course to draw out the corruption. Lust is a fire; if it be inflamed in the heart, there is no part of the body but shall feel the heat.

"Full." There is no mediocrity in sin; in extremes can be no mean; and every sin is an extreme, either deficient or excessive. The heart of man affects fulness; and if it be not full of God, it seeks to be full of something else. The wicked are full of unrighteousness, full of envy, Rom. i. 29; their hands are full of blood, their houses full of spoil, their lips full of deceit, their mouths full of cursing and bitter-

ness, their throats full of slander, their bellies full of new wine, their loins full of lust, their inward parts full of malice; let me add, their heads full of mischief, their hearts full of rancour, their ears full of petulancy, their eyes full of adultery. These be the fulnesses that shall bring the fulness of torments. Sin will not leave a graceless soul empty; the house is no sooner swept, but it is filled with seven worse spirits. The drunkard cannot give over till he be full of wine; the swearer delights to fill his mouth with a monstrous oath; the covetous never feels himself full though he enlarge his belly like hell; all, like Pharaoh's lean kine, though they have devoured the fat, are lean still. Ambition, like the grave, is never full. What a thing is the heart of man, that it should swell as big as the world! Alexander was but a little man, yet a hundred worlds could not have filled him. The babbling tongue is not weary, though full of prattle, and is scarce silenced with sleep. A full wardrobe cannot content pride, it is still longing for new suits. All Haman's honour could not fill him; he would swallow Mordecai's head, and that choked him. Oh the insatiate desire of sin! when will it be full? When the eyes be full of soreness, the hands full of palsies, the houses full of misery, the faces full of infamy, the bones full of aches, the mouth full of cries and roarings, the loins full of diseases, the head full of pangs, the heart full of distractions. Yea, their mouths must first be full of earth, their souls full of torments: this world could not, hell shall, render them full enough.

But for us, there is another fulness. Be ye filled with the Spirit, full of good works, full of fruits; our mouths full of blessing, our hands full of charity, our eyes full of modesty, our bowels full of pity, our looks full of humility, our hearts full of honesty, our souls full of God; that we may lie down full of peace, and rise again full of glory.

I conclude. Adultery is an epidemical disease; almost the whole world is infected with it. That if Christ should now come down, and call none to follow him but they that have not been defiled with women. Rev. xiv. 4, his court would be very thin. Rome hath been notoriously branded for this execrable vice; especially since the popes have bound them to continency, to whom God gave not the power of continency.

But enough of their filthiness, let us look to reform our own. Some (who, it may be, speak of their knowledge) tell us of whole houses of harlots in this city; by whose allurements, servants rob their masters, sons their own fathers. They are the sink of the world, the common sewer of all corruptions, not for passage, but for confluence; the standing pool, the vault that sucks in all odiousness. They have excellent gifts of wit and beauty, which they convert to pestilent uses of turpitude and brotherly. To church they never come, not in their whole life would they ever hear of God, but for their fearful swearing and blaspheming his holy name. The souls they bring forth, shall stand up at the latter day, and give evidence against them. Indeed God never said to Adam and Eve, Increase and multiply, till they were married; to show that he hath a curse, not a blessing, for that increase which is not lawful. But even to destroy that fruit which was unlawfully begotten, before the Lord Chief Justice of the world will be found murder. That God, who knows how to raise good out of evil, doth sometimes bless an adulterous intercourse with increase; and sometimes to the chaste embraces of honest wedlock he denies it. The honest wife hopes to be a joyful mother; the harlot fears that title, and therefore hides adultery with murder.

Whom God hath joined, let no man separate; yet the adulterer does what he can to separate them. For virgins; when virginity is gone, the virgin is gone too: When God can do all things else, saith one, he cannot restore a deflowered virgin. Our flesh will corrupt fast enough, though we never admit these corruptive forwardings. We have sins enough of our own, though we bring not upon us the sin of another. By other sins a man goes to hell alone, but in this he rides double. Our Saviour speaks of bundles that shall be cast into the fire, Matt. xiii. 30. The proud man burns single, the homicide burns single; but the adulterer and his harlot shall make one bundle, and burn together. Like Zimri and Cozbi, as they were conjoined in the sin, they shall not be parted in the torment. When two be bound together, and thrown into the sea, they have less power to help themselves. Marriage hath made one of two, that they might fructify together, like Aaron's rod. Palms are the emblem of marriage, that do not bear fruit divided. Cursed is that heat which shall make two of one, and dissolve so sacred a union.

"That cannot cease from sin." All sin is a labyrinth, whereinto the entrance is easy, but it is hard to get out. Possession is eleven points of the law, we say; and that which begun by an unjust title, fortifies itself by custom. Stamp garlick in a new earthen pot, it will never out. I do not wonder at the continuance of sin; to break it off by repentance is the matter admirable. The descent is easy, but to retrace the steps—that is it. Down-stream the boat goes fast enough; to stop it is the cunning, before it strike on a shelf. I do not say that the greatest sinner is evermore in the act of wickedness; yet so long as the habit is unmortified in him, he does not cease from sin: the slave asleep discontinues the acting of his master's business, yet he is still in service.

Sin, like the sun, runs his continual course, Psal. xix. 5; though sometimes clouds by day, and always the interposition of earth by night, hide him from our eyes. Yea, and sin hath his circle and line, as the sun his orb and ecliptic; if we may compare the real passages below, with these imaginary signs above; and let us compare them.

1. Wantonness. Conceive sin to begin with *Aries*, the Ram; in petulancy and youthful wantonness, ready to butt at every passenger. "Remember not the sins of my youth," Psal. xlv. 7.

2. Obstinacy. Thence it proceeds to *Taurus*, the Bull; to strength and tyranny in evil; a stiff-necked disobedience. The prophet calls them the bulls of Bashan, Psal. xxii. 12, goring with the horns of oppression.

3. Confederacy. It comes to *Gemini*, the Twin; it can no longer continue single, but must have a partner in transgression. The adulterer must have his harlot, the drunkard his boon companion; Babel cannot be built alone. Society makes good men cheerful in good things; and associating makes evil men confident in their evil attempts. It is rare to see single sins, or single sinners.

4. Hypocrisy. Then to *Cancer*, the Crab; a crooked, irregular course, anfractuons, full of subtle windings; circumventing his neighbours, as the crab doth the untrusting oyster. Here sinners get themselves hardened ribs, a shell not to be pierced by any reproofs.

5. Tyranny. Next to *Leo*, the Lion; a raging and roaring kind of life. Thus they grow on from petulancy to obstinacy, then to conspiracy, from that to hypocrisy, now to cruelty. The lion fills his den with prey, his hole with rapine, Nah. ii. 12. He

contemns all admonition, and without respect of justice, will be his own carver. This is the height of ungodliness.

6. Uncleanliness. He comes to *Virgo*, the Virgin; a sign which astronomers ascribe to the belly. Now he gives himself to rapes and adulteries, and looseth the reins to his brutish and boundless appetite; that were his power equal to his desire, he would not leave a virgin in the world.

7. Justice. Then to *Libra*, the Balance; and there is a demur in his proceedings. Human justice begins to examine him, to curb his impetuous violence; and in this house sometimes he stays longer than the sun does in that sign. For if few men should not fear the magistrate, more than they do God or the devil, there were no living among them. Now *Libra* delivers him over to

8. Conscience. *Scorpio*, the Serpent. When he hath been corrected by moral justice, he is then taken in hand by conscience; a tormenter that hath a worse sting than scorpions. This haunts him like a curst wife at home, like a querulous scold abroad; no where can he be quiet. No entreaties can persuade her, no bribes can corrupt her, no music can charm her, no noise can drown her thunder. He talked his pleasure while she said nothing; now she roars as fast, and he knows not what to say. This the prophet calls the Lord's rod of scorpions, wherewith he scourgeth wild offenders. This happily sends him to

9. Prayer. *Sagittarius*, the Archer; he takes the bow of devotion in his hand, and shoots up his prayers to the throne of grace. The fathers have called our prayers, the church's artillery, arrows of zeal; which if we draw up to the head, and send up from the heart, they shall pierce the very heavens, and wound the Lord of hosts with pity; and he will have compassion on us. The bow is repentance, the string is faith, the arrow is prayer, the hand that draws and looseth it is zeal, the mark is God, and the errand it goes for is mercy. At this sign he would dwell longer, but because he must go on, he lights up on

10. Infirmity. *Capricornus*, the Goat. Even after his humble devotion, and pious resolution, he falls into sin. The Ram, and Bull, and Lion may be mortified in him; pride, obstinacy, cruelty; yea, the Twins and the Crab, double-dealing and hypocrisy, may be abhorred of him; to *Virgo* he will offer no more violence; he loathes all constipations and turpitudes; yet still he smells of the Goat; some taint of the old corruption remains, the beast is not quite worn out of him. But it is fallen down as low as the knees, to which place they assign *Capricornus*; it is far from the heart, out of the reach of any vital part. But in this house he is but a passenger; the sun does not make more haste than he from it; and now having sinned, he posts to

11. Repentance. *Aquarius*, the Water-bearer; he knows no sin, which he endeavours not to wash off with his penitent tears. This fountain he hath always about him; and if the air of bad company hath made him sin with Peter, yet he can go forth and weep with Peter. Mary's tears did not more wash the dust from our Saviour's feet, than the sin from her own soul. If *Capricornus* have made thee offend, let *Aquarius* be ready with this repentant water; that Christ may answer thee as he did Mary, "Thy sins are forgiven." Luke vii. 48. So well the devout soul loves to dwell in this watery sign, that he concludes his journey in the very element of water, with the Fishes.

12. Perseverance. *Pisces*, the Fishes; this is the fact of the song, as they appropriate *Pisces* to these

in their anatomy. They be clear and cleanly creatures, delighting to swim in the crystal streams: if they strike into the mud, it is but to avoid the net; and when the danger is past, they soon cleanse themselves. True converts, if they cannot be always pure, yet are quickly purified. First, as fishes are beaten by the waves, but do not yield; so the billows of temptation beat upon the godly, yet they fail not. Secondly, as fishes swim thrice, in water, in vinegar, and in wine; so doth the Christian, in the water of baptism, the vinegar of affliction, and the wine of consolation, the sacrament, which cheers the heart. Thirdly, fishes, being wounded, have recourse to the trench, the physician of fishes, whom if they but touch, they are healed. Souls wounded with sin repair to Christ, the Physician of kings, the King of physicians; and touching him by faith, they are cured: as the woman with the bloody issue did but touch the hem of his garment, and was presently as whole as a fish, Luke viii. 44. Thus swimming in the pure streams of grace, removed from the sordid and dreggish corruption of earth, we shall at last be translated higher than that sidereal sign in the zodiac, even to the heaven of heavens, the kingdom of Christ.

But now, alas, how have I lost my theme! The argument of my discourse is sinners' obstinacy, and I have concluded with their salvation. Pardon me, it was a merciful mistake: I wish it should be so, though I find it otherwise of these in my text: for they are wretched adulterers, "that cannot cease from sin." Well, then, it is but bringing you some way back again: if you remember where I turned the sinner out of his road of condemnation, you find it in *Scorpio*. *Libra*, that is, public authority, had him under the scourge; but suppose that favour dismisseth him, and so gets out of the hands of justice, yet *Scorpio* will have a bout with him, conscience will trounce him. This, like some ghastly apparition to a soul forlorn, upon the threshold of desperation, with a show of fresh bleeding wounds, and an astonishing countenance, presents itself in unexpressible terror: how will he pass this sign? Yes, he will stupify his conscience with a deluge of wine, never allow himself to be sober; and with a vicissitude of sensual delights, lust and drink, as with two hot irons, quite sear up his conscience; and is then confident that the dead dog will never bark.

Thus he passeth from that dismal house of correction, a very bedlam to his soul: but now *Sagittarius* comes; Justice shoots at him from heaven, that merrying archer who never missed his mark: the arrow of sickness sticks in his ribs. Now his down-bed is troublesome, and after many changed sides he complains of unceasing pangs. What now? this will be a tedious sign to him, perhaps the end of his voyage. Physicians are sent for, who receive gold, and give drugs; keeping him sick the longer, that themselves may fare the better. But at last he recovers; after many promises to God, and vows which he never means to keep, he is enlarged from his bed: up he gets.

And now he posts to the next sign, to try what better cheer *Capricornus* will make him. He finds him like some goatish host, close at his cups and ribbidity; and here he falls in, relapsing to his former sensuality: riot and intemperance renew their old acquaintance with him; whoredom and new wine take away his heart; and thus being intoxicated with sin, he lays himself down to sleep. Thus many passages of execrable wickedness he hath got through: pride, injustice, hypocrisy, oppression, uncleanness, and voluptuousness, without any interruption, saving those short disturbances of sickness and conscience;

and now he slumbers in security. But yet his race is not done, he hath two more signs to pass.

From this sleep, *Aquarius*, or the world, calls him up; and whispers in his ear a golden word, Be rich. Now age and covetousness seize on him at once, and he projects to fill his barns with corn, with money his coffers, and thereby his heart with joy. To do this, he refuseth no course, be it never so unjust: neither friend nor father must stand in his way, now he is set upon it to be rich. He will starve his family, perhaps his own body, to be rich. He will be an *Aquarius* indeed; the devil's water-bearer, a water-drinker, so he may be rich. The law reproves him, his neighbours hate him, the poor curse him, God threatens to condemn him: he cares for none of all these, so he may be rich. Well now, rich he is, a rich beggar, or a beggar in the midst of his riches; for upon all his estate there is set a spell, "Touch not, taste not, handle not," Col. ii. 21. Touch me not, says his wealth to him: Leave me not, says he to his wealth. It is good to be here; in this house he would dwell for ever. But he must not; there is a bell that tolls him into another sign, the last of his eclipse, that shall eclipse his glory for ever: the grave and hell; the one to devour his body, the other to swallow his soul.

Pisces looks for him, and thither he must come. Then fool, this night shall they fetch thy soul from thee, Luke xii. 20. *Pisces* are placed at the feet of man; this is the last foot of his journey, the standing horse at the end of his progress, the period or full point of his travels. Swimming in the Dead Sea of this world, he hath swallowed the bait of riches, and now is caught with the hook of death; and he that never ceased from sinning, shall never rest from suffering. Though we sin often, and much; too often, too much; yet let us break off ourselves by repentance, and cease from sin that we may be saved.

"Beguiling unstable souls." The wicked cannot be quiet, till their vicious desires be accomplished: they have eyes that are uneasy and restless for sin, as Calvin renders it. Their meat and drink is to do their father's will, that is, Satan's; restrain them from wickedness, and they complain of famishment; either they call for poison, or no food. Ahah is sick, because he is denied Naboth's vineyard. Whether more in anger or in grief, it is hard to say, but he keeps his bed, and refuseth his meat, as if he should die no other death, 1 Kings xxi. 4. Because he cannot have his will on Naboth, he will take it on himself; as the madman tears his own hair, because he cannot come at his enemy's. The wicked cannot sleep till they have done mischief. Saul will not give over the chase of David, but hunts him dry-foot through every wilderness. The very desert is held too good a refuge for innocence: the hills and rocks are searched in an angry jealousy; the very wild goats of the mountains were not allowed to be companions for him, that had no other fault but his virtue. Still David's success is Saul's vexation. Where shall that man rest, who seeks rest in sin? In this life he cannot, for he walks all round, and grinds in Satan's mill. Shall he rest hereafter? No, then he shall eat of his own grist, and labour in torment. Only there is some difference in the manner of their working, and of the time: here with pleasure, there with horror; for a while here, there for ever. Still these obstinate seducers go on, from strength in sin to strength of sinning, till every one appear before their master in Tophet.

"Beguiling unstable souls." This verse yields us a fourfold description: First, of their filthiness, Eyes full of adultery. Secondly, of their craftiness, Beguiling unstable souls. Thirdly, of their worldliness,

Exercised with covetous practices. Fourthly, of their wretchedness, They are cursed children. In this branch we have two particulars: the fish, souls: the net, fraud; inducing unstable souls.

1. The fishes they take are souls: the prince of darkness says, as did the king of Sodom, Give me the souls, take thou the rest, Gen. xiv. 21. There is no taking the body, without a former winning of the soul; nor can they make those bodies tractable to their lust, whose souls be not first prostituted. And if the flesh could be abused without the consent of the mind, they might make themselves merry with the ease without the instrument. In vain does the thief look in at the window, when he sees the master standing on his guard in the house. Joseph's garment may be rent, his body escapes, because his mind was whole.

The soul is their fish, and so they are compared by Him, who gave his apostles that office, Matt. iv. 19, to draw men out of the sea of this world by the ears, that they may be served in to his own table. The poets tell us that Bacchus began his empire with the transmutation of mariners into fishes; the moral whereof may be, that when mariners come to shore, they drink like fishes. Christ, God of his Father's substance, begotten before the world; and man of his mother's substance, born in the world; began his spiritual kingdom by converting souls; that as fishes are caught *lineis textis*, with a net of twisted lines; so men are taken *lineis a Scriptura contextis*, by nets made out of Scripture, by the holy word, Rom. x. 17; not sea-fish, but land-fish.

But these be none of Christ's fishermen; they do not fish for him, they rather fish from him. The element that preserves fishes, is the pure stream of the water of life: out of this they labour to fetch them that they may perish. No fish with them so sweet as the soul. Yet as they do not catch the body but for their lust's sake, so nor the soul but for the body's sake, and neither but for gain's sake. Indeed there is difference between God's spiritual fishing, and the taking of material fishes; for when fishes be taken it is death to them, but when men are taken it is life to them. Fishes are taken to be devoured by the jaws of men; men are taken to be delivered from the jaws of hell. But these deceivers catch souls for their own ends, that they may pickle them up in vices, and make them the food of their insatiate lusts.

2. The souls which they beguile, be unstable, unconstant, tottering. If they were firm, they could not; if apostatized, they need not; but in this wavering plight they are fit subjects to work upon: the weathercock will be ruled by the wind. To-day the unstable soul is for a mass, next Sunday for a communion, the next week for neither. Rome thinks him theirs, we think him ours, his own conscience finds him neither's: this make him waxy to persuasion, servile in imitation. His heart is in such an equilibrium that the next scruple turns the scale. Now comes the tempter with a bait, and this foolish fish is caught. This Laodicean temper is far worse than the extremes, Rev. iii. 16: heat and cold have their uses, lukewarmness is good for nothing but to trouble the stomach. Spiritual heat hath God's promise of acceptance: stone-cold hath an easier reckoning; that which is betwixt both procures sickness; the nearer it comes to heat, and is not hot, the more odious the Lord holds it. Why do ye halt betwixt two opinions? 1 Kings xviii. 21. The prophet doth not so much rate them for their superstition, as for their irresolution: not so much for being unsanctified, as for being unsettled. One Israelite serves God, another Baal; yea, perhaps the same Israelite serves

both God and Baal. How long will you halt in this indifferency? God is less offended with going upright in a wrong way, than with halting betwixt the wrong and the right way. I yield that in ceremonial or circumstantial differences, indifferency is the safest, both for opinion and practice; but in the oppositions between God and Baal, woe be to him that is a neuter!

Curse ye Meroz, because they took not the Lord's part in the day of battle, Judg. v. 23. Here, even to stand and but look on, is treason: to take part with neither, is to be an enemy to both. God doth not hold them so capital foes that serve him not at all, as those that serve him with a rival. There are points which the passions of men have set further asunder than needs, wherein the persons indeed fight more than the things: it is charity to reconcile these; or at least, better to state the questions. But when the quarrel is betwixt Jerusalem and Babylon, truth and falsehood, woe to the unstable soul! We may sit at home and weep, bless God that we are in the right, pray for them that are in the wrong: but to labour a peace between them, is to bring a curse upon ourselves; to work, not a satisfaction, but a stupefaction, upon our conscience. Some things may admit reconciliation, as differences between men and men: some are in their nature irreconcilable, as the differences wherein men differ from God. Every man is a little world, yea, every man is a little church; wherein there be two factions, two armies that fight continually: nothing but a lethargy of conscience can cease this war. It is a civil war, yea, rather a rebellion than a war; yet cannot it be absolutely quenched. To make these two friends, were a labour not less vain than impossible. Every militant soul is a soldier in that general war between Christ and Belial: now as what God hath joined, let no man put asunder, so what God hath put asunder, let no man join. To set up the ark and Dagon under one roof, is an impiety that ends in scorn. "I will put enmity," saith the Lord: we and Satan should never have fallen out, we agree but too well, but that God hath put an enmity between us. This quarrel presently showed itself, and begun between Cain and Abel, and it is not yet taken up. The truth of the gospel, and the errant wickedness of idolatry, are so diametrically contrary; that whilst we would reconcile them, or by any colourable modifications bring them together, we fight against our Maker. For he hath infused such an incompatibility, and imprinted such an implacability, between truth and falsehood, that they can never flow into one another.

In quarrels betwixt brethren, in quarrels betwixt Christian princes, blessed are the peace-makers; but in the wars betwixt Christ and Belial, cursed are they that go about to make peace. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon," Matt. vi. 24. The wit of the world, and the pestilent wit of hell to boot, hath long laboured to bring these two lords together, to dwell in one house, and to feed at one table; that they might do them service both at once. But how vainly! Ye cannot: we will try: you may, but ye cannot do it. Day and night may join and meet; yea, they do so twice every four and twenty hours, in the dawn and in the twilight: the dawning of the day in the morning, and the shutting in of the day in the evening, make day and night so much one that we cannot tell which to call them. But light and darkness, midnight and noon, never meet, were never joined together. "What communion hath light with darkness?" 2 Cor. vi. 14. What do you call that between grace and sin? hath it a name? Almost a Christian, saith Agrippa, Acts xxvi. 28. What is that? One neither with Christ nor without Christ, neither holy nor unsanctified: sure there is no such

creature. But it is plain, "He that is not with me is against me," Matt. xii. 30. If a man be almost a Christian, God will almost pardon his sins, but he will not pardon them; he will almost save him, but he will condemn him. For him that is neither man nor woman, we have a name, hermaphrodite; but we have no name for him that is neither a believer nor an unbeliever, neither true nor false, neither for God nor for Belial. There is a Christian, and there is an infidel; there is a heaven and a hell; he that finds a third kind of creature, may fool himself with the belief of a third place, purgatory.

"Unstable souls." Here first let me give you a character, then an application.

1. The unstable man is in an evil case; for while he professeth neither side, he is hated on both sides. He is still asking for news, and scarce thinks it news as soon as he knows it. *Quid rari, chari, miri?* i. e. What are rare men, dear men, and wondrous men? To whom it was well answered, *Vir sapiens rarus, vir bonus charus, vir pius mirus*. The wise man is a rare man, the good is a dear man, the pious is a wondrous man. He may well be compared to the wave, for he is ever wavering. He now says it, in an anger swears it, and within half an hour renounceth it; as if his understanding did write upon his will, as a man writes upon water: it tarries not long enough for an impression. All his resolutions be but flashes, fiery, and momentary. When he begins a business, he goes about it hotly; ere you can say a Pater-noster, he is weary. Yet (by way of paradox) we may commend him for a good commonwealth's man, for he sets many on work; *Ducit, adificat, mutat quadrato rotundis*, as Horace says, i. e. He pulls down, he builds up, he exchanges square things for round, or round for square: you shall never have him but either building, or pulling down, or altering; as if he meant to make more business than time itself. Commend him also for this, he is a professed enemy to idleness; for he is never out of action, though what he doth is to no purpose. His heels carry his wit, neither his wit nor his heels know whither. His feet, like the harlot's, cannot keep within doors; he loves to be a guest in his own house. Propriety is a disease to him; he likes every thing better than his own. He longs for every rare thing he sees; and his purse gives it him, like a rattle to still him; and before night the child is weary of it. He is a piece of clay tempered with running water, which keeps his wit in a perpetual motion. He is any thing, or every thing, in possibility; but for the present he is nothing.

He is no dangerous enemy, for his hate cannot be more constant than himself; but the worst friend that can be chosen, for he is never the same. He were good to inhabit the fleeting islands, for he treads upon moving earth; and like some ill-broken horse, he hath no pace. In what a wretched case is the unstable man, whose religion is yet to choose! He knows he shall die, yet he will not know what faith he should die in. If he should die in that doubt, there were great doubt of his eternal state. His religion (it may be) lies in wait for the inclination of his prince; as a spaniel hunts according to the face of his master. Of all creatures, he is like the bat, which hath both wings and teeth; if he could cast off one of them, he might show himself either a bird or a beast. The unstable man shall receive nothing of the Lord, Jam. i. 7. Hear this, ye neters, that hold Christ with one hand, with the other antichrist, and know not whether you should choose or let go; that would fain mingle the colours of St. George and St. James in one sentcheon; while you are not settled in religion, in irreligion you are settled. Christ

will not save you, because you were not wholly his; Rome cannot save you, though you had been wholly hers. If you must settle, when begin you? if you must begin, why not now? Choose, therefore, and choose right, and cleave to it. It is not enough to resolve, but we must rather lose ourselves, than the truth of Jesus Christ.

2. We have chosen, and blessed may we be in our choice. It is happy for us, that God hath put the meat into our mouths; that we are baptized, catechised, and confirmed in the truth. Many thousands would have been more thankful to him, who exceed us in devotion, more than we do them in illumination. Are there no unstable souls among us? They write of a place in the isle of Paphos, where never fell rain; the island wants not showers, but none falls there. There is a place within us, our heart, so roofed with hardened lusts, that no dew of grace can have access. With what fear and unwillingness do I think of the state of a great multitude; so unstable in their devotions, that it is a high extent of charity to believe them Christians. The lawyer professeth Christ, yet a round fee can tempt him to plead against Christ: he doth sell his speech, and he will not give his silence; as he said, *Non omnibus dormio*, I do not sleep for all; so this, *Non omnibus taceo*, I do not keep silence for all: you must hire him to hold his peace, if you do not to speak. So indifferent and irresolute are such advocates in their religion, as they are in expectation of judgments; they hear both sides, yet know not on which side the cause will go. Indeed too many deal with Christianity, as they do with a suit at law; the matter is plain enough, but they cloud and puzzle it with their wranglings. So papists dispute, not from a wish to learn, but from a desire to contradict. As Cyprian speaks of one in his days, that challenged him to dispute, and used to amaze the people by holding the conclusion. The preacher would boldly reprove some vices, but then his parish withdraw their benevolence; are not these unstable souls? The magistrate would do justice, but then a great man's letter conjures his forbearance; is he not unstable? Some go to mass, yet flatter themselves that their hearts are right to God; a man does not walk in the sun with a purpose to be tanned, yet he cannot but know that he shall be tanned with walking in the sun. *Et agere et pati, Romanum est*, said Scævola, Both to do and to suffer is Roman; we are naught at *agere*, at doing; but when it comes to *pati*, suffering, we are gone. We are glad that Christ suffered all for us; but we will suffer nothing for him. It is the happiness of these cold times, that we are not put to the hot fire, for trial of our faith and love. If the wheel were turned, which the mercy of God forbid, how many would turn from Christ, rather than burn for Christ! But if there be a recompense for a cup of cold water in Christ's name, Matt. x. 42, how shall a cup of warm blood yielded for that name be rewarded! yet such is the niggardly devotion of men's unstable hearts, that they will scarce afford the poor even a cup of water from their cisterns. The distressed have God's mandatory and commendatory letters for them, yet toward the advancing of a collection, some great man's letter doth them more good. We all love to be of the taking hand, but will part with nothing: we would receive Christ's bounty, yet grudge our duty; we would be like him in glory, not in grace. If man's law should not prevail more than conscience, what order would be observed? Too many fear an obligation more than religion, and are more careful of a recognisance than of their conscience.

It were easy to find among the faults and fates

of the twelve tribes, praised be God that we have also their blessings. The very first puts me in mind of all the rest. Reuben unstable as water, thou shalt not excel, Gen. xlix. 4. Such a bar in the arms of great houses is inconstancy. Reuben was the first-born, yet he lost the principality: and you can say, This hath been the fortune of many an elder brother. Simeon and Levi, brethren in evil, ver. 5: the papist and seminary, in mischief against the gospel, sworn brothers. He that calls to mind the fifth of November, shall find instruments of cruelty in their habitations, and see them digging down a wall. "I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel," ver. 7: yea, O Lord, divide them from Israel. Judah hath the crown and the blessing, and the crown of blessing be upon Judah, our gracious sovereign: let him and his hold the sceptre, till Shiloh come again, ver. 10. "Zebulun shall dwell at the haven of the sea," ver. 13. Merchants are for the sea; but let them remember, it is a wavering element, governed by the inconstant moon; and that all their voyages are but adventures, their ships but reeling vessels; all unstable. If their conscience should be infected with this staggering disease, that were the worst shipwreck.

"Issachar is a strong ass couching down between two burdens," ver. 14. Issachar, the usurer; an ass that feeds upon thistles, while he stoops his back to the burden of riches. Let them be made servants to tribute: they are the fittest subjects for subsidies. Poor men labour for a little; they grow rich with ease: it is but walking out six months; then sit down and tell their monies.

Dan's place is to "judge his people," ver. 16; and far be unsteadfastness from the place of judgment. Yet, alas, there is nothing more unstable: the cause that goes on this side to-day, is to-morrow judged on the contrary. But we dare not say, the fault is in the judge, but in the law: just as the peremptory sexton said, Howsoever the day goes, I am sure the clock goes true: the law is difficult, but there is no fault in the judge. Aye, but Dan hath officers under him; bad lawyers, crafty serpents, adders that bite the horse's heels in the path of his journey, ver. 17: and that so sore, that no leech can cure it. The client comes riding up in haste to his lawyer; but by that time the suit is ended, he may walk a-foot home at leisure.

"Gad, a troop shall overcome him: but he shall overcome at last," ver. 19. He had his name of a troop, Gen. xxx. 11, he is overcome by a troop, and at last shall overcome a troop. We have many troops of them, abundance of the tribe of Gad: some gad to Rome, others to Amsterdam: it is still (according to my argument) an unstable soul that sets them a gadding.

I find no fault in Asher, unless plenty be one. He yields bread, and fat bread; dainties, and for kings: royal dainties, ver. 20: his emblem is a cup or bowl of delicacies. But as Noah was drunk with his own wine, so the cup of prosperity hath intoxicated many a soul. And God hath no worse servants in our land, than they that can live on their lands, and care for nothing else.

Naphtali "giveth goodly words," ver. 21: we have too many of this tribe, hypocrites, that can give nothing but goodly words. They will speak so fair, and deal so foully, that you would not believe they are made all of a piece. But when the wind sings, and whistles in the leaves, look for a storm.

"Joseph is a fruitful bough," ver. 22; and blessed be God, we have also a tribe of Joseph, fruitful of good works. Though he be the butt of contradiction, and "the archers have shot at him, and hated him;"

yet he is "made strong by the hands of the mighty God:" and a universality of blessings from heaven, earth, the womb and breasts, and the everlasting hills, shall be on the crown of his head that was separated from his brethren.

"Benjamin shall ravin as a wolf," ver. 27. The last is a wolf, the merciless oppressor, that from morning to evening doth prey upon the poor, and divide the spoil: but at last they shall be divided; their names to infamy, their wealth to the world, their bodies to the dust, and their cruel souls a prey for those more cruel spirits of darkness. Reuben had his divisions, Judg. v. 15, and the rest their waverings and infirmities; only we have Judah and Joseph among us, that faithfully adhere to the truth of Jesus Christ.

They beguile. The net wherewith they catch these trouts is fraud. If we continue the sense from the foregoing words, they charm them with the witchcraft of the eye. That is a silent oratory, and discourseth the meaning of the heart in a dumb motion. The tongue is a speaking eye, and the eye is a silent tongue: and by this dumb language, lovers understand one another's mind, though their lips open not. But I rather take this net to be the tongue, a subtle persuasion to lewdness. A deadly net, like that in Suidas, which in single combats one did cast over another, and being so insured slew him. "They hunt every man his brother with a net," Micah vii. 2; a bloody net. Not a fantastical, imaginary net, such as purgatory; which Szegedin calls, *Impissimum rete ad capiendas animas*, A large net to catch souls: he should have said, A large net to catch fools; a net wherewith the pope catcheth fish enough to serve his kitchen.

Fraud hath a thousand tricks of cheating; but of all instruments, the chief is the tongue. A handsome tale drunk in at a thirsty ear, is a philter to the soul. The tongue is either a man's glory, or his shame. When it is the servant of an honest heart, it is an especial organ to glorify the Maker. If otherwise, Satan is more beholden to it, than to all the body besides. It hath a thousand ways to do good, and as many to do hurt. When Satan had stripped Job of his riches, children, health; and laid him so full of sores, that no part of his body was free; yet all this while he spared his tongue. The reason might be, because the devil looked that that should do him some service; even such as his wife prompted him to, blaspheme God and die. Still he expected when all his vexation should break out at his lips. He that offends not in word, he is a perfect man, Jam. iii. 2. But where is that man? The Lord sanctify our ears, that they be not seduced by others' tongues; and sanctify our tongues, that they offend not the ears of others.

"An heart they have exercised with covetous practices." There is not a more dangerous vice in all the storehouse of hell, than covetousness. To other sins Satan tempts a man often; but covetousness is a fine and recovery upon the purchase; then he is sure of him; as when the jailer hath locked up his prisoner safe in a dungeon, he may go play. It is an imperious sin; and sits like a justice in his chair, while religion must stand eap in hand to it. Heaven is the highest place, earth the lowest; yet covetousness sets the lowest in the highest esteem, and the highest undervalues to the lowest. He respects heaven but on the by, for recreation; his main game is the world. While Christ was preaching, a covetous younger brother interrupts him with the division of an inheritance, Luke xii. 13. Make an end of your sermon, and come and end a difference betwixt me and my brother; you shall do a deed of charity, a neighbourly office, and save a great deal that would be

idly spent in law. We have many of his religion, that think we do God better service in composing their quarrels, than in preaching heavenly doctrines. This is to call Christ from dividing the word, to divide the inheritance. I know there is no Christian but condemn this vice, and yet this vice shall condemn many Christians. The difficulty here, is not so much to win consent of judgment to the point, as conformity of practice to the judgment. There may be a conviction of conscience without any preparation of obedience; and truth will be sooner confessed than practised. If every man were his own judge, there is not a covetous man among us; but the Judge of all the world will find many, that flatter themselves with Not guilty. The world hath very ill luck; for many affect it, admire it, adore it, yet will not be known of it. But God hath more injury; for they profess to love, serve, trust in him, yet indeed care not for him. The world hath many servants, but they wear not his livery: God hath many that wear his livery, but they are none of his servants.

"An heart they have exercised with covetous practices." Methinks here be four words not unlike the four elements. First, the heart, like the earth; it being the centre of man, as the other is of the world. Secondly, covetousness, like water, soaks into it, and makes it hydropical, yea, turns it into dirt. Thirdly, exercise, like the air; which is an element movable and circumambient, full of exercise. Fourthly, practice, like fire, active and devouring. Or covetousness is the child born; the house it is bred and brought up in is the heart; her education is the exercise of cruelty; and her whole course is the practice of iniquity.

But covetousness must formally be defined, that we may not lose ourselves at the first setting forth. Some say, it is a desire of having more; but we must have more in the definition of it than so; he that hath not enough, may desire more, and yet be free from covetousness. Others say, it is a desire of having more by unjust means; but covetousness is beholden to them for so favourable an expression; this were rather to confine it than to define it. *Avaritia est plus velle quam sat est*, says Austin, Covetousness is a desire of more than enough. But now what is that enough? There is no such word in the world's dictionary. "It is enough;" Israel said so, Gen. xlv. 28: it is a word only known in Israel. Enough is both necessary for being, and competent for well-being. "Having food and raiment let us be therewith content;" 1 Tim. vi. 8. In those boundaries doth God hedge up our desires, like wild bucks in a park. If we have money enough to bear our charges to our journey's end, to desire more is covetousness.

But who then is not covetous? It is a disease of nature; but here is the difference; some give it physic, and no sustenance; others give it sustenance, and no physic. Some would destroy it, and those it molests, but kills not; the other maintain it, and those it kills, but molests not. These latter are the covetous. The good man feels it as his enemy, the bad loves it as his friend. If you see a man that hath sufficient for his family, yet scraping for more, know him for covetous.

Covetousness is, like the father of it, of many names, but never a good one. As the same soul, in the several faculties, hath several titles; or as the same river, passing through divers regions, hath divers appellations; so hath avarice. In the church, it is sacrilege; in a churchman, simony; in the place of government, it is oppression and tyranny; in the place of judgment, it is corruption and bribery; and when this river swells up to the bank, it is usury. First, it is called idolatry, Col. iii. 5. All idolatry is

not covetousness, but all covetousness is idolatry. Secondly, adultery; as a man forsakes a wife peerless for beauty and virtue, to embrace a harlot, so doth the covetous man relinquish piety for gain, God for the world. Thirdly, homicide, Zeph. iii. 3: for betwixt life and living there is no such wide difference. Cut the poor man's purse, he thinks you cut his throat, and the throats of all his children: such a merciless cut-throat is oppression. The prophet speaks of princes that were such butchers, Micah iii. 2, 3. The thief steals to satisfy his hungry soul, Prov. vi. 30: but they can plead in themselves no necessity, for they are princes: in the other no superfluity, for they rob the poor. This is a sin which the poor man cannot commit though he would; the rich man doth, because he can. The high rate and port that divers live at, can be maintained by no driblets: but in the country, by racking tenants, enclosing commons; in the city, by diminishing quantities, corrupting qualities, taking advantages, falsifying balances or measures, by mixtures, blendings, and such sharking sophistications: a small booty will not serve their turns. Mice may be nibblers, and live; but the cat that keeps them in awe, is of the eating kind; she devours more at one bit, than the poor mouse would have done at twenty. This sin is the rich man's peculiar. Lastly, it is theft. There is a lying roll that "shall enter into the house of the thief," Zech. v. 4. Are none thieves but they that scour the plains? Yes, there is a thief that dwells in a house, a house of his own; and that commonly one of the fairest and stateliest, for it is built with blood. Thieves? rich men scorn the name: a thief is the only man they are afraid of. Yet they that lie in itinerant ambushments, shall in comparison of oppressors be justified as no thieves. Alas, they be poor shallow fools, soon taken and clapped up in chains of iron; whereas the other walk like senators in chains of gold; the great thieves are a terror to the little ones. Without partiality, to take men as we find them, the universal practices of covetousness occasion me to make a humble suit to free men, and rich men, and gentlemen, to lawyers, and judges, and magistrates, that they would think it no scorn to be no thieves. Let not the motion seem harsh, that you would not disdain the commendation of being no thieves. As portly and stately as they bear their heads, were they but stripped of that pomp wherewith injustice hath clothed them, and to begin the world anew, those poor people whom they now despise, would scarce be bound for their truth and honesty. Thus the covetous man may be called an idolater, an adulterer, a murderer, a robber.

But some will not believe the plague, till they see the tokens. Take therefore some concomitant signs. First, sollicitous care for the future; as if God that was here yesterday, and is to-day, would be gone to-morrow. What shall I do when I am old? So he breaks his sleep while he lives, to think what shall happen to him hereafter, perhaps when he is dead. This is an extreme folly of avarice, when a man makes himself miserable for the present, for fear of being miserable afterwards; not suffering himself to be free from a burden while he may, because he doubts he shall not be free when he would. Thus the fool leaps into the water, for fear of being drowned in the boat. Secondly, engrossing of too much business; they censure churchmen for pluralities; but there be temporal pluralists; and many have made themselves so much to do in the world, as if they had nothing to do with the world to come. They only say that they love eternal life; but if you mark their employment, you will confess they prefer the temporal. Thirdly, no business at all: when they give

over their profession, to live with less faith, and more security; and make themselves of that desperate number, whereof ten in the hundred go not to heaven. Fourthly, religion must not stand in their way to riches, without contempt, without violence. Moses broke the tables of the law in pieces for anger at the golden calf: these men would have broken them in fitters for the gold that made the calf. In their conscience there is kept a court of faculties; whereby they can give themselves a dispensation for any sin at pleasure. Fifthly, their discourse is of nothing but riches. He that is earthly talks of the earth. John iii. 31: his breath, like a dying man, is of an earthly savour. "The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom:" why? because "the law of God is in his heart," Psal. xxxvii. 30. So the covetous hath earth in his heart, and his very breath smells of it. Take off his tongue from the market, it walks to the exchange, then to the key or wharf, and from the custom-house to the warehouse; it never comes near the church. These be the signs.

The heart; that is the throne of covetousness. It is bad enough in the eyes; so Achan took the infection that cost him his life. Worse in the tongue; Let not covetousness be once named among saints. Eph. v. 3. As if that world, which many prefer before heaven, were not worth talking of. I will not take their name into my lips, saith David, Psal. xvi. 4. The worldlings worship those idols which the saints will not so much as honour with a mention. But the covetous man's mouth is full of earth while he lives, and shall be fuller when he is dead. Yet worse in life: "Let your conversation be without covetousness," Heb. xiii. 5. But worst of all in the heart; alas, that any disease should come near the heart! and yet any disease less dangerously than avarice. Lord, "incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not to covetousness," Psal. exix. 36. Our contemplation, our conversation, our communication, yea, our very cogitations, should be clear from covetousness.

Exercised with covetousness. The worldling will acknowledge covetousness to be a sin, but he will not acknowledge himself to be covetous. Adultery and blasphemy are notoriously convinced: they wear their Master's known livery. But avarice, like hypocrisy, will needs be a virtuous vice, a gracious sin. It wears the cognisance of frugality, the complexion of good husbandry, and would be called by the honestest names that are. There is no text against intemperance, but they think it makes for them. Because the drunkard spills the wine in wantonness, doth this excuse the miser that grudgeth himself a draught in necessity? A man may sin damnably, though he never come at the tavern; as at the tavern a good man may be merry and guiltless. The covetous wretch, that locks up his cupboard, and rageth at his servant for eating a poor crust more than allowance, cries out against riot: the times are prodigal; and rails at him for lavishness, whose snuffs he is glad to drink of in private. He tells his children how thirsty our predecessors were: how long one gown served his grandfather: and himself is still known by his forefather's coat, which with his blessing he bequeaths to his posterity, that they may be known by it too, for many generations. Thus he praiseth plainness, not for less sin, but for less cost; because it is cheaper, not because it is better. He persuades his family into meanness, as the tyrant served the idols; he took away their golden robes, which were too cold for winter, and too heavy for summer, and made them linsy-woolsey coats, that might serve them better for both seasons. He condemns others for wasting time, and never blames himself for selling time; which he doth so punctually, that he will

neither prevent his day nor defer it. Bring him principal and interest before his day, he fears you have law against him; after his day, he hath law against you. Some gratuities in the mean time are morsels to stay his stomach. He grudgeth a coal of his fire, a bucket of his water; and of all things next stealing, he hates borrowing.

Divers sins have the saints of God been taxed with, never with covetousness. Once Noah was drunk with wine, never drunk with the world. Lot was twice incestuous, never covetous. Peter denied his Master thrice: it was not the love of the world, but rather the fear of the world, that brought him to it; for he had denied the world before he denied his Master. Once David was overcome with the flesh, never with the world. Grace may stand with some transient acts of naughtiness, but never with covetousness; those were acts, avarice is a habit: grace is not overthrown by every act, but by the habit of sin. Therefore of all sins, the children of God have cleared themselves from covetousness, when they would approve their integrity before God and men. So Samuel: "Whose ox or ass have I taken?" 1 Sam. xii. 3. He that was the judge of Israel, would not now judge himself, but be judged by Israel: they shall acquit him, and of all sins, from covetousness. So Jeremiah: I have neither lent on usury, nor on usury borrowed; yet they curse me, Jer. xv. 10: as if that practice had deserved a curse. So Paul; "I have coveted no man's silver or gold," Acts xx. 33. He was covetous of nothing, but of their souls for Christ. Why did they not purge themselves from adultery, anger, contention, and the like? Because into these sins the infirmity of a saint may fall; but if once into covetousness, there is nothing of a saint left, not the very name. A guest may lodge in my house all night, yet leave me master of it still in the morning; but avarice, when it gets admission, turns grace quite out of doors. Exercise facilitates things in their own nature troublesome: the old cart goes quietly under a heavy load, when the new cannot away without creaking. This makes them call their wealth, their substance; while themselves wait on it like base circumstances and servile accessories. Their heart is obdurate, like rammed earth, to be the foundation of mischief, and bear the weight of all villanies.

"With covetous practices," He that prescribes medicines, and undertakes cures, professeth himself at least a practitioner in physic. The covetous are not without their practices, yet they deny the name. When Christ preached against covetousness, Luke xii. 15, one man gave the hint or occasion of the text, the whole multitude heard the sermon. Good reason, for from the least to the greatest, they were all given to covetousness, Jer. vi. 13. Some sins are peculiar to some places and conditions; but covetousness is an epidemical disease, infecting all persons. Let me discover to you some of these practices.

1. According to the rule of charity, I begin at home, with the church. If we should love the world, that teach others to condemn it, this were like the fox, to dispraise the grapes we keep for our own tooth. There is much art to elude the law: as a wager to be lost, that the living may be gotten; a poor jade bought at a hundred pieces, and a benefice at the tail of him; as one wittily said. The case is clear: the benefice is cheap, the horse was dear. Such a simonist applauds his own wit, that he is no bungler in carrying on a business. What follows? He that bought dear, cannot sell cheap; unless he means to live by the loss; and he that so buys, hath no such meaning. I do not deny, but the patron

hath as condemnable a share in this bargain; for he sells what he should give, and the other is fain to buy his own. Again, to take God's wages, and not to do his work, is a legal sacrilege. We find "men of the world" mentioned in holy writ, Psal. xvii. 14, and their worldly practices, Luke xii. 30. "But thou, O man of God, flee these things," 1 Tim. vi. 11: man of God, stands in opposition to those. Let fishes love salt-waters, birds of the air fly up towards heaven: God and mammon are two contrary enures; and they be so infinitely distant, that no court of faculties can give a dispensation to serve both. Bernard observes of St. Paul; All that the world love, was as a cross to him. But indeed, all the charity of the world is put upon us, other men rid their hands of it; as if we only were bound to do all things for God-have-mercy. If the least recompence be allotted to our pains, they think it is their courtesy, not our merit. God is much beholden to such men, and without question at the last day he will thank them to their faces; but they had better be without it. In this city, for the tenth, they have scarce left us the fortieth part; yet if we demand but that, we are censured covetous. But let not sheep judge the shepherd. God made thee, thy parents begot thee, thy preacher saves thee; where is the fourth equivalent to these? Yet as if God and the preacher had nothing to do with us, and nothing had done for us, there is none whom we so boldly defraud. There was an order and custom in St. Augustine's time, that the poor should beg of none but the priest; and if he had not wherewithal to relieve them, they might exclaim against him, for not more effectually moving the people. Then the poor came to us for succour, now all the succour we have comes from the poor. The rich rob us, only the poor are more willing than able to bestead us. We dare not plead for our own, then sacrilege would not hear us: the law must not help us, their evil conscience will not help us, the poor cannot help us; now the Lord help us.

There be some that have brought down the price of our function; and for the bettering of their own severals, have inveighed against the church's commons, in the language of Judas. To what purpose is this waste? John xii. 5. Crafty cul, he would have had it himself. Oh how these preachers fickle the people's ears, that can fit them with a cheap religion! If I should prophesy of wine and strong drink, I were a prophet fit for this people, saith Micah, chap. ii. 11. Now it is but turning wine into water, and strong drink into small charges, and then he is an excellent prophet. Faith, and all faith, and no good works, but to the household of faith, by which they mean themselves. I could also mention non-residents and self-silencers; but they are my brethren, and I will not accuse my brethren; my fathers, and I will not lay open the nakedness of my fathers: only pray for them, as Noah did for Japheth, Gen. ix. 27: God persuade them to dwell in their own tents; and purge all avarice from the house of Levi. You see I have not spared ourselves, shall I flatter the rest? God forbid.

2. Church patrons; who instead of Levites to divide the word, put in Gibeonites not worthy to divide word. Their question to him that moves them for a living, is Judas's, What wilt thou give? Let their end be Judas's, despair and a halter. God give him a halter. They that ask the same question, why should they not receive the same answer? Sacrilege is the highest theft; and by their own confession, the thief is worthy of a halter. They are in some kind worse than Judas; he sold the body, they sell souls: his barter brought but a pot-

ter's field for burial; theirs doth make the church Aeldama, a field of blood, for slaughter. Besides all their other condemnable traffic, they shall answer for soul-blood at the day of judgment, Rev. xviii. 13.

3. For magistrates and judges, they have their practices too. Isaiah calls the unjust ones, the "companions of thieves," Isa. i. 23. Why? for taking purses of travellers? No, but for taking bribes in their chambers. The thief hath as much right to the one, as the judge to the other. They plead gift; and what is freer? So the true man gives his purse to the thief, to save his life; and the client gives his money to the judge, to save his living. This sin is able to turn Guild Hall into Shooters Hill, and make Westminster Hall more dangerous than Salisbury Plain. They cry, Give, Hos. iv. 18; and the thief says but, Deliver; and what is the difference betwixt Give and Deliver? Yet Give sits on the bench, while poor Deliver stands at the bar. If places of judicature were to be bought for money, (and I would to God they never had been so,) we have them among us, that would lay them up by the wholesale, and make them away again by retail.

4. Covetous lawyers have their practices too. See, thy matters are good; so Absalom stole the people's hearts, so these steal their purses. Shall I say with the apostle, "Such were some of you?" 1 Cor. vi. 11. No, such are some of you.

He is a dissembling chapman, that says of a good commodity, It is naught; and he is a dissembling lawyer that says of a naughty cause, It is good. Tertullists will plead against Paul, and Abiezrites for Baal; such lawyers are advocates against Christ, and Christ will be no Advocate for them. It is a proverb not more old than true; Logie, the law, and the Switzers may be hired to fight for any body.

I must omit many practices of covetousness. As that of the covetous gamester; who when he wins, plays the thief with another, and losing is a thief to himself. Or the oppressing landlord, who while he makes his tenants beggars, makes himself a fool; Thou fool, when thy soul is snatched away, whose shall these things be? Luke xii. 20. Yea, worse; for if he be a fool that lays up but his own goods, find out a name for him that takes away other men's. Or the severe creditor, that useth his debtors as Darius did Daniel; first cast him into the lions' den, and then solicit God for his deliverance: Thy God deliver thee, Dan. vi. 16: so he casts them into prison, and prays God to help them out. I have heard of prisoners, that on their death-bed, when they had scarce one hour to pray for themselves, have spent half of it in cursing their creditors; and instead of their own pardon, have desired their vengeance. It was a fearful condition, yet remarkable: the parties thus cursed falling into such insufferable diseases, that they have been desperately ready to blaspheme God and die.

Or the sacrilegious purloiners of tithes; who feed the rich gluttons of Rome with the fat of bread, and will not allow poor Lazarus of the gospel the very crumbs. Nor is it the fault only of impropriators, some of which number are cured for reaping where they never sowed; and do not value a minister so much as they do their horse; with whom, as with men given over to a reprobate sense, there is nothing more to do; for no voice of God can awake them out of their dream, nothing but the archangel's trumpet, at which day they will be found to have impropriated their own souls from Christ. Thieves are broke in upon the remainder. The world is busy about it, disquisition of the tenure of tithes; and many an evening in this, than in the articles of their reli-

gion. But why does custom overbear God's law, man's law, and all? Let this point be argued in the court of conscience; and if God determine on their sides, we have done, much good do it them. I pay tithes of all that I have, saith the Pharisee, Luke xviii. 12. I should have feared he had lied, but that our Saviour justifies him, even to mint and cummin. A Pharisee of Jerusalem was in this an honest man to many a citizen of London; yet the Pharisee went to hell. The least sheaf the covetous man culls out for God, and what he steals from him he thinks the clearest gain.

1. If the usurer were not desperate, I would say something of his practices too; but the very name is enough to condemn him. He breeds of money to the third generation; and a shilling is not sooner his, than he sets it to beget another. The bear cannot drink, but he must bite the water; the usurer never cools his thirst, but his draught is a poor man's estate. St. Augustine felt a heavy burden on his conscience, for robbing of a pear-tree in his younger days; he calls it his perishing, his falling from the firmament. (Confess. lib. 2. c. 4.) Usurers rob men of whole orchards, and never grudge at it. A gentleman in the country takes in the commons, which in the city he takes out in commodities; and for his racked rents, he is furnished with rattles. The devil had a serpent to tempt Eve, and the usurer hath a parasite to tempt the young heir: bring him but once to riot, and then he will want powder; and who should supply him but the usurer? Thus his mind is quite transposed from his original: the usurer furnishes him for the tavern, the tavern for the harlot, the harlot for Satan. If one entice an apprentice to rob his master, the law makes it felony; if he maintain him being run away, there is a penalty; and is there no law for him that enticeth a son to rob his father, yea, that shall rob a father of his son, rob God of a soul? Methinks, such injured fathers should put up a bill in parliament against such caterpillars. "This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours," Mark xii. 7. They are like foxes, that use their wits and their teeth together; they never talk, but they take hold. Bees, of all creatures, cannot abide sheep; because being once got into their wool, they are so entangled that they cannot get out again. Usurers have the countenance of sheep, they look simple, and go plain; you would take them for sheep, but they are sheep-biters. They make no other use of their wool, that is, their wealth, but to snarl and inwrap men; and once in their books, it is hard getting out.

2. For practices of avarice in trade; preventions, interventions, circumventions, adulterate wares, blended mixtures, a weight for the hall and a weight for the stall, a measure to buy with and a measure to sell with; they transcend all numeration. There be certain mystical principles in every science, which cannot be declared; wherein *caveat emptor* , i. e. let the purchaser be on his guard. Call them what they will, they may all be reduced to fraud, that is the formal, yea, and practical part of them. Gehazi runs after Naaman for a talent of silver and two changes of raiment, with a lie, 2 Kings v. 22. The good Syrian greets the servant in that language wherewith he was dismissed of his master; "Is all well?" So sudden a messenger might seem to argue some strange news; but the breathless Gehazi soon satisfies him, if he will as soon satisfy Gehazi. Had he come for this reward in his own name, as a fee for the prophet's servant, as his gain, so his sin had been less; but he must have a greater sum. Light profit will not content a covetous tradesman; therefore he stretcheth his conscience; as Gehazi belied his master, robbed

Naaman, burdened his own soul. Avarice is ever cunning, as having the mother-wit, and the father's wit to help. "Two young men of the sons of the prophets be come from Mount Ephraim." What a sound and formal tale hath he devised, of the number, the place, the quality, the age of his master's guests! The value of his demand was so proportioned, that it might not be unlikely of his master, and yet well enrich himself. I ask you but reason, saith the shopkeeper. But the love of money can never keep good quarter with honesty; there is a mint of fraud in the worldly breast, and it can coin lies as fast as utterance. Covetousness never lodged in the heart alone; if it do not find, it will breed, base companions. We are not to do evil, that good may come of it, Rom. iii. 8; but there is no evil which they will not do, that goods may come of it.

But now what is the end or project of all these practices? To be rich; an impatient desire to be rich. "They that will be rich fall into temptation," &c. 1 Tim. vi. 9. One says, He who wishes to become rich, wishes also to become rich soon. "He that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent," Prov. xxviii. 20; yea, sometimes, he shall not be rich; the more haste, the worst speed. Cush runs apace, but through chubbly and rough grounds, uneven disadvantages: Ahimaaz outruns him, because he takes the way of the plain. Plain-dealing doth not seldom get more riches, it ever gets more happiness. The spurred horse soonest tires: many a one is so hasty, that he loseth the game. When the wind is strong, and the sails full, then let the mariner beware the rocks. How many had been rich, if they had tarried God's leisure! If Saul will not stay for Samuel, his sacrifice shall do him no good. But now when they will be rich, and God shall not know of it; rich, and never trouble him about it; when fraud is employed as a co-agent of trade, to ripen and forward it, as art helps to improve nature; when the spring of conscience is screwed up to the highest pin, that it is ready to crack; when religion is locked up in an out-room, and forbidden on pain of death to look into the shop or warehouse: then is covetousness in the full practice. The poets feigned Pluto to be the god of riches and of hell, (as if hell and riches had both one master,) and to be lame; yet withal, swift and nimble as fire. When Jupiter sent him to a soldier or scholar, he went limping; but when to one of his mistresses, he flew like lightning. The moral was, The riches that come in God's name, and are sent to honest men, come slowly; but they that come by unjust dealing, flow in apace. He that resolves to be evil, may soon be rich. All the wealth which the worst man hath, is for the matter the gift of heaven; yet for the manner of getting it, millions go to hell. Health cannot come but from God; yet how many have sought and obtained health of the devil! But more safe and welcome is the gain that comes in the slow wain of honesty, than that which comes hurrying in the swift chariot of iniquity.

Thus I have discovered some practices of avarice; but who can declare them all? Not he that hath done them, the covetous; not he that is undone by them, the guiltless; not he that teaches them, Satan himself; but only he that shall judge them, the omniscient God. But to what purpose is all this, if the covetous man will not be found? While the preacher walks in generals, declares the nature of avarice, every man can be the master of his own patience. But descending to particular application, Thou art the man; then he is held to leave his text, and to mistake his auditory. For my own part I profess, that I should be far from Jonah's passion, to vex or fret at it, should God's mercy and your innocence

make me this day a liar, and prove all my speeches impertinent: yea, I will pray that it may be so. But when the Pharisees came to Christ with an errand of accusation. John viii. 3, there were at first many sinners; when they had charged the woman with adultery, there appeared but one, ver. 4; but when they all went away convicted by their own consciences, there appeared never a one, ver. 9: but this did plainly show that they were all sinners. Oh that men would ransack their own consciences, and make a stricter inquisition into all the suspected passages and practices of their lives! You shall find this sin full of fetches, pretences, excuses: believe it not, spare it not; shrive it to the proof, arraign it, condemn it, punish it. Punish it in the body by fasting and mortification, punish it in the soul by repentance and contrition, punish it in the purse by works of charity and restitution. Break open your consciences, more rusty than your coffers. The law will not allow of the defendant's bare negation, without witnesses. Thy own word will not be taken before God; let the poor witness for thee that thou art not covetous. Their prayers shall unlock the gates of heaven for thy soul, and their testimony avail thee, when no riches shall, in the day of Christ.

"An heart exercised with covetous practices." This is the disease; now let me ask thy soul two questions. First, wouldst thou perceive the danger of it? Secondly, and then, wouldst thou be cured of it? If so, first consider the effects, then the remedies. The effects are many, and mortal.

1. It inefficuates the instruments of salvation: covetous thorns choke the seed, it is but cast away. It may breed a swimming, but not a saving knowledge; furnish the head, but not better the heart. Nabal is his name, and fool is his surname: the wisdom of God is shut out of doors, while this folly keeps the house. We wonder that our sermons take no better effect; that among so many arrows, none should hit the mark. But God tells us the reason: "They sit before thee, and hear thy words, but their heart goeth after their covetousness." Ezek. xxxiii. 31. The damps of the earth do not more quench fire, than the love of the earth stifles grace. Neither trees nor grass grow above, where the golden mines are below. If money be centred in the heart, no fruits of goodness can appear in the life. What, look for grace in the covetous? We may as well look for a harvest in a hedge. They do but serve us as they did Christ; when we preach against covetousness, they laugh at us, Luke xvi. 14.

2. It impossibilitates the entrance into heaven. Where the treasure is, there is the heart; no man hath two hearts, or two treasures: the one is but counterfeit, if any at all. The world indeed sometimes falls into men's mouths, but God doth not spill his heavenly riches; he parts not with them without suit, without thanks. He must strive to enter into heaven that misseeth not, and he shall miss of entrance that striveth not. The covetous is like a camel, with a great bunch on his back; heaven-gate must be made higher and broader, or he will hardly get in.

3. It disposeth a man to all sins, be they never so horrid: he is a fit piece of timber for any place in the building of hell; this mercenary soldier will refuse no office in Satan's camp, for booty. Any sin doth prepare and habitually dispose the mind to every sin; but this doth actually transgress the whole decalogue.

1st Commandment, "Thou shalt have no other gods but me." If the covetous have not another god, why does Paul call him an idolater? Either he doth offer sacrifice to his gold, Job xxvi. 24; 11ab. i. 16;

or if he does not, yet he refuseth no desperate adventure it puts him upon; and obedience is better than sacrifice. One of Jupiter's many names was Money; (August. Civit. Dei, lib. 7, cap. 12.) pagans gave unto their god the name of Money; and the covetous give unto money the worship of God. The Romans had a god which they called Terminus: I fear we have made it a London god and a Westminster god too. The Israelites made a calf, and then danced about it, one calf about another; with no less joy do the covetous adore gold.

2nd, "Thou shalt not worship an image." But mark how the prophet joins them: "Their land is full of silver and gold;" and presently, "their land is full of idols;" Isa. ii. 7, 8. It was gain that made Diana so great, and Demetrius to roar and make so great a noise for her. They be the colder-doctrines that Rome is most violent to justify: masses, which bring in masses of wealth; praying for the dead, which is a trick to prey upon the living; they are somewhat colder for those tenants that do not warm their kitchen; yea, I would that covetousness had not robbed God of his worship among us. How many churches of this land have no better than a ten pound stipendiary, that hath less learning than living, whilst one of another coat goes away with the church's salary!

3rd, "Thou shalt not take the name of God in vain." This the covetous thinks a very vain commandment. What equivocation, oath, lie, blasphemy, perjury, will not he swallow in the sweet broth of commodity? It is a principle in his catechism, Gain is godliness; and he never likes godliness, but when it brings in gain. Sometimes covetousness strips off all religion, at other times religion must be the cloak of covetousness, 1 Thess. ii. 5. "Shall not their substance be ours?" saith Shechem, Gen. xxxiv. 23. So, shall not their custom be ours? Are we brothers at the church, and shall we not be cousins at the shop.

4th, "Remember to keep holy my sabbath." But the covetous thinks, religion makes men idle: the sabbath is one day lost in a week; above seven weeks lost in a year. The people are idle, saith Pharaoh, therefore they cry, Let us go sacrifice, Exod. v. 8; as if men would never think of sacrifice, unless they were idle. Sacrilege hath appropriated God's tithes already; and now covetousness would appropriate his sevenths too. Christ should have neither tithes nor time, if avarice might have her will. Not to speak of some lawyers' chambers, which on a sabbath afternoon are fuller of clients than some country churches are of suppliants. We read that on the sabbath days Jerusalem was troubled with fish-merchants, Neh. xiii. 16; and does not London abound with drink-merchants? Suppose that these temples of Babelus be better visited among us, yet what are the suburbs and adjacent villages? When will the sabbath be gone, that we may sell corn? Amos viii. 5. There was some honesty yet in that covetousness: they had the patience to tarry so long. But our borders cry, When will the sabbath come, that we may have our houses full of citizens, and vent our tipping commodities? So they turn God's sabbath into the sabbath of Babelus; and make it both a selling day and a swilling day.

5th, "Honour thy parents." The father says of his child, as Abraham did, Oh that Ishmael might live! the covetous son, like Esau, Oh that the days of mourning for my father were come! *Haereditis lachrymae*. The heir's tears, are grown into a proverb. This is one practice among the Romish orders, like that of the Pharisees, Mark vii. 11; they must give all their goods to the college, and go as naked into the cloister as they came into the world. Thus their

poor parents, that depend on their maintenance, must be empty, that the others' eorban may be full: as if the very smell or steam of the sacrifice were enough to give them their dinners. Did we never hear of such unnatural prodigies, that have denied relief to their own parents?

6th, "Thou shalt not kill." Yet this is a common effect of covetousness. He that is greedy of gain, takes away the life of the owners, Prov. i. 19. The lamp is not only put out by pouring on of water, but by not pouring in of oil. Was not the rich man guilty of Lazarus's blood, while he relieved him not? It will grieve those churls, that have either made beggars or not comforted them, to be found at the last day murderers. Dishonest gain is accompanied with blood, saith the prophet, Ezek. xxii. 13. Judas did not so much hate his Master as love the money: yet the love of the money moved him to betray his Master. Naboth will not part with his vineyard, he shall therefore part with his life. He is accused, condemned, stoned, 1 Kings xxi. 13; here is a ready payment for a rich vineyard: Ah! will drink his blood, that he may come to taste his wine. What makes Rome give toleration of murder, by ordaining refuges for wilful blood, but avarice? Murder is condemned by the light of nature, as the barbarians concluded upon Paul, Acts xxviii. 4; yet to the golden shore how many fear not to swim through a stream of blood!

7th, "Thou shalt not commit adultery." The purse hath often prevailed more than the person. Do not too many gallants plot how to get into the merchant's bed, rather than how to get out of the merchant's book? Some force themselves to a single life, merely to avoid the charges of the married condition. They that had rather burn in their own sensuality, than quench that fire with an allowed remedy, do (as it were) offer up themselves to Moloch in the burning flames of lust. Thus a covetous father in the marriage of his child, inquires not after virtues, but riches. Abigail signifies, her father's joy, yet she was matched with Nabal and sorrow together. If her father had meant her joy, either in herself or in her life, so unworthily a churl had wooed in vain. But he married her *nummo, non viro*: i. e. to money, not to a husband. Oh how many a child is thus cast away upon riches!

8th, "Thou shalt not steal." All cozenage is theft; and as one says, Show me a covetous man, and I will in return show you back a thief. Extortions, depopulations, impropriations, enclosures, engrossings, monopolies, with that whole litter of vipers, are bred in the dunghill of covetousness. Now the covetous man may be conselled by his lawyer, that he hath an action against me, for calling him thief. But if we should come to trial, there is a witness within him that would cry, A thief, a thief; his conscience would attach a thief in his own bosom. I could tell you of a eulogy made by an orator of a magistrate, wherein he commended him for being no thief. This, replied another, was a good commendation for a servant; if, besides, he be no runagate. But at the great assizes, he is no lover of riches that shall clear himself from being a thief.

9th, "Thou shalt not bear false witness." But he that scruples not at false dealing, will never stick at false accusing. The tongue is an ill apprentice to the covetous heart, if it cannot lend the false hand a lie on an oath. I know there be hackney consciences, knights of the post, and flatterers that admire persons for advantage, Jude 16, as dogs fawn for a crust. But does not the tradesman, that tells me a tale in my ear, while he cuts a hole in my purse, deceive me with a false testimony? "Lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain," Prov. xxx.

9. Poor and steal: poverty brings in robbery. Steal, and take the name of God in vain; robbery brings on perjury. The lawyer that pleads his client's cause against his own conscience, is hired by covetousness to bear a false witness.

10th, "Thou shalt not covet that which is thy neighbour's." But if the covetous man's hands were as able as his wishes be nimble, like another Adam, he would have the whole world to himself. They talk of the philosopher's stone, but there is no such thing in the nature of things, unless it be a covetous man's heart. That is of a chymical virtue, and would turn all into gold, a perpetual limbeck that labours of projection; till on the sudden the glass breaks and all flies out in smoke. He doth wish the whole earth were mines and Indies; the ocean a sea of gold, as St. John calls it a sea of glass. If every fish had as much money in it as St. Peter's, he would quickly turn fisherman. Heaven itself cannot tempt him, unless it were all gold, and every star a diamond. Pope Benedict XII. refused to make another cardinal, unless he could make another world; for as that was not sufficient for his cardinal, so one is too little for the covetous. If the whole world were thrown as a sop into their mouths, it would not content avarice.

Thus is he a transgressor of every law. Go now, ye fools, and flatter yourselves that you are noatheists, no idolaters, no blasphemers, no sabbath profaners, no parent contempters, no murderers, adulterers, thieves, nor liars; you have been all these, are all these, or may be all these, or whatsoever else Satan will, if you continue covetous. The opinion of honesty is put on this sin through the world. An honest man, but something hard; but yet in the Judge's sentence, the adulterer and thief are as honest men. Read 1 Cor. vi. 10, and Eph. v. 5. There you may learn what to think of his honesty. He is got into the midst of that desperate throng, that shall never see the face of God. We rank him with aldermen and gentlemen, give him the best offices, the highest room at the table and pew in the church: God reckons him amongst harlots, and blasphemers, and thieves, and dogs, which be indeed his companions. Certainly, if such a man be honest, there are abundance of honest men in hell. We are loth to keep company with swearers, and harlots, and drunkards; but we have as great a charge of separation from the covetous. Eat not with him, 1 Cor. v. 11: and Solomon gives the reason; because he hath an evil eye, Prov. xxiii. 7, that wisheth a man choked when he bids much good do it him: when his guests are gone, he talks how much this man did eat, and how fast the other called for drink; and feeds his family with the mouldy remnants a month after. If such muck-worms were as odious to the rest as they are to me, they should appear in the street like owls, with whom no honest man will converse. Why should I prefer him before a piece of copper, that prefers a piece of gold before my Maker.

It is time to come to the remedies of this desperate disease; and to stop that violence and precipitation, wherewith we are transported to these rotten inconsistencies.

1. Faith overcomes the world, 1 John v. 4. What, doth it bring the riches of it into our coffers? No, but it casts the love of it out of our hearts. The world is not overcome by gaining, but by despising it. As covetousness is an alchymist, that turns gold into God, so faith makes Christ unto our souls All in all. The more hold a man takes of the world, the more he loseth hold of the Lord. Covetous men cleave to the world as long as they can; but when that staff breaks, then to the Lord. Extremity of

distress will send the profanest to God; as the drowning man stretcheth out his hand to that bough, which he contemned while he stood safe on shore. So Saul retired himself to inquire of the Lord, but he answered him not, 1 Sam. xxviii. 6. It is an unreasonable inequality, to hope to find God at our command when we would not be at his; to look that he should regard our voice in trouble, that would not regard his voice in peace. "Let your conversation be without covetousness." Why? Because "he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee," Heb. xiii. 5. We credit the promise of a wealthy and trusty friend; yet man may lie, man may die, man may be unable to help himself. God is too constant to be changed, too potent to be crossed, too wise to be deceived. I will never leave thee; not in a dear year, not in age, not in sickness, not in death: they that believe this cannot be covetous. The wealth thou keepest, is not thine own, but God's; he must give it thee out of thine own chest; and if thou hast little, cannot he give it thee out of another's chest as well?

2. Content with our own condition; he that hath wrought his heart to this happy resolution, hath disarmed Satan of a deadly weapon. The king is forbidden to multiply to himself silver and gold, Deut. xvii. 17; yet who hath greater uses, or fairer pretences, for this multiplying, than a king? Solomon says there be four things that cry Never enough, Prov. xxx. 15; and we may add a fifth, the covetous heart, that shall eat with them all four, and yet rise up with a Never enough. Esau was an honest man to thousands of these: for Esau had enough, Gen. xxxiii. 9. Naboth's vineyard lay too near Jezebel's court, 1 Kings xxi. 2, it had been better for him in the wilderness. The vicinity did not make it more commodious to the owner than envious to the beholder. It was now the perpetual object of an evil eye; his vines grew too near the smoke of that tyrant's chimneys, too much within the prospect of Ahab's window. The sight of it breeds those desires, that can neither safely be denied nor honestly satisfied. Eminence is still joined with peril, obscurity with peace. An inheritance needs no worse inconvenience, than the covetous eye of a great neighbour. There is no such annoyance belongs to a house, as an Ahab's avarice. He had vineyards enough of his own, but all their grapes were sour to Naboth's. His heart covets it, his tongue demands it, the possessor denies it, he grows sick upon it, Naboth must bleed for it, and then he will have it. Ahab was sick of a pleurisy, and Naboth must be let blood to cure him. Oh the impotent and insatiate desire of avarice! what is there that can make a man rich, but content! Ahab was lord and king of all the territories of Israel; Naboth is the owner of one poor vineyard; yet Ahab can have no joy of all Israel, if Naboth enjoy his vineyard. Besides Samaria, Ahab was lord paramount of Damascus, and all Syria; conqueror of him that was attended with two and thirty kings. Naboth was a plain townsman of Jezreel; the good husband of a little vineyard. Whether is the richer? Naboth wisheth for nothing of Ahab's; Ahab longeth for something of Naboth's, and cannot brook a repulse. Riches and poverty is more in the heart than in the hand; he is wealthy that is contented, he is poor that wants it. O poor Ahab, that carest not for thine own large possessions, because thou mayst not have another's. O rich Naboth, that carest not for all the dominions of Ahab, so thou mayst enjoy thine own.

3. Look up to the promised land; if but one glimpse of those heavenly treasures were presented to our eyes, how scornfully would we behold the

world, and call it, as Hiram did the cities given him by Solomon, in indignation, Cabul, 1 Kings ix. 13, a may or dirty land! Thou lovest gold; there is a city whose streets be gold, Rev. xxi. 21. Who would be raking in the kennels of the earth, that might gather pearls out of those crystalline streams of joy? Our Head is in heaven; what makes our hearts upon earth? It is fit the head and the heart should go together. As her Head went before the church, so his heart should go before the Christian. (August.) We cannot yet get up our bodies, let us send up our hearts. The whole of us will follow, whither some part of us has gone before. The way to mortify covetousness, is to "lay hold on eternal life," 1 Tim. vi. 19. The looser hold we have of the world, the less hold the world shall have of us; and the more we fasten above, we loosen below. "Men of the world have their portion in this life," Psal. xvii. 14; but my teeth shall not water at their dainties.

4. Let us free ourselves from a false opinion of riches: we think they will satisfy us, and they cannot. The heart shall be satisfied with gold, when the body is contented with wind; yea, does not *aurum*, gold, rather make *avarum*, a covetous man? St. Augustine (Confess. l. 6. c. 6.) tells of an oration which he made to the emperor; wherein he exceedingly pleased him, because he exceedingly praised him; and was so eloquent in his commendation, that all the hearers fell into commendation of that eloquence. But for his reward, it was like ours; for our good words, the people return us only good words again: as when a poet presented Augustus with Greek verses, he for his reward gave him Greek verses again. Home he came, and by the way in a green meadow he spied a poor beggar, well lined with strong drink, frisking, and singing, and dancing, and taking care for nothing. Whereupon he thus sighed: What is riches, that it should not give so much content as beggary! Miserable is that life, wherein none are happy but the miserable. All our labour for wealth, is but care and travail, for travail and care. He that hunts this game in the world's forest puts up more beasts than he well knows how to be shut of. This beggar hath not burnt candles all night a month together, he made no oration to the emperor to-day, yet he is merry. His purse hath no crowns, his flesh wears rags, yet he is jocular: sure there is no art leading to felicity, but the art of beggary. The meditation of this beggarly content wrought that learned man to provide for the posterity of his soul unpierishing riches. Thus thought the beggar had more joy than Augustine, yet St. Augustine had more joy than the beggar. With how different aspects and affects do diverse men look upon the world! The prophet and his man did not look upon the Syrian treasure with the same eyes, 2 Kings v. The one with the eye of contempt, the other of admiration: the one refuseth it offered, the other runs after it forbidden. I will destroy the whole land, and seekest thou great things for thyself? Jer. xlv. 5. Alas, they are, as one calls them, but splendid punishments, the vomitings of fortune. If they, like true servants, could continue, yet we, like frail masters, must vanish.

5. Lastly, charity. The sheep is overladen with wool if it be never shorn; and no coat is made for the child while it grows there. The worldling's wealth is too heavy a burden for him; let him be clipped, and his wool then may do much good. Do good, and distribute, 1 Tim. vi. 18. Call your riches what you will, you shall never find them to be goods till you do good with them. Men are mistaken in riches: God is called rich, not for his money, but

for his mercy; not for having good, but for doing good. "The same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him;" Rom. x. 12. Wherein rich? not in being Lord of all, so much as in doing good to all. Thus covet to be rich; rich in faith, rich in God, rich in good works. It was the worldling's folly, to think that wealth consisted in having goods, not in doing good. "So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God;" Luke xii. 21: so, that is, as very a fool as he was. Covetousness is that iniquity, which hath cast upon riches that reproachful title, to be called, The riches of iniquity. This inconvenience can only be helped by charity; make you friends of that mammon. Otherwise, a treasure of riches gathered and hoarded this day, is but a treasure of vengeance gathered and hoarded against the last day, Jam. v. 3. Whereas he that gets to give, doth give to keep. Thou fearest to lose thy money by giving it, and yet fearest not to lose thyself by keeping it. Every man shall leave his riches behind him, and every man shall find them again. They that have done good with them, shall find them safe in heaven, with the advantage of glory; they that hoarded them here, shall find them again too, and with usury; but the superaddition is the plague of conscience, and eternity of torments.

God hath appointed himself the rewarder of alms, even to a cup of water, Matt. x. 42; and a punisher of covetousness, even to the want of a drop of water, Luke xvi. 24. Dives would not give Lazarus a crumb of bread, though it might save his life; and Lazarus must not bring Dives a drop of water, though it might save his soul. Disused riches do not more rust in the coffer, than in the conscience, they be not only corrupted, but corrupting. Moisture was not given to the springs, that they should remain in the places where they were bred; but to run along in their watery channels, and to spend themselves upon the dry and barren grounds. Plato had a conceit, that nature at first was delivered of two daughters, Plenty and Poverty; that Need might be beholden to Plenty, for supply to her indigence; and Fulness to Poverty, for ease of her abundance. The rich man was made for the poor, and the poor for the rich. It belongs to the poor to ask, the rich to bestow. (August.) Rich niggards are like blessed thistles; when death hath cropped them, some water may be distilled out of them, medicinal to the disease of poverty.

Rich men should imitate Job, as he did the eagle, who is so honourable, that he will not eat his prey alone. The conceit that keeps rich men from giving, is a faithless fear that they shall want before they die. Therefore God often takes them away in the midst of their mammon: and so rids them of what they were afraid, and provides for others whereof they have need. It is easy for avarice to find an excuse to save the purse: the widow of Sarepta could have answered the prophet, with her own want; as the Macedonians could the apostle, that they had poor enough of their own, to take up their relief; yet they did not. "God loveth a cheerful giver," 2 Cor. ix. 7. An alms given with a grudging hand, doth not only lose all reward, but deserveth no pardon. By laying out your money, you shall increase your righteousness: thy righteousness shall shine forth as the sun, when the Sun of righteousness shines forth in his glory. Otherwise, *Audiant irrogare supplicia, qui volunt erogare subsidia*, as one saith, Let them look for the infliction of punishments, that will not apply themselves to the bestowal of relief. Men receive but ten for the surplussage of a hundred below; there shall be a hundred for ten

repaid hereafter. What do we give, but that which was first given us, and we cannot keep? "He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor; his righteousness endureth for ever," Psal. cxii. 9. The good man hath both riches and righteousness; he gives his riches, his righteousness he shall keep for ever. Good deeds derived from faith, are fortifications against Satan: what shall become of those cities, that have no such wall? They are a tribute we owe unto God, for defending us from our enemies, and planting peace in our consciences; he requires now no burnt-offerings nor sacrifices, but the fruits of mercy. Thus our religion affords us more, and costs us less; yet when the Lord gives us the whole harvest, we scarce allow him the very gleanings. The idolatrous Gentiles shall condemn us; for they bestowed their wealth in fanes, and shrines, and images; whereas we to the living images of the true God will not give our superfluities. Our devotion can away with any thing, rather than this same pharisaical almsgiving. Yet the cart that is overladen and crammed too full of sheaves, hath a tail that will scatter: let those full-gorged worldlings take heed, lest hogs come to glean after their cart's tail, and their heirs be made wards to usurers. "Let the extortioner catch all that he hath," Psal. cix. 11. It may be for his soul, he gives it gone; but his goods, he hopes, shall last: the extortioner says nay to that; and his children shall not have enough left to keep them in prison. The miser is the thieves' mark; if he would prevent robbing, let him be bountiful. The carle comes to distress, and no man pities him. Be charitable, that you may save your heirs from undoing. If there be in your bags but one shilling that should have been the poor's, that shilling shall be the consumption of all its fellows.

But after all this, he will build an hospital. Will he? Now blessing on him: when he hath taken away a man's land and inheritance, he will give him a staff to walk withal. By oppression he hath hedged in to himself great pastures, and now he will allow the owner the running of a nag. When I pass by an hospital built by a moneymonger, methinks I see the goodly monument of a cruel devotion. He sets a dozen beggars to pray for him, that God would forgive him the making of a thousand. And not seldom lewd persons are chosen into those places; whose prayers in the chapel cannot so much avail him, as their curses out of it make against him. In the law, God abhorred that offering, which was the price of a dog, or the hire of a harlot. He that thinks to be excused by giving part of his robberies, goes about to corrupt God with presents, and calls him in to take part of the spoil. But why doth Christ then say, Make you friends of your unrighteous mammon? Luke xvi. 9. I answer, He calls them not evil, because they were so much gotten by evil means, as were the baits of evil motions; otherwise, first wrongs should be satisfied, before friends be purchased. The apostle's rule is, first to labour honestly for wealth, and then to give to him that needeth, Eph. iv. 28. *Quamvis de parvo, tamen de justo, de proprio*, says one; i. e. Although out of a little, yet out of what is honestly got, and is your own. It is true, that a pound does the poor more good than a penny; yet a well-earned penny shall do the giver more good than ill-gotten thousands.

But there be some that hold it idle to do but so well, with what they got so ill. He that hath nothing to do with his money but build churches, they count him a fool. Or if the bench of penny-fathers do not ensue his wisdom, yet they will term him a vain-glorious fellow. Tut, almshouses will make good stables; and being let out in tenements, yield a round

sum by the year. A strong closet, and a good iron hutch, is worth twenty of your hospitals. These chuffs will contribute something toward the building of a jail, to deter thieves; or of a gallows, to execute them; but for a church or an almshouse, they see no need of those. Thus do they teach God to deny themselves mercy; for he that demands mercy, and shows none, ruins the bridge over which himself is to pass. We read of a lad that had five barley loaves in a basket, which Jesus took and distributed to the people, John vi. 9. Much goods are too heavy for the covetous, as the loaves were for the boy. Being shut up they will burden, being opened they will relieve: let them open the basket, and divide them among the poor. This is a special medicine, to breathe out the corrupt blood of covetousness.

"Cursed children." Children of cursing, a Hebraism, which may be taken either actively or passively; for they carry a curse about them, whosoever they go; and they bring a curse along with them, whithersoever they come. Covetousness is the root of all evils, not only criminal, but penal. There be innumerable woes against it, and sooner or later they shall overtake it. "I have smitten mine hand at thy dishonest gain," Ezek. xxii. 13; there the covetous man is but threatened. "For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him," Isa. lvii. 17; there he is plagued. God doth not only smite his hands at him, but he smites at him with his hands. He is in Laodicea's ease, Rev. iii. 17; wretched in getting, poor in not using, blind in keeping, naked in leaving, miserable in accounting.

1. Cursed not seldom in his body, Job xx. 20; which restless calamity is but a whip of his own making. I might instance Achan's heap of stones, Balaam's sword in his bowels, Judas's halter about his neck, one piece more to his thirty; but look upon Gehazi for all, 2 Kings v. 20. The prophet and the Syrian are parted; only Gehazi could not so take his leave; his heart was mailed up in one of Naaman's portmanteaus, and he must after to fetch it. He thinks his master too kind, or too simple, in refusing so just a present; himself will be wiser, thriftier. Desire hastens his pace; he does not go, but run after his booty. He hath it with advantage, two for one; and now pleaseth himself with the waking dreams of what land he might purchase, how well he was provided for, to live at ease. What says his master to it? "The leprosy of Naaman cleave unto thee, and to thy seed for ever;" the act overtakes the word; "he went out from his presence a leper as white as snow," ver. 27. A woful change hath Gehazi made with Naaman. Naaman came a leper, returned a disciple; Gehazi came a disciple, returned a leper. Naaman left behind him his disease and his money; Gehazi takes up both his money and his disease. The rest of his days he shall wear out in pain, and shame, and sorrow. He hath two changes of raiment for his body; but is not the body better than raiment? He wears Naaman's double livery, both of apparel and leprosy. He shall never look upon himself, but think on Naaman; and, O ye covetous, when you see yourselves, think upon Gehazi.

2. Cursed in his goods, which are his gods. First, he shall never have comfort in them: the curse of that unbelieving prince shall fall upon him, 2 Kings vii. 19; he shall see his own abundance, never taste it. Like the Indians that are slaved to the Spanish mines, he is a man condemned to the mines. "In the fulness of his sufficiency he shall be in straits," Job xx. 22. *Dives in miseris, miser in divitiis*; i. e. Rich in miseries, miserable in riches. Other sinners that have forfeited heaven, yet receive some pleasure

on earth; but the covetous deprives himself of this world, and God will deprive him of the world to come; so he enjoys neither: is not this a curse? But suppose the fool thinks it none; therefore, secondly, he shall not long keep his wealth. "He shall leave it in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool," Jer. xvii. 11. It is a hell to him to leave his riches at the end of his days; what is it then to lose them in the midst! The Sapiens of Africa are buried with all their gold about them; and worldlings would either not die at all, or else be buried so. If he must be a beggar in the midst, what shall he be at the end of his days? A fool; he shall lose both his goods and his wits. Thus saith Augustine, *Prædo minoris erit prædam majoris*; i. e. The prey on the lesser will be the prey of the greater. "There shall none of his meat be left, therefore shall no man look for his goods," Job xx. 21.

3. Cursed in his posterity. All his project and drift is to leave his children an inheritance on earth, though he forfeit his own in heaven; lo, even this also God disappoints. As the father was a rich beggar, the children shall be poor gentlemen. What got Gehazi's posterity by their father's covetousness, but an hereditary leprosy. He "covets an evil covetousness to his house," Hab. ii. 9. Indeed his desire is of good, but the event of that desire turns to evil; and he consults shame to his house, ver. 10, not, as he supposed, honour. "His children shall seek to please the poor," Job xx. 10; flatter the needy, and beg even of beggars: see now what his gentlemen come to. "God hath given him riches," saith Solomon, but not "power to eat thereof," Eccl. vi. 2. It may be so, but the more he spares, the more he leaves for his children: no, but a stranger shall eat it. Parents, be good to your children; let not my breath seem strange to you, (to speak in Job's phrase,) that entreat for the children of your own loins, Job xix. 17. Do not covet to leave them so much, that you disinherit them of all. There is no surer way to undo them, than by undoing others for them.

4. Cursed in his soul: he is in little better ease on earth, than that rich miser was in hell, burning in desire of that drop of water, which never shall be granted him, content. The covetous hath no inheritance in the kingdom of God, Eph. v. 5. No inheritance there? and none here neither? In what country then lies this man's purchase? In a place which is called, "without," Rev. xxii. 15, the territory of hell. After all his comings-in, he shall be sure of that to come into the bargain: this is that which makes up his revenues.

Now he that is so well practised in casting up parcels, so much in his counting-house, let him look over these particulars, and sum up his gains. A curse upon his body, upon his goods, a curse upon his children, upon his own soul: here is his profit: would not this gain make a man covetous? A man's soul in exchange for the whole world, were but a hard bargain, Matt. xvi. 26. Thou fool, they shall fetch away thy soul from thee; and then whose shall these be? Luke xii. 20; yea, whose shalt thou be? Lord, give us nothing in this world that may prevent our happiness in the world to come; let us rather be beggars than not saints.

To take yet a fuller view of this curse, let me give you a short character of the covetous man. He is cursed to be a servant of servants: the saints' drudge is his saint. He shrines his god in his coffer, and there locks up his heart for a perpetual sacrifice to it. Who rears the true God keepeth his, he will keep his god; and gives to a piece of earth that veneration which he denies to his Maker. Yet he dares

not trust either any other god, or his own; but fears lest thieves should put him to Micah's complaint, "Ye have taken away my gods, and what have I more?" Judg. xviii. 24. O poor god, that cannot keep itself from stealing! He fears a thief worse than Satan; yea, he will be beholden to Satan for a spell to save him from the thief. In his unquiet sleep he dreams of burglary; and is not sure that even now he barred the door. If his conscience ever go about to prejudice his profit, he condemns it for a common barrator. He laughs at poor men's curses; and before he dies, curseth himself to boot.

The ancients have compared covetous men to swine; of all beasts, the ejected demons chose to enter into them; and still they affect those swinish churls, that insatiately swirl up the draff of the world. One wittily observes, that if the Jews had not been forbidden by the law, yet nature itself would have dissuaded them from eating swine's flesh; lest one hog should eat another. Worldlings are swine, carrying their faces downward, not looking up to the tree whence comes their mast; wallowing in muck, digging up the earth, if they be not ringed by the law for rooting; insatiable in devouring, hoinish and grunting, and grudging any neighbourhood. The unthrift with his riotous courses, doth but still feed swine. It is not meet to give the children's bread to dogs, Matt. xv. 26; much less to hogs. By their unnatural dealing in the world, you would not think they came naturally into the world. Their sin is so impatient of the delay of vengeance, as if they would pluck the stern of the world out of God's hand, till he had confounded them. Oppression is the price of blood: the Jews would not put it into their treasury; these dare put it into their patrimony. There is no religion in them, but the love of money: by fraud and perjury they had confiscated their souls long ago. Any doctrine is welcome to them, but that which beats upon good works. They stick not, with the sages, to fall down and worship Christ, but they cannot abide to present him with their gold. Not to meddle or make with a man, is a high favour, for which (they look) God and the world should be beholden to them. They think all charity to their neighbour consists in bidding him Good morrow. How grossly do they cheat themselves! The prince requires not only that his laws be not contradicted, but not violated. Go, ye cursed, because ye did not give, Matt. xxv. 41, 42: you do not hear them taxed for condemning charity in others, but for not performing it themselves.

All their devotion consists in a few abrupt graces; God be praised, Much good do it you. And if any man speak against unjust dealing, they stand not to maintain their copyhold; but, We are all naught, God amend us; and stop the preacher's mouth with, Sir, I drink to you: but God's mouth will not be stopped so. Being asked at the day of judgment, From whence come you? they must answer in Satan's language, From compassing the earth; for heaven they have not compassed. All their good deeds be only good words, but God's words are deeds: Go, ye cursed. He that spake the word, and made heaven and earth, shall but speak the word, and send them to hell. *Nec volunt esse pauperes, nec haberi divites*; i. e. They would neither be poor, nor yet be accounted rich. To avoid a subsidy, they complain of poverty; and when they complain of want, they most fear that which they complain to have. Thus do they live in anguish, to die upon the rack, and to finish their course in everlasting unhappiness. Now as you like this cursedness, you may go on in covetousness. It is pity but the world should love him, that will love the world upon these conditions. But

for ourselves, let us impartially scourge this mammon out of our temples: Christ did not die to purchase this world for us; let us not lose that which he purchased, to purchase that which he contemned. No, Lord, thou hast prepared mansions for us, prepare us for those mansions; that by being rich in grace, we may come to be rich in glory. Amen.

VERSE 15.

Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness.

As a man hath but two hands, and but two feet; so he hath but two kinds of ways for those feet, but two sorts of works for those hands. His deeds be either good or bad, his way is either right or wrong, and his end will be either heaven or hell. The right way is hard to pass, and not easy to find; therefore God gives us his word for a guide, and his grace for an assistant. But the wrong way is so familiar, that we know it from our childhood; and so easy, that we run it by nature. We need not be taught it, for if we be not taught the other, we will never forsake it. Besides the easiness, that it is without difficulty; the smoothness, without rubs; the advantage, down a hill, without pains; it is numerous, and multiplies itself into great variety. The evil of sin: sin is the head or beginning of it; and this divides itself into three, "the lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and pride of life," 1 John ii. 16; and those three into three thousand. Now the concluding term where they all meet, is the evil of punishment. So that if a sinner doth not like one way, he may take another; if he cares not for excess, he may admit oppression; there is choice enough: any of all those millions of obliquities is able to bring him to hell; that rendezvous and common term where all transgressions have appointed to meet. Satan is called the god of this world, as it were, lord of the soil, having a commission to take up those wefts and strays, that wilfully straggle from the way of truth, and keep not the precincts wherein God hath bounded them.

First, these sorcerers, like vagabonds, abjure all honest callings, and turn their backs upon the place where they are set to work; refusing the path of God's commandments, they forsake the right way. Secondly, next, being set a wandering, all the world is their scope: which way soever they travel, they cannot be out of their way; be it treachery, blasphemy, uncleanness, what it will, all is their own. They balk no wrong way, all their care is to miss the right; they are gone astray. Thirdly, then they have their captain, whose exemplary steps they must follow; Balaam the grand rogue, the master rebel, the king of outlaws; this is their leader; following Balaam. Fourthly, and lastly, though the great commander of all be not expressed, yet he is insinuated, Satan; under whose colours they all march, move, and remove as he appoints: and the reward, which this black guard, this tattered regiment, serve him for, is wages; and that not bare pay, so much wages for so much work, but above just allowance, it must be the wages of unrighteousness. Thus now they have taken press-money, and put themselves into the army; let us see how they follow their captain, and he his commander; they Balaam, and Balaam Satan.

They "have forsaken the right way." This is their

apostacy. The right way is the signified will of God; and whatsoever repugneth that, is the wrong. The will of God is either *consilium cordis*, or *verbum oris*; i. e. the counsel of his heart, or the word of his mouth: the former, *quod vult fieri de nobis*; the other, *quod vult fieri a nobis*; i. e. what he wills to be done with us, and what he wills to be done by us. The first we cannot break, the latter we now cannot keep. This manifest will of God was first dictated to man by nature, when God engraved his image in the table of his heart. Adam obscured this image, but (through God's mercy) saved the tablet. But now because the letters which he had written in our tables of flesh, were almost grown out, like some ancient characters in the barks of trees, he saw it time to write them in tables of stone, whose hardness should not be capable of alteration. It was plain, that the squared stone would be more faithful and retentive, than our unsquared heart. There never was so precious a monument, as the law written with God's own hand. They that so dote on the beggarly relies of their imaginary saints, how would they have adored this! If we did see but the stone that was Jacob's pillow, or one of those upon which Jesus sat, a piece of Jacob's well, we would look upon it with more than ordinary respect. With what admiration then should we have beheld that stone, which was hewn and written with the very finger of God! If we have but a manuscript written by the hand of some famous man, we lay it up among our choicest jewels; what reverence then should we have given to the hand-writing of the Almighty! The stone is lost, the hand-writing remains; yea, even the hand-writing is nailed to the cross, so that it hath lost the condemning power, though not the commanding power. The book is misarced, the contents are left as a royal law; whereby the whole world should be governed, whereby the whole world shall be judged.

This is the right way: from which they that perversely wander, destroy their own souls. We read of the wicked, that they cast the law of God behind them, Psal. l. 17; and we read of Moses, that he did cast the law of God from him, and broke the tables. Yet God forgave the latter, and condemns the former. Moses in a holy zeal broke but the material books, they in a rebellious malice break the spiritual contents. The law then is the right way; Thy commandments are right, Psal. xix. 8; therefore given us as infallible rules to guide all our actions by. Inquire for the old way, which is the good way, and walk in it, Jer. vi. 16. The will of God is the rule of rectitude; whatsoever swerves from that is erratic, whether in opinion or practice. "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?" or an old man his; prince or subject, theirs; noble or vulgar, rich or poor, theirs? Even by ruling themselves after thy word, Psal. cxix. 9. But, alas, who is able to keep this way without some deviations? It is for these sacred chelms, to have "straight feet," Ezek. i. 7. We have a right way, but not straight feet; in many things we sin all. "Thou hast commanded us to keep thy precepts diligently," Psal. cxix. 4: this is God's imperative. "O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes!" ver. 5: this should be our optative. But how if we endeavour to go right, and cannot, is there no help? Yes, there is a way within the way, (like the ecliptic line within the zodiac,) an evangelical way of mercy to correct the rigour of the legal. "I am the way," saith Christ, John xiv. 6: this is the right way indeed. We cannot walk in the law, unless the gospel help us; and the gospel will do us no good, unless we strive to walk in the law, Gal. iii. 21, 22. Christ is

both our Saviour and our King: first, we must believe in that promise which he hath given to save us; and next, give obedience to that law whereby he will govern us. This is that entire rule; "and as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy," Gal. vi. 16. "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the word of eternal life," John vi. 68: not only the word of authority to command, nor the word of wisdom to direct, nor the word of power to convert, nor the word of grace to comfort, but also the word of eternal life to make us perfectly blessed.

They "have forsaken the right way." Therefore they once had it; no man can be said to leave that thing which he never knew. To refuse a thing, implies a present offer; but to forsake it, argues a former acceptance. So the prodigal forsook his father's house for a strange country, his father's household for strange company, his father's favour for a bag of money, his father's bread for the husks of beans: these if he had not enjoyed, he could not have forsaken. Here is an image of apostacy, whether of faith or of manners; which after a knowledge and approbation of the right way, is a deliberate election of the wrong. To begin is the lot of many, to finish, the lot of few, says Chrysostom. There be some that go forward in the ways of obedience: that in spite of all crosses and bruises, like good ships, maintain their course; that are not disheartened through the ill success of one adventure; but *redit ad tutandas naufraga puppis aquas*; i. e. the shipwrecked vessel returns to the swelling waves. In Gideon's army, all the faint-hearted were commanded to stay at home, Judg. vii. 3: no cowards get into the kingdom of heaven. Some are in many minds and moods, now forward, then backward; full of motions and commotions, ebbing and flowing, like Euripus, seven times a day. Some make neither forward nor backward; neither ebb nor flow, like the Dead Sea; but are betwixt the religious and the irreligious, just standing water. But these go altogether backward, and forsake the right way, as their most offensive eyesore: so, like a man out of the way, the faster they run, the further off.

They "have forsaken the right way." Perseverance is the crown of all graces. Aaron's garment had pomegranates in the skirt; the pomegranate hath the form of a crown, above all fruits; and this hung at the end of his vesture, to show that the end crowns all. The righteous man's "leaf shall not wither," Psal. i. 3: it is the note of the gloss, *Lapsus foliorum, mortificatio orbium*, The fall of the leaves is the killing of the trees. Happy repentance is sorry for ill beginnings; but to dislike good beginnings is an unhappy repentance. To divert ourselves from virtue, as the Jew put away his wife, without cause, is base ingratitude. Virtue seems to give a man this charge, when she first offers herself, Either never choose me, or never lose me. Not to know the right way, is an unldest ignorance; but it is a cursed disobedience, after knowledge to forsake it. To begin in the Spirit, and end in the flesh, was, in Paul's sense, folly, Gal. iii. 3; but to begin with grace, and end with wickedness, is malicious impiety. Yet how many have begun and proceeded well, that have shamed the stage with their last act! Solomon's younger years were studious and full of wisdom; his age was licentious and full of misgovernment, 1 Kings xi. 4. The philosopher could say, If every man must have a fit of madness, it is less unhappy to fall in youth; but certainly it is best not to be mad at all. Youth is petulant, wherein as to fall is easy, so these falls are relieved with pity. But inordinate errors are both most unseasonable and most intolerable in old

age. The childhood of old men is the sport of the young, one says. Solomon was the beloved of God, the oracle, the miracle of wisdom, in youth: who would not have expected, that the blossoms of so hopeful a spring should have yielded goodly and pleasant fruit in the autumn? Yet he, in his old age he forsook the right way. There is no time that can have security from sin, while it carries the sin of security about it. If any age were safe from this danger, it is the last. If any man's last days were safe, old David had not fallen. Youth is impetuous, middle age stubborn, old age covetous, all dangerous. It is no presuming upon time, or means, or strength: if God uphold us not, we cannot stand; if he do uphold us, we cannot fall. When we are at our full strength, it is good to be weak in ourselves; when at our weakest, to be strong in Him, in whom we can do all things. O blessed conscience in which is found this testimony, we have not forsaken the way of the Lord! All virtues run in the race, one only receiveth the garland, the image of most happy eternity, happy continuance. He that continues unto the end shall be saved, Matt. x. 22.

They "have forsaken." This is more than a mere aberration, of weakness; even a resolute, dissolute, absolute renouncing of the right way; without so much as a farewell to it, or a vouchsafing so much as once to look back upon it: not an aberration from, but rather an abjuration of, piety. When the wicked fall out with God, they betake themselves to new saints, or rather new devils; hardness of heart, contempt of God, neglect of salvation. "Behold, this evil is of the Lord; what should I wait for the Lord any longer?" 2 Kings vi. 33. Oh the desperate resolution of impatient minds! They will stint God, both for his time and measure; if he fail their desires in either, they turn their backs upon him, or fly in his face. It is one thing to forsake, another to propose and prepossess a forsaking: nor is their fault a simple transgression of the law, but a proud and wilful contempt of it.

In how full strength doth this example arise to the conviction of the Romists, who have indeed forsaken the right way, not only in regard of manners, but of doctrines! they have practically rejected it, and dogmatically taught against it.

For the law, they have made it of none effect through their traditions. First, for the first commandment, they make an unjust God, which is worse than none at all; while they teach that he quits the debt, but not the payment of the debt. As if the creditor should tell his debtor, I do forgive thee, but withal I will arrest thee. To pardon the fault, and not the punishment, is but a mockery. Secondly, the second they have raised quite out: because that commandment stands plainly forbidding images, therefore, that images may stand, they forbid the commandment. Thirdly, by declaring that men are not bound to keep oath with heretics, they take the name of God in vain, and teach that perjury. Fourthly, the Lord's sabbath hath not so much respect among them, as a saint's holiday. Fifthly, they dispense with allegiance to princes; yea, give remission of sins upon condition to become traitors; and so make the grace of God the reward of disloyalty. They absolve children from all obedience to their own parents, by admitting them into their monasteries. What hast thou to do with a father? the pope is thy father, the church thy mother, friars thy brethren, and nuns thy sisters. Sixthly, they make him no murderer, that kills a person whom they have excommunicated; and tolerate murder by ordaining refuges for wilful blood. Seventhly, they have established and permitted fornication. So they may have silver, they

care not to rake it out of the devil's sink. Hence it comes to pass as the prophet said; It came by the hire of a harlot, and to the hire of a harlot it shall return, Micah i. 7. Eighthly, sacrilege is the greatest theft, and of this they make the least conscience. They make sale of all things; heaven, hell, earth, pardons, purgatory; which is flat robbery, and the greatest deceit. Ninthly, their spurious and juggling equivocations have made the whole world hiss at them for false witnesses. If the priest be examined by the magistrate in any dangerous article, he answers, I know it not; that is, with this reservation, to tell it thee; grounding it upon a senseless exposition of Christ's words, The Son of man knoweth not the day or hour of the last judgment, Mark xiii. 32; that is, say they, to reveal it to others. Tenthly, the tenth they have restrained to the consent of will, and make lust or the first motion no sin. One commandment they have taken out; and to make up the number, cut the last into twain: as he that out of ten bags of money stealeth one, divides one of the nine left into two, that his theft may not be perceived. And yet this last they disannul again by their wrong interpretation. So that one while they make two of one, another while of those two they make none. Considering all this, it was no wonder in the first session of the last council of Lateran, to see the pope lay the Scriptures at his feet. We find the true church with a crown of twelve stars on her head, Rev. xii. 1; while that counterfeit head of the church throws the crown and twelve stars, the doctrine of the twelve apostles, at his profane feet.

To the gospel they have been no less injurious; laying another foundation than Christ, and ascribing his prerogative to a man of sin. To him they give power to create new articles of faith; albeit these overthrow the old. Whereas God hath subjected all men to the Scripture, they subject the Scripture to themselves, and bind it to an uncertain dependence upon their church. For the fathers and most illuminate writers, if there be any thing makes against the policy of Rome, away with it; their expurgations shall cast it out at the window.

Who can then blame us for forsaking them, that have forsaken the right way? O but they are still the church, and we leave the church in leaving them. This they utter loudly, and think to carry it away with a noise. Take a reverend divine's comparison: Suppose a man hath a fair pool of water in his grounds, which in time becomes corrupted; weeds grow, mud increaseth, and frogs creep into it. To help this, the owner cuts a new channel; and so drains out the water to this other place, that he leaves the filth and corruption behind. Shall the remaining frogs complain that the water is theirs, because the pit wherein it formerly stood is theirs? Shall they croak and foam as if they had wrong done them? or condemn all those fishes for heretics, that refuse their sink for the other pure streams? We have forsaken Rome: what have we left the crystal waters, the pure doctrine that was first in that pool? no, we have only left the weeds, the mud, and the frogs. God hath given us the water clear, which was theirs till they polluted it by their errors. And therefore have we forsaken them, because they succeed in the church, as the frogs did in the pool. If they forsake the right way, we must forsake them, or Christ will forsake us; which his mercy and our holy faith forbid.

"And are gone astray." Truth is one, errors are infinite. God chargeth us to refuse all ways but one; Satan bids us refuse that one, and take which way we please. All the paths of the wicked be crooked and irregular ways: they walk not forward to the prize that is set before them, and therefore

lose both pains and reward. Herein they truly follow their father, who testifies of himself, that he had compassed the earth. So confused and anfractuons are their goings, as if they cared not which way they went, so they went not with God. The ways of the wicked are crooked; they go wheeling to hell. We are all apt enough to stray, if preventing grace did not rectify us. Philosophers hold, if the inferior spheres were not ruled, and in a manner corrected by the highest, the swiftness of their motion would quickly fire the world. Certainly, if the affections of men were not moderated by the all-guiding Spirit, this little world would soon destroy itself. He that once forsakes the right way, and does not walk uprightly, Gal. ii. 14, quickly goes astray, and the first step he takes is toward hell. And he that hath begun that dangerous race, knows not where to stop; like an unbridled horse upon his speed; or a ship with a full wind, even when you strike sails, yet it will go some deal further by the force it had formerly won. He that lays the reins on the neck of his carnal appetite, cannot promise where he will rest. To say, This sin and no more, is as if a man should throw a stone into a pond, with a purpose to make one circle and no more; but that one will beget two, and those two multiply to a hundred.

When a man hath erred from the right way of charity, into what a number of mischievous courses doth he run! Here he takes up with injury, there he lays out with usury; this man he scandalizeth with malice, with fraud he robs another, a third he kills with oppression: every unrighteous action that Satan puts in his way, he is ready to embrace, be it as foul as deformity itself. Like that free citizen, that so doted on a female slave, that he would needs marry her, though by that match he were sure (by the law) to become a slave with her. God's charge was ever against bigamy: Solomon first takes two wives, then three, then hundreds; and having once gone beyond the stakes of the law, he is ready to lose himself amongst a thousand bed-fellows. "King Solomon loved many strange women," 1 Kings xi. Here was enough to overthrow the wisest king of the earth: women, many women, strange women, idolatrous women. First, women. He that made one woman for one man, saw that one woman was enough for that one man. "Let every man have his own wife," 2 Cor. vii. 2: a wife, not a concubine; his own, not another man's; his wife, not wives. One; for the charge of our wife is like the charge of our words: whatsoever is more than yea and nay in the one, or more than husband and wife in the other, comes of evil, and evil will come of it. Secondly, many women. Two is more than God allows; bigamy is unlawful; but polygamy, many women, is the practice of a Mahometan. No marvel if many women did ruin Solomon: Adam had but one, and that a good one; and yet she lost the game. If one woman was enough to undo all men, there is no wonder that many women should undo one man. Thirdly, strange women. Strange, because not sealed with the holy signet of matrimony; for otherwise they are too familiar. Fourthly, idolatrous women. Others only tempt to lust, these to misdevotion; if they can join our heart to theirs, they will disjoin it from God.

Hell is down-stairs; and if a man have descended a step or two, it is a miracle if he stop before he comes to the bottom. He that hath strayed into these thickets, will be so mazed with intricate circumvolutions, that he shall hardly unwind himself. This bad desire must be gratified with a lewd act, that act seconded with a lie, that lie credited with an oath. To do evil is a sin; to hide it with a lie, doubles the sin; to bind that lie with an oath, trebles it. So error begets error;

as a man of sunk estate, borrows of one to pay another, till finding his credit past soldering up, he runs in every where as far as he can, and then breaks. So the sinner, whose conscience lies perdu, refuseth no action that may at once satisfy his desire and conserve his reputation. At last he hath gone so far wrong, that he thinks himself in the right, and vice is counted virtue. In bodily diseases, where the beginnings are doubtful, and cannot denominate the sickness, yet the proceedings are evident, and the more keenly the disease is felt, the more certainly is it discovered. In spiritual diseases it is otherwise; for the first entrances are manifest; they trouble the conscience, and the sinner condemns himself; but the more he multiplies transgression, the less he is sensible of any compunction. No man is so mad as to call a fever health, or the gout swift footmanship, or the green-sickness beauty, or the consumption a good state of body. Yet these far-strayed sinners miscall the right way; while they call lust love, rage fortitude, envy emulation, pride magnanimity, sloth wariness, covetousness frugality, and rank dishonesty but mere policy. Who shall rectify that lunate member, which denies itself to be out of joint? Come, cast in thy lot among us, we shall find precious substance, saith the ungodly, Prov. i. 13, 14. If he might appoint the way, this should be the right; if he might determine the end, all should be peace; but he is mistaken in both. "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil!" &c. Isa. v. 20. Woe indeed; woe for refusing the right, woe for approving the wrong, woe for that they have erred, and woe because they will not be converted.

I conclude. It is said of Israel, that they journeyed and pitched at the commandment of the Lord, Numb. ix. 18. O blessed obedience, that in all business follows this direction! But, alas, "all we like sheep have gone astray," Isa. liii. 6. Like sheep? yea, like goats and dromedaries. The breasts of Eve gave no other milk to her children, Adam left no other inheritance to his posterity, than disobedience. Even in the garden of Eden, this bitter root grew too near the goodliest trees of life and knowledge; whereof our parents tasting, not only infected their own blood, but diffused their corruption into their whole succeeding lineage. God forbade but one tree, granting all the rest: Satan slighting all the rest, persuaded to this one. Yet how did Eve believe a murderer before her Maker, the father of lies above the God of truth! Aaron's rod was laid up in the ark, as a token of Israel's rebellion, Numb. xvii. 10. The whole world is an ark or court of rolls, to record the monuments of our disobedience. Moses sets down a catalogue of their rebellions, Deut. ix.; but, alas, ours be beyond all numeration. If the Lord forsook them for forsaking his truth, can we look to escape?

Christ sent two disciples to bring him the ass and her colt, Matt. xxi. 2. Some by the ass understand the Jews, by the colt the Gentiles. First, he chose the ass, he offered himself to the Jews; but they proving resty, he takes up the colt, the Gentiles. And now having been almost 1600 years a breaking and backing us, and managing us to his hand, even when he thought to have found us fit for the saddle, we are grown wilder and more untamed than we were before. We kick, and wince, and fling, and will by no means endure the reins of his blessed government. Thus now God is wearied with us both: his old obstinate ass, the Jews, tired him with continual beating; his unbridled colt, the Gentiles, vex him with their rambling. The former was a slow beast, and could not be gotten forward; this other runs fast enough, but will not keep the way.

But if the colt will not be ruled, the Lord will take his ass again, as the fitter of the two to do him service. O let us confess our errors, and return to the right way. Return, for you have erred; with weeping, for you have sinned, Joel ii. 12. Lord, "thou tellest my wanderings," Psal. lvi. 8: he tells them one by one, knows their just weight and number; for God is so wise that he can cast a man up to a hair. Your hairs are numbered, do not think that your sins shall pass unnumbered. O let the Lord also number our penitent sorrows; for as he doth book our sins, so he doth bottle up our tears. Our iniquities are not written in so deep characters, but our repentant tears shall be able to blot them out.

Let us therefore come home with sorrow, that have wandered with shame; seeking our Father's house, by doing our Father's will. Why should we run on this senseless and endless race of iniquity, till the days of our gracious visitation be out of date, when it will be hard to determine what the end will be? Let us follow the counsel of St. Chrysostom, alluding to the policy of the sages, who returned into their own country another way, Matt. ii. 12. Have we erred by the way of adultery? Let us go back by the way of chastity. Have we erred by the way of covetousness? Let us go back by the way of mercy. If we return the same way we went, we are still under the kingdom of Herod. No less in the sickness of the soul than of the body, there be critical days; whereby God observes in what likelihood we are to recover health. Smite thy breast and say, Where am I? Whither go I? We are all stray-sheep; now the great Shepherd of our souls bring us home to himself, and the fold of eternal peace. Amen.

"Following the way of Balaam." Custom is the principal magistrate of man's life, the guide of his actions; and as we have inured ourselves at the first setting out in this world, so commonly we go on, unless we be turned by miracle, and changed by that which is only able to do it, the grace of God. Our thoughts are according to our inclinations, our discourse according to our acquired and infused opinions, our deeds be according to our customs, and our customs generally follow after our precedents. So they that propound a Balaam for their master, are sure of vice for their mistress, and destruction for their wages. The apostle here speaks of sorcerers; and whom should sorcerers imitate but that grand magician, Balaam, the prince of false prophets, the eldest son of Satan? The general points are two; what, and wherein. First, what they do, They follow Balaam. Secondly, wherein they follow him, In his way, with all the passages; and in his end, which is the wages of unrighteousness. In the former I have three circumstances; a description, an observation, and a caution.

1. A description of Balaam, who had taught evil, and done evil; and in doing evil, he taught it. He was two ways a master of wickedness; preceptory, and exemplary: *Quæ docuit lingua, facilitavit vita*, says one; i. e. What he taught with his tongue, he illustrated by his life. He had his damnable doctrine, whereof we read, Rev. ii. 14; a doctrine which will never die so long as there is a pope living. Let us observe the parallel; the fitness invites me to the comparison. First, Balaam was great with kings; the pope will be great over kings. Secondly, Balaam would do any thing for money; and what practice doth the pope refuse to fill his exchequer? Incest shall be dispensed, murder refuted, uncleanness tolerated; all for gain. You may buy heaven, buy out hell, for money. For this, indulgences be his wares, and purgatory his market town. He will,

with Balaam, curse the very Israel of God for money. Thirdly, Balaam was a hidden hypocrite, a close villain, with a corrupt heart under a clear skin. The pope is such a glorious saint in show; no matter what stuff his conscience be made of, all his doings must be justified; his murders are excused like Samson's, his thefts like the Hebrews', his adulteries like Jacob's. Nothing doth he amiss, though the devil himself would scarce wish him to do worse. Fourthly, Balaam had some true oracles, and by the colour of them, he vented his own sorceries. If the pope should not confess some truths, the world would never admit his many falsehoods. He must have two or three pieces of right gold that would get off his bag of counterfeits. Lastly, Balaam persuades the Moabites to tempt Israel; first, to fornication, and by that to misdevotion. It is the papal indulgence to a fleshly life, that wins so many to his superstition. They will worship the pope's God, upon condition he will let them also worship their own. What is a harlot, but a pleasing idol? What is an idol, but a spiritual harlot? If the pope will allow them the one, they will not stick with him for the other. Idolatry was Balaam's sport; and who can but think that antichrist laughs in his sleeve, to see superstitious fools down on their knees to beautified puppets? Cornelius Agrippa, a great learned papist, hath left it written, that certain of the schoolmen, meaning Aquinas and Aureolus, defended, that the very stars in the firmament might be worshipped, but only for doubt of giving occasion to idolatry. Not that it were idolatry, but that it might give occasion of idolatry. Just as when a thief cuts a passenger's throat, he gives occasion of murder. But as Balaam was crafty to do mischief underhand; so the pope doth but plot, and contrive, and command in his consistory, what must be performed by his officious emissaries. Treasons and conspiracies against anointed sovereigns, blowing up of parliaments, ruin of countries by war and invasions, all fetch their original from his sacred and unerring breast; yet the Romish Balaam is innocent, he hath no hand in it. Let the actors on the stage answer it, the poet is close behind the curtain.

But now shall not this Balaam answer for all those conspirators whom he hath suborned? Suppose he did not give every one of them his particular errand, doth not his general warrant bid them go? While they teach men to earn the kingdom of heaven by shedding the blood of an heretical prince, and promise the forgiveness of many sins for the committing of one, what is this but to live instruments to their damnable designs? Machiavel's doctrine is quite fooled and shamed by the Jesuits: he taught that no man was fit for a desperate conspiracy, but one whose hands had been formerly dipped in blood. Alas, he knew not of a Friar Clement, or a Ravillae; he knew not, that superstition hath so well advanced mischief, that the first blood which a murderer sheds shall be no worse than a king's; and that by votive resolution, he shall be as merciless as butchers by occupation.

The Moabites were persuaded that Balaam could not err; and do the Romists think any less of their papal god? "He whom thou cursest is cursed, and he whom thou blestest is blessed." Numb. xxii. 6. They think if the pope put a traitor into the rubric, he is presently a saint in heaven; if he curse or excommunicate a Christian, he must needs be enrolled in hell. This being sized into their souls, no wonder if they become as dead engines, moved only by the Spirit he puts into them. Thus the way of the Lord is no more stood upon; but the way of Thomas, as the Dominicans speak; and the way of Scotus, as

the Franciscans; and the way of Loyola, as the Jesuits; and indeed the way of the devil, for he comes in for his share: while treasons, perjuries, uncleannesses be the doctrines, what man of sense will look for any other but Satan in the pulpit? At the best, we find not an apostle to be the master of their sentences, but Peter Lombard grows to be the text, and the hierarchy of Rome the expositors; and what will become of the poor lambs when such wolves be the pastors?

For observation, They follow Balaam. There was never any man so desperately wicked but he had some fellows and followers. Beelzebub fell not alone from heaven; thousands of angels fell with him in that confederacy. We read of three conspirators, Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, that prevailed with two hundred and fifty rulers, men of renown, and famous in the congregation, Numb. xvi. Those seditious leaders could not err without followers. Shall an Absalom rebel without seconds? No, two hundred men went out with him in their simplicity and knew nothing, 2 Sam. xv. 11: even the innocent are won to wait upon a conspirator. It is no hard matter to beguile harmless intentions; yea, the true-hearted be most open to credulity; and while they mean nothing but faithfulness, are brought into rebellion. The name of David's son carries them against Absalom's father; and while they purpose only attendance to the prince, they become loyal rebels to their king. But were there none that embraced this innovation for their own turns? Yes, it grew a strong rebellion. Can Jeroboam be an idolater alone? No, he no sooner sets up his calves, but Israel is down on their knees. If he cause such an impious erection, they presently follow him with their superstitious devotion. One man may kindle such a fire, as thousands are not able to quench. One plague-sore may infect a whole nation, and all the venom of sin is not spent in the act. The deed may be past and gone, but the pernicious example remains, and spreads to a woeful contagion. Like Goodwin sands, which not only swallowed up his patrimony, but still continues a dangerous place, where too many have miscarried. He is a very mean person, that draws not so many clients after him: even Thiodas and Judas had their four hundreds to accompany them.

It hath ever been the dangerous policy of Satan to assault the best; he knows the multitude, as we say of bees, will follow their master. The unstable vulgar are soon carried with the religion of authority. What Hushai said in policy, they speak in simplicity: Whom Israel choose for their king, his will I be, 2 Sam. xvi. 18. Hypocrites will be of the king's faith, as papists are bound to be of the pope's. Let Korah kindle the fire, two hundred and fifty captains will bring sticks to it, and all Israel are ready to warm themselves at it. The weathercock will look which way soever the wind blows. Jeroboam shall be sure of brutish subjects, while he sets up calvish deities. Simon had so bewitched the people, that they all took him for the great power of God, Acts viii. 19. A sorcerer shall not be without clients.

It is an unhappy degree of wickedness, to be the ring-leader of sin; every necessary is faulty enough, but the first author is abominable. Therefore is Jeroboam so often branded in those sacred leaves: therefore do all ages ring of his fact, with the accent of dishonour and indignation, "Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that made Israel to sin." It was a shame for Israel, that that made to sin by a Jeroboam; but O cursed name of Jeroboam, that drew Israel to sin! Jeroboam was a wicked king, and miserably accursed; they of his house that die in the city the dogs shall eat; they that die in the field the fowls of

the air shall eat, 1 Kings xiv. 11. Yet Nadab his son, and Baasha his successor, Zimri, and Omri, and Ahab, and Ahaziah, and Jehoram, they all walked in the way of Jeroboam, which made Israel to sin. So easy is it for a man's sin to live when himself is dead; and to lead that exemplary way to hell, which by the number of his followers shall continually aggravate his torments. The imitators of evil deserve punishment, the abettors more; but there is no hell deep enough for the leaders of public wickedness. He that invents a new way of serving Satan, hath purchased for himself a large patrimony of unquenchable fire. Shall not the pontificians answer for all that blood, which miscarried by their superstition? Suppose they think best to die with Christ, and nothing but Christ, in their mouths; shall they not answer for teaching others to live and die otherwise? How fearfully do the seducer and seduced greet one another in hell; where the one saith, Thou hast been the occasion of my sin; and the other, Thou art the occasion of my more grievous torment! What infinite tortures doth Mahomet endure; when every Turk that perisheth by his juggling, doth daily add to his unspeakable horrors! The devil himself by tempting and deceiving souls, doth advance his own damnation. Nor was it any charity, but mere fear of greater burden, that made the rich man in hell so respective of his brethren, Luke xvi. 28. Many a man sins only for himself, he shall be plagued for the sins of others.

3. The caution. Let eminent persons take heed of eminent sins; they do, with Samson, pull down those pillars of goodness, that shall not only crush themselves, but be the ruin of thousands. Their facts become examples, those examples laws; and it is natural to men to follow the law of fact, before the law of faith; a visible pattern, rather than a meritable doctrine. We were wont to say, Evil manners occasion good laws; but here it is true, corruption of manners is become the birth of laws; the leader's example is a law to the followers. Divers customs are no less than ridiculous and pestilent, that have had their birth from a great man's precedent. From this root hath grown all our strange disguises, transformations of apparel, painted faces, apish, brutish gestures. Usury had still lain like neglected ware in the devil's shop, if some great rabbin had not brought it forth. The excuse of such pernicious customers to the followers of them, is as Pilate said to Christ, Thine own nation hath delivered thee unto me; and sin will conclude against those authors, Therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.

Let this first warn us of the ministry, that we teach you that way, whereof you shall never repent the travel; which is only Christ, "the way, the truth, and the life," Jn xiv. 6. "Let him that heareth say, Come," Rev. xxii. 17. He that inwardly heareth the voice of sanctification, let him outwardly call men by the voice of exhortation. It was a law among the Jews, "If a man die, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother, Matt. xxii. 24. Christ being dead, risen, and gone up into heaven, we are bound to raise up seed to our elder Brother; begetting children to Jesus, Gal. iv. 19. No other way dare we teach, lest we perish. For *quid proderit non peccata sine peccato, qui puniendus est alieno?* saith Prosper; i. e. What comfort is it to escape with our own sins, if we must be punished for the sins of others?

For you; go not into the ways of sin, though you follow a Balaam. If we see a great offender led to execution, we are not so forward as to say, Let us die with him; yet while he goes on in pride, we follow

him in a hurry, Let us sin with him. If he travels with vanity, we are for him; if he sails to Rome, we venture ourselves in the same bottom with him; only when he comes to hell, we would then leave him. But if men will be followers in sin, they must not look to be separated in punishment. They that pursue the way which Balaam went, shall arrive at the place where Balaam is. The Lord turn our steps from such a following, that we may have a more comfortable ending.

"Following the way of Balaam." They that pro-pose examples, whether for imitation or detestation, have respect both to the way and the end. Let me present you with both these out of the sacred history. Here suppose, the scene lies in Moab, time is the stage, all that read or hear the story be (as it were) the spectators. Balak plays the king, Balaam the conjurer, princes the ambassadors, gold and honour are the properties; yea, you have an ass playing her part too; these be the actors: the Israelites are the mutes; let me stand for the chorus. The conclusion will be the ruin of the ungodly, the reward of the righteous. Let no man think me profane, in borrowing such a comparison; the fathers have called the whole world but a theatre. Our Saviour borrowed a comparison from pipers and dancers, as I from players: players shall get no more by my comparison, than pipers and dancers did by his. Christ chargeth the slothful servant for not putting his talent to usury; yet he that puts his money to usury by the warrant of that text, is like to be ruined at the day of reckoning, and shall wish that he had better understood his Master's meaning. The passages are divers, and useful to our observation.

1. The occasion. Moab and Midian saw their neighbours fall under the victorians sword of Israel, and expected with fear when their own turns should come to bleed. Could they have secured themselves, those bordering calamities had not moved them. Natural men are not sensible of others' woes, while safety fenceth in their own estates. They that drink wine in bowls, mind not the affliction of Joseph, Amos vi. 6. The burning of a neighbour's house would not startle them, but for the danger of their own. But peril is come to the doors of Moab, and they begin to be frightened; to overcome or repel this, Moab is not able alone, therefore requires the confederacy of Midian. Yea, both Moab and Midian find themselves too weak, without the assistance of Balaam. They put more confidence in his tongue than their own swords, and will not fight, but conjure. What needs the levying of forces, mustering of soldiers, emptying their treasures, endangering their persons, when all this trouble may be saved with one curse? They had only wit enough to fear, but knew not how to take the right course for safety. Otherwise they that saw the irresistible power of Israel, why did they not treat, and entreat, yea, buy the conditions of peace? They might easily think, Either the God of Israel is stronger than we, or he is weaker. If weaker, why are we afraid of him? If stronger, why do we not serve him? If he be greater, then down with Baal-peor; if not, then Baal-peor is sufficient without Balaam. But he that can make Israel victorious over others, is able to keep us safe from Israel: let us make him our friend, whom we cannot escape as an enemy. But wicked men are not more joind in prosperity, than in disasters they are amazed. As the voluptuous man, that hath taken such pleasure in his own house, when suddenly he finds it a-fire, knows not which way to turn him, but runs forth at the wrong door.

2. The invitation; "Come, curse me this people,"

Numb. xxii. 6. A devilish errand for the elders of Midian to carry. Sihon with his Amorites, Og the giant with his Bashanites, were destroyed; there is no hope of resistance left in man; therefore they will try what the magician can do. How desperate is that wickedness, when Satan must be implored to undertake what God refuseth! They are likely to have good counsel that fee the devil. What can Balaam do without him? What can he do for Balaam? Curse; alas, as if all the world were under the power of an enchanter's tongue; as if that little engine, fired at the furnace of hell, had a kind of omnipotency in it. But, doubtless, Satan doth more through our credulity than by his own efficacy; that beggarly spirit is more beholden to our imagination than to his own riches. "He whom thou cursest, is cursed." If Balaam were a famous prophet, yet Balak was a very credulous king; he believes that the sorcerer could do any thing beneath the moon. Commodities far-fetched and dear-bought are diet for ladies; and so this design proved, for the ladies of Midian must manage the plot of Balaam.

Superstitious dotards think nature itself under the spell of their charms; but they are deceived. For if either the curses of men, or the malice of devils, could take effect, how soon would all be hell! Could either power or policy prevail, the church of Christ should not stand. But there is a strength so far above Balaam, that neither the prophet nor the potentate shall avoid that curse on themselves which they wished to others. From their evil let us learn this good, to bear as fair a respect to the true prophets of God, as they had confidence in the false. Why should they expect more comfort from God's enemies, than we from his deputed servants? Why do we not more seek their blessings, and stand in fear of their curses; seeing they have the ratification of God in heaven to their sentences upon earth? John xx. 23. If Moab have so bold assurance of a Balaam, how choice should we be of a Moses! Balaam's tongue cannot hurt us, Moses' lips can bless us. It was not the hand of Israel, but the hand of Moses, that got the day; as one expresses it, It was not the hand which fought, but the hand which did not fight, that prevailed. Shall we give less credit to God's instruments, than they do to Satan's? How miserable is the darkness of some souls in this glorious day-light! To the chamber of a fortune-teller, a juggling mountebank, or some suspected conjurer, flock many clients; not only of the vulgar, but even of those that come in coaches, and the gayest comparisons. The door of the devoutest preacher is empty enough; few visitants trouble him, either for direction of their lives, or comfort of their consciences. Alas, for such children of perdition; that they should take the forbidden way of hell, and neglect the gracious invitations of God!

"Curse me this people." Why did they not rather desire Balaam to bless themselves than to curse Israel? that had been the easier task of the two, and more likely to prevail. Defensive war is surer than invasive; we may better fortify ourselves at home, than offend our enemies abroad. Israel did not tremble then, why would they trouble Israel? who would wake a sleeping lion, that had not first fettered his claws? Moab might have rested in peace, and Israel in peace; why then should Moab curse Israel? It is a most malicious pride, that cares not to fare well itself, unless it go ill with others; as Moab did not care for safety, unless they might have victory. Yet it is worth a good man's thanks, to have his own blood spared, though the same favour be allowed to others. Is my own prosperity nothing, because my neighbours also prosper about

me? Let such a conceit be harboured in the breasts of pagans, or those antichristian Christians, that content not themselves to extend their bloody dominion to the Indies, unless they may also ruin their adjacent countries; whose envy is not satisfied with escaping us, if we escape them. They eat their own hearts in anger, that they cannot eat ours in revenge. We pray for the opening of their eyes, and they pray for the pulling out of ours. We desire the turning of their hearts, and they wish the cutting of our throats. There is a great dearth of reason and charity in that man, who would be happy alone. Society is no small part of the very joys of heaven. They desire the blessedness of others, that are of the communion of saints.

3. The prohibition. Balaam had a mind to go; God hath no mind to suffer him. The elders of Moab have not sooner delivered their message, than the fingers of that leaden prophet tingle for the golden wages; yet he appears not rash and peremptory, but pretends serious advice and deliberation. That night he will give them hospitable entertainment, the next morning shall give them their answer. Lodging and good cheer they shall have, but their host means to make them pay for it in the reckoning. Yea, they deserved to be welcome, for they brought the reward of divination. An answer he promiseth them, but such a one as God shall give him. Now the Lord prevents his inquiry, by inquiring first of Balaam, "What men are these with thee?" Numb. xxii. 9. Did not God know them? Yes, they that could not move but in him, could be no strangers to him. He knew them well enough, but he would have Balaam know them better. Before his question was, "Where art thou?" God had found Adam, but he would have Adam find himself. When we lay open our wants, and confess our sins, we tell him no news; alas, he knows all better than our own hearts. Yet he chooseth to deal with us from our own mouths. When we harbour foul lusts, he seems to ask us, What thoughts are these? Is it fit for you to give lodging or house-room to such messengers as Moab, of hell? Are these guests fit for the men of God to entertain?

Balaam hath admitted them, and now waits what God will do for him, what he will suffer him to do for them. He receives a plain oracle of inhibition; "Thou shalt not curse the people, for they are blessed," ver. 12. Balak had a confident opinion of Balaam's power. Either he thought him a notable conjurer, that could do much with the devil; or a true prophet, that had interest in God. Balaam shall not be suffered to gratify him either ways. Let him be a sorcerer, he shall not give Moab the least encouragement in the conceit of this help. Let him be a prophet, God will not have his name scandalized, no not in the opinion of those pagans. Why should his name be usurped to curse, where his will hath intended to bless? "Thou shalt not go."

Yet what if Balaam had been granted the liberty of his feet and tongue? say, he had gone, and cursed: how forceless had all his maledictions been! Could not the breath of God have dispersed them all into air, or beat them back on the curser's own head? "The curse causeless shall not come," Prov. xxvi. 2: or, at least, it shall not come where the curser meant it. He gives just cause to make himself accursed, that without just cause curseth another. How often hath the Balaam of Rome cursed the church of England! How often hath he roared out the direst execrations against us! How often have those Sauls, with letters of commission from the high priest of that synagogue, like pirates with letters of mart from the Great Turk, breathed out threatenings and

slaughter; using the ordinances of their church like the ordinance of a man of war, spitting fire and thunder against the bark of Christ! What have they done, but sunk themselves in the skirmish? Let them look back upon their invincible navy, their inevitable powder-plot; and confess with blushing cheeks, to the glory of God, that they would have more than cursed Israel, but they could not. How many bulls of theirs have bellowed out execrations against us, endeavouring to gore us, and let out our very bowels! yet God hath sent those curst beasts short horns; blessed be his name, they did us no harm. How many blustering tempests have those enraged sorcerers raised against our prince and country! yet all this wind hath shaken no corn. Were we the worse? Nay, I rather think we had not sved so well, had not these Balaamitish curses been spent upon us. For them; I read of certain Africans, who being troubled with the north wind, driving heaps of sand upon their fields, mustered an army of soldiers to fight against it; but with so ill success, that themselves were buried under those sandy monuments. They that arm themselves against the church, shall fall by their own weapons. Malice shall do the nature of malice; drink up the marrow and moisture of them that foster it, and bring their curses upon their own souls; as Nadab and Abihu were consumed by as strange a fire as they had in their censers. As we may say of that blind man whom Christ cured, and the Jews excommunicated, that he was never fully in till he was cast out, John ix. 34: so if antichrist had not cursed us, we had not been so thoroughly blessed. Though they curse, O Lord, yet bless thou; and so thou hast done with a merciful advantage.

The Israelites sat still in their tents; they little knew what mischief was brewing against them. The goodly plains of Moab gave such refreshing to their minds and bodies, that they securely embraced this dear-purchased rest. They neither felt nor saw any opposition; yet even then the most dangerous plot was hammering against them. Our adversaries never mean us more hurt, than when they cry Truce. Villanous policy then multiplies her pledges, when she purposeth to destroy us. What trust should be given to them, even when they swear, whose religion allows them to break all oaths for advantage? Only that God, who (without making Israel of his counsel) crossed the design of the Moabites, still sees, and (we hope) will prevent all the stratagems of our enemies; or else, like another Parisian Vigils, we should feel their swords before we heard their alarms. But the providence of our Maker restrains many evils, which we never dreamed to be near us. He that keeps Israel, slumbers not; he is both a sure and secret Friend. Why are not our sanctuaries turned into shambles, and our beds made to swim with our bloods, long before this, but that the God of Israel had crossed the conspiracy of Balaam? It is no thanks to wicked men, that their wickedness doth not prosper. The world would soon be overrun with evils, if men might be so ill as they would.

4. We have their answer and dismission. The reward was so sweet a taste of a rich banquet, that the teeth of Balaam began to water. Yet he pretends that God must inform him, before he can tell what to say. He waits on the Lord, they wait on him. Yet he falters in the repetition of God's answer, He refuseth to let me go, Numb. xxii. 13. Had he spoke the downright truth, it may be they had solicited him no further. But he higgles, and dodges, and conceals half of it, which was little less faulty than the denying of all. From this niggardly relation of God's message St. Paul most accurately clears

himself, Acts xx. 20, 27; to the condemnation of those lisping and curtailed doctrines of Rome, that show no more truth than that which concerns their own profit: like a subtle artist, that teacheth his scholars only the rind, concealing the sap; that so at once he may keep them the longer and himself the better.

Here was Balaam's hypocrisy; to hold in with God, he refuseth to go with Moab; to hold in with Moab, he lays the blame upon God. So did he deny, as one that wished to be sent for again. How often do we look on the temptation with one eye, with the other on the penalty! fain we would, but we dare not. So the unhappy child would be fingering the knife, but looks on his father, and fears the lash. And instead of being angry with ourselves and our loose desires, we grumble at the good law of our Maker; as if he had done us an unkindness, in that he will not suffer us to perish. Yea, rather than abridge our own pleasures, we will hazard the displeasure of God; we will do what he forbids, and yet hope to escape what he threatens. But let us know that while we bluster against his precepts, we do but raise a tempest against our own souls. It will never be right, till we can heartily say, Lord, thy will be done, though ours be crossed.

5. The elders of Moab are returned with Balaam's refusal; and now the impotent king frets and rageth with a furious passion, that so potent a monarch, the lord of so fair territories, of such viceeroys and underlying princes, should be denied. Graceless sovereignty scorns a repulse, in the most unreasonable demand. Chafe he may, and vex himself; but still the sorcerer is tied at home, Israel lies safe in the plain, no revenge is found out for Moab and Midian. Oh what a scene was here! a malicious king rejected, a covetous prophet hampered, an innocent people secured, and in all a blessed God honoured! Still there is no hope but in the conjurer; again he sends to Balaam. It may be the former were not worthy to wait on so famous a sorcerer, therefore he sends more noble ambassadors, Numb. xxii. 15. No messenger is honourable enough to wait at the door of a mountebank; every lackey is good enough to fetch the preacher. Like the first Indians, that hung bugles at their ears, while they left their gold on the dunghills.

Balak is not discouraged with one denial: oh that we could be so importunate for our good, and double our knocks at the gate of heaven, as he did at the gates of hell! Denials do but whet the desires of vehement suitors. The reprehensive blast brings out the fire with more violence. Much time and wit is spent in compassing that, which after a short fruition wears the obtainer. So do worldly objects enchant us, that the more they fly us, the more impatiently we pursue them. But when it comes to spiritual things, which we cannot want and be blessed, we beg them as gluttons do their daily bread, whereof they are full even to surfeit. Balak was denied, and became more eager: God doth not deny us, but delay us; and we give over at the first repulse, yea, even before we have an answer; spare to speak, and despair to speed. It is true that God gives us more than we desire, but without our desiring he makes no promise to give. If many had all they desired, it would be very little; if some good ones had no more than they desired, it would not be very much; but if the best had no more than they deserved, it would be nothing at all. There is an impost set upon the favours of men: Balaam will not gratify the king of Moab without a reward. God gives liberally, and upbraids not, Jam. i. 5. The trees bow down their heads, as if they would ask moisture of the rivers; the

thankful flowers open their dumb mouths to the sun; the eagles and young lions seek their prey at God; and he feeds not the young ravens, till, in their language, they call upon him. And shall man be silent at the bountiful gate of his Maker, when it is no more but ask and have? If we have not all that we ask, yet we must ask all that we would have. Why do we hold our peace, that have such a command to pray, and such a promise to speed in Jesus Christ?

6. Next cometh to our observation, the sorcerer's lure, the prostration of wealth and honour at his feet. I will promote thee; let nothing hinder thee, Numb. xxii. 16, 17. O fools, is there nothing to hinder a man in his way to promotion? Doth not the swiftest eagle stoop a hundred times to her prey, and rise without it? "The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong," Eccl. ix. 11. He that sits in heaven, and disposeth all things in the world, can disappoint the huge host of Midian by a dream, Judg. vii. 13, of the Syrians by a noise, 2 Kings vii. 6. What needs he employ angels or thunders, or awake the winds and tempests, when he can make a man hinder himself? Or suppose they spake like a king's orators, not so much questioning the possibility of impediments, as persuading an inclination to consent; they show their tempting bait, presuming that if they could once fasten this hook in his nostrils, then nothing should hinder them from drawing him all the world over. Once mentioning promotion, they hoped to have struck it dead. This vanity had transported themselves; and they knew no man living that could hold out against those assaults, wherewith their own hearts had been so easily conquered. Who would be poor, that might be rich on such terms? who would toil in common drudgeries, that might for one curse be set among princes? what is a poor word to their pains, that have broke many sleeps, flattered many fools, swallowed many sins, spent their time and means to get one favour, honour, or grace from him that sits on the throne? and yet, after all this, might say of their courtship, as that captain did of his burgesship, With a great sum we have obtained it, Acts xxii. 28. Balaam's honour comes at an easier rate; Do but curse Israel, and be a statesman of Moab.

This was their persuasion, that all the world would be glad to run a madding after their bait, or adoring their idol. They that are all flesh and blood, think it impossible to despise wealth and dignity; and because innumerable souls are thus inveigled, they cannot believe that any would escape. The swine thinks no garden so pleasant as the dunghill wherein he wallows. But they are deceived; that which seems a heaven to one mind, to another is little better than a hell. Two men see a mass together; one is transported with admiration and delight, the other looks on it with indignation and scorn; one thinks it heavenly, the other knows it blasphemy. Let covetous hearts confess, there be those that can despise the world and say, Thy gold and silver perish with thee; that had rather be masters of themselves, than of the Indies; that tread under feet with disdain the best proffers of this world, in comparison of a good conscience. Fetch them from beneath the burden of their sins, and let them feel the ease of an assured forgiveness; and then tempt them to their former condition with the gain of the whole world, and they will scorn it. What are riches in themselves, but the mere baggage to goodness? The baggage of an army cannot well be spared, yet doth it hinder the march, yea, and not seldom the care of that loseth the victory. So poor is the value of riches, when they come upon the best terms; but if they be gotten like Balaam's, with a curse, a curse shall light on

them. That God who allows men to be rich, doth not allow them all means to be so. They that are gotten up to the top, let them look down again to the stairs by which they ascended: if those were crooked and rotten, their wealth at the height shall be but a burden to break their own necks. There is a golden prize set up for all runners; but they must keep the right road, of honesty, charity, equity, truth: if, with Balaam, they leave this regular path, and will be crossing over through by-ways, with a shorter cut of their own, they may be rich with a vengeance.

7. The sorcerer returns his answers to this golden and honourable invitation. "If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord," Numb. xxii. 18. What saint could speak better? who would not think this man mortified to the world? He talks of a round quantity; no bags, nor chests, but a whole house full, and that house no less than a king's: now the more he mentioned, the less corrupt he appeared. He was not yet of the mind of our ignorant votaries, that place holiness in want, and think to merit by having nothing. They would make good the old rule in a wrong sense, it is better to give than to receive; they give away to some convent all they have at once, for but a licence to beg for ever. Crosses they call holy, yet abandon money; as if the very crosses could not sanctify the coin, and keep it from sin. But for all their ridiculous paradox of money-lusting, a wise man would be loth to trust them with a house full of gold and silver. But did Balaam in very deed mean as he said? Dissimulation is able to deceive thousands. Good words, conjurer, no such matter in earnest. Such godliness might come no further than his lips, and there the covetousness of his heart stopped it out. Balak by this refusal may think the worse of his gold, Balaam doth not. A house full may not buy his tongue, a far less sum hath won his heart. A house full, sorcerer! alas, a closet full, a coffer full, yea, rather than fail, a purse full shall do it. Avarice will play at small game, ere it quite sit out. If Balaam were not covetous, why did he say nay with a desire to take it? why did he solicit God for that which was so peremptorily denied him? why did he hope that his Maker's mind would change, but that he longed for the reward? why did he delay his messengers, and feed them with hope of success, that had fed him with hope of recompence, but that his heart was formerly bribed?

Once forbidding is enough for an obedient child. When we petition God for some useful things, all the while he holds us in suspense, and says nothing to us, we may redouble our prayers. But when he resolutely denies us, and signifies plainly that we ask not according to his liking, therefore he will not give us according to our asking, it is time to hold our peace. Thrice did Paul repeat his suit, 2 Cor. xii. 8; all this while God gave him no direct answer; but when he heard, "My grace is sufficient for thee," he gave over in that particular. We grow surey with God when we solicit him for that which he hath said he will not grant us. Let our requests be lawful, and then the more earnest the better welcome: such holy violence shall make the kingdom of heaven yield to our conquest. But when we beg prohibited favours we are troublesome. Should the malicious pray for a place of authority, to carve his own revenge? or shall another beg riches to accommodate his pride, that he may overtop his neighbours? It is wretched presumption to ask that allowance, which God's word hath expressly forbidden. Shall Balaam beg leave to curse? shall he repeat that postulation? was not one answer sufficient?

No honest heart will endure to be forbidden twice. But oh the powerful enchantment of money! this can charm the very charmer, and command him that thinks he can command hell. When we are resolved to sin for profit, we do even then turn our backs upon heaven. Nor is it now enough, in cold blood, while we are reading this, to disclaim this unrighteous mammon: (and yet there be some stony hearts, that let God preach till doomsday, life and the world shall part from them both together; that think all this as needless as a shower of rain in harvest;) but when the temptation comes, and the king of Moab or hell offers the golden bait, then to resist, then to contemn his offers, this is the noble trial of Christians.

8. Balaam longs, prays, and obtains, Numb. xxii. 20; permitted he is to go, but this permission was worse than a denial. This is not the first thing that God hath granted in anger. He gave murmuring Israel dainty meat, quails; but they had little joy of it, when that they put in at their mouths came loathsomely out at their nostrils. They had better have had no meat, than such sauce. I gave them a king in my wrath, Hos. xiii. 11; they had better have been without him. It is one thing to like, another to permit: God suffers a thousand evils in the world, he never took pleasure in any. Moses tolerated those legal divorcees, he never approved them. God liked not Balaam's journey, yet in his judgment he gives way to it; as if he had said, Well, since thou art so hot upon gold, set on thy journey, be gone. So he bids him go, as Solomon bids the young man rejoice, Eccl. xi. 9; whereupon would follow a sorry reckoning. This Balaam could not deny; for when God crossed him in his journey, he did not say, Thou commandedst me; which (had not his conscience known the contrary) had been a ready answer. The Lord rather deny us our requests in love, than grant them in anger.

Be we content with what God sends us; and let neither purses full nor houses full of gold hire us to transgress his laws. If we keep the bounds of obedience, he will both give us the bread of sufficiency on earth, and a whole city of gold in the kingdom of heaven.

We are got through the better half of Balaam's way; there is but one mile further, of eight short furlongs, and we have overcome it.

1. Such was his forwardness, that no sooner did God answer his importunity with a Go, but he takes the first hint, and longs to be gone. He was busy with God before; but now he hath his *Vade*, (Go,) not a word more, there is no need to bid him hasten. He gets up betimes in the morning, Numb. xxii. 21: the night seemed tedious to him, and he taxeth it of lazy minutes; but the morning is welcome. Covetousness needs neither clock nor bell to waken it; its own desires will not allow it to take rest. Want does not break so many sleeps for provision the next day, as abundance doth for increase. Where shall we find men thus eager after spiritual wealth, which alone can make them happy? We seek for that, as the Israelites did for Canaan, when they made forty years' travel of a forty days' journey: so softly do we pursue the blessings of our eternal peace, that if we can reach home by that time we come to threescore, we think it time enough. But in the pursuit of profit and pleasure, we drive Jehu's pace, as if we were mad. Under religion men travel a pack-horse motion, as if they were weary of their burden; but run after vanity, like horses with an empty coach. We would be strong at twenty, rich at thirty, we would be wise at forty, but to be holy we can tarry till fifty. When our own business wakens us, what common day in the week finds us tardy? But

on the sabbath, when God's special service calls us up, we take our ease, and make bold to lie in bed. Nature and our vain misconception of God hath taught us, that if any work be left undone, it shall be his.

2. Balaam is up and onwards his way, and now flatters himself with assured success. His corrupt heart prompts him; Why should God let me go, but that he means to let me do the thing I go about? God had first charged him neither to curse nor to go; now he hopes, he that had given him licence to go, would also give him leave to curse. He that relented in the one, why may he not as well relent in the other? He saw how this curse might bless himself; and therefore chooseth rather to undo so many millions of souls, than to prejudice his own fortune in so gallant a promotion. How Satanic is that mind, which would make way to his own particular benefit, with the ruin of so many thousands! that would set a whole city on fire, and it were but for light to tell his money! How should they escape the plague of Balaam, that have more than cursed, even depopulated, whole towns, to build up their own smokeless chimneys? Would God such men had only cursed the people, and not given the people so just cause to curse them. They cannot escape woes, while there is an orphan left to cry, or a widow to weep.

But now, confident sorcerer, is there no stop to be feared in the way? Yes, "God's anger was kindled because he went," Numb. xxii. 22. First God said, Neither go, nor curse; next he says, Go, but curse not; and now he is angry that he did go at all. Why did God suffer him to do what he prohibited, if he be angry with him for doing that which he suffered? The Lord saw his covetous desires grow hotter, his wicked hopes stronger, and his heart worse with this last allowance; therefore it was high time to cross his wicked intentions. Men know us only by our external motions, God judgeth us according to our inward dispositions. The life of all our works lies in our heart: if the fountain stink, no matter how clear the channel looks. The difference of all actions in God's sight, is fetched from the will. He laide Moses smite the rock; he smote it twice, and is blamed for doing it so often. Elisha bids the king of Israel smite the earth; he doth it thrice, and is blamed for not doing it oftener: all the difference of the fault was in the different heart. Moses numbers the people, and is praised; David numbers them, and is punished. Not that one man may better play the thief than another look on; as if God were indulgent to any sin; but he finds in some men's inwards that malice, whereof another is less guilty. Corn that grows on a house-side, often shoots up higher, and looks fairer, than that of the tilled field; yet this we gather, that we neglect, because we know the root is naught. Though our persons shall be judged according to our works, yet our works shall be judged according to our hearts.

3. An angel is despatched to resist Balaam: this is one of the noble employments of those glorious spirits, to give a strong and invisible opposition to wicked enterprises. Many a treacherous act have they hindered, without the knowledge of the traitor. Among the divers conspiracies against Queen Elizabeth, some, by the adversaries' own confession, were prevented by miracle; they knew not how. It pleased their malice to give out that they were crossed by the devil; but we acknowledge with thanksgiving, it was the hand of God; and say, with Daniel, Our God hath sent his angel, and delivered us from those merciless lions, Dan. vi. 22. How often hath the murderer prepared his weapon, the thief plotted

his robbery, the enemy set his ambush, and been disappointed above their imagination! Sure there was a secret resistance, God sent his angel to cross the designs of Balaam. It is our honour, that God hath set us on work for this purpose; therefore also are preachers called angels. As God hath made his angels ministers, so he hath made his ministers angels: the whole scope of our labour is to stop sinners in their way of disobedience. To stay the course of evil, whether ministers do it by the word, or magistrates by the sword, is in both their hands angelical service. Yea, and to prosper this work, both the tribunals of the one, and pulpits of the other, are protected by angels, or they could not stand.

But now in what case are the wicked, that have God's angels for their opposites! How deplorable and desperate is their estate! God they have made their enemy, angels they cannot call their friends, devils labour to destroy them, the world cannot save them; whither, oh whither should they run for refuge? Balaam goes away from God, (for he leaves him that does not ask leave of him.) Satan provokes him, a good angel resists him, what shall become of him? How should those heavenly spirits bear that man in their arms, like nurses, upon earth living; or bear up his soul to heaven, like winged porters, when he dies; that refusethe the right way? They shall keep us in our ways, Psal. xci. 11. Out of the way it is their charge to oppose us, as to preserve us in the way. Nor is this more a terror to the ungodly, than to the righteous a comfort. For if an angel would keep even a Balaam from sinning, how much more careful are all those glorious powers to prevent the miscarriages of God's children! From how many falls and bruises have they saved us! In how many inclinations to evil have they turned us, either by removing occasions, or by casting in secretly good motions! We sin too often, and should catch many more falls, if those holy guardians did not uphold us. Satan is ready to divert us, when we endeavour to do well; when to do ill, angels are as ready to prevent us. We are in Joshua the high priest's case; with Satan on the one hand, on the other an angel, Zech. iii. 1: without this, our danger were greater than our defence, and we could neither stand nor rise.

4. The angel stops Balaam, not strikes him. Why doth not God confound him, as well as withstand him? Why did he withstand him, yet so as to let him pass? God is pleased to warn the very wicked, before he destroy them; they shall see his dislike, ere they feel his wrath; that so at once he may be glorified, and the mouth of all wickedness stopped. If all God's warnings were laid to heart, how few should perish! So he spares Balaam, because he had more to do with him: that tongue shall get him honour in Moab, which meant there to dishonour him. God sees it more for his glory to fetch good out of evil, than to suffer no evil at all. Pharaoh shall be soundly knocked, before he be slain. Why? "I will get me honour upon Pharaoh," saith the Lord, Exod. xiv. 17. He could soon rid the world of bad members, but then he should lose the praise of working good by evil instruments. The bad man's sin is the good man's sorrow: he must grieve for it, he may not repine at it. The wicked do not sin behind God's back, he sees it, and suffers it; and though for a time he hold his peace, he will call them to a strict account for it, Psal. i. 21. It is no good sign for a man to prosper in his ungracious courses: God owes him a payment; and it shall be the greater, when he comes to reckon with him for all his faults together. Do you mark none worldly and wealthy, that are rich in goods, and penurious in good

deeds? That man doth not more treasure up gold than wrath; and while he grudgeth his superfluity to the poor, he grudgeth mercy to his own soul.

5. After all oppositions, the conjurer is arrived in Moab. He had seen an angel against him, heard a beast speak under him; and if the former were familiar, yet this last was strange and uncouth; yet he is not afraid to ride on that ass, whose voice was still in his ears. News goes post to the court; the long-expected guest is come. Now as if he had been some great monarch, the king sets out to meet him: he that to fetch him sent princes, goes himself in person to welcome him. They both look for promotion, either from the other; and he that said, "Am I not able to promote thee?" insinuates a confession withal, Thou art able to promote me. Two would be raised, and both with the downfall of a third. Now the bargain is sure on both sides; the very sight of the physician hath half cured the disease.

But who can wonder enough at this, that a king thus graceth a prophet? Such respect have even pagans borne to those that were but reputed prophets; their purses, their palaces, were not held too dear for them. How should this cast a blush upon the cheeks of Christians! Those showed false gods, we teach the true; they brought poison, we bring the food of life; they flattered men to destruction, ours is the tidings of salvation: yet they were honoured, we are despised; we are defrauded, they are rewarded. So that if Barbary wring her hands for mistaking, Christendom shall rend her heart for abusing, the messengers of God. Our names come into few mouths, out of which they return but with reproaches. Among the rest of our sins, O God, be merciful to the contempt of thy servants.

6. The superstitious king hugs Balaam, and his hopes in Balaam; and confident of the success, he feasts his gods, his princes, his prophet, and spares for no cost. Next morning they all visit the high places of Baal, altars are erected, sacrifices prepared, the number designed; seven altars, seven oxen, seven rams. What a glorious business was here! Why seven? Would not one have served the turn? The true God is but one, and he required but one altar at once: did he now stand upon numbers? There is nothing more magnificent than false devotion. Idolaters in all ages have made more pompous shows than the true worshippers. Religion seldom hath so fair a flourish as superstition. The harlot affects gaudy dressings, the sober matron does not. Truth had rather go naked, than wear the caparisons of hypocrisy. We paint old rotten houses; sound and substantial buildings honour themselves with their own bare worth. What a world of plausible devices hath the church of Rome invented to hold up her credit in the world! To say nothing of their proud vaunts of antiquity, universality, succession, name of forefathers, which amaze and besot an ignorant heart; the glorious shows of their processions, the gaudy ornaments of their altars, the rich robes of their images, the pomp and magnificence of their places, the triumphs of their great festivals; these transport simple and shallow spectators. Nature is led by sense: children and fools cannot well be of any other religion. Alas, they see not the inside; the doctrine that maintains idolatry, justifies treason, commands lying, refuseth murder, disgraceth the word of God, dishonours the Mediatorship of Christ. It is but the face they behold, not the heart; yea, it is the paint, not the face. I have heard of a traveller, that could get no lodging in his inn, unless he were bed-fellow to a stranger, that seemed a goodly person. They slept together all night. This pas-

senger waking first in the morning, draws the curtain, and seeing a deformed, stigmatical, and misshapen creature in the bed, cries out that he had lodged with the devil. Yet when this ugly heteroclite had put on an artificial nose, a glass eye, covered his bald head with borrowed hairs, and clapped a rich suit on his back to hide his other deformities, he appeared a brave, proper man again. If you should see the church of Rome naked, without her disguise, you would loathe her; but stay till she put on her dressing, her artificial head the pope, her artificial hands the Jesuits, her garish apparel of pomp and ceremonies, she will tempt you to love her. If a pagan should ask a papist, What god do you worship? and he should truly answer, A god that delights in blood, that rewards treason, that commands dissembling, how horrible would his religion appear! But clothe all these with arguments, and neat distinctions, and pompous ostentation; and then how many unblest understandings are bewitched with it! Error had need be gorgeously set out, or else truth would soon mar her market.

7. Balaam's altars are smoking, the king expecting, the prophet desiring; but all will not do: God will not give him leave to curse Israel. Again they renew the sacrifice, and change the station; like an unlucky gamester, that looks for better success in another place. Yet if Balaam be constant in solieiting, God will be more constant in denying. How shameless was that forehead, which durst importune God after so many denials! Yet still the love of earth over-masters the fear of heaven; and as if the infinite Deity were not every where, he chooseth a new place for sacrifice, and dares rather hope a change than change his hope. In the midst of all this distraction, his tongue blesteth against his heart, and his heart curseth against his tongue.

Balak hearing this unlooked-for news, first expostulates, "I took thee to curse mine enemies, and behold, thou hast blessed them altogether," Numb. xxiii. 11. Next he entreats, "Neither curse them at all, nor bless them at all," ver. 25. Lastly, he chides, "I thought to promote thee, but the Lord hath kept thee back from honour," Numb. xxiv. 11: as if he would make him curse God, for not suffering him to curse Israel. Doth God hinder Balaam's promotion? No, he hinders Balaam's destruction: in that he will not let him be so bad as he would. Many a man goes to hell for getting what he should not; Balaam must thither for desiring to get what he could not. Unjust gains may be honey in the mouth, but they are gravel in the throat, poison in the soul. It is to be feared, that many tradesmen have not a little to answer for about this reckoning. Let them search their chests, search their hearts; and if they find any of this adulterate gold among their heaps, away with it: as they love their souls, away with it. For else they have locked a thief in their coffers, which will carry away all, and at the last themselves with it, Prov. xxi. 7.

8. The king may fret, but the prophet goes on; and instead of cursing Israel, he curseth Moab, "A sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth," Numb. xxiv. 17. As if he did protest, I may curse, but I dare not; I would curse, but I cannot. The king is angry with his sorcerer, the sorcerer is angry with God: Balaam hath his dismissal, yea, command to be gone. Yet rather than lose all his hopes, he will now speak worse than curses. He falls in with the council of Moab, and adviseth them a way how to make God curse them himself. It is not for lack of desire that I do not curse Israel; thou dost not more wish their ruin, than I wish thy recompence. Now so long as they

keep in with God, "there is no enchantment against Jacob, nor divination against Israel," Numb. xxiii. 23. Get them but once into rebellion, and they shall curse themselves. There is no withdrawing God from them, but by withdrawing them from God: procure them to sin, they shall fall alone. They will admit no sin sooner than wantonness; this will be wrought upon them by fair faces: adultery will draw on idolatry, and both fetch down God's anger upon them. Beauty shall tempt them to gaze, their sight shall draw them to lust, their lust to folly, folly to superstition, and so God shall curse them for three unasked. Here was policy derived from the conclave of hell. As it has been said, *Ubi bene, nemo melius; ubi male, nemo pejus*; i. e. Where Balaam spake well, never any prophet spake more divinely; where ill, never any devil spake more desperately. This project took too well: ill counsel prospers faster than good. Kindly seed falls often out of the way, and roots not; but the tares never light amiss. They look, and lust, and sin, and perish. The Balaam of Rome, the Balak of hell, sit in council against us; but if we do not yield to sin, they shall never hurt us.

"Who loved the wages of unrighteousness." Where we have three things propounded to our instruction. First, what this wages is, riches. Secondly, how they become the wages of unrighteousness. Thirdly, the baseness of the covetous heart, that sets his affection on this wages, that loves such riches.

1. There have been some busy humours and stirring wits in the world, that with bitter declamations have inveighed against riches: like foxes, dispraising the grapes which they could not reach: and because they might not be rich themselves, would needs persuade the rest to be poor with them for company. Eustathius, Pelagius, the illuminate elders of Munster, some ignorant votaries of Rome, have taught and practised these absurdities; fit for none but rebels and bankrupts, or (if you will) idle and unuseful beggars. But the crown of the wise is their wealth, and the blessing of God maketh rich. "The rich and the poor meet together; the Lord is the maker of them all," Prov. xxii. 2. I should not fear, if the best of those mendicants should preach you a sermon against riches, that you would presently be out of love with them: I rather fear, you would be greedy of this unrighteous mammon, whosoever condemns it. Therefore for your satisfaction, you may be rich and happy, if you will be rich and godly. It is the bad affection, not the lawful possession, of riches, that we blame. The substance is good, if there be not sin in the conscience. Eccles. xiii. 24. God doth not charge us to renounce riches, but to avoid the dangers incident to them. When they come in God's name, in God's name let them be accepted; otherwise the saints would none of them. Abram refused the king of Sodom's liberal offer, lest he should say, "I have made Abram rich," Gen. xiv. 23. God had promised to be his great reward: the King of heaven shall make him rich, the king of Sodom shall not. "Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter," Heb. xi. 24: not that he thought it unlawful; for when God called him to honour, he behaved himself as a worthy prince. Daniel refusing the king's portion for pulse, yet thought it no sin to fare well; therefore being advanced to honour, he kept a table befitting his estate.

But those that are God's sworn pensioners, will not live at men's finding. What he gives bountifully, they take thankfully. As Achsah, when her father had given her a portion desired also a blessing; so where God gives a portion, there is always a blessing with it. Otherwise, as at a funeral dinner there are

many guests, and great cheer, but no mirth, because he is dead that should make it; so in a full estate there is variety and abundance, but no joy of conscience, because that is wanting which should give it, the love of God in Christ.

All things are not to be blended in a community. The Christian hath a double right to the things of this life. First, a spiritual right. Man came naked out of the earth, yet was he then so rich as to be lord of all. Heaven was his roof, earth his floor, the sea his pond, the sun and moon his torches, all creatures his vassals. This though God's earthly son lost to his posterity, yet his heavenly Son recovered for his chosen: in whom all things are ours, and we are his, and he is God's, 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23. Secondly, a civil or human right: for it is false to say, there is no tenure but grace, no title but charity. By the rule of grace, the civil owner may be a spiritual usurper, and the spiritual owner may be a civil beggar. But there is another law, *jus gentium*, or the law of nations, whereby God divides to every man his own propriety; otherwise that were a superfluous commandment, "Thou shalt not steal;" for no man can steal his own. In a word, Paul chargeth Timothy to charge the rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, &c. 1 Tim. vi. 17. He says not, Charge men that they be not rich, but charge the rich that they be not proud. Your riches shall do you good, when you do good with your riches. But many a man may say of his wealth, as it was epitaphed on that pope, He got it like a fox, held it like a lion, and left it like a dog: as the boat drowns the passenger, yet afterward comes itself safe to the shore. Riches too often do worldlings the kindness to help them unto hell, and that when they are,

2. The wages of unrighteousness. The gain that comes in by unwarrantable means, defineth this wages. God hath set certain bounds and limits, beyond which if men step to get wealth, they may get it with a vengeance. Every man hath his orb or compass, justice, integrity, innocence: if he can be rich within that allowed sphere, much good do it him. Balaam would have built himself a fortune upon the ruins of Israel, and got wealth by a curse: the curse indeed he got, but the wealth he missed. So it becomes the wages of unrighteousness. Not to mention those two trusty servants of mammon, use and brokerage, which have been so anciently, so universally condemned: there be some trades that live altogether by this wages, and so reconcile at once *hucrum in arca* and *dammum in conscientia*; i. e. gain in the chest and loss in the conscience. They have two evasions: First, every thing is worth what it may be sold for. But as a rigorous price is the breach of charity, so an excessive price is the violation of justice. It is no matter how they honest it with fair profit, when God shall judge it foul theft; or how they esteem that lawful gains, which they shall find unrighteous wages. Secondly, let it be at the buyer's peril: though the measure be defective, the matter vicious, all insufficient; yet still let the buyer look to it. No man can wrong himself, none are bound to buy. But do they not both conceal the faults in their knowledge, and protest the goodness against their knowledge. Is not deficiency of worth their chief apprentice, and excess of price their best factor? Whatsoever comes by force or by fraud, falls under this term, the wages of unrighteousness, and will fall heavy upon the gainers. It is an unhappy profit that ariseth from another's loss: he that cares not who doth lose so he may gain, shall be sure that whosoever gains heaven he shall lose it. The oppressor will hedge in his poor neighbour's estate, though it be to his utter undoing; as the

thief cuts off the traveller's finger, and it be but to have his ring. Let me have thy vineyard, saith Ahab, and I will give thee a better for it, or the price of it in money, 1 Kings xxi. 2. One would think here was square dealing; no extorting it by force, but requiring it by a fair composition, either the value in money or in exchange. Yet was there iniquity under this pretence: for God had forbidden the Israelites to alienate their inheritances; this Ahab knew; and therefore what Naboth might not lawfully do, he might not lawfully require. A fast is warned, the city assembled, Naboth convented, confronted, accused, sentenced, stoned; and now his vineyard is escheated to the crown. The false witnesses have their wages out of Jezebel's purse, the judges have their wages out of Ahab's favour, Ahab and Jezebel have their wages out of Naboth's vineyard; but Naboth speeds the best, for he changeth a vineyard on earth for a glorious inheritance in heaven. Here was the difference: Ahab shall lose a kingdom for a vineyard, Naboth shall lose a vineyard for a kingdom. Thus Gehazi runs after Naaman for this unrighteous wages: his master was careful to win honour to God, and credit to his profession, by denying those Syrian presents; the man will mar all in requiring, in receiving them. He will enrich himself by belying his master, and disparage that holy function in the eyes of a new convert; and all for a little of this cursed trash. Yea, Judas will betray his Master, his Saviour, himself, for this unrighteous wages. Oh how execrable is that gain which doth lose the soul! how desperate is that soul which will be lost for gain! Did not Satan first make sots of worldlings, he could never persuade them to venture their eternal blessedness for these transitory vanities; yet still they love this wages; which is the next point.

3. The baseness of the covetous heart, to love the wages of unrighteousness. There is no man that loves evil for itself, but for some imaginary good he expects from it. Something is proposed, either profit, or pleasure, or some kind of wages, that tempt men to love sin, else they never would embrace it. Achan would not have sacrificed, nor Gehazi have disgraced the prophet, but for the wages of gain. The most wicked do not love evil simply for itself, but for some other respects, which is their propounded wages. To discover this folly, let me describe riches to you by their three properties.

(1.) By their foundation, or the garden where they grow; this world. All is but earth; they consist in acres of earth, bowels of earth, beasts of the earth; and all are valued by pieces of earth. They all come from the earth, tend to the earth, and one mouthful of earth makes an end of them all. The earth is the basest part of the world; yet earth is the end of all this wages, except (which is worse) some of it be taken out in hell. They are like Nebuchadnezzar's image, a composition of metals; but the foot is clay. God hath laid heaven open to our eyes, and placed our heads next heaven; but gold and silver he hath hid from our eyes, and placed them under our feet. Yet worldlings invert all; and, like tumblers, stand upon their heads; and kick

at heaven with their heels. They subject their hearts to that, which God hath subjected to their feet. Covetousness is idolatry; St. Paul puts them both in a bag: now how sordid is that idolatry which shall worship *deum lutulentum*, i. e. a dirty god!

As riches grow in the world, so they go not out of the world. It is but a pagan folly, to put money in the dead man's hand at his burial, to defray his charges in another world. Of all our hoards and heaps we shall not carry one single penny with us. Among the Indians, belts, bracelets, and rattles were of high esteem; yet we despise them. Their gold and silver is precious in Europe, which was there contemptible. Things are as they are used or valued: the monies that pass in divers countries are not current here, nor much of ours there. All our pieces of gold are but current to the grave; none of them will pass in the future world. Therefore as merchants when they travel make over their monies here, to receive them by bills of exchange in another country; let us do good with our goods while we live, that when we die, by a blessed bill of exchange, we may receive them again in the kingdom of heaven, Luke xvi. 9. To part with that we cannot keep, that we may get that we cannot lose, is a good bargain. Wealth can do us no good, unless it help us toward heaven.

(2.) By their uncertainty. The form of money agrees well with the condition of it; it is stamped round, because it is so apt to run away. Could we be rich so long as we live, yet that were uncertain enough; for life itself is but a dream, a shadow, but a dream of a shadow. (August.) Rich men are but like hailstones; they make a noise in the world, as the other rattle on the tiles of a house; down they fall, lie still, and melt away. So that if riches could stay by a man, yet he cannot stay by them. Spite of his teeth, he shall carry away nothing when he dies, Psal. xlix. 17. Life and goods are both in a vessel, both east away at once; yea, of the two, life hath the more likelihood of continuance. Let it fly never so fast away, riches have eagles' wings, and will outfly it. There be thieves in the high-ways, that will take our monies and spare our lives. In our penal laws, there be not so many ways to forfeit our lives as our goods. Rich Job lived to see himself poor to a proverb. How many in this city reputed rich, yet have broken for thousands! There are innumerable ways to be poor: a fire, a thief, a false servant, suretyship, trusting of bad customers, an unfaithful factor, a pirate, an unskilful pilot, hath brought rich men to poverty. One gale of wind is able to make merchants rich or beggars. Man's life is like the banks of a river, his temporal estate is the stream: time will moulder away the banks, but the stream stays not for that, it glides away continually. Life is the tree, riches are the fruit, or rather the leaves; the leaves will fall, the fruit is plucked, and yet the tree stands. Some write of the pine-tree; that if the bark be pulled off, it lasts long; being on, it rots. If the worldling's bark were stripped off, he might perhaps live the longer, there is great hope he would live the better.

Why should we dote upon this world, which hath so many doors to let out wealth? Why love wealth, that when the doors are shut, and all the windows, can yet creep out at a quarry, at a cranny? Who would stake or wager his mansion-house against a booth? Curious glasses are pleasing vessels: yet because they are brittle, we do not think them precious. Solomon's royalty was not comparable to a lily, nor the crown on his head to the coronation-flower in the garden: yet because they are flowers, whose time is but for a month, necessitated to fading, we respect them thereafter: to-day they are for to-morrow.

bosom, to-morrow for the besom. There is nothing laudable that is not durable; nor doth it afford us so much joy in the welcome, as sorrow in the farewell. It is with the rich man at his death, as with a sleeping man when he wakes out of his dream. In life the worldling hath much; all this while he dreams; when he dies and wakes, he is not worth one groat. Alas, that we should set our hearts and hazard our souls on that, which is so certain to vanish and so uncertain to stay! It was the speech of a worthy father, This is all I have got by my riches and honour; I had something to which I could prefer my Saviour. Happy are we, when we care not to call any thing our own but Jesus Christ.

(3.) By their mischief. Many think themselves undone by losing them, but too many are undone by keeping them. Our Saviour calls them thorns. First, for their sharpness; they prick and pierce the heart through with many sorrows, 1 Tim. vi. 10. They expose men to dangers; the fat booty invites the thief; they are but sponges, that suck up much for one squeezing. Children inquire into the age of their parents, executors long to close up their eyes; sometimes the pillow is pulled from under their heads a day before their times. Weapons of iron hunt after wedges of gold. Still gold is the most perilous metal. Secondly, thorns are the shelter for serpents, and riches the den of many sins. They are haunted with temptations and snares, with foolish and hurtful lusts, that drown men in destruction, 1 Tim. vi. 9. The foulest fact that ever was done in the world, was done for money; even the betraying of Christ. Thirdly, they hinder the growth of corn, and the path-way of passengers; but not more than riches do choke the seed of the word, and of all grace; and bar up the way to the kingdom of heaven. But the greatest mischief of all is, they steal away our hearts from God. That joy and content which we should find in our Maker, we seek in our drudge. Yea, even the faith of good men is invaded with the fear of want. Indeed the dissolute make it none of their fear; and shall we? Will God be worse to them that follow him, than he is to them that forsake him? Yet, alas, how doth wealth engross men's confidence!

What is there that the rich man hopes not to do? He can buy honours and offices, he can buy out faults and offences; yea, foolish Magus thought the Holy Ghost himself might be had for money; and Satan presumed that this bait would even catch the Son of God. Yet what can riches do? Can they put off the gout, assuage grief, thrust out cares, suspend death, prevent hell, or bribe Satan? A satin sleeve can as well heal a broken arm. Indeed this they can do; they can anger God, hurt men, bar the gates of heaven, open the gates of hell, and forward souls to confusion. They are false friends, that will be sure never to fail men but when they have need of them. Sickness will besiege thee, death will summon thee, God will pass his doom on thee: in all this, what can riches avail thee? our manifold receipts shall but greatness our accounts; and the moderate estate will have the easier reckoning. Riches are a pit, wherein to we soon slip, but can hardly scramble out. Æsop hath a fable of the two frogs, that in the time of drought, when the marshes were dry, consulted what was best to be done. One advised to go down into a deep well, because it was likely the water would not fail there. The other answered, But if it do fail, how shall we get up again? Small puddles, light gains, will not serve some; they must plunge into deep wells, excessive profits; but they do not consider how they should get out again. So it comes to pass, that either they are famished for want of grace, or drowned in a deluge of riches. If this world be a

sea, over which we must swim to the land of promise, I do not see what use there is of this abundant luggage, unless it be to sink us in the waters.

To conclude. We are here like unexperienced young travellers in an inn: the host bids us cheerfully welcome; we flow and frolic, and spend with mirth while our stock lasts; that once gone, the host's changed countenance drives us out of doors with shame and nakedness. We exhaust the virtues and powers of our souls, in satisfying our covetous and carnal lusts; but then at last we must depart away sad and melancholy, bankrupt of all goodness, clothed only with scorn and sinfulness. Our joys are like fire, either durable or transient according to their subjects. Fire in straw is a blaze and away; in solid wood, lasting. Joy in heavenly things is everlasting; in the stubble of earth, but a flash. We find keys of iron and of gold; we know not to what locks they will guide us, therefore we choose the golden ones. At last we see by experience, that the richer metal brings us to the poorer purchase, it opens only a cabinet of toys and bracelets; but the iron keys of labour, repentance, and mortification, which we slighted, do open the doors of heaven, and let us into those invaluable treasures. The blood being poisoned, hath recourse to the heart, as the principal fort and refuge; but while there it seeks remedy, it thither brings instant death. Our desires infected with the world, run to the heart; and while they call it to rejoice with them, they bring it to destruction. Drowning men catch hold of any thing that comes next to hand, though it be the root of a weed; yea, they will lay hold on them that lay hold on others. They that are plunged into the gulf of avarice, for want of better stay, rest upon the rotten sticks of wealth, and so perish. Man's heart is so conscious of its own weakness, that it must have somewhat to trust upon; it cannot move without a prop: now a weak stay is held better than none at all. Politicians say, Better a tyrant than no king; but who would refuse a good king for a tyrant? Who would trust in riches, that might trust in God? 1 Tim. vi. 17. Riches are but for this world; God is Lord of this world, and of that also to come. Where the glory of this world ends, the glory of heaven begins. Riches are here to-day and gone to-morrow; but Christ is "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever," Heb. xiii. 8. He is the first and the last; blessing our beginning, crowning our end, and never forsaking us in the midst. Riches are but lifeless and senseless things; merely passive in gift; they cannot so much as bestow themselves, much less other things. The Lord is a living God and a giving God; unchangeable in his goodness, most bountiful in his beneficence. It is good to trust in the Lord. Some trust in their horses, and some in their swords; some trust in their lands, and some in their wits; some trust in their friends, and some in their monies; but let us trust in the Lord: the rest may have their uses, only God shall have the confidence of our hearts for ever.

Take the sum of all: the mischief of this wages of unrighteousness is not confined to this life; the full payment of it is in hell. Balaam desired one wages, but he found another: gold he coveted, as the reward of sin; this he required, and had not. Judgment he found, the reward of sin indeed; this he had, though he required it not. He went not away without wages; what the treasure of Moab denied him, the sword of Israel paid him. Unjust gains never escaped just vengeance. A man may come honestly by his wealth, and yet dishonestly use it, by making his table a snare. So God sends meat, but there is another that brings cooks; a good estate is dressed to

an ill purpose. But that which is unjustly acquired will be justly required. "He that hath swallowed down riches, shall vomit them up again; God shall cast them out of his belly," Job xx. 15. God had reserved to himself the treasure of Jericho; the blood of that wicked city shall be spilt to his honour, the riches kept for his use. Who but a miscreant can grudge that God should serve himself of his own? Achan spies a booty, and fileth it; Israel knows not of it; they go on in their wars, and are beaten by a little town. Joshua expostulates, "O Lord, what shall I say, when Israel turneth their backs before their enemies," Josh. vii. 8. God answers, "Israel hath sinned;" that people which prevailed for their faith, are beaten for their sin. A fault is committed, but by whom? The crime is spoken of, not the man. What shall discover him? A lot. Achan thought he might have him as close in all the throng of Israel, as the wedge of gold lay in his tent. This hope of secrecy first moved him to sin, and now arms him with confidence against fear of shame. But when he saw the lot fall on his tribe, he began to startle; when upon his family, he changes countenance; when upon his household, he quakes with amazement; and is no less than confounded, when himself is designed the man. With what eyes did Achan look on that spoil, which his fellows saw and condemned? The overprizing of riches will make men transgress for a piece of bread. They that admire the glory of metals or brave clothes, shall not be innocent. But what was the reward of all this? The lot discovers him, the stones kill him, his family and substance perish with him. Lo, ye that fear not to rob God of his consecrated things, what shall be the wages of your unrighteous sacrilege: you cannot go to the grave in peace.

Gehazi derives from Naaman a rich gift, lays it up, wipes his mouth, and stands before his master, whom he had so foully abused, 2 Kings v. 25; as if he thought to blind the eyes of a seer. All his attendance on that wonder-working prophet had not wrought so much on his heart, as to know that the undecivable eye of Divine Providence discerned his works, his words, his thoughts. He runs, fetches, disburdens, conceals; but where did he think God was all this while? To convince his hypocrisy, his master asks him, "Whence comest thou, Gehazi?" to let him know, that he knew he had been where he should not. "Thy servant went no whither." He had got the booty with a lie, and with a lie he would keep it. Whosoever loves this wages, must not stick with the devil for such a service; if a man will steal, it is necessary he should lie. In those days, to lie unto the prophets was as much as now to outface our senses; yea, our eyes seen not half so clearly as did their minds. This Gehazi might have considered afore; that prophets have spiritual eyes, not confined to bodily objects; that their hearts went abroad, when themselves sat still at home. Went not mine heart with thee? Hear then, and be convinced: Is this a time to receive money and garments, oliveyards and vineyards, sheep and oxen, men-servants and maid-servants, ver. 26; which in thy conceit thou hast already purchased? Hither thou wentest, this thou saidst, thus thou didst, and thus thou spedddest. How pale now did this guilty thief stand before the tribunal of his master! With what a trembling heart did he expect some heavy judgment! Hear this, ye lovers of wealth; all your ways be overlooked by invisible witnesses; and when you have gotten riches, and forgotten the unrighteous means, the Divine justice shall call you to a reckoning, perhaps worse than Gehazi's. Yet his talents

could not buy off his sores, nor his garments hide his shame: his tears might wash off the guilt of his sin; not they and another Jordan shall cleanse his leprosy. That shall remain as an hereditary monument of God's wrath upon fraud, avarice, sacrilege; and he shall more lively proclaim to the world by his face, than others by their lips, the cursed wages of unrighteousness.

Take one instance more: Ahab promiseth Naboth very reasonable composition for his vineyard, 1 Kings xxi. 2. This seemed a fair motion, yet Naboth saw violence under this plausibleness, and refuseth to bargain. He did not so much stick at the land, as at the law; one earth might be as good as another, and money as good as either. Naboth did not fear loss, but sin; he would gladly be quit of his patrimony, if God would acquit him of iniquity. Yet Ahab falls sick, and takes a strange surfeit of those grapes he never tasted. Jezebel undertakes to cure him; "I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth," ver. 7. Ahab wanted neither wit nor wickedness, yet he was a mere novice to Jezebel; there needed no other devil to plot and execute this mischief. What, shall a subject deny his king? I will soon rid the king of such a subject. She suborns false witnesses, and corrupts the senators; those accuse Naboth of blasphemy, these judge him to die, the people stone him: here was a quick despatch, an easy payment for a rich vineyard. All this while God sits still, and says nothing. Much good do it thee, O king, with thy vineyard; many fair flowers and sweet grapes may it yield thee: applaud thy Jezebel for her cunning, triumph over the blood of a harmless subject, please thyself with thy wages of unrighteousness; yet let me rather die the death of Naboth, than do the deed of Ahab. Naboth's turn was over, when Ahab's was to come. Naboth and Ahab shall both bleed; the one by the stones of the Jezreelites, the other by the shafts of the Aramites. Ahab dealt cruelly with Naboth, God shall deal severely with Ahab. The dogs shall lick his guilty blood, that to the dogs had given the blood of the innocent. Only the cause and the end makes the difference: Naboth lives holy, and dies happy: Ahab lives in wickedness, and dies in vengeance. Naboth bleeds as a martyr, Ahab as a murderer. Consider this just retaliation, ye whose covetousness hath made beggars, and then not relieved them; your children shall beg, and none give them. Read Psal. cix. 10—12. Or perhaps God will take order for your wives and children, as he did for Ahab's: whether they die in the city or in the fields, the dogs or the fowls shall eat them, 1 Kings xxi. 24. You shall not need to take thought for your posterity, or study to traduce your ill-got riches; God will ease you of that care, by depriving you of heirs. You have made your children not more heirs of your body than of your curse; the curse shall remain theirs, but God shall dispose of the riches. Ahab's cruelty to Naboth hath made both the mother and the children dogs' meat. God will recompense the slowness with the sharpness of his revenges. A Syrian draws a bow, wounds Ahab, his blood flows in the chariot, and pays Naboth his arrears. The chariot is washed in the pool of Samaria, the dogs come to claim their due. Jezebel is thrown out of a window, and brained; for their due, the dogs come again. They lick the blood of Ahab, they eat the flesh of Jezebel; the tongues of those brute creatures make good the tongue of God's prophet. I hope you will now say, that Naboth's vineyard is thoroughly paid for.

Let me conclude with Balaam. The king dismissed him, and he pretended hasty homewards; but he lingered so long, that he left his bones in Midian,

Numb. xxxi. 8. His tongue had insensibly slain many thousands of them, their sword shall kill him for it. Nor is it mentioned for his honour, that he fell among the kings; but for special notice, that all his sorcery could not save his life. Moses seeing that they had slain the men, and reserved the women, grew angry. These caused Israel to sin, by the counsel of Balaam; therefore kill every woman that hath known man, ver. 16, 17. They that had tempted the lust of Israel with their faces, shall feel the revenge of Israel in their bloods. How happy was she that had not played the harlot; her maiden-head was her ransom! whereas she that had lost her virginity, must lose her life. Righteous are all thy judgments, O God.

Now as men seriously love this wages, let them accept of such a service. What shall it do you good, that you have scraped, and heaped, and hoarded, when God shall come to reckon with you for all these? I would not have one widow weep, nor one orphan cry against me, for all the wealth of the Indies. Nor is it enough to clear thee, that thou didst not injuriously get what thou hast penuriously kept. The thief is not worse than the receiver, nor the hoarder any better than a purloiner. Some get their wealth with a false key, others keep it with a rusty lock; both shall be convinced of uncharitableness. The fox and badger (in the fable) come to the lion's court, to present their new-year's gifts. The fox had nothing but from hand to mouth, yet he gave liberally; the badger had store lying by him, yet pleaded poverty, and gave sparingly. But the lion censured them both to death, because the one did steal to pay tribute, the other would not pay tribute of what he had stolen. The politic worldling deceives, gains, and gives somewhat; the hoarder scratches, multiplies, and keeps all: God shuts them both out of heaven, by the warrant of two texts. The one, "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth," Eph. iv. 28. The Lord will take no bribes; we must honestly get what we charitably give. The other, "So is he that layeth up treasure for himself," Luke xii. 21; even like that wretched churl, who purposes to fill his barns and famish his soul; so, that is, as very a fool as he was. They may think themselves the only wise men, fit for honours and offices; but they are fools on earth, and no fools shall enter into heaven. This is indeed the wages of unrighteousness: now grace keep us from such a service, and mercy deliver us from such wages.

VERSE 16.

But was rebuked for his iniquity: the dumb ass speaking with man's voice forbade the madness of the prophet.

God in the Old Testament, Christ in the New, angels, the prophets, the apostles, the fathers, all preachers, all Christians that have hope of heaven, yea, all reasonable men that discern the vanity of the earth, have spoken against covetousness. Now we shall come a step lower, and hear what an unreasonable beast doth say against it. So we have it condemned from the mouth of the Lord, from the mouth of Christ, from that of angels, prophets, apostles, preachers, wise men, and last and lowest from the mouth of an ass: and if all this prevail not, we shall hear it from the mouths of them that have no mouths at all: "The stone shall cry out of the wall,

and the beam out of the timber." Hab. ii. 11; the silver and gold shall cry; even riches themselves shall cry out against the love of riches. Beasts have mouths, but not to speak; stones shall speak, yet they have no mouths. To prove it a worse than beastly sin, God hath enabled a beast to condemn it. We have these particulars: first, the scholar, a prophet. Secondly, the schoolmaster, or rather school-dame; for it is *asina*, an ass. Thirdly, the lesson, which is reprehensive; she rebuked, she forbade. Fourthly, the manner of her teaching; which is not emblematical, nor enigmatical, but plain; with man's voice. Fifthly, the fault for which she corrected him, was iniquity, and madness.

1. The scholar was a prophet, but what kind of one? First, we find him sacrificing in the mount of Baal: had he been from the true God, he would rather have said, Pull down these altars, than built up new ones: the very place and number convince him of idolatry. Seeing his seven bullocks and seven rams smoking on his seven altars, he goes up higher into the mount to receive God's answer. This haply he had learned of Moses: so nearly a false prophet can counterfeit a true one. An answer he hath, and that from God; but will God meet a sorcerer? Will he put prophecies into the lips of a magician? O man, who shall teach God the choice of his instruments? He knows how to employ not only saints and angels, but even wicked men, beasts, and devils, to his glory. Why should we wonder that Balaam receives visions, when his very ass hath her eyes and mouth opened; those to see the angel, this to reason with her master. Those words were but transient, gliding through him, and could not be defiled because they were none of his. His heart did not conceive them, though his tongue uttered them. The trunk through which a man speaks, is not the more eloquent for that speech. The looking-glass shows us our faces, yet is itself blind. The bells that ring us to church hear not their own noise. The wax that seals up the letter knows not the contents of it. A book of morality may teach us good behaviour, while itself becomes mouldy or ragged. Balaam's tongue shall convince Moab, and do good to Israel, not better himself. Many shall say, We have prophesied in thy name; and speak it for their honour; to whom Christ replies, Depart from me, ye wicked, Matt. vii. 22, 23; turning it to their shame. How divine were the parables that God uttered by Balaam! Stay but a while and you shall find Satan in the same mouth. That which came from God was sweet and heavenly; that mere villany which came from Satan: the good was God's, the evil was his own. Nor was he saved for his excellent prophecy, but lost by his hellish policy. There was no thanks to him for his good parable, but many plagues for his bad counsel. It is no wonder to hear God speak with a false prophet: Pharaoh, Abimelech, Nebuchadnezzar had visions; Caiaphas had his inspiration; none of them had his gracious benediction. Yea, God spake unto Satan, and that in a familiar question, "Whence comest thou?" Job i. 7. Men will bestow words where they will not bestow favour; the argument of God's love is not the sound of his voice, but the matter of his speech. "The Lord will speak peace unto his people," Psal. lxxxv. 8. He may speak to his enemies, he will speak peace to none but his saints. It is a poor brag of the unleserving subject. The king hath spoken to me: but what did he say? The judge speaks to the malefactor, when he gives him his sentence. Hath God spoken to thee? so he hath done to reprobates and devils: but what said he? Did he say to thy soul, I am thy salvation? Did he say, I am thy

God, thou art my son? Thou canst not hear this voice and perish.

Use. Balaam was a bad man, shall we therefore reject his good prophecy? God forbid. If men be mortally sick, will they refuse to be cured by a sick physician? A lame steward may give a good alms from the purse of his rich master. Shall we think, the Spirit of God hath so tied himself to the goodness of the speaker, that he will not open the heart of the hearer, unless he hear a holy teacher? How doth this absurdity meet with popery at the back-door! Why does the novelist rail at the papist, when they both shake hands in the same opinion. That the goodness of the priest blesteth the word or sacraments? What, shall not I be saved by hearing, unless the preacher be saved whom I hear? Is the grace of God tied to the ministry of man? Shall the servant share the honour with his Master? Christ charged the people to observe their doctrines that sat in Moses' seat, Matt. xxiii. 3; yet were they such as he termed hypocrites, and on whom he heaped woes. Paul rejoiced that Christ was preached, whether in pretence or in truth, Phil. i. 18; yet they that preached him in pretence were not likely to be sanctified. What Christ commanded, and Paul commended, these men censure. The picture may be excellent and lively, representing the person whereof it is a counterfeit; and yet the painter be no hand-some man. If the limner be unlike his piece, the beauty of that disgraceth him, but itself is lovely. Thou art condemned, and the prince sends thee a pardon by another that is condemned; wilt thou none of it therefore? The religious eye looks to the comfort of the message, not to the misery of the messenger. A bad man may bring good news, as God sent blessings to Israel by the mouth of accursed Balaam. Samson did not disdain the sweets because he found them uncleanly laid, in the lion's carcass. His diet was strict enough; he might not eat that which savoured of legal impurity; yet he ventures on the honeycomb in the belly of a dead beast. Good should not be refused because the means are accidentally evil; honey is honey, though in a dead lion. They are more scrupulous and less wise than Samson, that abhor the graces of God, because they find them in ill vessels. One will not take a good receipt from the hand of a physician, because he is given to unlawful studies. Another will not receive a deserved contribution from the hand of a usurer. A third will not hear the sermon, because he hath found some fault with the preacher. How sullen is this neglect, not to accept the honey because we hate the lion! as if Elijah should have scorned his breakfast because it was brought him by a raven. God's children have right to their Father's blessings where-soever they find them. Let the doctrine be good, and the heart good; this shall save the hearer, whatsoever becomes of the preacher.

2. The school-dame is *assina*, an ass. This is not the first time that God hath taught men by beasts, though it may be the first beast that ever he taught to speak unto man. And what if the Maker of all will teach one creature by another, the better by the inferior? there is none so contemptible which is not useful. Howsoever the ass, among all beasts, hath the most despised name; yet there be some things in him not unworthy of imitation. Some have made him an image of thriftiness, some an emblem of painfulness, some a pattern of temperance, others a miracle of patience. And be not frugality, industry, moderation, and long-sufferance, lessons worth our learning? For innocency; he is not harmful as the horse or ox. For usefulness; some few particular labours are exacted of other beasts, the ass is good

for all. For moderation; he will live upon thistles. For patience; he endures hunger, thirst, and stripes without murmuring. Their milk is precious against consumptions; and famine thought their flesh sweet, when "an ass's head was sold for fourscore pieces of silver," 2 Kings vi. 25. It was with the new jaw-bone of an ass that Samson revenged God on a thousand Philistines; nor could all their forces withstand that contemptible engine, till it had left ten hundred bodies as dead as that carcass whose bone it was. With that base instrument Samson gave death to the Philistines, and from the same God gave Samson refreshing. One bone yields him both conquest and life, and was both a weapon of war and a well of water.

Thus useful hath this poor beast been; now indeed corruption hath made the name ignominious, and to all ridiculous purposes our common talk applies the ass: As ingenious as an ass, as courteous as an ass, as stupid as an ass, &c.

But now the more despicable this beast is, the more shame is it for man to be set under such a tutor. As there be some good things in the ass to be imitated; so she is an emblem of some vices to be shunned. We do not approve the folly, the stupidity, the misery, the slavery of the ass. Therefore was the teacher fitted for the scholar: a foolish beast to teach a man that was self-conceited; a stupid beast to teach him that was too precipitated; a miserable beast to teach him that placed happiness in riches; a slavish beast to teach him that was so basely subjected to his own affections.

(1.) For folly; when we speak of a defective understanding, we say, As wise as an ass. But no ass can be so foolish as the covetous. He lays up for to-morrow, and is not sure to live out this night; is not this a fool? He provides for himself, without any faith to depend upon God's finding; surely the fowls of the air and flowers of the field are not such fools. To work himself into a rich fortune, he neglects to work out his own salvation; is not this a fool? He refuseth God's service, which would save him, for mammon's service, that will confound him; is not this a fool? O wealth, how many fools dost thou make in a year! The eagles are about carcasses, bears about honey, bees about oil, wolves about sheep, and fools about riches. Many of them are worse than asses; for the ass doth not use to bite, they pinch to death. To end all controversy, God himself calls them fools, Luke xii. 20: and what is it for men to deem them wily foxes, when the Judge hath pronounced them foolish asses?

(2.) For stupidity; the ass is a dull and blockish creature, and in one sense, so are the covetous; fit for nothing but taxes and subsidies, to bear the commonwealth's burdens. The strength of the bear is in his tusk, of the elephant in his trunk, of the lion in his paws, of the ass in his back, of the covetous in his back-burden. Where the treasure is, there will the heart be also; now the heart of a usurer is to be found where his money lies; if that be in danger abroad, he is heavy and heartless at home. He so loads himself with thick clay, Iiab. ii. 6, that he cannot stir a foot toward heaven. He flies with no other wings, walks with no other staff, fights with no other sword, minds no other business, but his riches. Indeed, what hath he to do? He needs not sweat for his bread, others sweat for him. He needs not go to the market, the market will come to him. To visit the poor, he hath little inclination; to spend his time in prayer, less. He is both like the mill and the mill-horse; turning and toiling within his compass; grinding the bones of the poor; still there at night where he begun in the morning. If he be a lay-man, his journey is always for a purchase; if

of the clergy, he will switch and spur for a benefice. Bees make the honey, and drones suck the hive; oxen plough the ground, and asses reap the harvest. It is said in Job, "The oxen were ploughing, and the asses feeding beside them," Job i. 14. Laborious oxen, painful preachers, spend their time in ploughing; and lazy asses eat up their labours, being always feeding. Great revenues belong to the contemplative convent, while the devout and active preacher is a mendicant. God appointed the ark to be carried only by Levites, yet was it once carried by oxen, and then it was ready to fall, 2 Sam. vi. 6; but when it is carried by ignorant asses, how should it stand?

(3.) For misery; the ass is the poorest beast: he carries his master, and meat for his master, but fasts himself. He endures sore labours and sharp blows all day; at night he is turned forth to seek his supper on the bare commons. The worldling is vexed with many cares; yet, after all, hath not the power to give himself one comfortable meal. He abates from his stomach, to add unto his coffers; and, just like the ass, having borne a burden of gold all day, all night he feeds upon thistles. He thinks himself admired for his wealth; and therein he is an ass too: for as the ass that carried the goddess, seeing the people bow in reverence as he passed by, did think that homage was done to him which was meant to his burden; so the respect that is given, is not to the man, but to his riches. "Wealth maketh many friends," Prov. xix. 4; they are friends to the wealth, not to the man. Now can there be greater misery, than to starve in the midst of abundance? Alas, he is but the jailer of his estate, to keep the keys; till at last death opens the doors, dischargeth the prisoner, and commits the keeper, and that to a strong and woeful dungeon. He is thirsty by the spring, and dares not drink for fear the fountain should fail him; yea, he cannot drink, that is God's curse upon him.

(4.) For slavery; the ass is not only a slave to man, but even to other beasts: the lion toils him, the ox gores him, the horse beats him, the fox cheats him; all are too hard for him; he dares deny none of them his service. He is *animal subjugale*, the word our apostle here useth, i. e. ordained for the yoke. The worldling is not only a slave to his mammon, but even to all the brokers and panders of filthy lucre. He rides his ass, and Satan rides him; he spurs his ass, and Satan spurs him; he bridles his ass, and Satan may post him to hell with a golden bit. There is no sin he will deny, no baseness he can refuse, to be rich. The ass is servile against his will; the covetous gives his full consent to this slavery. Justly therefore is one ass set to school another; and if this latter will not be schooled, they shall change names and natures; the ass shall be the man, and the man shall be the ass. If there be a fountain, the beasts of the forest will drink, and the wild asses quench their thirst; but if a man will be miserable here, to become everlastingly wretched hereafter, oh what an ass is he! Now the grace of God direct us a better course, that we may find a better recompence; and by despising this world which Balaam sought, we may have treasure in that world which Balaam lost.

3. The lesson is reprehensive; she rebuked, she forbid. A prophet, and come to be reproved? this was preposterous. A teacher taught, a rebuker rebuked, is but a harsh hearing. Yet hath it been no strange thing; the praise of the centurion was the shame of Israel; the mercy of the Samaritan the condemnation of the uncharitable Levite; the thankful returning of the strange leper an exprobration to all the nine, when God had his tithe from a person

where he least expected it. "What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God," saith the ship-master to Jonah, Jonah i. 6. What an astonishment was this! An infidel leads an Israelite to his prayers: the preacher is become an auditor, the seaman a preacher; the patient heals the physician. Yet truth is truth, wheresoever we find it: "Call upon thy God," was good counsel, though it came from a Gentile. He says again, "Why hast thou done this?" ver. 10. "They worshipped a false god, he the true; yet was he colder in his devotion to the true than they were to the false. How pitiful is it, when a babe must catechise a man, when a Turk shall find a Christian false, and say to him, Why hast thou done this? A child may think, speak, do as a child; but of a man there is more required. If darkness be on the hill, what light is in the valley? Errors of the eminent are eminent errors. The tattered beggar can spy a small rent in a silken coat. It is ill to deserve the censure of inferiors; fearful, of beasts: when Israel shall be taught thankfulness by the ox; when the dogs shall be mentioned to the confutation of the rich churl; when the rash prophet shall be disputed with by his ass. It was a shame for Sarah, and no great praise for Abraham, when an Abimelech shall say, Thy husband is to thee the covering of the eyes, &c. Gen. xx. 16. Let prophets take heed how they give a theme to atheists; they will quarrel at our good actions, much more at our manifest criminations. Our faults be their sport: if Samson stumble, the Philistines shout and triumph. Indeed God useth their declamations as a rod to whip his children with shame, to save their souls by the bargain. But yet still it is preposterous to come behind them in goodness, whom we go before in knowledge. Balaam's book cannot save him. They tell Christ of their prophesying, casting out devils, and doing wonderful works, in his name, Matt. vii. 22; yet are answered with an I know you not, depart from me. In vain have they prophesied to others, unless they had also prophesied to themselves, and lived like prophets. In vain have they cast devils out of others, retaining one in their own bosoms. In vain have they eaten in his presence, Luke xiii. 26, when neither the example of his life nor the doctrine of his lips hath amended them. Indeed all faults are not to be taxed, all be not faults that are taxed. God openeth that ass's mouth to reprove a manifest error; we have asses that open their mouths to censure they know not what. They will blame their pastor for no other fault, but because he is so, or because he doth not humour their fancies. It were better that such beasts would hold their peace.

She rebuked him. Among all God's preventions and stoppings of us in our ways of sin, reprehension hath a wholesome and necessary place. Our iniquities would be like rottenness in our bones, festering in our bowels to the day of judgment, but for this medicine. So Wisdom begins her lore, reproving simple ones, scorners, and fools, Prov. i. 22; giving us names according to our corrupt natures. God, like a most accurate musician, hath variety of notes and tunes: he hath spoken by a burning bush, by a cloud of water, by a pillar of fire, by visions, by dreams, by miracles, by angels; and by some nearer to us, men; and by one nearest to himself, above all, Jesus Christ, Heb. i. 1, 2. Sometimes he speaks by sensible judgments: Miriam's foul leprosy was a fair warning; Zacharias's dumbness was no dumb teacher to him; Paul's blindness took away his blindness, and made him see more into the way of life, than could all his learning at the feet of Gamaliel. Why may not Balaam be reproved by his own beast? The reprehension was not the beast's, but the Lord's.

He is a wretched man whom God never chides; the first messenger to him is the first-born of death.

This is our ministerial business; not only to teach, but to reprove. Otherwise we offer red, not scarlet; the tincture and dye of our preaching is not in grain, nor penetrating into the soul. Our fire gives light and shining, but kindles not in the conscience. It is oil without wine to the wounded; a crutch to walk withal, when the leg is out of joint, and should be set; holy-days without eyes; a passover without sour herbs; continual feasting without sweeping the house. As there is a *dicte* of joy, "Tell the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy King cometh," Matt. xxi. 5; so there is a *dicte* of sorrow too, "Tell my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins," Isa. lviii. 1. But most of our hearers are like wanton children, that care not to be mended, but to be commended; he that praiseth them, pleaseth them. They are all apt to conceit well of themselves; but this self-love is (in effect) self-hated. If we reprove not our brother, God says, we hate him in our heart; and if we suffer not our brother to reprove us, do we not hate our own hearts? How often hath a horse in his full speed miscarried by a precipice, whereas one cheek had saved him! Yes, I would be reprehended, saith one; but I would not have an ass to do it; as the satirist said, *Quis tulit Gracchum de seditione loquentem*? Who would endure a Gracchus speaking of sedition? But as when God speaks, we regard who, without examining the what; we do it because he commands it; so when man speaks, we regard what more than who: What am I the worse, if the admonition of a fool can make me wiser? Our Maker, that sees our proneness to evil, thinks it best to hedge up our sinful ways with prohibitions. The first precept that ever was given to man, was a prohibition; Thou shalt not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, Gen. ii. 17. Among those ten laws, the ground of all other, there are but two affirmative; the last of the first table, and the first of the last; the other eight are negative, leading us to good by the forbidding of evil. He that will not omit to judge us for omitting the good commanded, for the doing of forbidden evil will not fail to punish us, if he have not punished Christ for us.

4. The fault corrected is twofold; iniquity, and madness. His iniquity is discovered in three particulars.

(1.) He had a desire to curse; and the brand of the desperately wicked is to love cursing. He loved to send it abroad, he shall feel it at home; he wore it about him, he shall have it within him. "Let it come into his bowels like water, and like oil into his bones," Psal. cix. 17, 18. When David's misery deserved compassion, Shimei's foul mouth loaded him with malediction. Hereof he complained; They persecute him whom thou hast smitten, and vex him whom thou hast wounded, Psal. lxxix. 26. The picking out of such an opportunity doubled his malicious rancour. Such words would have galled at another time, which now are ready to kill. Let an arrow fly against the wind, it will hardly stick upright; with the wind, it pierceeth deep. While thy enemy stands, he may ward thy blows; but once fallen on his back, he is at thy mercy; and how base is that spirit which will prey on prostrate fortunes! Little children have so much valour and justice, as to call him a coward that strikes his adversary when he is down. To insult upon those whom God hath humbled, and to draw blood of that back which is yet blue from the Maker's stripes, is even the murder of a virulent tongue. Nor will it be any rare thing at the day of judgment, for cursers to be indicted of murder. They would kill, if they durst: they do kill as far as they

can. I would be loth to trust his hand, that bans me with his lips. Balaam would soon have been the death of all Israel, if either tongue or sword could have effected his will.

Hear this, ye whose tongues run so fast on Satan's errand; you love cursing, you are not heirs of the blessing. Christians are charged to bless their enemies; what are they that curse their friends? If every curse should stick a visible blister on the tongue, as it doth an insensible one on the soul, how many men's tongues would be too big for their mouths! In the discharge of a gun, the fire is given at one end, the report is heard at the other. In the charging of the heart with malice, fire is taken at the ears or eyes, and presently the noise of cursing and railing breaks out at the mouth. Therefore have we been cursed and plagued, because our mouths were so full of cursing and bitterness. Why should we not expect that on our bodies, which proceeds so continually forth of our lips? Who can set his neighbour's house on fire, and be secure of his own? Yea, cursing mouths be like ill-made pieces; which while men discharge at others, they recoil in splinters on their own faces. Curse not the king in thy thought, nor the rich in thy bed-chamber, Eccl. x. 20; for these arrows will return on thy own soul. Some men's maledictions are shot like fools' bolts, without regarding where they light. In this throng not seldom they hurt their friends, their children: as Diogenes warned the bastard, when he saw him throwing stones at random among the people, to take heed he did not hit his own father. The wicked do not shoot directly at God; yet God shoots at them, and sendeth out his arrows as against persecutors, Psal. vii. 13. Blessing becomes Christians: Christ's heart was meek, he repined not; his tongue meek, he reviled not; his hand meek, he revenged not. The good man wronged, shoots not again; neither with the arrow of the head, nor head of the arrow; neither with the mouth of the sword, nor sword of the mouth. If this life prepares us for the next, then the mouth of bitterness shall be plagued with bitterness of mouth; but the lips accustomed to bless, shall be blessed with songs of joy for ever.

(2.) He had a mercenary tongue. He that had mortgaged his soul for gold, would not stick for his tongue into the bargain. There be not many acts of sin, wherein the tongue hath not a part to play; that little engine is seldom ever left out. For uncleanness, the tongue woos; for dissimulation, the tongue walks; for ambition, the tongue flatters; to hide faults, the tongue lies: what business hath sin wherein the tongue finds no employment? But a vendible tongue, that may be hired for a bribe to contradict the truth, is rooted in a most wicked heart. For the mouth is but the bell, and the tongue the clapper; the heart is the spring that sets all a-going. For a man to sell his speech, is bad enough, but worse to sell his silence. He that speaks, does something for his reward; the other is feed for nothing. Christ said, "He that is not with me is against me;" but many a client says of a famous advocate, If he be not against me he is with me. So the just cause may be lost both ways; by speech, or silence. But he that farms out his tongue, shall receive but a sorry rent at the last.

(3.) He did strike his beast for doing him good. She saw the angel, and would not go on; for this he bestowed his fury and stripes upon her. If she had gone on he had perished, yet he strikes her that kept him from being stricken. How often do men wish for those things, which it is mercy to go without! They find fault to be stayed in the ways of death, and fly upon those that oppose their perdition. It

is our office and endeavour to save you from destruction, to guide you along through this wilderness unto Canaan, to discover your dangers, to clear your eyes, and deliver your souls: do not you, like Balaam, requite us with blows, and use us worse than beasts for our service. An ape seeing himself in a looking-glass, whether through wantonness or dislike of his own visage, doth often break the glass a-pieces. Preachers are like crystal glasses, declaring to sinners their spots and deformities; and these, like apes, requite them with injuries and abuses. We would fain save you, why should you mischief us? Travelers make much of their guides; so let us have your loving company in the way of obedience, that we may all arrive at the land of promise.

Balaam's madness will appear in four fits; a foolish fit, a frantic fit, a desperate fit, a raving fit.

(1.) He knew the danger, yet incurs it; was not this madness? Until the will of God be known, we may dissent from it without sin. St. Paul, by virtue of his apostolical commission, would have preached in Bithynia, but the Spirit hindered him; yet herein he sinned not. Samuel prayed for Saul's good, otherwise than the secret counsel of God had determined; and this without sin: but when the decree was manifested, he ceased that duty. One good thing may differ from another; and the creature may will a good, which God in his secret purpose willeth not: yet the will is good, if it leave not out Thy will be done, submitting itself to a better: as the child prays for his father's life, when God hath determined him to die of that sickness; yet without sin. But when Balaam is forbidden to go, and opposed in going, still to persist, this was madness. What prophet ever spoke better, what reprobate ever did worse, than Balaam? It is no less than madness, for prophets to give light to others, and walk themselves in darkness; to distribute portions of meat to the family, and starve their own souls; to rescue others from the enemy, and suffer themselves to be taken; to forewarn others of that pit, whereinto themselves run headlong. If we hear a mountebank undertake to cure the distempered heat of the liver, while himself hath a fiery face, will we believe him? If prophets dress heavenly feasts, made up of God's gracious promises and infinite mercies, yet fast themselves, surely the very ass may convince them of madness.

Now as there be mad prophets, so there are mad people too; such as will not live as their pastor teacheth, but as their pastor liveth. St. Paul tells us that faith cometh by hearing; he does not say, it comes by seeing. We live by precepts, not by examples. But these nice patients neglect the diet which their physician prescribeth, and follow the diet which he useth. I deny not but good examples have their profit; and to see others feed heartily, betters our appetite. But it is not their example, but our own meat, that doth nourish us: no man is the fatter for another's feeding. The common exprobration is, Physician, heal thyself. Yet suppose those prophets warn us of the tide, and lose it themselves; that they are careless of their own sores, so our wounds be healed; that they become infatuate salt, so we be seasoned; that they are cast into darkness, so we be enlightened; we have no cause to complain. Have they built us an ark, though themselves be drowned? have they shone to us like tapers, though themselves go out in stench? have they brought us to the land of promise, though themselves die short of it? have they served us in the temple as vessels of gold and silver, though themselves be carried into Babylon? have they sown our fields, and miss their own harvest? have they planted us vineyards, and none for themselves? Be it unto them as they have

deserved: let us take our own portions, and be thankful. Indeed prophets are in your mouths, as you will be pleased to take them; and every one speaks, not as he sees, but as he suspects. What are we more than you? All are men of the like passions, Acts xiv. 15. Do you look for no passion in us, and find so much in yourselves? We bring you heavenly treasure, yet are still earthen vessels. Among the apostles, one was a devil, and another was a Satan in his kind, none were angels. We are the men of God, yet men; prophets, but yet (as Moses said) like our brethren. Acts iii. 22: not in the similitude of sinful flesh, as Christ was, Rom. viii. 3; but sinful flesh indeed. We are stars, yet, saith Job, the very stars are not pure in God's sight, Job xxv. 5. We are angels, by a more honourable style than our natures can bear; yet God hath not found stedfastness in the angels. Our profession gives us no immunity from sin. But if we know the right, and bend our whole course the wrong, we are then mad indeed; and if you neglect our doctrine, and follow altogether our example, certainly you are as mad as we. This was his foolish fit.

(2.) He hears the beast speak under him, yet slights it: this was a frantic fit. Who would not look that his hairs should stand upright, his blood forsake his cheeks, that he should alight from that strange kind of beast, and stand amazed at the miracle? But such was his madness; as the frantic hath sense to hear a voice, but no use of reason to distinguish it; that as if no new thing had happened, he talks with his ass, and gives her words again, not more full of anger than void of discretion. Who does not wonder that this magician wondered not? Two reasons may be alleged for it; though indeed there was no reason in it.

[1.] It might be, this was his trade. So custom might take away strangeness, if he had been wonted to this before. But suppose Satan and he were so well acquainted at this device; yet he knew his own ass; she had long groaned under so unworthy a burden, Numb. xxii. 30: he knew this voice came not from Satan; for then it should have been an encouragement to persist, whereas this voice sounded a retreat: yet still he puts her on, whose tongue had forbidden him to move further.

[2.] It might be, his rage and covetousness had so transported him, that he did not observe this unusual and unnatural accident. If a man had as many eyes as the poets feigned of Argus, the melody of gain would play them all asleep, or make them blind. He that looks through a green glass, sees no other colour. The worldling is like a man in a dream; you may talk what you will to him, but his dream goes on. Balaam's mind did so run on the gold of Moab, that he could hear a beast speak, and never regard it. One man passeth by that with contempt, which another receives with astonishment. In dreadful thunders, when good men be at their prayers, some still ply their sports. They are as mad as Balaam, whom extraordinary judgments cannot move. God made all his works to be observed; but they that do not wonder at his miracles, are miracles to be wondered at. The papists feign a world of miracles, and they have men mad enough to believe them. Daily we see God's judgments; if we do not lay them to heart, we are as mad as they.

(3.) After all this interruption, still he drives on, and runs upon that sword which was brandished against him: this was a desperate fit. The ass saw the angel, and gave back; common sense had taught her to avoid that danger, which reason could not work in her master. The sword was drawn against him, not her; yet she would decline it, he rusheth

upon it. Evils were as good not seen, as not avoided; our happiness is in the prevention, not prevision of them. "The prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself; but the simple pass on, and are punished," Prov. xxii. 3. We pity him that is hurt through want of circumspection; but he that sees the snare, and flies into it, scarce deserves compassion. The revenging angel stands before us in the ways of disobedience; and though we know we shall as surely die as sin, yet we have neither the wit nor the grace to give back; though it were with the hurt of a foot to save the body, with the pain of the body to save the soul. Sin is a labyrinth, wherewith the entrance is easy, the extrication difficult. The Turk making an expedition into Persia, found the Straits of Armenia somewhat troublesome for his passage; therefore they consulted which way to get in. But one among the rest, and he none of the wisest, said, Here is much ado how you should get in, but I hear nobody take care how you should get out. Suddenly doth a wicked Balaam set upon his mischievous design; but no persuasions can make him break off. How often doth the adulterer's conscience check him with the law, and dread of plagues; yet still he persists, and resolves desperately, as Esther did religiously, If I perish, I perish. Or as Pompey said in another sense, when he was to bring grain to Rome in a great dearth, and coming to the sea, found it tempestuous and dangerous, inasmuch that he was dissuaded to embark, it is necessary that I go, not that I live. So they make a necessity of their sinning, and put it to the venture for their salvation.

Do we resolve ever to give over the course of wickedness? Yes, one day. If one day, why not this day, why not now? We are not sure to live out this day. Pyrrhus opened himself to his friend Cineas, that he first intended a war upon Italy. And what then? saith Cineas. Then we will attempt Sicily. And what then? Then we may conquer Carthage and Africa. And what then, sir? Then we may rest, and feast, and sacrifice, and make merry with our friends. Cineas replied, And may we not enjoy this sweetness now, without all this ado? Vain man fancies divers projects; as first how to be rich: and what then? next to gild his gold with honour: and what then? then to take his pleasure according to his sensual appetite: and what then? at last to repent, and prepare for heaven. O madman, and why not so now? He that calls thee now, will not call ever. He that calls thee now, will now receive thee: will he receive thee when he does not call thee? Cast away thy lusts, that they may not cast away thee. If the perverseness of our stomachs break through all oppositions, Balaam himself was not more mad than we.

(4.) His unmercifulness to the poor beast is a remonstrance of his raving fit. What did the ass deserve? All the hurt she did him, was to turn him, to serve him, to save him: this he requites with blows. This was her first fault all her time with him, if it had been one; therefore she deserved not so cruel a revenge. We little think of it, but God will call us to account for all the unkind usages of his mute creatures. Of this the angel first takes notice; of this wrong he first expostulates, "Wherefore hast thou smitten thine ass these three times?" Numb. xxii. 32. One blow had been unjust, three was madness. God hath made us lords of them, not tyrants; owners, not tormentors: he hath given us leave to kill them for our use, not to torment them for our pleasure. As they are our drudges by constitution, so they are our fellows by creation. "Unless she had turned from me," saith the angel, "surely

I had slain thee," ver. 33: that was somewhat; she was a means of saving thy life. Yea, "I had slain thee, and saved her alive;" that was more. To show that I respect an innocent beast more than a perverse man, her safety should have aggravated the woe of thy ruin. Canst thou tell, O man, whether thy very beast may not be a means of thy preservation, that thou madly spendest thy fury where thou findest matter of mercy?

Beasts have been a means of the deliverance of men; not seldom hath a dog prevented thieves, the swiftness of a horse saved the rider's purse or life; many of them have done more than ordinary service, all which pleads for them against our tyranny. Yet so bloody was this magician, that he wisheth for a sword to slay his harmless beast. A wand had been too much, yet he desires a sword. Whose beast would he have killed? was it not his own? and if he had killed his own beast, who should have been the loser by it? How impotent was this madness! The good man is merciful to his beast. They cannot declare their wants, nor tell their grievances; otherwise than by moaning in their several kinds: to an honest heart their very dumbness is a loud language. David will venture on a bear, rather than lose a lamb; Jacob will endure heat by day, and cold by night, rather than neglect his flocks; Moses will fight with odds, rather than the cattle shall perish with thirst; only a Balaam wants this mercy. It was a sign that he would fain have snitten Israel with a curse, that wished a sword in the sides of his faultless beast. It is ill falling into those hands, which the very beasts find unmerciful. While they live, it is mercy to supply them; when they must die, it is mercy to despatch them: in all things mercy becomes the servants of God.

5. "With man's voice." This was the manner of her disputing. Balaam's madness had turned him into a beast; and why might not one beast teach another? In some things the ass excelled her master. First, she saw the judgment, he was blind: common sense better instructed her, than reason and religion had enlightened him. Beasts cannot examine the occasion of their employments, their masters should. Secondly, the ass had a tongue of equity; the prophet a tongue, hand, and heart of iniquity; he would do ill, she labours to prevent him; he intends Israel's destruction, she means his preservation. Not seldom have we seen a drunken rider on the back of a sober beast; inasmuch that one said wittily, the horses stand at the tavern door like men, while their masters are playing the beasts within. Thirdly, the ass was not capable of sin, and did therefore justify herself; the master was so mad upon sin, that he would needs ruin himself.

Observations. 1. The weaker vessel may hold the better liquor. The unlearned lay hold on heaven, whereas men of knowledge often wallow in the lusts of flesh and blood. (August.) We are ordained to judge the angels; but if we degenerate from our prerogative, angels, men, infidels, harlots, yea, even beasts and stones, shall be our judges. Because when we ask in our daily prayers, that the will of God may be done on earth as it is in heaven; we are so far from matching this proportion, that there is not the poorest creature in the air, earth, or deep, but in their kinds go beyond us. (Bern.) But let us know, though we have the beasts our servants in the labours of this world, they shall not be our companions; suffering the torments of hell. Howsoever the profane epicure in the pleasures of life would rather be a man than beast; yet coming to his answer, he would rather be a beast than a man. How willingly after death would Balaam have

changed conditions with his beast; vainly wishing that himself had been the ass, and that ass the prophet!

2. As Balaam proceeds in frowardness, so doth the ass in reprehension. First, he went aside out of God's way, and she went aside out of his way; so her error was a reproof of his. When things go cross with us, let us consider our crossness to the will of our Maker. Secondly, as he went forward with his wicked intendments, so she dashed his foot against the wall, to put him in mind of his malicious projects, and, if it were possible, by the bruising of a limb to save the whole body and soul. Thirdly, because he was carried headlong with the hope of wages, she lay down to stay his course. Had there been the least spark of grace in him, this falling down of his beast might have taught him to fall down on his knees, and to deprecate that danger which an ordinary capacity would have suspected. In sin there may be security, there can be no safety. Wickedness makes guilty men fear where is no cause; Balaam had cause enough, but no grace to fear. Fourthly, because in his anger he smote her for stopping his haste, she opened her mouth to reprove his injustice. Thus at every turn she answered him, in every passage she was quit with him. We cannot run so fast, but God can overtake us; nor be so cunning, but he can teach even a beast to over-reach us.

3. The sensual creatures are set to condemn our sins, and to reflect our evils upon us. Peter hath a cock to tell him his cowardice, and Balaam an ass to reprove his avarice. There is no creature dumb, when God bids it speak: if there were no preachers to declaim, no conscience to accuse, the very creatures themselves would cry; the beds, boards, walls, windows, markets, closets should have tongues to condemn us. We need not wish for angels from heaven, or the dead from hell, to warn us; for besides Moses and the prophets, besides Christ and the apostles, besides the gospel and a multitude of preachers, the very stones would speak against us. Whither can we turn our eyes, and not see an object rebuking our iniquities? In their rebellion against us, they are dumb interpreters of our rebellion against our Maker. In their mute inability to declare their grievances, they tax our stubbornness, that have tongues to speak, and yet will not confess our sins. When they pine for want of meat, they show us our demerits, that have brought a curse upon them and ourselves, and that we suffer in their ruin. We can take signals by ravens and screech-owls, and presently talk of graves and corpses: superstition hath taught fools to understand the language of birds; would devotion could teach us to understand the groaning of all creatures under the bondage of our corruption, Rom. viii. 22.

There is a divine voice, that cries against our sins; The Lord gave his voice from heaven, "and that a mighty voice," Psal. lxxviii. 33. There is an angelic voice; an angel cried "with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth!" Rev. viii. 13. There is a human voice, the dictation of reason; every man's conscience condemneth sin: a voice within thee, which is against thee; a loud voice to every one's self, though not heard of others. And there is a dumb voice: so Abel's blood had a tongue to cry against murder; the walls and beams have a tongue against oppression; the fields and vineyards have a tongue against drunkenness and excess. Stephen had as many mouths as he had wounds, calling for justice; and there be as many tongues as there are creatures. Yea, there is an infernal voice: the devils have thundering voices; they become (as it were)

hoarse with accusing us; day and night they cease not to put up bills and declarations against us. Yet there is a penitentiary voice. How ought we to lift up our voices and weep for our sins, lift up our voices and cry for forgiveness, when so many thousand voices cry against us! All our comfort is, there is a saving voice, the voice of a Mediator that speaks for us: and it is a voice of blood too; but such a voice as "speaketh better things than the blood of Abel," Heb. xii. 24. This voice God will hear, when he stops his ears to all the rest. It is a voice that cries for mercy, and may it obtain mercy for us all.

4. There is no beast deserves so much wonder as this of Balaam; and that for three things: first, her common sense was advanced above the reason of her rider; so that for the time, the beast was the man, and the man was the beast: not by any transmigration or permutation of souls, after the fancy of the Pythagoreans; but by Satan's hand over the one, and God's power in the other, the prophet became brutish, and the beast prophetic. Secondly, her eye was enlightened to be capable of seeing an angel. Among all the properties of this beast, I do not read any commendation of his sight; but rather find it to be dull and heavy, scarce apprehending a bodily object that is not too apparent. But to see a spirit, and that spirit which his rider could not discern, was far above nature. Thirdly, her mouth was opened to speak: now to hear a word come from that tongue, which was only used to bray, was strange and uncouth. Who could but stand amazed at such a sight, at such a voice, at such a discourse, from so silly a creature! That a beast whose nature is noted for incapacity, should out-reason a man, her master, a professed prophet, was in the height of miracles.

But what can hinder the will of the Almighty, that doth all things with the same facility? *Non laborat in maximis Deus, non fastidit in minimis*, says Ambrose; i. e. God spends no labour in the greatest, and does not feel disdain in the least, things. There is no impossibility, where he is pleased to give a dispensation. Yea, as all extraordinary things are only done by him, so what ordinary thing can be done without him? Our eye could no more see a beast, than a beast can see an angel, had he not thus enabled it. He that made all eyes, can easily make them dim or clear at his pleasure. The Syrians had eyes good enough, yet God so held them that they could not see the man that led them, 2 Kings vi. 18. The ass had a dull eye, yet saw a spirit: he that shut the one, opened the other. If his power can make stones to speak, how much more creatures of sense! That evil spirit spake in a serpent; why is it more that a good spirit should speak in the mouth of a beast? We do teach birds to speak those sentences they understand not: if man can do this, how far can his Maker go! He can as easily create a voice without a body, as a body without a voice. We may not distrust, we may wonder; let us compare the act with the Author, and all is easy.

5. We read but of one beast in the Scripture upon which God wrought such a miracle. One, to witness his power; and but one, to show his wisdom; for wonders cease to be wonders when they are common. The antichristian church hath made them superfluously frequent; and for this one, they have many beasts that speak and do strange things, if we will believe them. As that of St. Anthony of Padua's horse, that knelt down to worship the holy host: yet we had a man in England that taught his horse neater tricks, and we had not the faith to think it a miracle. They tell us how St. Francis commanded a wolf to hurt no more lambs; and the wolf came to him, and put his paw into St. Francis's hand, and thereby made him

a promise; marry he said nothing. Not to speak of their parrot, that being pursued by the hawk, and flying over St. Thomas of Canterbury's tomb, cried to him for help; whereupon the hawk fell down dead, and the bird escaped. Nor of St. Francis's preaching to the birds, and their attentive patience, yea, thanks to him for his good sermon: or the swallows holding their peace at his rebuke. They tell us of Bishop Trian, who having killed his cow and calf to entertain St. Patrick, found them both feeding in his meadow the next morning; only we do not read of aught they said to him. And of a woman, that to make her bees fruitful, did put a consecrated host into the hive; where the bees built a chapel with an altar, doors and windows, a steeple with bells, and sung their canonical hours, and kept watch like monks in their cloisters; and was not here a goodly convent made in a bee-hive? It is no wonder that beasts speak words, when bees can say their prayers and receive the communion. Yea, they profess more, even to give language to images, blocks and stones. Beasts have tongues, though no speech; sense, though they want reason; images have neither reason, nor tongues, nor sense. So the image of the blessed Virgin is reported to bid St. Bernard good morrow; and to charge Hyacinth, when he fled from the Tartarians, to take her and her Son along with him: to bid the sexton open the church door, and let in Alexius; and thus to encourage Thomas Aquinas, Thou hast written well of me, what reward wilt thou have? Were not these very proper miracles?

They refuse Christ speaking in his word, and listen to his speaking in a rood. But, as when Agesilaus was told of one that did excellently counterfeit the nightingale, and was entreated to hear him, he replied, Why I have heard the nightingale herself: so what need we listen to these counterfeit voices of Christ, when we have heard the Word of God himself? He is too prodigal a spendthrift of the stock of his faith, that shall give credit to their forgeries. I had rather be of his mind, who when his friend told him of a strange matter, and added withal that he would not have believed it had he not seen it; answered, And no more will I. This we find, that since the brightness of the gospel, God doth rarely work miracles, but Satan is often permitted to do signs and wonders. We are not bid to expect miracles from heaven, we are to suspect the delusions of hell.

There be yet remaining certain metaphorical allusions and moral observations, wherewith I conclude.

1. This beast never spake before, never after; only this once, and that was but an expostulation and a reply. Some dissolute sinners are like this ass; their eyes are never opened, nor their tongues unloosed, but once; they see not the sword of God's vengeance, nor fall to their devout prayers, till they come to their death-beds. These fools would buy knowledge, when Wisdom hath shut up her shop. Never to spare till we come to the bottom of the purse, is a frugality next to beggary. Men sing and take their pleasure in prosperity, and open not their mouths to Heaven, unless in blasphemy: in the day of trouble they cry for help; but if they will not speak to God in their health, can they hope he should speak to them in their sickness.

But God hath said, Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will hear thee, Psal. l. 15. True, but this must be such a voice as he is acquainted withal. Hath he heard it daily in petitions and praises? then he will know it familiarly in distress. Otherwise he will count it a strange voice, and none of his family's. Strangers hear not the voice of Christ, nor will Christ hear the voice of strangers. He that never would

learn to read, and yet hopes at last push to be prompted with a psalm of mercy, shall be put away with a *non legit*. God is fain to deal with wicked men, as we do with skittish horses in a pasture, which we cannot take till we get them at a gate; even to bring them to the gates of death before they will be tamed. Pray continually, saith the apostle, 1 Thess. v. 17; mind that exercise that you may be perfect in it? Other duties have their several seasons: there is a time to weep, and a time to rejoice; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time to speak, and a time to hold our peace, Eccl. iii. 2, &c.; but pray continually. Let us pray while we can speak, that God, like a kind Father, may hear our groans and pity us when we cannot speak.

2. The ass spake to better her master, not herself: and so do many, that have heaven in their lips, and the image of hell in their lives; that are excellent at the muses, but have no acquaintance with the graces. We may say of their learning, as it was of Galba's wit, *Male habitat, it dwells ill*. They are like some unfortunate swimmers, that save their endangered fellows and drown themselves. Or oculists, that make others see clearly, while themselves have sore eyes. Or physicians, that prescribe a good diet, and keep a bad. Or the Israelites in captivity, that made bricks to build the Egyptians' houses, and had none of their own. Or the Indians, that enrich the Spaniards out of their golden mines, and yet are themselves the most beggarly people of the earth. They use their gifts, as if a man should use monies only to count them. Plutarch writes of an old man that found reverence of children in Lacedemon, and contempt in all Greece besides: All the Greeks, said he, know what is right and proper, but the Lacedemonians alone practise it. He is a monster, that hath a tongue larger than his hand; many good words, and no good deeds. Thus the salt of the earth, after it hath seasoned others, may lose its own savour. They that are the light of the world, may carry the light behind them, guiding others, not their own feet. They minister occasion of their own sentence: Out of thine own mouth, thou wicked servant. They make their learning a mercenary art, who live themselves differently to what they instruct others to live. The good commander says not to his soldiers, Go, but, Let us go; what you see me do, do likewise; as Gideon, Judg. vii. 17.

Yet might the ass's counsel have done Balaam good, though not herself. Let not the hearer become a judge, and turn his pew into a tribunal. What would such men have said, if they had heard Solomon preach after all his scandalous sins? Say thou with Samuel, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth," 1 Sam. iii. 9; and not, Hear, Lord, for thy servant speaketh: and what speaks he, but judgment on the preacher? It is enough for me to eat my own dinner, not to mark how much he eats that dressed it. Indeed I would have every prophet's life a martyrdom to his doctrine; for though his goodness gives not salvation, yet it may give the sweetness: this is to preach with a witness. Where the Spirit speaketh twice, by illumination and sanctification, he is more heard than where he speaketh but once: and guests mistrust that cheer, whereof the host refuseth to taste.

3. Let no man plead simplicity, when a beast sees an angel; nor inability to speak, when an ass opens her mouth. Who can complain his own rudeness and slowness of speech, when a beast is enabled to convince her master? We excuse our own coldness, when we are occasioned to reprove impiety, by the want of eloquence; yet an ass could do it. There is no mouth whereinto God cannot put words; yea, so

doth he glorify the wisdom of his own election, in confounding the prudent of this world by the foolish, 1 Cor. i. 27. Out of the mouth of babes he will derive praise to his name. He hides those things from the wise, which he reveals to babes, Matt. xi. 25. He that can exalt the eyes of a beast to see a spirit, can advance the dulllest apprehensions, and make them capable of the mysteries of life. He chose his apostles among none of the great rabbins, yet who ever saw further into the secrets of heaven? The word of the Lord is able to make wise the simple, Psal. xix. 7. Some have capacity without honesty, and they have eyes without hands; some have honesty and small capacity, and they have better hands than eyes; some have both; but miserable are they that have neither. Say not, I hear and profit not, because I understand not; for thou art promised to have wisdom for the asking, Jam. i. 5. He that will not pray to be wise, may sit still and be a fool.

4. When the ass had done this miraculous service, she remained an ass still; her skin was no better after it than the rest of her kind. Many men have done God service, without any blessed recompence. Ashur was his rod to scourge Israel; that done, they fell under a sharper lash themselves. We use rubbish to scour our vessels; when those vessels are clean, we fling away the rubbish. Ahithophel could advise David well; he was the worst counsellor to himself that might be. His words were the oracles of God to the state, to his own heart mere paradoxes. So we have heard very judiciously discourse of good husbandry; meanwhile themselves are the worst husbands in a country. They are like bridges that help men over the stream, at last themselves rot and sink in. When this beast had done speaking with man's voice, she lived an ass, and died an ass. So many an unholty Machiavel, that hath been admired for policy, falls under Jehoiakim's curse, to be buried with the burial of an ass, Jer. xxii. 19: he lived a fox, but dies an ass.

5. This ass spake the truth: no matter who speaks, so he speaks good matter. Sometimes a jewel is found in a dunghill; and wisdom is most applauded where it is least expected. The fathers have compared human learning to Balaam's ass: it may sometimes speak to purpose; and bring men to church, as the ass carried Christ to the temple. Not the Lord, but we have need of it, Mark xi. 3. Is there nothing but the temple of the Lord with the Jews, but the word of the Lord with us? Is there no water to be found in the jawbone of a Philistine ass? May not the crown of the king of Ammon be set on the head of the king of Jerusalem? 2 Sam. xii. 30. St. Paul says, Be not spoiled with philosophy, Col. ii. 8: some are spoiled for want of philosophy. Nor does he condemn all eloquence, but a sophisticate and meretricious eloquence. Would not the eloquence of Tully or Seneca have done good service in the cause of Zion? Indeed, that which is against Zion, is a poisonous eloquence. Nor doth he dislike philosophers simply, but the philosophers of this world. The slavery of the Gibeonites is an ease to the free-born Israelites. Not Jews only, but Gentiles had a hand in the building of God's temple. Even pagans have their arts from heaven, and therefore may justly be improved to the honour of the Giver. If there be a Tyrian that can work more curiously in gold, silk, or purple, than an Israelite, why should he not be employed about the sanctuary? Their heathenism is their own, their skill is their Maker's. Many a one works for the church of God, which yet hath no part in it. Wherever truth is, she is mine, saith Austin. We may salute Athens in our way to Jerusalem, as St. Paul did. The vessel

of water, that is, human knowledge, may be turned into wine, that is, divine knowledge. Indeed *Sic transcendendum, non hic habendum*; i. e. We pass by this knowledge, we dwell not on it. What Aristippus said of other sciences and philosophy, is more true of all other arts and divinity: they that study the other, and neglect this, are like Penelope's wooers, that made love to the waiting-women. whatsoever we learn or know, we submit and refer all to the knowledge of Jesus Christ.

6. But one ass spake; this is no privilege for others; the rest can do no more than bray. One swallow makes no summer; nor do singular examples constitute general rules. Presumption encourage itself by one of a thousand; and despair will not take a thousand for one. If a thousand men be assured to pass over a ford safe, and but one to miscarry, desperation says, I am that one. If a thousand vessels must needs miscarry in a gulf, and but one escape, presumption says, I shall be that one. We read but of one sinner that was converted at his last hour of life: millions that had less iniquity, yet have found less mercy. The dissolute flatters himself, If one, why not I? Other beasts have not attempted to speak, because this one did. Yet brutish men look for heaven dying, that never looked toward it living, because one sinner sped so happily. Christ was then upon the cross fast by him; art thou sure he will be so near thy death-bed? Lazarus and some few others were raised from their graves; the whole world else must sleep till doomsday. Enoch and Elias were translated, and did not see death; which of all the sons of Adam had this privilege besides? Paul was rapt up to the third heaven before his dissolution; none were so before him, none so after him. It is no trusting upon precedents, where we have manifest rules. The rule is, "Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth," Eccl. xii. 1; lest he forget thee in thy age. "Seek the Lord while he may be found," Isa. lv. 6: this were but slender counsel, if he might be found at any time. We use to mend our ships in the harbour, and not let their leaks alone till we come into the main. We harness ourselves before we go to war, and not have it to provide in the battle. The walls of a city that are not repaired in peace, will hardly be mended in a siege. Let us speak when we should, or not look to be heard when we would.

One ass spake in her life, one sinner was saved in his death: there was one, why should we despair? there was but one, why should we presume? In the mean time, we can never make that too sure, whereof while we live we can never be sure enough. Grace to repent, without space, is uncomfortable to our friends. Space to repent, without grace, is unprofitable to ourselves. Grace and space, shall both comfort them and save us.

VERSE 17.

These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever.

From many things doth the word of God draw comparisons, that it might speak according to our capacities. Every creature hath this emergent use, to teach us. "The heavens declare the glory of God," Psal. xix. 1: how can we look upon them, and forget their Maker? The stars not being pure in his sight, may put us in mind of our uncleanness,

which reached so far as even to blemish their glory. The sun gives us beams of obedience, while he keeps his course, knows his rising and going down. The wind breathes upon us a similitude of the Holy Ghost, John iii. 8, which comes and goes, and no man knows whence or whither. The dews drop upon us the memory of that dew of Hermon which fell upon the hill of Zion. The hen gathering her chickens doth, as it were, cluck us under the wings of Christ. The crane chatters to us how poorly we shall speak in death, Isa. xxxviii. 14. The lilies and ravens forbid our solicitude for apparel or food. The camel at the needle's eye, is an image of the covetous man at heaven-gates. In the last verse, a beast taught a prophet to obey: a wondrous one; some have assigned her a place in the zodiac, in the sign of *Cancer*. Whereat other astronomers storming, they were asked, whether they thought Noah's raven, or Samson's foxes, or David's lion, or Elisha's bears, or Babel's dragon, placed there, rather than Balaam's wonderful ass? Now we are come to certain wells; out of which, if they were full of water, we might draw to quench our thirst; but they are empty, and without comfort: "wells without water," &c.

These ungodly deceivers are here described by Their unprofitableness, Wells without water. Their unstableness, Clouds carried with a tempest. Their unhappiness, To whom the mist of darkness, &c.

Their punishment is proportioned to their wickedness. A well, if it be empty of water, will be full of fog; a tempestuous cloud is but a blustering mist; here is all mist and darkness; therefore the penalty is the mist of darkness. They have shadowed the light in this world, therefore no light but an uncomfortable shadow belongs to them in the world to come.

"Wells without water." A fountain to a thirsty traveller is a welcome sight; but if it be without water, it is a grievous mockery. Pastors are like to wells in divers regards.

1. They are wells for constancy: they keep their residence, men know where to find them. Passengers may abuse the fountains, they cannot remove them. You fetch water at these wells every sabbath, yea, even on common days when your thirst calls for it: we teach you on the Lord's day; there is no day wherein we are not ready to comfort you. Indeed you should give us leave to fill our fountains; if we do perpetually draw, and not suffer the springs to have their time of supplying, we must be empty. You sometimes shut up your conduits on the week-days, or else they would lack water; they are so full on Sundays, that they run over. Therefore we study all the week, and fill our cisterns, that on the sabbath you may fill your pitchers. Fishers are allowed time to mend their nets; mowers to whet their scythes; bees to gather sweetness, before we eat their honey. God's temples are our hives; there you are sure of our honey; yet you must not deny us the flowers, the Holy Scriptures, fathers, and other good books, together with our own meditations, out of which we suck it: and to do all this requires time. But still we keep our orbs, and therefore are called stars; we have our stations, and therein are wells. It is true, that our waters do good as they run in the channels; but they are best drawn from the well-head. They that content themselves with reading at home, and neglect the public ministry in the church, omit the spring, to quench their thirst at the channel.

2. They are wells of piety: the water of life, the word of salvation, is in them. We must distinguish the waters that be above the heavens from

the waters that are below the heavens, Gen. i. 7. The well above is the fountain of glory; a spring that multiplies itself into a river; that "pure river of the water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God," Rev. xxii. 1. The well below is the fountain of grace; and this is "a well of water springing up into everlasting life," John iv. 14. Either of them is a well of life; the one inchoate, the other consummate; the one preparatory, the other satisfactory; the former a prebation, the latter a fruition; that a well of comfort, this a river of pleasure, Psal. xxxvi. 8. Indeed Christ is the well of life, without whom our thirst can never be quenched; that "fountain opened to the house of David," Zech. xiii. 1, that well of Jacob, John iv. 6, watering the whole face of the ground, Gen. ii. 6. A well of infinite depth, without bottom; of everlasting abundance, for it hath eternal springs; of satisfying virtue, for he that drinks of it shall never thirst more. This is that fountain which supplies all the wells, which fills all our cisterns; of whose fulness we have all received, John i. 16. It never failed the thirsty passenger, never offended a humble receiver, never was shut up or denied to the faithful seeker. We are His wells; and the water he puts into us, is the word of the gospel. "With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation," Isa. xlii. 3. We are earthen vessels, yet do hold a heavenly treasure; wells of clay, yet full of the water of life. He that refuseth the water for the well's sake, shall perish for that contempt's sake.

3. They are wells of sanctity, and therefore must be clean. Indeed their uncleanness cannot defile the water; it is of its own nature so pure, that it will work itself from all infection. Yet may the foulness of the glass cause men to dislike the good liquor. For the sin of Eli's sons "men abhorred the offering of the Lord," 1 Sam. ii. 17. If they had not been sons of Eli, yet being priests of God, their very calling (one would think) should have infused some holiness into them. Yet may the white ephod cover black sins; and vices, like those spices, 2 Sam. xvii. 19, may be hid in the well, while there is wheat spread over the mouth of it. Who are devils, but they that were once glorious angels? If the lantern be broken, an easy wind will blow out the light. There be commonly two buckets belonging to a well: the one bucket draws doctrine, the other example; and this latter is more employed. As it has been said, While they neglect what we say, they imitate what we do. I have heard of here and there a pastor, that hath outlived all the people of his parish: I never heard of any that hath outlived all the sins of his parish. Yet must not the infirmities of the wells bring the water into contempt: let none dislike the service of God for the sin of man. This were to make holy things guilty of our profaneness, and to offend God because he hath been offended.

4. They are wells of knowledge; and of sufficient depth; skilled in the mysteries of salvation. Shallow pits are full of mud and frogs; they may make a noise in the pulpit, but it is a harsh sound, which rather offends the ear than profits the soul; nothing but frothy stuff comes from them. Wells are deep: the priests' lips preserve knowledge; they can tell how to resolve the doubtful, to hearten the fearful, to convince the wilful, to comfort the sorrowful. They are good physicians, and have medicines for all diseases. They are able to clear difficulties, to reconcile antilogies, to answer objections, to confute errors, to apply their discourse to all occasions. So St. Augustine professeth of St. Ambrose, who went from Africa to Milan to hear him; that while he was penetrated with the eloquence of his discourse,

he was penetrated also with the truth of it. He is no babler; neither *spermologus, qui mera vox est*; nor *matæologus, qui mera nō est*; i. e. neither a talker, who is mere voice; nor a vain talker, who is mere darkness. But he hath a key to fit every lock, a gracious faculty to take every ear, to pierce every soul. Moses was a prophet learned; none like him in Israel, Deut. xxxiv. 10. Indeed I do not like the wells that are so deep, that we can draw no water out of them; men that have excellent talents, but they lie buried; that know much themselves, and impart little to others. A man of meaner gifts, by his assiduity of preaching, shall do more good, than he that breeds a sermon, like *elephanti partum*, a year's conception, which being born, only amazeth the hearers, and makes them at their wits' end with admiration. We put down the bucket into these wells, hoping to draw water, and bring up nothing but air. Concealed learning is but like a candle in a dark lantern, or the fowler's light, to see which way this game lies. The good pastor is light in a crystal glass, that shines every way, to the good of men and glory of God.

5. They are wells of pity, full of compassion; bowels that yearn for the danger of men's souls. Jeremiah had such a well in his head, or at least he wished such a well in his heart: "Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears!" Jer. ix. 1. The prophet before him is not in this behind him: "I will weep bitterly, labour not to comfort me," Isa. xxii. 4. David contends with them both who shall weep most; "Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law," Psal. cxix. 136. Among all, our Lord Jesus is the chief mourner; who having no sin of his own, wept and bled for the sins of others. Obstinate offenders are dry pits; nothing can pump the water of repentance out of their eyes. For their wickedness God plagues the land; that thousands cry in pain, Our bowels, our heads, our hearts: thus they give others cause to mourn, while their own mouths are filled with laughter. All that tempest was for Jonah, yet Jonah alone is fast asleep: that unspeakable agony of Christ was for the sins of his disciples and chosen, yet even then the disciples were asleep. The destroying angel's sword lays heaps upon heaps, and multiplieth his deadly wounds; and are we still dry wells, that have no tears to spend for our sins? The fire is kindled, and what shall quench it, if these fountains be without water? If there were not some Ezras and Joshuas, Isaiahs, Joels, and Jeremiahs among us, pouring out their souls before God in cries and lamentations for our iniquities, what should become of us? The Lord hath marked the houses where these mourning wells be, Ezek. ix. 4; and if we would not only escape the judgment ourselves, but even turn away wrath from others, let our heads be fountains, and our eyes conduits, sending out floods of tears, not so much for the punishments we feel, as for the cause of those punishments which too many feel not. The crown of preachers is the tears of their hearers: when we find you with moist eyes, we then hope there is good wrought on your souls.

6. They are wells of peace and amity, such as reconcile feuds and appease discords; as the water of a well serves to quench flames. In such a combustion, for want of rivers, we run to wells and conduits; yet, alas, for the quieting of jars and controversies, you seldom appeal to your pastors: a fault which St. Paul long ago condemned in his Corinthians, that they were too apt to consult lawyers, 1 Cor. vi. 7. And yet many of them, like Laeſis, wind off more in one turn than they span in five. Were your wells

full to the brim, there be buckets enough belonging to the law to drench you. There is a holy water able to put out the fire of contention, the gospel of peace, or of the covenant: so was the well of Beersheba called, The well of an oath. Indeed when this water is offered to a peevish and perverse stomach, it turns into bitterness; and makes him swell yet more against his neighbour, yea, against his teacher. If the suspected wife were guilty, she would swell after a draught of those waters of trial, Numb. v.: so dissolute souls swell against their reprehender. Our message is the message of peace, our doctrine is the gospel of peace, our office is to make peace; we are all for reconciliation; reconciling God to you, you to God, 2 Cor. v. 19, one with another, all with every one, every one with all. We speak peace, we speak for peace, we wish you peace; peace with your neighbours, peace in your houses, peace in your hearts, peace in your consciences, and above all, that peace which passeth all understanding.

7. They are wells of charity; that do not only give good counsel with their lips, but good relief with their hands. The loins of the poor bless them, Job xxxi. 20: they are fountains where the beasts of the forest drink, and the wild asses quench their thirst, Psal. civ. 11. Charity becomes all men, but above all, the men of God. Yet, alas, in these times, we want wherewithal. What quantity of spiritual water soever be in us, there is little enough of temporal. Our springs be cut off: sacrifice hath besieged us, as Holofernes did Bethulia, and taken away our springs. While you had wells that yielded you nothing but foul puddle-waters, superstitious ceremonies instead of pure doctrines, all your channels ran into those pools, and swelled them to the brinks. Now you confess in your consciences that you draw from us the water of life, yet you deny us the water of livelihood, whereby we may subsist. We sit like disconsolate Elijah, by the brook Cherith; and if we have sustenance it must be by miracle, and for want of your just supply the brook is dried up, 1 Kings xvii. 5-7. If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it any great matter to reap your carnal things? 1 Cor. ix. 11. Will you not give the water of your wells for the water of life? The tenth of your increase is God's portion; do you look he should give you the cup of salvation, that deny him the cup of retribution? Do you live in him, and yet fear not to defraud him? The priest was wont to give alms, now he must be glad to receive it. If all his means can reach above necessity, to buy but one book to his study, one spring to his well, when that fails, he must sell it to buy another: his cloth is ever too short for two coats, the world will not allow him two springs. If the poor do not find our charity, it is because we are sick of their own disease, poverty. We may ask with one, How can they be beneficent, who are forced to be indigent? Yet howsoever our temporal waters fail, God grant our springs of grace to hold, that you may be saved.

"Without water." Thus pastors should be like wells, but these false teachers are wells without water. A blind guide, an ignorant physician, a candlestick without light, a penury without provision, a well without water, is a miserable privation. When the thirsty traveller, after much labour and grief, spies a fountain, he rejoiceth; but coming to it, and finding it dry, his joy is turned into sorrow, and he is ready to curse it for such a mockery; as our Saviour did the fruitless fig-tree, when he was hungry. Suppose we are thirsty and would drink, foul and would wash, hot and would be cooled, our houses are on fire and we would have them quenched; if we come to the well with our buckets, and find it empty,

we know not whether our grief or indignation be greater. When we are to build a house, we first look to the convenience of water, and refuse to dwell in a dry land. Yet whether the pastor that should moisten our souls, be a well without water, a formal fountain with never a spring to feed it, we examine not. We love a physician with abundance of medicines, a lawyer with variety of knowledge, a merchant with choice of wares, a rich man full of monies; we affect abundance in all perishable things; but for the water of life, so little serves us, that we do not mind whether the well be full or empty. But indeed, while the clouds above are restrained, the wells below will be soon dried. Unless the Spirit of grace distil down his holy dews into the hearts of his ministers, all will turn to barrenness, and the visible church appear like a wilderness.

1. Let all this teach us to thirst for the water of these wells, as the hart pants for the river when he is embost; or as David longed, "Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem!" 2 Sam. xxiii. 15: or as the woman of Samaria did, for the water, not of Jacob's well, but of Jesus' well; Lord, "give me this water, that I thirst not," John iv. 15. There is no corporal appetite so violent as thirst, when the extremity of heat hath wrought upon the radical moisture. Victorious Samson complains of it; yea, even that almighty Samson, Christ himself on the cross, cries, "I thirst." How sensible are we of this want in our bodies! yet our souls are dry, and we neither moisten them, nor pity their thirst. He is a rare man that never drinks till he be thirsty; nay, it is too common a fault, not to stay for any such occasion. Men drink before they are dry, they drink until they become dry; and thirst overtakes drunkenness; as fools run into the river to avoid a shower of rain. But for this living water, a little draught on the sabbath is enough for all the week. My soul longeth for thee, saith David, as the thirsty land; that opens itself in rifts and crannies, as if it would devour the clouds; so many chops, so many mouths, as it were crying to heaven for moisture. Blessed are they that thirst after righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

2. Let us duly prize and esteem the water of these wells. It is an unhappy way of learning, when we will not know the worth of a benefit, but only by the want of it. Three kings were confederated to make war upon Moab; and they were not sooner come into the parching wilds of Edom, than they are ready to die for thirst, 2 Kings iii. 9. If there were channels, yet no waters; the scorching beams of the sun had dried them up, and left them rather ditches than rivers. How precious now had a cup of cold water been! There is a season, when so poor a benefit will not be poorly valued. Even with this may a soul be comforted, even for this shall a soul be rewarded, Matt. x. 42. We read of a king, that sold himself and his city for a draught of water. This caused three kings to walk down and visit one poor prophet. Religion and necessity are (either of them) able to humble the stoutest heart: either zeal or need will make a prophet honoured. Oh what are the greatest monarchs of the world, if they want but water to their mouths! What can their crowns, and plumes, and rich arms avail them, when they are abridged of that which is but the drink of beasts? Therefore with dry tongues and lips do these three princes confer their common misery. So highly is water esteemed, that some philosophers have thought it a kind of seminal principle: *aqua*, as if it were a *qua*, i. e. from which all things spring.

Now what is elemental water to the water of life? What is a corporal thirst to the soul's necessity?

The Jews smarted for despising it, when they were driven to wander from sea to sea, and from north to east, to seek it; their young men and fairest virgins fainting for thirst, Amos viii. 12, 13. Our forefathers would have been glad of a concealed fountain, some few drops of this water: we have full wells, yea, rivers and streams, yet let it run at waste. We come to Jacob's well, but bring no pitchers with us, John iv. 11: our ears are at church, our hearts are at home. The waters of the sanctuary grow and flow, from the ankles to the knees, from the knees to the loins, from the loins up to the neck, Ezek. xlvii.; but we have not vessels to receive it. Either to this well you come not, or come and drink not, or drink and digest not; but *aut bibendum, aut abeundum*, i. e. you must either drink or depart. This fountain is the word of comfort; but many can find no sweetness in it, because their palates are so out of taste by the world. Christ refused the vinegar, because it was vinegar; these men taste the powers of the world to come, and will none of it, though it be the water of life. As David would not drink the water of Bethlehem, because it was the price of blood; and yet this did cost no blood, but the blood of Jesus Christ.

3. Do not abuse these wells, nor defile the waters: a troubled fountain cannot look clear. Of all men, the minister should be suffered to lead a quiet life, undisturbed, free from vexations. There is a woe due to him that polluteh the fountain, that shall cast aspersions on his pastor, to disable him in the hearts of his hearers. When Homer had spent many lines in disparaging the body of Thirsytes, he briefly describes his soul thus, that he was an enemy to Ulysses. We need say no more of a bad man; he is an enemy to his pastor; that is enough to brand him. While thy preacher is studying to apply the warm blood of Christ to thy heart, thou art studying to vex the best blood in his heart. We take care to save your souls, and many of you take care to molest our souls. While you deny us due maintenance, respect, and peace, you put us to spend that time in temporal provision for our bodies, which we should and would spend in spiritual comfort for your consciences. Supply us with springs, hearten us with encouragements, trouble not our waters, and we shall be to you the wells of salvation.

"Clouds that are carried with a tempest." In this comparison is shadowed out their variableness; where we have three considerations. First, the fitness of the metaphor. Secondly, the levity of these hypocrites, that are carried with a puff. Thirdly, the event of their dealing, which is to promise a shower, and yield nothing but a tempest.

For the metaphor, it is frequent in Holy Scripture. "Drop thy word toward the south," Ezek. xx. 46. My doctrine shall drop as the rain upon the tender herb, my speech distill as the dew and showers upon the grass, Deut. xxxii. 2. First, clouds are made to contain water, and preachers should be fitted and filled with wholesome doctrine. Secondly, clouds are drawn up by the sun, and teachers called to that holy profession by the Sun of righteousness. Thirdly, clouds are nearer to heaven than common waters, and ministers are advanced nearer to the secrets of God than other men. Fourthly, clouds hang in the air after a strange manner, and preachers live in the world in a wondrous sort: all the winds of the earth, and furies of hell, band against them, yet still they are supported by their Ordainer. Fifthly, clouds are set to distil rain upon the dry places of earth, and preachers to satisfy the thirsty soul. To give drink to the thirsty, is in other men a debt of charity, in us a debt of justice. A necessity is laid upon us, and woe unto us, if we yield not the former and the latter

rain, that God's ground may fructify! The rain coming down, returneth not again, "but watereth the earth, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater," Isa. lv. 10. So the word of God shall never return void, but accomplish the thing whereto it is sent: not a drop from these clouds shall be lost; but will either work to the confusion of them that resist it, or to the conversion of them that embrace it. The ground where these showers fall, must yield either flowers or weeds; and so be either blessed, or nigh unto cursing, Heb. vi. 7, 8. If they fall upon a proud heart, like some great mountain, off they glide, and leave it barren; if in the valley, a humble heart, they dwell there, and make it fruitful. As that royal prophet sings, Thy waters stand in the valleys, and they grow thick with corn.

But how can it be conceived, that the clouds above, being heavy with water, should not fall to the earth suddenly, seeing every heavy thing descendeth? It cannot be denied but the clouds are heavy, Job xxvi. 8; yea, the very winds, which are lighter than clouds, have their weight, Job xxviii. 25. Philosophy is here too defective; all the human learning in the world cannot give a sufficient reason for this. Only the word of God decides it: "Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters," Gen. i. 6. This was God's ordinance in the creation; and such is his providence in the disposition of the clouds, "He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds, and the cloud is not rent under them." There he bade them hang, till he that called them up, sent them down. There are those bottles of rain, as it were *in orbe non suo*, i. e. in a sphere not their own, thin as the liquor they contain: there they move up and down; and when his finger crusheth them, they drop again to their own place. By virtue of this command, the waters hang in the clouds, and the clouds in the air, and need no supporters. He can as easily hang water in the air, as he can hang the earth upon nothing. Some by that firmamentary division of the waters, have dreamt of a watery heaven above the stars, for the better mitigation of their heat. But the celestial bodies are of no fiery or elemental nature; nor have they such heat in them, as needs to be refrigerated. By the firmament is meant the air; the waters below it are seas and floods, the waters above it are the clouds. Which helps us to understand that of the Psalm, "Praise the Lord, ye waters that be above the heavens," Psal. cxlviii. 4; that is, above the lower region of the air. So, "The Lord thundered in the heavens, with hailstones and coals of fire," Psal. xviii. 13. Now thunder, lightning, and hail, come not properly from heaven, but from the air.

In sum, priests are clouds; this is no ignoble title. How often did the Lord appear to Moses in a cloud! How long did he walk with Israel in the pillar of a cloud! "I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy-seat," Lev. xvi. 2. The cloud was a figure of Christ; without whom we should never have seen God appear in the mercy-seat. When the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle, the tent was covered with a cloud, Exod. xl. 34. Our glorious Saviour sits upon a white cloud, Rev. xiv. 14. St. Paul speaks of a "cloud of witnesses," Heb. xii. 1. It is a happy church that is encompassed with a cloud of preachers. Man's heart is a plot of ground; which, before it be fruitful, must suffer a spiritual husbandry. First, it must be ploughed and broken up; it is so cold and stiff a clay, that it needs undergo the coulter. God was fain to shake the earth before he could move the jailer's heart. When the terror of sin and judgment works upon the natural conscience,

then the ploughshare reacheth the quick. Secondly, once ploughing is not sufficient, for it will quickly harden again of itself; there must be a second stirring. In prosperity it will never tell truth, but rather flatter that it may be flattered. But when the ground is softened, then put in the plough; the heart broken by affliction is fit to be tilled with the word. Thirdly, cast in the seed with joy and hope of a blessed harvest; sow it with the precious promises of Jesus Christ. Fourthly, then come the clouds, and they do their seasonable office, in pouring down kindly showers, both to raise and ripen the fruits of grace. Fifthly, after all this, weeds will grow; therefore we must fall to weeding, and hook out our lusts with the sickle of repentance. Thus the valleys shall stand thick with corn, till we rejoice and sing, Psal. lxx. 13.

The next point is their levity, Carried with a wind. Some are not stable in the truth, but it is not possible for any man to be constant in errors, for the next fancy will take him off from the former. As wanton children are won to be quiet with change of toys, so the devil is fain to please such men with variety of crotchets. He forgets what he hath been, understands not what he is, and knows not what he will be. But like a banished man, when his back is upon his own country, all the world is his way. He is fled, with Jonah, from the word of God, and now it matters not whither he makes his voyage. From a Brownist to Anabaptism, from an Anabaptist to Arianism, from an Arian to the Family of love: still he is "carried with a tempest;" and does not more eagerly embrace the air where he is first a cloud gendered, than he rails on it when he is removed. He is water, and water hath ever been an emblem of inconstancy. So Jacob called his son Reuben, "unstable as water," Gen. xlix. 4. Whether it be a cloud above or a billow below, it is carried with the wind. There is a rack-wind, and that drives the clouds: there is a ground-wind, and that tosseth the waves. So St. James compares the inconstant to a wave driven and tossed with the wind, Jam. i. 6.

To exemplify this unstableness. First, water is continually running from coast to coast, and as it changeth currents, it changeth names and colours. Names, according to the countries it salutes. Colours; for in puddles it is black, against rocks foamy, in the sea green, in sweet rivers clear. Such a cloud as here is meant, is at Rome a papist, at Munster an Anabaptist, in England a protestant. Indeed he taries no where; for his heart is but an inn, and all his thoughts travellers; if they lodge for a night, they are gone in the morning, and leave him without taking leave of him. Secondly, water runs to the lowest parts, seeking out holes and receptacles where to hide itself. So these wavering clouds love corners and private conventicles, and leave the beaten way, though it lead directly to heaven. They scorn with every common understanding to go through the gate, and therefore will climb over the wall. Thirdly, water poured out leaves nothing behind in the vessel: oil and wine will leave their savour, and milk its colour; but there is no remaining sign of water that it was there. So their steps be fluid, and no more stable is their memory; either buried in oblivion, or famous for infamy. A cloud both alters the shape with the wind, now appearing like a house, then like a camel; and the seat with the wind, now hovering over this climate, then over that. They are wax ready tempered, that soon taketh a new impression. Or chaff, which when the good grain sinks down and is saved, becomes the sport of the wind, Psal. i. 4. Their plague is answerable; they "shall be chased as the chaff of the mountains before the wind, or like a

rolling thing before the whirlwind," Isa. xvii. 13. The tempest hath driven them to and fro upon earth, at last it shall blow them to hell. They are like loose teeth in the mandible, of more trouble than use. They set themselves for so many things, that they are good for nothing. A pluralist in religion is indeed a neutralist, and seeks the truth by all ways but that where he is sure to find it. The Moon spake to her mother to get her a coat made; but no tailor could fit her: for if he made it fit for her in the change, it would be too little in the full; if it were fit for the full, it would be too large for the wane: so we must have for every day a new coat, or none. The inconstant soul is as hard to suit; only, after the change of many places, there is one that will hold, the place of darkness; after the change of many fashions, there is one that will last, a coat of torment. But for us, let us stand fast in the faith, and hold that we have, that we may never lose our crown, Rev. iii. 11.

"Carried with a tempest." They promise a shower, and bring a storm. This is their mockery: they have four inconveniences of the clouds.

1. They hinder the sun from so clearly extending his beams to comfort the earth. An antichristian priest is a cloud gotten before the sun, whose very doctrine tends to darken the light. That "ignorance makes saints," how much is hell beholden to them for such an opinion! They call that the mother of devotion, which was indeed the daughter of transgression. We use to say for the body; If nature lose some vigour or virtue in one sense, she recompenseth and mends it in another; they that see ill, hear the better; and he that wants his smelling, hath the better taste. But if the soul lose her eyes, she will hardly find the way to heaven; nor can we say, any faculty is improved, any grace advanced in her, for being blind. There is a woe to them that withhold the truth in unrighteousness, Rom. i. 18. Not sanctity, but iniquity, is the child of darkness. Sin was begot in secret, betwixt Satan and Eve; and Vice is the brood of Nox and Acheron, say the poets.

2. Clouds are unthankful: for they are drawn up by the sun, and set in the lower region of the air; there being placed, they not seldom dishonour that sun which exhaled them, by darkening his refulgent beams. I do not say that false teachers are called by Christ; they rather prefer themselves without invitation, making the church a market, and buying their places, and those, too often, of eminency; which they fill, like clouds, with a blustering and stormy presence. But in the mean time they obscure that light, which the Sun of righteousness would give to his church by better instruments. Thus they have the places of Christ, and the arms of antichrist; and most ungratefully dishonour that name by which they would be called.

3. Clouds do harm when they vent themselves in a tempest; their moisture is not so profitable, as their violence is hurtful. They that never preach but in thunder, whose words be flashes of lightning, hell and damnation being almost the period of every sentence, are black, pitchy, and pernicious clouds; presenting the face of God tempestuous, and the brow of heaven cloudy; for so we call the frowning, a cloudy forehead. These are engendered of clouds, as poets write of the centaurs. They that hang their faith on such men's lips, do but, like Ixion, embrace a cloud instead of Juno. Fabius Maximus resolving to prolong the war, waited on Hannibal's progress, and encamped himself on the high grounds. Terentius gave Hannibal battle, and was put to the worst; but then Fabius came down the high grounds, and got the day. Whereupon Hannibal said, he ever

thought that same cloud which hanged on the hills would at one time or other give a tempest. So these clouds never spend themselves, but with a storm to the church of God.

4. They are unprofitable clouds; "clouds without water," as Jude calls them, ver. 12; empty bottles, which promise the thirsty earth relief, and have never a drop in them. Or if they have any water, they let it fall where it can do no good. As sometimes we have seen dry pastures and chopped grounds, as it were with open mouths calling upon the clouds for rain: anon a cloud gathers, and comes down; but where? It misseeth the needy fields, and falls in a dirty lane; balking the place where it is expected, and fouling the way where it might be spared. This the natural clouds do by God's disposing; but I speak of rational, wilful, spiteful clouds. Many rich men are such conditioned clouds: they have store of wealth, and some they will part with; but it shall be to such as have no need of it; and that either for fear, or favour, or in hope of honour; which is in the proverb, pouring water into the sea. But to the poor, distressed, and thirsty souls, they will not afford a drop. While they live, they will empty a bag to the lawyer; which is to fall in a dirty lane. When they die, they make rich men their heirs and executors; not in imitation of God, To him that hath shall be given; but to witness their dear regard of money, which when they can keep no longer, they bequeath to them that will keep it: as if they durst trust any thing sooner than their Maker. So do they love the world, that they love all them that love it: and when the hand of death crusheth these clouds, they fall into a quagmire.

You see by this time what clouds they are, against which our apostle inveighs. Tempestuous clouds, that raise storms and factions, and trouble the peace of the air. Black clouds, that turn day into night by their errors. Wandering clouds, that never keep any station. Dissembling clouds, that promise moisture and have none. Malicious clouds, that intend nothing but mischief. Foolish clouds, that make mire rather than cause fertility.

But withal, there be commendable clouds. There is difference between a shadowing cloud and a showering cloud. There is a bright, azure, sky-coloured cloud; like that heaven to which it is near; whose life is in heaven, Phil. iii. 20: a fruitful cloud, that causeth the earth to fructify, Hos. ii. 21, 22. The Lord fills these clouds with his holy dews, which they let fall in due time and place. They water the earth, and come down like showers upon the mown grass. In their days shall the righteous flourish, and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth, Psal. lxxii. 6, 7.

Besides the former resemblances, preachers are clouds in spending themselves upon the dry earth. When a cloud hath emptied itself of water, it ceaseth to be: so we consume ourselves to do you good. Love turns us into lamps, that we waste ourselves to give light unto others; into silkworms, that we spin out our own bowels, to make you garments. The olive would not leave her fatness, nor the fig-tree her sweetness, nor the vine her cheerful liquor, Judg. ix. 8—13: we refuse not to part with our fatness and sweetness, our blood and marrow, our rest and quiet for your sakes. Yea, like clouds, we willingly consume ourselves in showers, that you may bring forth fruit unto Jesus Christ. This riseth to the conviction of them that will not be bettered by the good clouds.

1. Some refuse to come under the clouds, and of all places love not the orb of the church. The fruitful grounds are covered with clouds; they that shun

this rain for fear of being wet, shall have barren souls. There is a double heaven, one of glory, the other of the church. The church is a heaven upon earth; her priests be the clouds of heaven: she denies not her showers to them that seek it; the rest must remain a wilderness. The Jews, while the church of God was national, were commanded in their devotions to look toward the temple, when they could not come to it. We have those that may come to it, but will not look toward it. "In this place will I give peace, saith the Lord," Hag. ii. 9. Not any where, not every where, but in his own house: as if this blessing were confined to his holy walls, "In this place will I give peace." I know not whether the blessing doth more honour the place, or the place the blessing; both grace each other, and make God's people happy: "In this place I will give peace." This flower grows not in every garden, but only in that which these clouds have watered. If ever we would have peace, outward, inward, private, public, secular, spiritual; peace in our land, peace in our church, peace in our state, peace in our own souls; we must pray for it: and if ever we will pray for it, we must pray here: for "In this place will I give peace, saith the Lord." It is true indeed, that we are bidden every where to lift up pure hands unto God: but those hands cannot be pure that are profane; and they cannot be other than profane, that condemn the church, the clouds, and showers, and ordinances of God. If ever men would have their prayers heard at home, let them pray at church; else their devotion is but the sacrifice of fools. For he hath said it, who hath good reason to appoint the circumstances of his own beneficence, "In this place," where those holy clouds are, "I will give peace."

2. Some bring forth no fruit at all, though they dwell under the clouds. They are barren and beaten grounds, like the streets or high-ways, over which such a throng of lusts fetch their continual walk, that nothing can rise or prosper. The more rain falls, the more dirt. Or if they produce any fruit, it is weeds instead of herbs; stinking weeds; yea, even briars and thorns, to scratch and wound the husbandman that tills them. If a displeasing drop falls from the clouds, they rage and swell; as Pharaoh did when he received a command of Israel's dismission. The showers and monitions of God make ill men worse. Corruption, when it is checked, grows frantick; as the waves do not beat or roar any where so much as at the bank that restrains them; or as the vapour in a cloud would not make that fearful report if it met not with opposition. A good heart yields at the stillest voice of God; but his most gracious motions harden the wicked. Some would not have been so desperately settled in their sins, if the word had not controlled them. But that ground is reserved for the fire, which would not be bettered with the water. What the element of mercy could not mollify, the element of wrath shall cruciate. For the earth's sake which we bear, the earth that bears us is often cursed: therefore our works are weeds, because we concoct the moisture of the clouds into venom. So, We bear thorns and briars as fuel for the fire, says one: they are fit fuel for the fire: and another, According to those things which the wicked bring forth, will they themselves be hereafter moulded. If the lustful limbs burn in flames, it was lust that made them fit matter for those flames.

3. Others look after the infirmities of the clouds, and never mind their virtue or benefits. They will follow their teacher's own way, not that which God teacheth by him. Israel indeed did follow the cloud in the wilderness; when it stood still two years together, they moved not; only then they went on,

when that went before them. And we do well to follow the pattern of those holy clouds, that direct us the way to Canaan. Yet this, not absolutely, but with limitation. The cloud that guided them had two parts, a light part and a dark one. The Egyptians, who were God's enemies, had only the dark part; which following, they rushed into the Red Sea, and were drowned. The Israelites had the light part, the direction whereof safely delivered them. Wicked eyes see only the dark part, the infirmities of these clouds; that example they follow, and perish. Faithful souls look upon the light part, the graces of God in them; this doctrine they follow, and are saved.

To conclude. Be thankful to these clouds, in returning answerable fruits. If showers fall on a dunghill, they make but dirt; if in a kennel, they make but stink; if in desolate places, they spring up weeds: but in the garden, they raise up herbs and flowers; in the tilled field, corn; in the meadows, grass; in the groves and orchards, plants and fruits. If the ground of your hearts be foul with uncleanness, rank with covetousness, or sown with lusts, our rain will cause the appearance of weeds. But the mind that comes hither like a well-tilled field, receives these showers with comfort, and recompenseth them with increase. "Then shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our own God, shall bless us," Psal. lxxvii. 6.

This heart of ours is the best or the worst ground that lies between heaven and earth. The worst, if it be thorny, weedy, miry; but if fair, pleasant, fruitful, it is the best. There be two that lay claim to it; and howsoever the property be God's, for he made it, yet Satan will try his title, and sues to have it. First, let us weed this ground, and that betimes, for old weeds will hardly be destroyed. Sins are weeds, the weeding-hook is repentance: let not a weed appear, but presently by contrition cut it down. God indeed said of another field, and in another sense, "Let both grow together until the harvest," Matt. xiii. 30; but it must not be so here, for then the weeds will eat out the corn. Secondly, keep it in heart: for if the soul have not her cheerings, she will grow faint and barren. The way to keep thy heart in heart, is by devout prayers, meditation, hearing the word, and receiving that which is the food of the soul, the blessed sacrament. Thirdly, look to the expiration of thy farm, and be sure to leave it in good case; that when the great Landlord shall call the tenant out of the teneament, the soul from the body, it may be entertained into his own house, the glorious court of heaven. Fourthly and lastly, be sure to pay thy rent always, and that is thankfulness. For temporal farms we pay our rents by quarters and half-years; but this rent is due every month, week, day, hour. Seven times a day, yea, seven times an hour, will I praise thee, Psal. exix. 164. We forfeit many of God's favours, for not paying the rent of thankfulness. It is an easy rent, it costs us no labour. It is a cheap rent, we are not out of purse for it. It is a ready rent, never to seek. If it be easy, ready, cheap, why do we grudge it? We can do little, if we cannot thank God for his goodness. Yet for the ground itself, for the seeds that sow the ground, for the clouds that water the seeds, for the sun that draws up the clouds, for the influences of heavenly grace that bless all, God requires no rent but our thanks. Nothing is more easy to be spoken, or more comfortable to be heard, or more acceptable to be understood, or more fruitful to be done, than thankfulness: so Augustine. If we cannot requite gifts, yet let us return thanks. And even Seneca writes thus: I can never give unto God sufficient

thanks; yet I will ever acknowledge that I cannot give him thanks sufficient. He that returns this to man, makes half the amends; to God, it is all the amends we can make.

But the least gratitude lies in the tongue; when the heart, when the life is thankful, this is better than the sacrifice that hath horns and hoofs. Then is the earth thankful to the clouds, when it returns answerable fruits, when it does confess and recompense the good it hath received; when the valleys stand thick with corn, the meadows yield fat pasture, the trees flourish with fruits, that the birds sit and sing in the branches. We call a barren earth, an unthankful earth. What is the worst fruit that the earth bears? I find a great complaint of tares, Matt. xiii. 27, of thorns, Heb. vi. 8, of thistles, Gen. iii. 18, of venomous creatures, noxious and baneful plants; yet all these are good in their kinds, and useful to the wise. But the worst thing that the groaning earth bears, be ourselves, our sinful and unprofitable selves; *telluris inutile pondus*, i. e. a useless burden to the earth. Therefore God more than threatened to destroy both man and beast from the face of the earth, Gen. vi. 7. The earth, as a good mother, rejoiceth in good children; but she mourneth for them that dishonour their Father, and are a shame to their mother. She does not take pleasure in wild animals, and beasts of prey, but in men, tame and gentle creatures. So long as there is pride in us, contention among us; while covetousness and cruelty in our hands, unmercifulness in our hearts, and lust in our loins, remain unweeded out; we are those wild beasts. Is this our thankfulness to the clouds? Is this our requital for all their showers? Do we rain down holy dews, and find you springing up profane weeds? Alas, for the sins of the land! for this cause the clouds melt themselves into tears. As all our sermons be public showers, to refresh your thirsty souls; so we have also our private showers, dissolving ourselves into tears for the obstinacy of your hearts. We weep in secret for your pride, Jer. xiii. 17, and are still dropping this rain from our eyes, together with the exhortation of our lips, Acts xx. 31. Remember that God who gives you the former and the latter rain: showers to soften the earth before the seed be cast in; showers when it is cast in, to bring it forth; showers to ear it, and showers to ripen it. If all this will not make you fruitful, the clouds weep again, because they have laboured in vain, and spent their strength for nought, Isa. xlix. 4.

*Mortales quoniam nolunt sua crimina flere,
Cælum pro nobis solvit in lachrymas.*

When men for their own crimes no tears will shed,
The heavens above melt into tears instead.

Oh that it would fall out by you, as the bishop comforted Monica concerning her son Augustine: The children of so many showers and tears shall never perish.

Open therefore your breasts to receive these holy dews: lest with that rich clunk you cry hereafter for some of this water, when you cannot have it. How many showers and buckets of grace had he despised in his jollity! now he calls out pitifully, for one drop to cool his tongue, Luke xvi. 24. Do not neglect the least drop of grace when it falls, lest you be driven to beg one drop of mercy when it must not fall for ever. Now God draws near unto you, draw you near unto God, and be enlightened: so shall you no more be a dry land, but a fruitful land, bearing fruit for the Lord's harvest. Thus you shall restore the golden age, and make the place you live in, were it worse than it is, a very earthly paradise. Earth

shall return to earth; but such fruitful earth shall possess the earth, and be possessed of heaven. Now the grace of God make us the one, and the glory of God crown us with the other.

"To whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever." Private offenders are not so much plagued as public. He doubly sins, who sins by example; for he teacheth evil by doing it, and so again does evil by teaching it. The exemplary sin is a mischievous sin: he that gives bad example, shall be made an example himself. A sinner, by his true contrition and hearty repentance, may get pardon for his own sin; but how shall he procure it for them whom he hath taught to sin? Nothing more troubles the mind of a good man, than his tempting of others to offend God. Thou hast been a blasphemer, and art converted; but how shall this medicine cure the infection which thy foul breath hath conveyed to others? Thy excesses may be forgiven thee, but how art thou sure of those Uriahs whom thou hast inebriated? The adulterer, after the fact, may repent of his own wickedness, yet it cannot but trouble him to think what may become of his harlot. So grievous and dangerous is it to be guilty of others' sins. An eminent offender draws many with him into evil. When David fell in with Bathsheba, many of her servants and his courtiers must needs be conscious of that adultery. When Uriah must die, Joab must be fetched in as necessary to the murder: how did that example harden his heart against the conscience of Abner's blood! He might well think, how can my master revenge that on me, which he acts himself? Great men's sins are seldom secret, and no less secret shall be their shame. These heretical teachers have brought on men's souls a mist of darkness, and done what in them lies to send them blindfold to hell: now therefore such a lot abides them, even a mist of darkness for ever. In which punishment observe three things.

1. The quality of it. The mist of darkness.

2. The congruity of it. It is prepared or reserved for them; and they were such as loved darkness more than light.

3. The eternity or duration of it. For ever.

First, the nature or quality of it. A mist of darkness. If hell had no other anguish in it but the very darkness, it were a formidable place. How uncomfortable would that night be, which had no hope or possibility of day! But as it is said of heaven, the gates of it are not shut by day, and there shall be no night there, Rev. xxi. 25; so it is contrary of hell, the gates of it are not open by night, and there shall be no day there. Night is feigned to be the daughter of the Earth; and that is dark enough: so Job calls the grave, "a land of a darkness, and of the shadow of death," Job x. 22. If our bodies had any sense when they lie in that dark bed, how tedious, how odious would it be unto them! But there is that which Christ calls "outer darkness," Matt. viii. 12; uncomfortable, unlightable. The Hebrews, by light, understand joy and felicity; by darkness, sorrow and confusion. "To give light to them that sit in darkness," Luke i. 79. Such a mist shall be on their souls, as comes upon a swooning man; who cannot see though his eyes be open, the organs being (for the time) ineapable of illumination. So lie the damned, as dying men in the very pangs of death, with a mist of darkness over their understandings, yet cannot die.

But there is fire in hell; shall not this give light? No, it differs from elemental fire. First, for violence, it is more subtle and searching. Secondly, for duration, it is a wildfire that cannot be quenched. Thirdly, for operation, it consumes not what it burns.

Fourthly, for obscurity, though it flame terribly to the vexation of the wicked, yet it shines not to their comfort. It has burning, but no light, says Gregory. John "was a burning and a shining light," John v. 35. There is a fire that shines without burning, and a fire that burns without shining. It is as easy for God to make fire without light, as light without fire. All the prisons and dungeons devised by man are palaces in respect of hell; as all pains mortal are a mere shadow to these torments. (Chrysost. ad Pop. Antioch. Hom. 49.) The darkness of Egypt was wonderful and fearful; wonderful, in that it was so thick that it might be felt; fearful, therefore reserved for the ninth of the ten plagues. But this far exceeds; "the blackness of darkness," Jude 13: so doth the Hebrew idiom express it in the uttermost extract of darkness. If thou couldst see in a dark prison some looking pale and ghastly, others bound in chains and fetters, others tormented with famine, all shut up in a loathsome dungeon, howling with lamentation; how would it fright thee from such a course as might endanger thee to such a place! Thus let us meditate of this darkness here, that we may never feel it hereafter. The body that is surfeited with repletion of pleasant meats, must be purged with bitter pills. Let the due consideration of those insufferable horrors cleanse our hearts from all filthy lusts; and let us follow the way which the light of grace leads us, that the light of glory may crown us.

Reserved for them: this is the proportionableness of it. The punishments which God's justice inflicts upon sinners, have always a respect of condignity, not seldom of congruity; so that we may read the matter of the offence in the characters of the penalty. These black clouds did wholly endeavour to superinduce darkness on the church, therefore the mist of darkness is reserved for them for ever. Some read, is prepared; and this refers us to God's decree, who had preordained the darkness of hell for such cloudy souls: not in preparing, but prepared; as a king prepares a prison for such of his subjects as shall prove rebellious. But God made not darkness; and whereas in the beginning of the creation it is said, "darkness was upon the face of the deep," Gen. i. 2; this was not a thing created, but a mere privation, or absence, or not being, of that light which was made afterward. Nor do we think this mist of darkness a positive thing; but as when the sun is hidden, darkness necessarily follows. Not a beam of God's countenance, not a spark of his light, comes into hell, and thereupon follows this intolerable darkness.

"Tophet is ordained of old," Isa. xxx. 33; not by chance, not on a sudden, but with deliberate judgment. For the antiquity of hell, I refer you to the fourth verse of this chapter, where the lost angels are said to be cast down into hell; now they could not be cast into that which was not. God hath ordained but two places to receive all, whether angels or men. For those fustian-weavers of Rome with their intermediate places, they make but chimeras, and imagine places without a foundation. As the limbo of the fathers, where (they tell us) there is punishment of loss, not of sense; and the limbo of infants, for children dying without baptism, where they likewise say is punishment, not of sense, but of loss. The former whereof they would have dissolved by Christ's descent into hell, the other to last for ever. And their purgatory, where is the punishment both of loss and sense; which shall cease at Christ's coming to judgment; unless some better informed and more merciful pope unlock the doors, and let them out for money beforehand. These be pretty tales for a winter's night, and not unlike their legends. The Holy Scripture hath this plain truth: There is but election and

reprobation, grace and sin, the narrow gate and the broad way; but two places, light and darkness, joy and pain; but two ends, heaven and hell, to one of these must all flesh come. They that tell you otherwise, flatter you with error: we tell you the truth, though it be with terror; and testify to you our brethren, (albeit with another mind,) that you come not into that place of torment, Luke xvi. 24. And howsoever you may storm against us, for disquieting your security with such menaces; yet we had rather you should be offended with us for preaching hell to you here, than that for not preaching it you should curse us in hell hereafter.

But I rather read it, is reserved; and then it denotes the fitness of the plague to their sin: darkness to darkness, inward to outward, temporal to eternal darkness. The Egyptians drowned the males of Israel, themselves were drowned for it. They had bloodied the waters from those innocent veins, their waters are turned into blood. That law of retaliation which God will not allow us, because we are fellow creatures, he justly practiseth on us. He would have us read our sins in our judgments, that we might both repent of our sins and give glory to his justice. Ham sinned against his father, and therefore is punished in his children; whereas Japheth was dutiful to his father, and finds it in his posterity. Because Ham was an ill son to his father, therefore his children shall be servants to his brethren. But because Japheth joined himself with Shem in bearing the cloak of shame, therefore he shall dwell in the tents of Shem, and partake of the blessing. Samson abuseth his strength among women, therefore he lost his strength by a woman. Saul divides himself from God, God divides the kingdom from Saul. David committed three sins in the business of Uriah, adultery, murder, and dissimulation; for all these he receives just payment: for adultery, in the delouring of his daughter Tamar; for murder, in the stabbing of his son Amnon; for dissimulation, in the contriving of both. "Did not ye hate me, and expel me out of my father's house? and why are ye come to me now when ye are in distress?" saith Jephthah to the elders of Gilead, Judg. xi. 7. The suits of necessity are justly upbraided with the errors of prosperity. The same expostulation that Jephthah makes with Gilead, God at the same time makes with Israel; "You have forsaken me, and served other gods, wherefore should I deliver you? Go and cry unto the gods ye have chosen," Judg. x. 13, 14. God tells his children of their faults while he is whipping them. It is a wise and safe course, to make much of those in our peace whom we must make use of in our extremity; otherwise it is but just that we should be rejected of those whom we have rejected. We call upon God in our trouble, and are not heard. Why? Because he was not heard when he called to us in our prosperity. He will say, Did you not drive me out of your houses, out of your hearts, in time of health? did ye not plead the strictness of my charge, the weight of my yoke? did not your willful sins expel me from your souls? what do you now crouching and creeping to me in the evil day? It is but justice, if God be not found of those that were content to lose him.

Thus he once plagued the inundation of sins with an inundation of waters: Sodom's unnatural lust with unnatural fire. He proceeds still in the same course: the dearth of charity he punisheth with the dearth of plenty; the surfeits of peace, with the sharp physic of war; malice and wrath, those burning sins, with burning fevers; the languishing of piety, with consumptions of body; whoredom and uncleanness, with loathsome diseases; riot and profuseness, with fluxes; drunkenness and excess, with dropsies; pride

and swelling, with tumours; curses and blasphemies, with the plague and pestilence. That which men have so many years tossed in their mouths, is now fallen upon their loins; the plague hath been their imprecation, the plague is become their common destruction. What is it that infects the air, but the contagious breath of oaths and curses, vented every moment from the lips of men and children? Every sinner teacheth God how to punish him, out of his own mouth. And there is no particular wickedness, but God hath a particular rod to scourge it on earth, and a particular torment to vex it in hell. Only they escape, that have answered all the variety of their sins in the variety of the sufferings of Jesus Christ.

"For ever." Such is the perpetuity of this darkness. And this is also a just recompence, that they which might have found life, and would not seek it, should at last seek for death, and not find it. There is a shame never covered, a worm never dying, a cry never ceasing, a fire never wasting, an intolerable pain, an interminable time. They "shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them," Rev. ix. 6. A good day makes amends for a bad night; but to this night belongs no day; it is everlasting darkness. The roughest tempest, the weariest journey, is not without comfort, because there is hope of an end; but these pains be as endless in quantity as they are caseless in quality. Joshua had a long day when the sun stood still, Josh. x. 13; yet that day had an end; the sun did go on his course again, and set; but here the sun and moon shall utterly cease to measure time by their motion. That is a long sentence that hath no period, a doleful night which shall have no morning; a woeful darkness, where no star shall give a glimpse, no taper burn for the damps and foggy mists. Thus they lie like a malefactor pressing to death, calling for more weight to despatch them, even rocks and mountains, Rev. vi. 16, and cannot get it. They are those serpents that will not be charmed, Jer. viii. 17, those tormentors that will never be entreated. It is to no end to compare them with piles of grass, sands, or stars: if a million of years should stand for every dust of the earth, there might be an end; but this is, as Gregory expresses it, Death without death, and without end: time shall be no more; and after time, it is as possible for that damnation to be temporal, as it is for God not to be eternal.

Sinners greedily hear that the mercy of God endures for ever; but they shall as sensibly feel that the wrath of God also endures for ever. It was a pitiful complaint, "Will the Lord east off for ever? is his mercy clean gone for evermore?" Psal. lxxvii. 7, 8. God did not deal so with David, he will deal so with the damned. Let this meditation touch thee now, that the matter itself may never hurt thee hereafter. That heart is hard frozen, which nothing can thaw but hell-fire. If a rebellious city were threatened by the king to be tithed for their conspiracy; that one of ten should die in justice, though nine were spared in mercy; would not every one tremble, lest the lot should fall upon himself? If among ten passing over a bridge, one were assured to fall in, would not every one look to his feet? The Supreme Judge in his last great assizes, will execute his wrath upon many; not one of ten, but rather nine of ten, are in danger; "for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God," Rom. iii. 23, deserving ever-burning fire in everlasting darkness; shall we not make sure our Advocate to plead for us; even Him alone, whose plea is unanswerable, because he died for us? He that is for ever, suffered that we might not suffer for ever. But will he plead

for those above, that care not to be his below? Shall they challenge his covenant then, and trample on it now? Do they not abuse that covenant, while they break the conditions, faith and obedience? Let not men flatter themselves, that they may sin in their own eternity, so long as they can; and yet that God will not punish them with his own eternity, so long as he can. Hell was not made for nothing; there be two fatal engines, the devil and sin, that will supply and furnish it, and keep it from being empty.

Thou art sick, think how uncomfortable it would be, to be confined to that bed and that pain, if no worse, for a thousand years; where thy friends are fiends, and thy physicians tormentors. Consider them that are shut up for the plague; how irksome it is to want help and society, to lie fearfully expecting death every hour; and the prayers of thousands sent up to heaven for their comfort. Who would for the pleasure of an hour, be racked a whole year? or for a mass of gold, lie burning in the fire one day? Yet how many for the satisfaction of a lust, hazard themselves, souls and bodies, to more exquisite tortures and endless flames! Let us not pass over this meditation superficially, but in time make an end of sinning; otherwise beyond all time there will be no end of our suffering. For our Creator's sake that made us, for our Redeemer's sake that with his own blood bought us, for that Comforter's sake who would heal us, for the angels' sake that guard us, for the church's sake, our mother that mourns for us, for our own soul's sake, that should be dear unto us; let us break off our sins by repentance, and live the life of grace and obedience, that we perish not in this mist of darkness for ever.

VERSE 18.

For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error.

FLESH and blood is pleased either with no religion, or with a carnal one; yea, with a carnal religion rather than none at all. For without some boundaries to the unlimited rage of sensuality, they could neither enjoy their goods nor their sins in peace. Therefore among the heathen politics, that state where nothing was lawful, was preferred to the state where all things were lawful. He would be loth to have his own goods stolen, that makes no conscience of robbing others. The wicked are neither sensible of doing injury, nor patient of suffering it. Unjust tradesmen will have the law open to fetch in their debts, and that with rigour; but for payment of their creditors, they would have the law shut, and oppose them under a protection. Thus if they can shuffle out for this world, they never dream of any reckoning in the world to come. That religion, therefore, which can humour flesh and blood, and give corrupt nature leave to be herself, proud or wanton, is the only plausible doctrine, and sure of entertainment. Every bad man would have all others bound, and himself free; and he easily connives at that in himself, which he severely censures under another skin. Silly understandings adhere to that rule, which is indulgent to their carnal affections; as fishes are taken with the bait that is agreeable to their natures. Wanton souls are caught with wanton allurments. "When they speak," &c.

This verse is spent upon two sorts of men; the seducers, and the seduced; the subtle, and the simple; the thieves, and their booty. In the deceivers we have,

Their posture, They speak great swelling words of vanity.

Their imposture, They allure or beguile souls.

For the deceived, we have three circumstances;

1. What they were for their former condition, Escaped, &c.

2. What they are for their present estate, Wrapped in error.

3. How they become so; which is their own weakness, or proneness to sin, whereby the temptation works upon them, here called wantonness.

The posture of the seducers appears in three passages:

In many words.

In vain words.

In great swelling words.

For the first, they think to carry it away with words.

That is a very ill cause, which wants colourable reason for it; that is a very ill reason, which wants a Tertullus to plead it; and he is an ill Tertullus, that wants words to defend it. Yea, error hath always most words; like a rotten house, that needs most props and crutches to uphold it. Simple truth evermore requires least cost; like a beautiful face, that needs no painting; or a comely body, which any decent apparel becomes. We plaster over rotten posts and ragged walls; substantial buildings are able to grace themselves. We cannot but suspect that cause, whereon the lawyer wastes so much of his time and tongue. Multitude of words is not unlike the thick painting in some popish church windows, a mere device to keep out the light. Why doth the hare use so many doublings, but to frustrate the scent of the hounds? Falsehood is a gaudy harlot; strip her of her borrowed garments, she will appear, we know not whether more hateful or ridiculous. Loquacity hath ever been a note of folly; *In multiloquio stultiloquium*; i. e. In much speaking is foolish speaking; is very difficult to speak much and well. The ship that hath more rigging and sail than ballast, will never make a good voyage. The tree that wanted fruit, might have abundance of leaves; and commonly they have the worst course of life, that have the most voluble tongue. "They think to be heard for their much speaking," Matt. vi. 7: as if God could not hear them at first; as if he could not understand them at once; as if the blessing of Heaven depended on the labour of the tongue: whereas indeed, it is not many words, but hearty desires, that can fetch down heavenly blessings. No prince will grant a suit ever the sooner for a long petition. Certainly, if twenty Ave-Marias and five Pater-nosters were all that God required, many a papist hath done his duty. But, alas, how can they hope to merit by that, for which God hath said, they shall not be heard, much babbling? The publican used not so many words as the Pharisee, the Pharisee had not such commendation as the publican, Luke xviii. 14. It is vain to do by many words, what can be done by fewer. There is little of a long-winded exercise, except to bring men asleep. Many words must not carry it; for then the brawling woman would have the better, who will not give over without the last word. But not to catch the disease which I declaim against, prolixity of speech, I pass to the next, which is,

Their full-mouthed speeches, "great swelling words." Nothing is more loud than error; the more false the matter, the greater noise to uphold it. Paul can have no audience, the truth must not be heard;

but they all cry out for Diana, Acts xix. 34. In that bloodiest and most unnatural custom of idolatry that ever the sun beheld, the sacrificing of their children in burning fire to Moloch, it was the noise of the instruments that drowned all sense of the madness. Thus Ahab shall be deluded with great words and numbers, 1 Kings xxii.; the clergy of four hundred prophets conspire to his destruction: one single Micajah can do no good, they bear him down with multitudes. Four hundred to one is odds; every one will have as much talk as he. Yet indeed, one prophet speaking from the oracle of God, is more worth than four hundred Baalites. Truth is not ever to be measured by the poll; it is not number, but weight, that should carry it. Solid verity in one mouth is worthy to preponderate light falsehood in a thousand. But falsehood hath the more swelling words, the louder noise: as Cyprian mentions one that challenged him to dispute; who though he wanted learning to urge any argument, yet he amazed the people by engrossing all the talk, and holding the conclusion.

False Zedekiah not only speaks, but acts his prediction, with swelling words, yea, presumptuous signs; horns of iron, and thus shalt thou push the Syrians, 1 Kings xxii. 11. The horn is forcible, the iron irresistible; by an irresistible force shall Ahab do this: as if the certainty of his tongue were not enough without his hands. He had a forehead of brass, a heart of lead; the one for impudence, the other for flexibility to humours and times; therefore he devised horns to gore his king unto death. One silly prophet affronts the four hundred; whereupon Zedekiah, having sworn first into words, now swells into blows, and smites God's prophet on the face, ver. 24. Micajah gave him the lie, and he gives Micajah the fist; and with the blow expostulates. Before two kings, the guardians of peace and justice, swaggering Zedekiah falls to blows. For a prophet to strike a prophet, in the face of two princes, was intolerably insolent; the act was much unbecoming the person, more the presence. Prophets may reprove, they may not strike. It was enough for Ahab to punish with the hand; no weapon was for Zedekiah but his tongue. And if Ahab had not been well content to see that hated mouth beaten by any hand, if malice had not made authority insensible of such a usurpation, this rude presumption had not passed unrevenged. Falsehood doth not more bewray itself in any thing, than in swelling words, in unjust blows. Nor is it any new condition of God's servants to smart for speaking true. Truth suffers, while error persecutes. None are more ready to boast of God's Spirit than they that have it not. The full vessels are evermore silent. Brass makes a great sound when it is beaten; the gold is more malleable with less noise. A fool's voice is heard in the streets, but wisdom speaks low. Therefore hath luxurious behaviour been called roaring, for the dissolute cannot rule their tongues. As Bias was sailing, there fell out a great tempest, and the mariners (who were lewd persons) cried to their gods; but Bias said, Peace, make not such a noise; for if the gods know ye are here, we are all like to perish. Peacocks have a louder voice than nightingales; no man thinks a sweeter. Empty casks in the cellar return the greater sound; the good liquor lies in them that are dull. The light housewife is the scold, and can put down the grave matron in words, no less than the other excels her in honesty. The frogs of Egypt were no small plague; who besides the annoyance to their nostrils, and trouble to their bosoms, with a dismal din filled their ears. Swelling words are like the reports of ordnance; they blaze, and crack, and smoke,

and stink, and vanish. They proceed from divers causes; there be in the soul six swelling diseases.

1. Pride, which is an unnatural tumour, puffs a man up. And indeed, pride is a poison, and the nature of poison is to cause a swelling. He swells for place, not only above his fellows. The man with the gold ring looks to sit uppermost, Jam. ii. 2; but even above the angels; and, "I will be like the Most High," Isa. xiv. 14. He that rides on his foot-cloth, or in his caroché, how big does he look on the inferior passengers! We wonder: it was not so with him the other day. Alas, since that time, he hath swallowed the venom of pride in a pill of wealth, and now you may see it by his swelling. He fears an affront more than he fears hell; if by his equal, he puffs like one out of breath; if by his inferior, he swells like the sea in a storm. The proud man is a kind of madman; he thinks himself brave in another's clothes, and glories in that which is none of his. He is sick of a swelling in the brain.

2. Malice, which is a higher degree of poison, swelling inwardly; and when it cannot vent itself in revenge, bursts the entrails. How did Joab swell against Amasa! Jezebel against Elijah! Nothing but a poultice of their warm innocent blood can abate the tumour. After the defeat of that great armada, the Duke of Ossuna presented himself to the king of Spain, with a distaff at his side, and a spindle at his back instead of sword and dagger: the king hereby understanding that a woman had foiled them, hastily stepped to the altar, and taking a silver candlestick in his hand, swore a monstrous oath, that he would waste all Spain, yea, his whole Indies, to that candlestick, but he would be revenged on England. But God be praised, those swelling words were but the effect of his own malice, without our ruin. *Rumpentur et ilia Coleri*, as the poet saith; i. e. Let the bowels of Codrus (an envious person) burst. The malicious is troubled with a swelling of the spleen.

3. Vain-glory, which is a kind of venomous froth, that swells men with a rank opinion of their own worths. So the fly that sat on the axle-tree of the chariot wheel, gave out that he made that glorious dust. Things that move upon greater means, they ascribe to themselves; and strut like Colossus, that the world may not escape their notice. Mighty are their words, as if they would shake mountains, and speak thunder-claps. "Come," saith the Philistine to David, "and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field," 1 Sam. xvii. 44. What big words were here! But how seldom ever was there a good end of ostentation! Presumption at once is the presage and the cause of ruin. He is a weak adversary that will be killed with words. Swell on, proud giant; a small pebble from the brook shall confute thee. "Hath any of the gods of the nations delivered his land from the king of Assyria?" Isa. xxxvi. 18. Swell on, Sennacherib: an angel shall confute a hundred and eighty-five thousand of thy soldiers with the argument of death in one night. Many a foe hath spoke bravely, who in the push hath made more use of his heels than of his hands. When one vaunted of hurts received on his face, Julius Caesar knowing him to be a coward, bade him take heed the next time he ran away, how he did look back. This is a swelling in the throat.

4. Hypocrisy, which is a malignant humour, swelling the parts affected or corrupted with it, as some kind of grass doth the kine, or sweet wort swine. Methinks the hypocrite should smile at himself, being so conscious how he rails at the world which he worships; how he condemns the belly which he

serves; how he persuades men to condemn the gold, which is dear to him as his life; how he commands the cross to others, which himself abhors. How, like the kite, he flies aloft, but is ever looking down to the earth for his prey. "God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men," Luke xviii. 11. Hypocrite, so thou sayest, so thou swellst; but what a famine of goodness there is within, thou dost not, thou darest not ask thy conscience. Like a decayed merchant, that studies tricks to uphold the credit of his wealth; and still the nearer he comes to poverty, the more show he makes of sufficiency; till at last the bladder is pricked, and the wind flies out, and there is rather a merchant's case than a merchant. Still the more a man swells in pretence, the less he is to be trusted in deed. This swelling is a tympany.

5. Blasphemy, which is the highest excess of words, when they swell against God himself. "Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves?" 1 Sam. xvii. 43. The last words that ever the Philistine shall speak, are boasts and curses. How truly he spoke himself! Had he been any other than a dog, he would not have opened his foul mouth against the host of God, and the God of hosts. And as he calls himself a dog, so it seems David thought him, else he had never come to him only with a staff and a stone. Jezebel hath lost her prophets; and she swears and stamps at that, whereat she should have trembled. She swears by those gods of hers, which were not able to save their prophets, that she would kill that prophet of God which had slain her prophets, and scorned her gods, 1 Kings xix. 2. O foolish dust, wilt thou swell against thy Maker?

6. Success in wickedness, which is like hemlock taken for diet-drink. To prosper in ill designs, is the greatest unhappiness, the heaviest curse; for he that useth to do evil, and speeds well, never rests till he come to that evil from which there is no redemption. Joab kills Abner, and escapes; again he emburies his hands in the blood of Amasa, and is not indicted for it: now David is old, and Adonijah towards, he furthers him in the usurpation; and big with assurance of his own command, he thinks to carry it: but this carried him to his grave. Fair Absalom was proud and ambitious, yet he flourisheth: he kills his own brother, yet escapes; he insinuates himself into the affections of the people, and bold of their fidelity to him, he swells even against his own royal father, and becomes a disloyal traitor. God owes that man a grievous payment, whom he suffers to run on so long unquestioned. Prosperous wickedness is one of the devil's strongest chains. A man feels a little sweetness of wealth, this makes him swell for more; when his stalk is so stiff that it bears up above the rest of his ridge, presently he swells for honour; the first draught doth not quench his thirst, he swells for a higher degree; thus honoured, he swells into some place of authority, and still his insatiate dropsy calls for larger draughts, till at last he is inebriated: like the toad in Æsop, that would needs swell in ambition to be as big as the ox; and then he bursts. Such tongues shall be swoln with the infernal fire, till they be not able to call for a drop of water to cool them.

The last attribute of their speech is vain, "words of vanity." If the matter were good, yet many words were vain, great words were vain; but here both the matter and words and all are not only vain, but vanity itself. "The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power," 1 Cor. iv. 20. How justly doth the Lord infatuate these magnificent talkers, in frustrating their boasts! They have a show of wisdom, but that show ends in folly. What hath been said of two nations, is true between two sorts of men: The

French are wiser than they seem, the Spaniards seem wiser than they are. He that says little, is thought by some to understand less; and those great scholars, that are confident talkers. But to make superficialities seem body, with depth and bulk, the plentifullest speaker will scarce devise sufficient shifts. It is according to the French proverb, Much bruit, little fruit; or, as we say in English, A great deal of ery, but no wool. Demades the orator in his age was talkative, and would feed much; therefore Antipater would say of him, that he was like a sacrifice, whereof nothing was left but the tongue and the paunch. Alexander in his Persian expedition, caused his soldiers to leave scatteringly behind them, as forgotten, larger and heavier pieces of armour than they were used to wear; the Macedonians being not such portly men: it was his policy to scare and fright the Persian. So mighty words terrify weak hearts; but wise judgments make small account of their vain words, whereof one day they must make a strict account themselves. Jezebel swears by her gods to be revenged on Elijah, 1 Kings xix. 2: it was well that tyranness could not keep her own counsel. She meant to kill him, and the disclosing of that purpose was a means to preserve him. The wisdom and power of God could have found evasions enough for his prophet in her greatest secrecy; but now he needs no other than the warning-piece from her own lips. Here were swelling words, but the words of vanity; she is no less vain than the gods she swears by. In spite of her fury, and her oath, and her gods, Elijah shall live; at once she shall find herself frustrate and forsworn. And now she is ready to bite her tongue, and to eat her heart for anger at the disappointment of her cruel vow. It were no living for godly men, if the lands of tyrants were allowed to be as bloody as their hearts. Men and devils are under the restraint of the Almighty; neither are their words more swelling, or their designs more lavish, than their achievements are vain and their executions short. Benhadad sends great words to the king of Israel, as if it were nothing to conquer him, 1 Kings xx. 10: stay the proof; Benhadad flees, and Israel pursues. The heathen rage, the kings combine, and the people imagine a vain thing, Psal. ii. 1, 2. Though for power they be kings; though for policy, counsellors; though for fury they be Gentiles; though for number, all the people, multitudes; yet they study but vanity: they imagine a thing vain impossibly, vain unprofitably.

No wrestling of man can evacuate the purpose of God. While he struggles, he is caught; and by resisting the will of God, he doth fulfil it. The divine purpose, while man attempts to avoid it, is fulfilled; human wisdom, while it resists, is caught and led captive; so Gregory. Second causes are susceptible of impediments; as the burning of fire, by the action of water; but there is no evasion to shun the decree of Heaven. These swelling intendments are like Caligula's enterprises, who never took any thing in hand if there was hope to effect it: it is vain impossibly. Neither doth any profit arise from it. To count evil for gain, is unjust, but human; but mischief intended for mischief's sake is devilish. The old way of wickedness began at, What shall it profit us? But that is a new way of malicious sin, when men cannot be pleased to live in quiet themselves, unless they disturb the tranquillity of others: as vipers and the venomous cantharides and stinging spiders are more detestable than bears and wolves, because they sting folk to death without any benefit. That is an odious mischief, which is vain unprofitably.

The apostate church swells in words, both in respect of her promises, and of her menaces; but

Quid feret hic dignum tanto promissor hiatus? i. e.

What can this promiser bestow,
That's worthy of so great a show?

mere words of vanity. That when the sin is forgiven, the penalty remains: the poet could say, *Pœna potest tolli, culpa perennis erit*. The punishment may be removed, but the guilt will be perpetual: they say, *Culpa potest tolli, pœna perennis erit*. The guilt can be removed, but the punishment will be perpetual; at least during their purgatory. Kings are the anointed of God, to whom only they are inferior; *Inde illis potestas, unde Spiritus*. Their power proceeds from that source, from which is the Spirit, as one says. And by whose will they are born men, by the same they are made princes. Yet how big is the noise, that the pope is above them, may dethrone them, that his assassins may kill them! these be swelling words, not only of vanity, but of treachery. That we may merit heaven by our good works, or at least bear half the charges of our own salvation: these be mighty words, but they are vain men that trust them. I know not what trick they have to pay God, but I am sure I am infinitely in his debt, and no ways can pay him but by his own coin, the blood of his own Son. So innumerable are their swelling tenets, that their very mention would swell to a volume; but I leave them to their conclusion, mere vanity.

Let me conclude with this summary observation. Harmony is the sound of the gospel, unity the band of the church: her true members know no discords; with one mouth, with one heart, they praise God, and love one another. All the noise and jars come in by broken instruments, such as the sower of contention hath put out of tune. He fills the lips of his engines with repining, cavils, and wranglings, which are the right sounds of hell. "If any seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, nor the churches of God," 1 Cor. xi. 16: there is no such voice in the quire of the Holy Ghost. Indeed Christ came "to send fire on the earth." Luke xii. 49: but he never meant such a fire as comes out of two flints by repulsion, or out of steel by hard-edge. But rather such a fire as he sent down in disparited tongues upon the apostolical assembly at pentecost; a fire that shall enlighten the understanding, warm the heart with grace, and consume the stubble of iniquity; this is the fire that burns in Jesus' name. They grossly mistake, that think Christ is come to his spouse in whirlwind and thunder, (such is the coming of anti-christ,) for Christ comes whispering, as it were, in the light breeze; in silence, as the dew upon the tender grass, and the fruit of his coming is peace, Psal. lxxii. 6, 7. There came a strong wind, that rent the mountains, and brake the rocks, but the Lord was not in the wind, 1 Kings xix. 11. That tearing blast was from God, God was not in it: so in it as in his other extraordinary works, not so in it as to impart himself to Elijah by it. It was the usher, not the carriage of God. Then came an earthquake, more fearful than the wind: that did but move the air, this the earth: that beat upon some prominences of the earth, this shook it from the centre: but God was not in the earthquake. Then a fire, more fearful than either. The first affected the ear, the next the feeling, this last lets in horror to the soul by the eye, the quickest and most apprehensive of the senses: but the Lord was not in the fire. The prophet shall see God's mighty power in the earth, air, fire, before he hear him in the soft voice; all these are but hoisterous harbingers of a meek and still word. In that God was; he came in the gentle voice of mercy:

how are they his messengers, that come in the great words of vanity?

Observe this, ye thunderers of Rome, who come with roaring bulls, and teach the ordinances of your church to speak louder than the ordinance of war; there is not the greatest efficacy where is the greatest noise. God showed but his powerfulness in those fierce representations; he loves to make way for himself in terror, but he conveys himself to us in sweetness, in that mild breath of mercy. Those Boanerges, the sons of thunder, first tame our proud natures with the gusts and flashes of the law; but then the soft voice of evangelical grace doth comfort and confirm us. But for those Jesuits, that preach unto us with the word in one hand and the sword in the other, threatening blood and ruin, let them read Isa. liii. 7, and see whether they be like that Jesus, whose name they usurp. Examine their books, and you shall find many of them so fraught with boisterous invectives and desperate untruths, that it is a question whether the father of lies could outdo them; as if they meant plainly to write, not in the defence, but in the defiance of truth, of modesty, honesty, God, and all goodness. The scope of their disputations, is rather to vent their own passions and uphold a side, than in zeal to holiness and to maintain the truth. Themselves would have the conquest, with out respect of the truth. They cannot yield either to truth or to peace; as Augustine said of the Rogations. But where there is no mind of yielding, there is no end of disputing.

To conclude against these high, swelling terms; we have reason, as to suspect the cause that needs them, so the men that use them. Even in moral or civil demeanour, a loud tongue is commonly a lewd tongue. "We are in danger to be called in question for this day's uproar, there being no cause," says the town clerk of Ephesus, Acts xix. 40. If no cause, why all this noise? Why be many of our courts of justice turned into a Babel, if there were not more confidence in a lawyer's tongue than desire of truth? Why are those railings and invectives among men? Why instead of the voice of the turtle, is the voice of the screech-owl heard in our land? O there is a swelling heart in unmodified breasts, which cannot be suppressed, but would like new wine burst the vessels, if it were not broached and vented by foul language. What swelling words did Rabshakeh utter against the living God, and his Israel! yet Hezekiah held his peace, 2 Kings xviii. 36. How contumelious and false were the accusations of Christ! yet even his silence was their conviction, Matt. xxvi. 63; xxvii. 14. The best confutation of their slanders, is not by our great words, but by our good works, 1 Pet. ii. 12. Sophocles being accused by his own children, that he grew dotard, and spent their patrimonies idly; when he was summoned did not personally appear before the magistrates, but sent one of his new tragedies to their perusal; which being read, made them confess, This is not the work of a man that dotes. Against all clamours and swelling opprobries, set thy innocence and good life; and, *Sic verbosa tacet clamanti turba sophista*; i. e. The noisy crowd of talkers hold their peace: they shall be driven to acknowledge that these be not the courses of a dissolute sinner. Thus patience shall overcome clamour, and thy quiet heart shall be accepted of God.

In a word, the church of God is not built up with noise. There was no axe nor hammer heard in the building of the temple; the frame was made in Lebanon, and set up in Zion; there was no noise in the rearing, whatsoever was in the preparing. Lebanon might be loud, all is quiet in Zion. So doth the

church love peace, so do all seek peace that love the church. Quarrels and contentions are for the world; let those dogs snarl and fight whose portion lies without, peace and concord becometh the house of God. Schisms and wranglings, like axes and hammers, are the weapons of pride; cudgels thrown in by the devil, and taken up by malcontents, who baste one another while he stands by and laughs. All Christians, especially pastors, should be men of meekness; otherwise while they pretend to take birds with their nets, they drive them away with their noise. The house of God is not built up with blows, with blows it is beaten down. God loves to see holiness and peace, and without peace and holiness no man shall see God, Heb. xii. 14. It follows,

"They allure." This is their imposture. The metaphor is taken from fishing or fowling. Those fishes that were taken out of the feculent pond of this world, and put into the crystal streams of the church, are by these seducers again drawn out of the streams of the church into the pool of the world. The hook whereby they perform this, is fraud; the same devil teacheth his trade to all his followers; by fraud he overthrew our parents, and the same train he lays for their children: the lion is strong enough, but the serpent doth the mischief. While Satan appears like a roaring lion, we are ready to run from him; but when he transshapes himself into a familiar form, we admit him too often, and suspect not the danger. They be the foxes that spoil our grapes, that worry our lambs. First, foxes prey far from home, and do not mischief too near their own dens; so these compass sea and land, and will sail to the Indies to beguile souls. Secondly, foxes range in the night, and keep their holes in the day; so these seducers abide not the day-light, but wander in shades, masked with visors, to effect their purposes. Thirdly, these foxes fasten upon young lambs, such as are poor in knowledge and weak in faith; enticing simple women, that they may entice their husbands; after the practise of that old reynard, who wrought Eve to work Adam. Fourthly, hungry foxes will prey upon slight purchase, rather than fast; so they will stoop to cozen the meanest, where the great ones are too wise for them. Yea, desperate fortunes have been the pope's special engines. The ivy creeping along the ground, begins at first to compass the lowest part of the oak; but works itself upwards by degrees, till it overtop the highest branch, sucks the sap, pierceth the pith, and ruins the whole trunk. Fifthly, these foxes will tell some truths, where it may win credit and advantage to their lying. If they spake nothing but true, they could not deceive us; if nothing but false, we would not believe them. Therefore they have some few truths at first, like three or four good strawberries at the top, to help away the rest, even their sophisticate trash. A thief lighting into true-meaning company by the way, can talk of sincere dealing and uprightness, against robbery and oppression, to take off suspicion, till he spies his opportunity. The decoy will suffer the simple man to win for a while, till he hath whetted him on, then he leaves him in the lurch. If fraudulent merchants had not some good wares, their base ones would not be saleable. But Paul cast out the foul spirit, that confessed him to be the servant of the most high God, and to teach the way of salvation, though he spake true, Acts xvi. 17, 18; for he knew to what hellish purpose he spake it. The devil acknowledged Jesus, yet he commanded him to come out, though his testimony were true, Mark v. 7, 8; whereby he taught us, not to give ear to Satan, though he tell the truth. Thus they cast dust in our eyes, that we might not see our way, and

strike a hook in our nostrils, to lead us their own way : but it is no hard matter to spy out their juggling : though the ass have put on the lion's skin, he may be discerned by the length of his ears. But in the mean time, if they be conscious of their own frauds (and I am so persuaded of many of them) and still persist, what hell is deep enough for them, that seek and study to fill hell with souls? You will say, that is but my persuasion; and so well I wish them, that I would for their own eternal state's sake it were not true.

That they may not too unperceivedly catch us, let me a little bare their hook, and discover some of their wiles.

First, they tell us, the church agrees, the church cannot err; all which in their language is the church of Rome. Take it so, and we may as soon find paradise in hell, as any text in Scripture for it. The seat of abomination, the city of the beast, it calls her, not the chair of the church of God. That the apostate Rome is the catholic church, the wit of earth and hell shall never be able to prove.

Secondly, that the pope sits successively in Peter's chair. If we should grant it, for they cannot prove it; so did the Pharisees in Moses' seat, yet neither the better nor the holier for all that. A Seriphian told Themistocles, that his glory arose rather from the renown of his country than from the merit of his virtue. Not so, says Themistocles; for if I were a Seriphian, I would not live without honour; and if thou wert an Athenian, thou couldst not live without shame. For *quæ non fecimus ipsi, vix ea nostra voco*: i. e. what we do not, we hardly call our own. If St. Peter were at Rome, he neither taught nor lived like the pope: if the pope sit in the same chair, he neither lives nor teaches like St. Peter. Neanthus, a bungler, having got Orpheus' harp, so jangled and jarred with it, that while he looked for listening beasts and dancing trees, he brought the dogs about his ears. The pope hath so long boasted the name of Peter, that the world sees he hath nothing left but the bare name to boast of.

Thirdly, the consent of councils; a glorious gull and guile; as if no council had ever condemned both their popes and opinions. As if the council of Basil had not decreed, That one simple man alleging plain Scripture, was more to be believed, than a whole council to the contrary. As if the last Trident council were any other than the pope's notary or secretary, to engross that in fair characters, which he had before written in a foul copy. One saith truly of them, Whereas they should have brought their doctrine to the rule, they forced the rule to their doctrine; and did not mean to say as Christ taught them, but to expound Christ's words as they would have them.

Fourthly, the harmony and consent of the fathers. Indeed they were holy men, but men, not privileged from errors. Besides, the fathers are to be heard as witnesses, not as judges. Yet were they heard speak their own meaning, none of them would ever have been a papist, sure not a Jesuit. I hope they do not mean those holy ancients, as father Moses, father David, father Isaiah; no, nor father Paul, father Peter: for impudence itself cannot deny that our faith is built upon those fathers, the foundation of the prophets and apostles; which they, for theirs, are scarce able to pretend, never to prove. What fathers then? Father Lombard, father Thomas, father Scotus, father Cajetan, father Bellarmine; all the pope's true-born children: who, though in many things they agree no better than Herod and Pilate, yet they all conspire to degrade Christ from his office, as the other consented to bereave him of his

life. Abraham is our father, is a vain brag for the Gentiles.

Fifthly, the Scriptures, say they, are deep mysteries, dangerous for common eyes; it is sufficient to eredit their teachers. Pestilent subtlety! so men shall never understand what the Lord says, but as they are pleased to report it. This is called *fides carbonaria*, or the collier's faith; and it shall leave *animas carbonarias*, souls as black as ever fire left coals. "Search the Scriptures," saith Christ. You shall not, saith antichrist. He saith, there is lively food; this saith, there is deadly poison. Whether of these shall we believe?

Sixthly, universality. All ages speak as we do: a gallant flourish, not unlike to varnish, which makes seelings not only shine, but last. To discern the true church (whereof we must be, if we will be saved) from the false, (from which we must separate, unless we will be damned,) they wholly stand upon multitudes. But if in secular affairs there be more fools than wise men, what is there in spiritual? As if it were not the broad way which leads to destruction, through which many pass; and the narrow way that leads to life, which few do find. When the deluge came upon the world, whether was multitude or paucity a mark of the church? What was Abraham's family in comparison of the Canaanites? What was Israel, and take in all her hypocrites, to the whole world? How was the church discerned by multitudes, when the rulers and multitude rejected Christ's own person; "Away with him, crucify him!" John xix. 15. What be the largest dimensions of popery to the extent of paganism? either for multitude they are not better than we, or for multitude the pagans are better than they.

Seventhly, antiquity of religion; a fraudulent ostentation. He is a shallow herald, who when he must give honour of the first head, cannot fashion a sound of ancestors. The Jews taxed Christ of novelty, Mark i. 27; I hope no papist will tax him of falsity. We derive our doctrine from the blessed apostles; one would think that were ancient enough: will they go further? We have better proved ourselves the true church before Luther, than they can ever vindicate themselves from being a false church since Luther. Let them look to their invocation of saints, purgatory, prayer for the dead; I hope they will pretend no antiquity for these. Their mass, like a monster, was not begot all at once; but here a limb, there a member. God hath not built us a new church, but reformed the old, by taking away their corruptions; whereas they will rather be confounded than reformed.

Eighthly, unity is a good argument, if it were true. But where is that church which knows no division? There must be seeds, that the approved may be known, 1 Cor. xi. 19. What unity can Rome brag of, when Canus is against Cajetan, and Bellarmine against them both? To say nothing of Thomists against Scotists, the Black friars against the Grey, the Dominicans against the Franciscans, and the Jesuits against them both. We have some petty jars about the lace of Christ's coat, they rent the coat itself. When was the whole church of God so happy, as to know no contention? Yea, rather such miserable distraction doth it suffer, that not only Christ's garment is divid'd, as it was by the soldiers; but his own blessed body is torn, as if it were no better than the body of the Levite's concubine, which was chopped in pieces, flesh and bones, and the twelve pieces sent into the twelve tribes of Israel, Judg. xix. 29. Such is the faction and fraction, schism and separation, in the body of Christ; church against church, altar against altar, priest

against priest, religion against religion, Christian against Christian: yea, Satan sends his instruments with Christ against Christ, and opposeth the truth of divinity under the colour of divine authority. So that religion is in a manner lost in the questions of religion; and speeds in the world, as she did in Plutarch, who had many suitors; when every one could not have her to himself, they pulled her in pieces, that so none might have her. Because all men do not like their religion, they will refuse all. So distraction in religion is the destruction of religion; for while they say, I am of Paul, I am of Apollos, I am of Cephas, I am of Calvin, I am of Luther, I am of Arminius, I am of Dominick, I am of Francis, I am of Jesus, almost none are of Christ. Thus the conscience of religion is lost in the controversies of religion, and men rather strive to have a subtle head than a sanctified heart: they had rather dispute than live; so little is the hope of unity.

We partly see their nets to insnare us; which allurements if we have light to discern, they do not so give us over. Yea, they will rather mood all their syllogisms in a blow, and turn their arguments into armadas: and whom they cannot subdue with the sword of the month, they assault with the mouth of the sword: their fraud shall betray itself into force, the devil puts off the fox, and puts on the lion. Antichrist thunders out his excommunications, commands our throats to any knife, esteems our blood more vile than beasts, and accounts us as dogs; but it is only for baiting his bulls. Swelling words declare themselves in wounding blows, so their villany comes out; and that religion which pretended nothing but holiness, discovers itself in the highest degree of wickedness. True religion is defended with prayers, not with violence: *Ferant, non feriant Christiani*, i. e. Christians bear, not strike. So Christ conquered by dying, not by killing, as it was said.

But oh, to what execrable impiety will not misreligion drive! The king of Moab will sacrifice his eldest son, 2 Kings iii. 27: as if he would win his cruel gods with so dear an oblation, he sends up the blood of his heir apparent in smoke to those hellish deities. Such was the act of Agamemnon, assisting at the immolation of his own daughter. *Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum*, says Lucretius; i. e. Such mighty ills religion would persuade. That massacres, homicides, parricides, powder-treasures, should be a proof of religion, is an argument fetched from the pit of hell, whereof the devil himself, if he could blush, would be ashamed. It was a great blasphemy when the devil said, I will ascend, I will be like the Most High; but a greater blasphemy, when God is feigned to say, I will descend, and I will be like the prince of darkness. To make religion stoop to such abominable actions, as the murdering of princes, firing of states, butchering of innocents, such a doctrine, as is not to be found in Lucian, Machiavel, or the most desperate patrons of atheism. Certainly, it is the nearest sin to that against the person of the Holy Ghost; instead of the likeness of a dove, to bring him down in the likeness of a vulture, or a raven: nor can there be a greater scandal to their usurped apostolical see, than out of the bark of St. Peter to set forth the flag of a bark of pirates and assassins. Wise men observe, that there is no knot of thieves so dangerous, as when there is a harlot in the company; that robbery is seldom without bloodshed; Naboth cannot lose his vineyard without his life, if Jezebel have a hand in it. Now there is not so mischievous a harlot in the world as "the whore of Babylon;" to what cruelty cannot she exasperate her besotted amorists! Whither she can stretch her arm, she fills the church's back with

furrows, and her heart with sorrows. But force never got ground of truth; all attempts of that kind shall be driven to confess with that cruel queen, *Ego prosum sole nocendo*; i. e. By doing ill alone I get my good.

I conclude. The law of nature, and the conscience of every man, must needs secretly condemn fraud; how much more doth it misbecome Christians! Let us look to that absolute Pattern, in whose mouth was found no guile, 1 Pet. i. 22; and to that true Israelite, whom he commended, John i. 47. The wit of man finds out many tricks and shifts in the world, either to do mischief, or to avoid it: there is one worth them all, simplicity of heart and plain-dealing. Themistocles being entreated to play on an instrument, answered, that he could not fiddle: but asked again, what he could do then? answered, that he could make a great city of a little one. St. Augustine applies it to points of subtlety and perplexity: answer, that thou knowest not what to answer; thy learning lies not that way. If further urged wherein thy learning lies, answer, in knowing how without all these thou mayst be saved, (Ep. 56.) Let others be full of the politics, it is good for us to be well habited in the morals. Martha, Martha, thou art troubled about many things, but one thing is necessary; integrity of heart. When the fox boasted what a number of shifts and devices he had to get from the hounds, the cat said, she had but one; which was, to climb a tree. But when it came to the proof, this one was better worth than all the rest. Many a man's brain is a forge of frauds, wherein there are more engines of craft than cords in a bark. But there is one worth a thousand of them, sincerity of dealing, and the integrity of a good conscience. "Lord, remember how I have walked before thee with a perfect heart," Isa. xxxviii. 3. I have not deceived for any reward on earth, and the Lord will not deceive me of my reward in heaven. A plain heart, through a plain conversation, finds a plain way to everlasting benediction.

"Through the lusts of the flesh." Nothing sooner wins flesh and blood than a doctrine that tends to licentiousness. This is one especial cause of the increase of popery, the plausibleness of it to carnal dispositions. Every religion bears in her lineaments the image of her parent. True religion is spiritual, and looks like God in her purity. False religion is carnal, and carries the face of nature, her mother; and of him whose illusion begot it, Satan. The former would kill the lusts of the flesh, the other would feed the lusts of the flesh, and make both a wanton mind and a wanton body.

1. It advanceth the pride of nature, by telling her, that she can merit her own glory, without being much beholden to God's mercy; that she can fulfil the royal law, and so brave God in his judgment, as if she needed no pardon. Yea, that she hath more works than she needs, and can (for money) help her neighbours; that some of her sins be venial in their nature, and not worthy of death. Oh how sweet a lesson this is to self and blood, even enough to make her run mad of flesh-conceit! Now hear the voice of truth: we say, that we have no good of our own, nor can do good of ourselves; that we are not self, but dead in sins, and move not more than we are moved; that our best works are faulty, all our sins deadly, all our natures corrupted originally; that we have no merit but the mercy that saves us; that nothing but the blood of Christ can cleanse us; that his mediation is more than sufficient to save us, his sufferings to redeem us, his obedience to enrich us. Now come to the trial; which of these gives the glory to God, and which the reins to conscience? If nature be honoured, is not God dishonoured? Is not all that bravery stolen from grace, which is put

upon the back of nature? Will Sarah take it well, that Hagar should usurp her freedom? No, God teacheth us to abase nature, to tread her in the dust, to spoil her of her proud rags, to load her with reproaches; and to give that glory to Him, who says he will not give it to another. This is to give nature what is nature's, and to God what is God's.

2. It tends to dissoluteness, while they teach that it is both easy and safe to believe with the catholic at a venture; that they may spare the labour of searching, and need not much knowledge to salvation; that the mere sign of the cross can drive away devils; that a little alms can make amends for a great deal of injustice; that they may have an indulgence to dispense with a sin before they do it; that a man may buy himself out of hell while he lives, and his executors or friends may buy him out of purgatory when he is dead. O doctrine delectable to flesh and blood! What matters it how unsound his devotions be, how lewd his life, how heinous his sins, that knows these refuges? Hear the truth, that teacheth us (against nature) to strive unto sincere faith, without which we have no part in Christ, no benefit by his sufferings, no comfort in our own good works; that our heart must be zealously active in all our devotions, and without it the hand and tongue are but hypocrites; that the hand must do good deeds, or else the presuming heart is but a hypocrite; that we must expect no pardon for sin before we commit it, and from Christ alone when we have committed it, and to repent before we expect it; that life is the time of mercy, death of retribution. I hope flesh and blood takes no pleasure in such a message. So clearly manifest is it, which of these two religions is framed to the humour of nature, and is indulgent to the lusts of the flesh. From all which, let me deduce these two conclusions:

1. It is a very easy thing to be a papist; for what injunction hath it, which a libertine will not admit? To sin and confess, to confess and sin; to be drunk and vomit, to vomit and again be drunk, what true Trojan dislikes? But they have strait rules, as fastings, scourgings, hair-cloths, weary pilgrimages, blushing confessions, wilful beggary, and perpetual continency by solemn vow: what a fair pretence is here of mortification, by them that love it as dearly as a dog doth a cudgel! But is all this true? To be lodged like princes, and clothed like Dives, in fine linen, is this hair-cloth? To abstain from coarse flesh, and feed on choice dainties, is this fasting? or to drink the strongest wines, till their faces discover their hypocrisies? When the world is together by the ears, who shall bestow most upon them, is this their wilful poverty? Surely they take great pains, to tell over so many thousand crowns, as come yearly tumbling into their coffers. For the pope to ride on men's shoulders, is this humility? or to think he does the man a grace, whom he admits to kiss his pantofle? To forbear allowed matrimony, and admit forbidden adultery, is this their vow of continence? Oh that these criminal doings were not more true than their penal sufferings! And what if they should perform all that they pretend, and in the austerity of their will-worship go beyond us; yet let them not insult in the victory, for the priests of Baal went beyond them. I hear much of the Romanists' whips, I hear nothing of their knives; they may scourge, they will not lance and carve their flesh in their devotions. The Balaists did it, yet were never the wiser, never the better, never the nearer. What then do they get by this self-devised rigour? Either it makes them not better than us, or it makes the priests of Baal better than them; let them take their choice. In all these, the flesh is served, the soul is starved;

a small difficulty is admitted, that a greater might be avoided; they leave that which God commands them, to do that for which he will never thank them.

2. To be a good Christian, is a far harder task, and lies in another kind of combat; not in macerating the flesh, but in mortifying the lusts of the flesh. I do not find that God ever required or accepted the self-tortures of his servants; he takes no pleasure in our blood; they mistake him, that think to please him by destroying that nature which he hath made, and measure truth by the rigour of outward extremities. Elijah drew no blood of himself, the priests of Baal did. It is true, inward crucifying of our corruptions, the subduing our spiritual insurrections, by the noble exercises of severe restraint, that he commands and accepts. To work our stubborn wills to an awful subjection, to draw this untoward flesh to a sincere cheerfulness in God's service, to reach unto a sound belief in the Lord Jesus, to pray with a true heart, without distraction, without distrust, to keep ourselves in the continual fear of God; these be the tasks of a Christian, worthy of our pains, worthy of our comfort. The rest is but a careless fashionableness, as if it had nothing to do with the soul. Give us obedience, let them take sacrifice. For men to walk with God, so long as plenty doth walk with them, and while they may stretch their limbs on a peaceable couch, eating the fruits of their own vineyards, is not worth either reward or thanks. The valour of such men will faint when it comes to the push; and, with Archilochus, they will rather cast away their shield than perish. But to love that God who crosseth us, to kiss that hand which strikes us, to trust in that power which kills us; this is the honourable proof of a Christian. It is a vain consideration, Will Jerusalem yield me the same delights that I enjoy in Egypt? Is there such store of flesh-pots in that country, as we have in ours? Will religion allow me this wild liberty of my actions, this loose mirth, these carnal pleasures? Can I be a Christian, and not live sullenly? None but a regenerate heart can choose rather to suffer affliction with God's people, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. An easy importunity will persuade Orpah to return, from a mother-in-law to a mother in nature, from a toilsome journey to rest, from strangers to her kindred, from a hopeless condition to likelihoods of contentment, Ruth i. 14. A little entreaty will serve to move nature to be good to itself. But to hamper our extravagant lusts, to subdue our rebellious desires, to cross nature in her affected delights, this is the business of a Christian. To persist in the actions of goodness, though tyranny, torment, death, and hell stood in our way, this is that conquest which shall be crowned with glory.

"Those that were clean escaped." Some read, for a little, or, for a little while; the one translation having respect to the degree of their escaping, the other to the time; for a small measure, or for a short space. We read it, "clean escaped;" they were not quite delivered from sin, but from the external profession of sin, and from the doctrine that maintains sin. The people that escaped from perishing in the conspiracy of Korah, were not all holy; for the next day fourteen thousand and seven hundred died in the plague for murmuring against their governor, Numb. xvi. 49. "They went out from us, but they were not of us," 1 John ii. 19. The children of the world may outwardly be gathered to the congregation of Israel, yet not be of Israel. When it was represented to Alexander, to the advantage of Antipater, who was a stern and imperious man, that he only of all his lieutenants wore no purple, but kept the Macedonian habit of black; Alexander replied, Yes,

but Antipater is all purple within. Divers good men do not pretend so much strictness outwardly, but they are pure within; "The King's daughter is all glorious within," Psal. xlv. 13. Whereas hypocrites wear not the colour of mischief in their external habits, but they are all purple within. "Inwardly they are ravening wolves," Matt. vii. 15: their inwards are rotten; "their inward part is very wickedness," Psal. v. 9. They are escaped, as a man from some dangerous sickness, but not fortified against death: as a man flees from a lion, and a bear meets him, or leans his hand on the wall, and a serpent bites him, Amos v. 19. They are escaped from the lion and the bear, gross and raging impiety and idolatry; but in the house of God they are bitten by a serpent, sly hypocrisy. Escaped, as a vagabond from a shoal of beggars, reformed to some civility; yet tempted again to wander with a new doxy. Oh how far may a man go in the outward profession of truth, and yet be a hypocrite, be an apostate, be a reprobate! This is discerned by their next estate.

They are again returned to error. What a poor way went they toward heaven, so soon to turn back! Even so far as Orpah with her mother Naomi toward Canaan, a mile or two, and then back again to Moab. The devotion of worldlings is all for a gird; they will run upace for a spurt, and then afterward stand still and breathe them. They were but equivocal members of the visible incorporation; and when their consciences shall be wounded with God's judgments, they shall cry as he did in Homer, This is the blood of a man, not such as issueth from the gods: this was at the first and best but flesh and blood, not the unlosable grace of sanctification. It is but Ephraim's morning dew; let the sun of prosperity rise but two hours high, the dew is gone. A Galatian humour, to begin in the spirit, and to end in the flesh: like a meteor or gliding star, that seemed in heaven, shot through the air, and lighted on a dunghill. Or like a bowl thrown up a lull, which climbs according to the strength that forced it; and when it is come to the furthest, returns down to its own place. These violent motions have ever the less perpetuity. Their cloth hath a fair gloss, but when the iron of trial is put to it, presently it shrinks. As the Samaritans sought bread for their life, not the bread of life; and when that bread failed, Christ might sit long enough ere they sought him. But good Christians seek not, as Musculus saith, the bread of multitude, but the multitude of bread, Christ himself. They that adhere to God for any second cause out of himself, shall soon lose him, and all good things with him. Beasts will suspect the train, and birds the snare, out of which they are escaped: have rational creatures less wit than beasts or fowls? Lucullus having entertained Pompey in one of his magnificent houses, Pompey commended it for a stately house in the summer, but he thought it would be too cold for the winter. Whereto Lucullus; Do you not think me as wise as divers fowls are, to remove with the season? Have we less providence than birds, to fall into that trap out of which we have been delivered? Alas, that there should be any among us, who from the midst of our salt waves should come out fresh and unseasoned! that all these heavenly showers shall fall beside them, while they, like Gideon's fleece, want moisture! that being by a mighty hand delivered out of Egypt, they should again fall down before that calf, whose power they so confounded! that being haled out of the lake of iniquity, they should again plunge themselves into it, to their own everlasting ruin! Now the Lord lay hold upon us, that we may lay hold upon him, and never let go that hold till we come to heaven.

1. Wrapped in error. Some notice is to be taken of the phrase, *ἀναστροφέουσιν*, *involutos*, *intricatos*, involuted, entangled. All sin is a labyrinth; the entrance is easy, all the difficulty is to get out again. Jael invites Sisera to her tent, and wraps him warm, but he shall never return through those doors alive. A bird is so wrapped in the net, that the more she strives the faster she sticks. The fly entangled in the web, soon becomes the spider's breakfast. Sin hath such a clinging quality, that if it once embrace and take hold of the soul, it binds it up in pleasing fetters; as Samson was tied with Delilah's tresses, more than with the cords of the Philistines. Therefore they are called ropes of sins, Prov. v. 22, nets of hell, and chains of the soul; the worst obligation, whereout the bounden shall never get, till Christ have discharged the debt. Suppose the sinner walks abroad, yet he is not at liberty, because he carries his jail about with him. Other malefactors are within their prison, he hath his prison within himself: and whithersoever he runs, like the stricken deer, *hæret lateri lethalis arundo*, i. e. sticks to his side the deadly shaft. All his honours and pleasures cannot free him from his bonds; only he is in the number of those jail-birds, that have the favour to beg in their chains. Why cannot we persuade rich men to be charitable? Alas, they are so wrapped up in their covetous desires and insatiate lusts, that you may with as good success stand in the street, and bid a prisoner come out of his dungeon. As Lazarus in his grave was wrapped up with his towel and winding-sheet, so are dead sinners folded up in their sensuality; and nothing can loose them, but that same "Lazarus, come forth," from the mouth of Jesus Christ.

2. The practice of these deceivers is upon them that are escaped from their errors. As the good shepherd leaves the ninety-nine that are safe, and seeks that which is lost; so the malignant jailer, without any strict watch upon the malefactors in safe custody, pursues after him that hath broke prison. Sensual men have the least trouble; they are as sure as temptation can make them; they are rebels, not parasites, against whom the tyrant bends his forces. They that are wedded to the world as to a wife, and count pleasure their harlot, seldom hear the roaring noise of the enemy. It is the fort of holiness that is most besieged with assaults and stratagems. There is some satisfaction and comfort in this, that Satan will not let us alone; it is a sign we are not his, when he is so busy about us. Even this just war is a thousand times better than an unjust peace. It was the spouse's charge concerning her beloved, Waken him not till he please, Cant. viii. 4. No other is Satan's command to his officious spirits concerning his sleepy followers; Do not waken them, let them sleep their last. But for those that have renounced his sovereignty, and denied him allegiance, let them sit fast; if all the winds from the smoky corners of hell, or all the gentle airs of the pleasures on earth; if either the blandishment of fair words, or the brandishment of keen swords, can prevail against them, they shall fall. But as a gallant soldier said, Let me be a Carthaginian, though I have Rome mine enemy; so, let me be a Christian, an escaped soul, reformed from error and sin, though Rome and hell, man and devil, conspire against me. There is one able enough to save me, in whom I trust.

"Through much wantonness." This is that little postern set open, to which Satan is so much beholden for his readmittance. Wantonness, whether of soul or body, makes way for him. There be such as love crotchets and divisions, not caring for the plain song; stomachs that within one month are weary of manna; that set more by salads and sauces and kickshaws,

flashes of wit, than substantial food, the word of God. These indeed turn grace into wantonness, while they turn the word of grace into curiousness, verity into vanity. How easily are these wanton minds wrought upon! What wind is so weak, as not to move the fan! What toy will not win a child! A mind forestalled with levity, is like a vessel without ballast, soon overset. The advantage of seducers, is the lightness of those who are to be seduced. At this hint Mahomet begun his religion, compounding it of all opinions, to allure and gratify all nations. If the Sabellians had lost the distinction of persons, or the Arians Christ's Divinity, or the Marcionites his humanity, or the followers of Macedonius the Deity of the Holy Ghost, or the Jews their circumcision, or the rabbins their Talmud, they are sure to find it all in Turcism. Because the Arabians were thieves, he allowed theft; because his soldiers, especially those of Heraclius, were malicious, he allowed revenge: hurt him that hurts you: he that killeth his enemy, or is killed by his enemy, shall not fail of entering into paradise. To satisfy lust, he permits the multitude of wives, and divorcement for trifling causes. Now what a potent king, and of what large command, is he grown by this indulgence to men's wantonness?

I would we had no parallel for him in Christendom. But alas, what is papism, but a truss of schisms, a bundle of heresies, a religion many ways compounded, that all might be pleased? If old men be covetous, young men voluptuous, nobles ambitious, common persons ceremonious, whosever is led with any kind of wantonness, they have allurements for all. For the avaricious, that follow riches with craft and cruelty, they have devised a purgatory; by which trick, they will get one half, the offender shall keep the other half, and the poor shall have never a doit. To draw on the dissolute, they have ordained many odd holidays, and half-holidays, wherein they may ring, sing, and dance. To win ambitious spirits, they teach that the pope can give kingdoms (to such as can get them); they dispense with loyalty, and bestow a crown in heaven on those that can pluck a crown from any excommunicate king's head on earth. Lest men should be disheartened with the greatness of their sins, they have abundance of venials, to be washed off with a sprinkling of holy water; a connivance for the least, a pardon for the greatest, to all them that will pay for it. Because knowledge is a trouble in the getting, and men naturally love to be lazy, they fit their humours, with devotion as the seed of ignorance, images are lay-men's books, reading the Scriptures makes hereties, and that faith is sufficient which is folded up in the common bundle. Lastly, that poverty of truth may not breed contempt, they have mimic and comical actions in those mysteries which should be sacred; clerical shavings, uncleanly unctions, crossings, creepings, censings, sprinklings, cheating miracles, garish processions, tossing of beads, christening of bells, hallowing of candles, wax, chrism, ashes, palms, garments, swords, water, salt, and what not? So easily do these pontifical solemnities allure to wantonness, and work upon petulant affections.

I conclude. We see here the danger of wantonness, of dallying with our conscience, and yielding the reins to our inordinate affections. There be three goodly sights, a penitent sinner, a patient sufferer, and a thankful receiver. And there be three other as ill-favoured and scandalous; a proud beggar, a rich robber, and a wanton professor. Of all conditions there is none more culpable than a wanton Christian. That heavenly Pattern of ours, in the days of his humiliation, is never read to laugh.

I do not bid you follow him in that altogether; for there is a season for us to be merry in him, who could never have been happily merry without him. But when our laughter shall turn into profaneness, our mirth into lasciviousness, this is a demeanour unbecoming Christians. But wanton children play with their meat: we come with fear and reverence to deliver to you these holy mysteries; as it was told the vestal, that holy things were to be handled *magis sancte, quam scite*, rather holily, than knowingly. O let the fruits answer the seed: "Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling," Psal. ii. 11. Otherwise, they that drown all their devotion in wantonness, shall at last lose all their joviality in wretchedness. Death will set a period to all joy, if sorrow have not prepared an antidote for death. Let us mourn here; this is the way to be merry hereafter. Our tears are but temporal; when God hath wiped them off, our joys shall be eternal. Now the Spirit of God keep us in the sobriety of grace, that the Son of God may admit us into the court of glory.

VERSE 19.

While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.

THE common pretence for the most unbounded licentiousness, hath been liberty. In that nefarious and disloyal conspiracy and murder of Julius Caesar, the general dispensation of their conscience was liberty. Cataline's foul treachery was set off with the colours of liberty. When Sheba would invite Israel from a just and lawful subjection, to the bondage of a usurper, he proclaims a liberty, "Every man to his tents," 2 Sam. xx. 1; he meant every man to his own tent. And that people, which had but as yesterday fallen into the design of Absalom, a son of their king; are now again up in arms under Sheba, a subject of their king, a rebel against their king. As bees when they are up in a swarm, are ready to light on every bough; so the Israelites being stirred by the late commotion, are apt to follow the head of any faction. When the rulers conspire against Christ, they project liberty; "Let us break their bands," Psal. ii. 3. Laws are bands; for the wild, to encircle and humble them; for the weak, to secure and keep them; they that would oppress their inferiors, and never be called in question for it by their betters, would break the bands. Pride, idleness, drunkenness, and all manner of dissoluteness, cannot range their voluptuous chaces, till the boundaries be removed: let them dissolve the cords of morality, and then they proclaim liberty. So doth corrupt nature abhor restraint, that it embraceth any doctrine which shall but promise liberty. "While they promise them liberty," &c.

The parts of this text have a chain of dependence. First, the main scope is the allurements of the weak, in general. Secondly, the way of this allurements is by promise. Thirdly, the force of that promise is liberty. Fourthly, the conviction of that force; the promisers are bound, themselves are the servants of corruptions. Fifthly, the proof of that conviction, For of whom a man is overcome, of the same he is brought in bondage.

First, for the main scope, the seducement of the weak. It was Christ's charge to Peter, "When thou art converted, convert thy brethren," Luke xxii. 32. It is Satan's charge to his agents, Now you are con-

founded, confound your brethren. He that is not cross to Christ, cannot be antichrist. "There be many antichrists," saith St. John: there is a mean antichrist, and a main antichrist; every false teacher is a mean one, but there is another that is the main antichrist. The old fox hath abundance of cubs; and as Christ said to Peter and the apostles, "Feed my lambs;" so he to these instruments, Fleece, flay, worry the lambs. Christ came to heal the wounded, to bring deliverance to captives; they come to wound the whole, to bring the delivered into captivity. He to call sinners to repentance; they to call the righteous into wickedness. He to save that which was lost; they to spill that which might be saved. Such is the implacable enmity of the prince of darkness against the children of light, that he will rather make his own fire hotter, than not labour to bring them to the participation of his torments.

But oh what shall we say to the ringleaders of this infernal conspiracy? "Many sorrows shall be to the wicked," Psal. xxxii. 10; but how infinite is their portion that make men wicked! "Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins," Jam. v. 20. So let him know, that perverteth the righteous from the truth of his way, that he doth bring a soul unto death, and occasion a multitude of sins. If they that turn men to righteousness, shall shine as the stars in heaven, Dan. xii. 3; then they that turn the just to error, shall burn as everlasting coals in the furnace of hell. He that doth ill, and teacheth so, shall be the least in heaven, Matt. v. 19, but the greatest in hell. Even to infect men by bad example, is a mischief intolerable; and corrupt patterns shall find an unanswerable indictment for the filthy copies that have been taken from them, though they neither forced, nor tempted, nor persuaded to them. That which custom hath made honourable, will by great men's refusal grow contemptible. Young gentlemen in Athens used to play on the recorder; but when Alcibiades, viewing his face in a glass, as his cheeks were puffed up with blowing the instrument, threw away the pipe with indignation, all the gallants presently cashiered that kind of music. (Aul. Gell. lib. 15, 17.) And when eminent persons take up things contemptible, their followers think them honourable. What was more vile than the office of scavengers, the charge of scouring the sinks and gutters? Yet when worthy Epaminondas had once borne the office, it was sought for among other preferments. (Plutarch.) Exemplary evils be bad enough, but how deep a place is prepared for them in Tophet, that wilfully seduce others to dishonour their Maker! It is dreadful to think, horrible to feel, the bitterness of their damnation.

Secondly, the way of this allurements is by promise; where we have divers considerations.

1. Promises are the cheapest things men can part withal, and yet the strongest enchantments. The cheapest; therefore he that is poor in every other thing, can be rich in promises. Of all members, the tongue decays least and last; there is no fear of wearing out that. The legs decay with travel, the arms with labour, all with age; but the tongue holds out, unless the palsy or such accident seizeth on it. It is commonly two years after we are born, ere we can speak with it; but it is scarce two hours before we die, that we lose it. Still that little firm or flesh retains the vigour, when the rest languish into impotency, as one clapper will wear out divers bells. "Naphthali giveth goodly words," Gen. xlix. 21; this is every man's bounty: what a Nabal is that, which will neither hear good words nor give them! He did

not only give David's servants nothing, but that which was worse than nothing, bad language, 1 Sam. xxv. 10, 17. All Israel knew and honoured their deliverer; yet this clown, to save his vituals, will needs either make him a man of no merits, or of ill; either an obscure one, or a fugitive. Suppose he feared Saul's revenge, and therefore resolved to shut his hands, yet he might have so tempered his denial, that the repulse might have been free from offence; but now his foul mouth doth not only deny, but revile. It should have been Nabal's glory, that his tribe yielded such a successor to the throne of Israel: now his envy stirs him up to disgrace that man who surpassed him in honour and virtue, more than he was surpassed by him in wealth and ease.

Fair words, we say, never hurt the tongue; they do less hurt the purse. Never man was the worse or the poorer for good language. St. James speaks of some verbal benefactors, Jam. ii. 16; now to say, Be warmed, doth not cost them one stick from their wood-piles; Be clothed, fetches not one east garment from their wardrobes; Be filled, derives not a crust from their cupboards; yet such hypocrites are condemned of uncharitableness. How fearful then shall be the account of savage cruelty; that doth lay burdens on the already burdened, trampling upon them with scorn, whom God hath humbled with misery; and instead of healing their wounds, set them afresh bleeding by their reproaches! With the same ease men may speak well, that they do speak ill; yea, of the two, bad words are commonly the loudest, and put the organs of speech to more stress: therefore Paul calls cursing, a crying. It is a question, whether the flatterer or blasphemer shall have the upper hand in the kingdom of hell; unless we moderate it thus, that the hypocrite's tongue shall be everlastingly bitten with scorpions, and the blasphemer's burn in unquenchable flames. By how much easier the law, by so much sorer the punishment for breaking that law. Now there is nothing easier than to speak fair; as the beggar told the bishop, when instead of an alms he gave him his blessing, that if that blessing had been worth a penny, he would not have been so bountiful. They be uncharitable passengers, that will not bless the reapers, Psal. cxxix; like our hide-bound, heart-bound, tongue-bound, peevish secretaries, that will not vouchsafe a Good day or a Good speed to their neighbours. As they delight not in blessing, so it will be far from them, Psal. cix. 17.

2. Fair promises are strong snares to entangle fools. Every one is not a Joab to be fetched home to us with firing his fields; as they say, witches are brought to the house where they have done mischief, by casting some relics into the fire. The devil did not appear to Christ in a terrible form, threatening the calamities of earth, or torments of hell; but by fair promises of many kingdoms. How impudent was that presumption, even such as hell itself might well have been ashamed of! A beggarly spirit that hath not an inch of earth, offers the world to the Maker of it, to the Owner of it; God's slave would be adored of his Creator. But let this teach us, that he will not be sparing of false boasts, and unreasonable promises to us, that dares offer him kingdoms, by whom alone are made all kings. Promises; this was his way at the beginning; "Ye shall be as gods," to our first parents: this is the proceeding with all their children; honour, and wealth, and ease, are the proposed rewards of unrighteousness. If the king of Moab promise gold and promotion, the covetous prophet cannot hold off. "Shall not their substance be ours?" Gen. xxxiv. 23. That promise won the Shechemites to so painful a condition, to so bloody a conclusion. Temptations on

the right hand are most dangerous: how many that were hardened with fear, yet have melted with honour! There is no doubt of that soul, that will not bite at the golden hook. Some indeed are so cunning, that they will do more for a small present benefit, than for the promise of a tenfold value. Satan is fain to stop their mouths with ready money: Gehazi shall have the talents, Achan the golden wedge. Oh that time were but so wary as to say, with the poet, *Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes*: i. e. I fear the Greeks, e'en when they offer gifts.

3. It is ill to promise and to deceive; but it is worse to promise with a purpose to deceive. Even to renew or delay just promises, is faulty: to add term to term, is not only the craftiness of denial, but worse than denial. We may safely doubt whether that be a kindness, the putting off which torments the expectant. The God of truth dwells in heaven, he hath made no room there for the children of falsehood. Truth is the column of commerce, the bond of society, the seal of equity: and where that fails, the very foundation is cast down. Yea, it is the obligation of conscience, to which we set our tongues as hands, and our fidelity as seals: if not an act and deed, yet the first act of a seasonable deed; which he that wilfully breaks, shall be in the end as bankrupt of credit as he is already of grace. I know there be some faulty promises better broken than kept; In evil promises do not keep faith; concerning which a man is foolish in making them, wicked in keeping them. But the good man breaks not his promise, though he be damaged by the performance. Udislaus king of Hungary falsifying his promise and oath, at the earnest instance of two cardinals, set upon Amurath the Turk unawares; who perceiving his soldiers falling, and victory lying from his side, pulled a copy of the true out of his bosom, and lifting up his eyes toward heaven, uttered words to this purpose: O Jesus Christ, to these are leagues which thy servants have broken, after confirmation of them by thy name: if thou be a God, as they say thou art, revenge this injury done to thee and me, by plaguing these perjured miscreants. Scarcely had he ended this strange petition, but the success of the battle turned, the king was slain, his army discomfited, and his people pitifully butchered.

This hath been one of Rome's old tricks. John Huss had a promise, and (more) a safe-conduct to the council of Constance; yet those forsworn persecutors put him to death: a foul fact, not only against the law of Christians, but of nations. Yet how have they blanch'd it? First, that the safe-conduct was not granted by the council, but by Sigismund; as if these could be distinguished; in which the fault is not discharged, but translated. Secondly, that it was a protection against unlawful violence, not against lawful execution. How absurd! when he suffered in that very cause, for which he received warrant of security. Thirdly, he had it to come, but not to return: but this is an evasion that may wrest laughter from the spleen of gravity itself; as if where access is promised, recess were not always included; as if an understanding man would move one foot out of doors upon such weak terms of assurance. Such hath been the conscience of Romish promises: we expect fidelity from papistry, as Britain expects her own Arthur again, as the Jews a new Messiah. Only we are sure of one thing; if we never trust them, they shall never deceive us. Therefore when the deputies of the reformed religion in France, after the massacre that was on St. Bartholomew's day, treated with the king and queen-mother, and some other of the council, for peace, and both sides were agreed upon the articles; the sole question was, the security of per-

formance. After some particulars propounded and rejected, the queen-mother said, Why, is not the word of a king sufficient security? One of the deputies answered, No, by St. Bartholomew, madam. They that encourage their proselytes to promise great matters to us, whom they account heretics, and by their doctrine absolve them from all performance, deserve no better trust or credit than very devils. How like are they to those two sons of Jacob, Gen. xxxiv. 25, bloodily breaking their promise to the Shechemites, whose act their own father cursed! Gen. xlix. 7. To execute rigour upon a submissive offender, was more merciful than just; to inflict a punishment so far exceeding the fault, was cruel. If they had been fit judges, who were bloody executioners; or if the penalty had been proportionable from another; yet in them that had vowed peace, and promised affinity, it was shamefully injurious. To disappoint the trust of another, to neglect our own word and fidelity for private purposes, adds faithlessness to cruelty. They never mean us so deadly a storm, as when they make fair weather, and bear us in hand, all is peace. The Spanish proverb is true in them, *Come santo, y coga diablo*, They have eaten down saints, and void forth devils. Alas, how woful a complaint have I here just cause to take up!

Truth faints and swoons in the street, Isa. lix. 14, and nobody will so much as give it a little *aqua-vitæ*, to recover it. There is a decay and declination, as of the strength of the world, so of all goodness. We are the dross, the refuse, the fag-end of mankind; upon whom, not the end, but the ends, not of the world, but of worlds and ages forepassed, are not to come, but met together, in an unhappy conjunction. The alacrity and vigour of the whole creature is worn away: justice draws her breath faint and short; equity is knocked down with the beams of the balance; charity hath caught an everlasting cold; conscience is taken with a lethargy; and fidelity, like a little gold, is so lost in the sophisticate mass of self-love and policy, that when the great Judge comes, he will scarce find it upon earth. This daily defection grows still upon us, which was prophesied above fifteen hundred years ago, That in the last days there should be promise-breakers, 2 Tim. iii. 3. All sin spreads, and, like the plague, disperseth itself: thus pride is gone from the court to the country, and covetousness from the country to the court; swearing from the gentleman to the beggar, and drunkenness from the beggar to the gentleman. If some sin be more predominant in some places: as high-mindedness is busy about riches; malice, or private revenge, about authority; unfaithfulness fills all places. Rich misers hoard it up with their gold, and poverty makes it her staff to walk withal; the sycophant lives by it, as his daily bread; and great men do not scorn it, for an advantage; the young learn it for their first lesson, and the old keep it to the last. This false core rots us at the heart, while our skins be fair and unblemished. Now from what source is derived the calamity? we have broken our promise with God, and how should men trust us?

There is a book written against them, a flying, a burning roll, that shall destroy their houses and themselves, Zech. v. 4. God will one day bring it forth: it may be while the words are in their memory, the vision may cross their brains, and the wings of this book flutter over their drowsy consciences; till out of a furious paroxysm, they vent this hideous exclamation, The book, the book! amongst the rest of their frantic imaginations. A terrible supposition, may some say: but terrors are no wonders, when God comes to judgment. Certainly, the guiltiness of

this infidelity and wilful eozenage, is like a match laid to fire a train of powder; it burns dimly on to the appointed time, and then at one fearful blow it blows up all. A detestable sin, a deprecable punishment!

4. Seducers refuse no way, so they may deceive; they swear, they forswear, promise and lie, propose and interpose, to make strong their party. Absalom stood at the court gates, and having first taken the eyes and tongues of the people with his expensive bravery, lays also snares for their hearts, by liberal promises and courtly policy, what he would do for them were he a judge, 2 Sam. xv. 4. His ear is open to all plaintiffs, all petitioners; there is no cause which he flatters not; his hand welcomes every man with a salutation, his lips with a kiss. O courteous, beauteous, bounteous Absalom! this was the common acclamation. But the promises of tyrants end in the ruin of those who trust them. Indeed they have arguments in all moods and figures. It is recorded of Cæsar, a notorious thief, that when he had stolen beasts, he would drag them into his cave backward, by their tails; that by the contrary track of their feet he might be freed from the suspicion of thievery. So to their holes of rapine and mischief they drag backwards, that the innocents may rather seem to have freely passed from them, than to be surprised by them. Our English papists, smarting under the hand of justice, which they call persecution, some of them seeing both the promises of Rome and their present fortunes at home failing together, began to totter, and make show of turning to the gospel. Whereupon the pope hath been fain more than once to send them a token, wherein were printed the five wounds of Christ, with this motto or posy, *Fili da mihi cor tuum*, "My son, give me thy heart." Thus by maintaining their dissimulation to us, he maintained his own dissimulation to them. Ever since they have learned to temporize, having one heart for God, and another for Baal; one for the prince, and another for the pope; one for the communion, and another for the mass. So that neither protestants nor papists can tell whose they be, nor themselves whose they shall be.

O this heart of man, how deceitful it is upon the weights! how like a close, dark vault, without any crevice to look into it! The poets feign, that when Jupiter had made man, and was delighted with his own beauteous fabric, he asked Momus, what fault he could spy in that curious piece, what out of square, or worthy blame. Momus commended the proportion, the complexion, the disposition of the limaments, the correspondence and dependence of the parts; and in a word, the harmony of the whole. He would see him go, and liked the motion; he would hear him speak, and praised his voice and expression. But at last he found a fault, and asked Jupiter, whereabouts his heart lay? He told him, within a secret chamber, like a queen in her privy lodging; whither they that come, must first pass the great chamber, and the presence. There is the court of guard, forces and fortifications to save it, shadows to hide it, that it might not be visible. There then is the fault, saith Momus; thou hast forgotten to make a window into this chamber, that men might look in, and see what the heart is doing; and whether her recorder, the tongue, do agree with her meaning. If a window were framed into the breasts of these deceivers, how would the black devices which they contrive in secret, be palpably odious; how would the coals of festering malice blister their tongues and scald their lips! Then we should see how they pack and shuffle, and mean in their time to cut away, or to deal a poor game to the innocent. But

that privy chamber hath a window only to God's, not man's or angels' inspection.

I conclude. It is the sweetest thing in the world to be innocent, to be freed from the check of an impartial conscience; which will as surely tell us our unfaithfulness, as ever we durst be unfaithful. There is not the least promise made, but there it is entered; if it be performed, the book is crossed; if not, it remains upon record, an evidence against us. A man passeth by the poor, promiseth to give them something as he comes back; this promise is written in heaven, and it is not safe to mock God, who in all lawful things binds us to our word. If the good man promise to his own hurt, yet he changeth not, Psal. xv. 4. If he be spare in promising, yet he will be sure in performing. How welcome is sleep, when we lay down our heads upon the pillow that bears not the burden of unfaithfulness! Let the cunning men of the world triumph in their riches, overlook all their injuries, make themselves merry with their witty deceivings; this and that we have gotten by cleanly tricks. When they come to die, and their awaked conscience represents all these impostures in their true faces, they would give a thousand worlds for this one testimony, "We have wronged no man, we have defrauded no man," 2 Cor. vii. 2. I have kept my promise with men, God will keep his promise with me, for salvation in Jesus Christ.

"While they promise them liberty." This is the force of their promise. Now liberty is fourfold; corporal, consensual, spiritual, and sensual.

1. Corporal, which consists in a freedom of action; when men are not slaves bound to the mines or galleys to row (their lords in ease) with strokes and stripes; or to dig gold from that earth which scarce yields them salads: when the feet of Joseph are not hurt in the stocks, neither do his children sweat in the brick-furnaces: when the mured-up debtor sits not in a melancholy consideration of his unmerciful creditor. To move only the length of his tether, or but by the allowance of his keeper, is a man's captivity. Yea, even to be confined to a sick-bed, is a miserable thralldom. Those anchorites that have barked up themselves in hollow trees, or walls, had yet some room. That perverse cynic, who barreled himself up in a tub, could stand or sit, or enjoy some kind of posture. Scarce any jail is so close, that it affords not the prisoner two or three steps. But the bed of languishing sickness is of a narrow compass, Job vii. 4. David swaile that he would not go up unto his bed, &c. Psal. cxxxii. 3. To go up unto the bed, denotes strength, promiseth ease. But when God saith of Jezebel, "I will cast her into a bed," he makes his own comment upon that, calling it the bed of tribulation, Rev. ii. 22. Their thralldom is grievous, whom God hath nailed to their bed: they are not hindered from the church by a recusancy, as if they would not come; but as it were by an excommunication, they cannot come. The sick-bed is a solitude: when the centurion's servant lay sick at home, his master was fain to come to Christ, the sick man could not. Their friend lay sick of the palsy, and the four charitable men brought him to Christ; he could not come. Peter's wife's mother lay sick of a fever, and Christ came to her; she could not come to him. The bonds of mortality are so much the stronger, by being weaker; the ligaments of the arms are the looser at the point of death, yet then they bind the arm from motion, and abridge it of freedom. There was a woman bowed down with a spirit of infirmity, Luke xiii. 11: her body was not more a jail to her soul, than her disease was a jailer to her body, and Satan to her disease; who had thereby inverted the posture of her creation, and turned that counte-

nance to the earth, which was made to look up toward heaven.

This then is a liberty of the body; when neither debts, the diseases of estate, nor diseases, the debts of nature, do hinder the freedom of action. Even a civil freedom hath been held honourable: how ambitious were the tributaries of Rome to become her denizens! The burgess confessed that he obtained it with a great sum, Acts xxii. 28. The honour of Jerusalem was far greater, therefore so much the more grievous the expulsion. Their banishment and loss of their sweet country, their servitude and loss of their sweet liberty; and the loss of the sweetness of all sweetnesses, among them that had any spark of religion, the service of God, might teach them to hang up their harps and weep, remembering Zion, Psal. cxxxvii. Had a Gentile been banished thither, he had not been an exile, but a proselyte; but for a Jew to be banished from thence, it was lamentable captivity.

2. Conscientia, when nothing is imposed on us, but that may stand with the persuasion of our rectified mind. That religion which would bind the conscience, where God hath not bound it, brings snares and fetters, and takes away due liberty. Indeed those civil laws do bind, that tend to good; as forbidding to frequent tippling houses, for the avoiding of drunkenness; or to wear dangerous weapons, for the preventing of homicides. But those which are for civil orders, whose intention is not *obligare ad culpam, sed ad pœnam*; i. e. to bind to the guilt, but to the penalty; the breach whereof is sufficiently satisfied with the mulct; do not bind the conscience, nor is the omission of them a moral or mortal sin. But to entangle the soul with a multitude of traditions, ceremonies, and unconcerning rites, is condemned, as taking away the liberty of conscience, Matt. xxiii. 4. Such is celibate to the pampered flesh, or abstinence to the raging appetite. They may as well put a match to dry powder, and forbid it to take fire.

There is indeed a scrupulous conscience, like a little stone got into the shoe, that galls the foot. This ariseth, first, from ignorance: the purblind cannot discern colours, though they be dyed in grain. Secondly, from that we call *morbum maniacum*, the effect of melancholy, or of some tedious sickness; or from melancholy itself, for the mind follows the temperature of the body, and scruples are most incident to crazed brains. Thirdly, from factious teachers, which leave the harmony of the truth, and broach vain janglings; which is indeed to turn the grace of God into wantonness. And it is strange to see, how madly they are affected to such crotchets; like peevish stomachs, which cannot away with solid meat, but love to be picking of bones, or feeding on kickshaws. Fourthly, from a wrangling disposition, which makes the business of the hand to become only the business of the tongue. Hence it comes, that so many rheumatic pens blot innocent papers, and trouble the world, not for what is to be done, but what is to be thought. They come like petulant children into the vineyard to gather grapes, and spying the gaudy butterflies, only run up and down to catch them. These men take away their own liberty, freely give away their freedom, and betray their consciences. But if water had been good to drink with wine, goath a good fellow, God himself would have put it into the grape; but every simple is best. So if such ordinances of men had been good to join with the word of God, Col. ii. 20, 21, that great Law-giver would not have left them out. But let me obey all God's commandments, and believe all his promises; and for other things, my conscience hath a sweet liberty granted to it by Jesus Christ.

3. Spiritual, which frees us from the bondage of the law, and the everlasting curse of God's wrath. "If the Son make you free, ye shall be free indeed," John viii. 36.

(1.) Free from the ceremonial law, which took its mortal wound by the death of Christ: for that death was to the moral law *finis consummans*, or an end completing; to the ceremonial, *finis consumens*, or an end abolishing: to the latter, *dissolvens*, dissolving; to the former, *absolvens*, absolving. Indeed this dead law was not presently thrown into the grave; but according to the seemly burial of human bodies, which are not instantly after the soul's departure cast forth as carrion, but have their decent funerals, and are brought with solemnity to their sepulchres. So to put some difference betwixt God's institutions and human inventions, those ceremonies which died with Christ, were honourably brought to the grave. Now he that revives them, shall not be a devout solemnizer of the funeral, but a profane raker in the grave, and violator of the quiet sepulture. (August. Epist. 19. ad Hier.)

(2.) Free from the moral law; and that both as to its power of condemning, for there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ, Rom. viii. 1; and as to its power of ruling, that sin should not reign in our mortal bodies, Rom. vi. 12. Our sins are remitted, our imperfect obedience is accepted. They that look to be justified by the works of the law, are not under grace. Such peremptory travellers, mounted on the back of their own conceited righteousness, will needs post to heaven, and not take Christ along with them. Whereas indeed they are but like oxen, that a great while draw in the yoke for pasture, and are at last for slaughter. Truth is, we are not freed from obedience to the law: Christ met with none on the mount in his glory, but Moses and Elias, the law-giver and the law-restorer; to show, that he did not only come to fulfil the law and institute the gospel, but even to reconcile the law and the gospel. We must obey what God commanded by Moses, and what we cannot perform, is supplied to us by our belief in Jesus. St. Augustine makes four states of men: first, before the law, when we do not so much as fight or strive against sin at all. Secondly, under the law; we fight, but are overcome. Thirdly, under grace; we fight and conquer. Fourthly, in peace or in the kingdom of heaven, where is no occasion to fight, there being no enemies. We have now two good encouragements to fight: first, from the goodness of the cause; we take God's part. Secondly, from the easiness of the victory; God takes our part.

(3.) Free from the slavery of sin: before it reigned over us as a tyrant, now it can but dwell in us as a tenant. It never gives us a foil by any act of disobedience, but we give it a mortal wound by the sword of repentance. How sweet is that liberty which avoids the shackles of sin! It is the most common and troublesome guest that belongs to man; it troubles us both in the solicitation of it, and remorse for it. Before the act, it wearies us with importunate violence; after the act, it torments us with fear and the painful gnawings of an accusing conscience. And if it be thus irksome to men, how odious is it to God! He indeed never hated any thing but it, and for it any thing. It is the happiness of heaven, an immunity from sin; but we must content ourselves with the happiness of grace, a liberty not to be captivated by sin. The body of sin and death goes about with us; but it shall not carry us, though we carry it. It must dwell with us, but with no command, yea, with no peace. We grudge to give it house-room, we hate to give it service.

(4.) Free from all the miserable effects of sin; as

the horror of a troubled conscience, which makes a man fly from his own heart; like one sea-sick, that runs from deck to deck, from the stern to the fore-ship, from hold to hatches, from the ship to the boat, and last from the boat to the main. Or like those fondly impatient fishes, that leap out of the boiling caldron into the burning flame. You know not whom you fly from, and therefore it is you fly. All these storms are allayed by Christ. Or from the dread of temporal judgments; the sword that destroyeth without, the famine within, or the plague that spareth not either without or within. Either the sun of mercy shall shine upon us, and disperse these tempests, or God shall shelter us under the shadow of his wings, Psal. xci. 1. Death itself is but a bottom to transport us to the land of promise; and Satan, our old sworn enemy, shall be trampled under our victorious feet; and we shall sing to him that hath given us this liberty, Glory and praise be to the Lamb for ever and ever.

4. Sensual, when the boundaries of God and laws of man are broken through, and excess knows no limits but the want of power. This indeed is not properly liberty, but licentiousness; an exorbitant, luxurious violence, the greatest slavery of the world: but this discourse I reserve to the due place. Here only note this sum of the text.

Sensuality and a carnal freedom is the spell that conjures these wild spirits, and brings them in subjection to their heretical teachers. They may promise them civil liberty; this they are not sure to perform; or consensual; this they will not perform; or spiritual; this they cannot perform: but profane excess, riotous intemperance, the uncontrollable swing of their lusts, this they will endeavour to perform. This is the lure of wanton souls: who can wonder that so many turn to papistry, when men may be at once Roman Catholics and human devils? They say, their religion daily winneth; yet let them not boast of their gain; they neither need, nor can, if they consider how it gets, and whom. How, but by base forgeries, frontless untruths, plausible persuasions, and flattering promises; which easily prevail with a pleasure-disposed soul. Whom, but such as are either most unable to resist, or most like to bested them. Unsettled heads, in their unseasonable travels, like fond and idle Dinahs, have come ravished home. These impostors besiege the fiery wits, or the great heir of some noble family, whose greatness of example may be persuatory and commanding. Malcontents, whom envy makes desirous of a change; loose livers, men necessitous, whose penury of estate and judgment compels them to base things; voluptuous epicures, who for all their filthy uncleanness have a shift, that is, a shift; that having first by their adulteries made work for confession, now again by confession prepare for more adulteries. These unclean birds are insnared by the nets and calls of such fowlers.

But alas for that other sex! still Satan begins with Eve; still his assaults are strongest where is weakest resistance. How few grand heretics do we read of without their mistresses! Magus had his Helena, Donatus his Lucilla, Apelles his Philumena, Montanus his Priscia, Priscillian his Galla; every one his factotum; as the Jesuits are not without their collapsed ladies: not only dead images to worship, but even living instruments to court and employ. "Silly women, laden with sins, and led away with divers lusts," 2 Tim. iii. 6; these must be the stalls of their spiritual, if not corporal, fornication. More polite than Balaam; when they could not blow up religion with powder into heaven, they try the old Moabish plot, to sink it down to hell. Such is the public

liberty of their dispensations, whether for dissembled religion, or not unprofitable filthiness.

Here is even a spoil fit for such a conquest, for such victors; this fetches them in so many notoriously dissolute persons. Malefactors, that for horrible misdemeanours are committed to prison, be there wrought upon by these instruments; and so they that were convicted thieves, robbers, strumpets, homicides, are turned off from the gallows Roman Catholics. Who can marvel, to see them that lived like atheists, to die papists? Drowning men catch hold on a weed, rather than nothing; dying patients embrace an empyric, a leech, rather than no physician. They can teach them to be saved in a moment, if they will but hang as fast upon their foundation as they must on Tyburn; that is, on the holy mother, the church of Rome; which can no more stumble, than a man when both his eyes are out. Who would envy them this purchase? We are the fewer, not the worse. If all our harlots, and thieves, and murderers, and hypocrites were theirs, we should not complain; they might be the prouder, not the better. Let them triumph in their conquest, so long as we know we have lost none worth our credit, and they have got none worth their honour. They daily forego more in a better exchange; the sea never encroacheth upon our shore, but it loseth elsewhere. Many have we fetched out of their wastes into the fold of the church; and those not Catholic colliers, and cobblers; but such as were able to render a reason, both of the just dislike of their idolatries, and the sincerity of our doctrine.

I conclude this point. Most men take that liberty which justice never granted; but justice did never grant a liberty which men do not greedily take. Nature affects that which is pleasing to nature; nothing better pleaseth it, than the freedom of its own will. As it has been expressed, Few men seek to understand what is allowable, very many what is delectable. Lord, keep us from such a liberty, as is the running of our own ways, after our transpative fancies, and the baneful allurements of wantonness.

"They themselves are the servants of corruption." All sin is a servitude; and that which flatters men with the greatest opinion of liberty, makes them the most miserable vassals, 2 Tim. ii. 26. They may think, that they have the world at command, and not the world them; as conjurers, after their contract made with hell, think they have power over Satan, whereas indeed Satan hath power over them. They have a secret and insensible tether, which that enemy ties to their heels, and holds in his hand: while they run whither he allows them, they shall have scope enough; but if they offer towards goodness, he instantly snatches them up. They think themselves the freest men in the world; and let them be their own judges, as they will be their own carvers, they are so. No cords, whether of law or conscience, can hold them: Samson did not more easily break the bonds of the Philistines, than they dissolve the ties of government, Psal. ii. 3. The commonwealth is a tabernacle or tent, pitched up to shelter men from wrong, and that they may live happily together. Laws are the cords of it: break the cords, the tent falls: "My tabernacle is spoiled, my cords are broken," Jer. x. 20. Vines are underpropped and bound up, to make them fruitful; vessels are hooped, to contain the liquor: so laws are bonds, to keep the evil in awe, the good in safety. But these flies will not be caught in such cobwebs: unruly and headstrong beasts, no mounds can keep them out or hold them in. Laws bind all, without exception: I speak not of princes; as it is said, No one writes laws for a prince. They do not, like death, lay sceptres level

with spades. Yet, as it was said of the blessed Virgin, offering her legal sacrifice for her purification, Grace had set her *above* the law, but humility placed her *under* it; so of good princes, their high calling makes them above the law, their humility respects it.

But they that dare force and ravish the law, and make it both the instrument of their revenge and patronage of their mischiefs, think they may well plead their liberty. Oh what a poor slave do they hold the man of a tender conscience! They dare swear and blaspheme; we fear an oath. They dare spend their days in uncleanness; we dare not make the members of Christ the limbs of a harlot. They dare pollute the marriage-bed by adultery, and make it the mirth of the company; we dare not, fearing lest heaven should be shut against us for the sin, and hell swallow us for boasting of the sin. They dare wager for lying, with that grandfather of lies and liars; why, their tongues are their own, Psal. xiii. 4: we dare not, though it were to save ourselves, to relieve the poor, to honour God. They dare kill a man in their anger, yea, for their pleasure; we dare not deface the image of our Maker, knowing that no river can wash off that blood. They dare drink themselves into beasts; we dare not, lest we should never be recovered again unto men. They dare oppress the poor; we dare not, knowing that thereby we reproach their Maker. They dare revenge all wrongs done them, and carve it with a large measure; we dare not wring God's weapon out of his hand, but remit all vengeance to him. The devil cannot hurt a good man, without letters patent; yet the wicked would harm him, against all laws and prohibitions. They dare sin God in the face, and presume upon his patience; we fear him, as a consuming fire. It is all; they dare hazard the breaking of their necks, we would not willingly break our shins.

Now, do not these appear the more free and magnanimous? Alas, we are curbed and hampered; so many interdictions lie in our way, Thou shalt not do this; so many impositions lie on our backs, Thou shalt do this; that we seem the most miserable servants upon earth. Whereas they know no law, but the latitude of their will; no limits, but the extremity of their power: yet for all this, they are no better than slaves, yea, the very vassals of the most contemptible masters. He that serves a papist, yet serves a Christian; he that serves a Turk, yet serves a man. But he that serves the world, serves nature's slave; he that serves the devil, serves God's slave; he that serves lust, serves his own slave. Some have served one another by turns, in mutual and reciprocal offices; and that might be a service of love. Some have yielded service to men of meaner degree and quality than themselves: but that might be a service for gain, which were base enough; or for fear, which is baser; or for flattery, which is the basest of all. Some masters have come to serve their own apprentices; but that was a woeful turn of fortune's wheel; a necessitous, piteous service. But for a man to serve his dog, this is wondrous low: his lusts are his dogs; as Acteon, given over to his pleasures, was devoured of his own hounds. Such may be well called here, The servants of corruption.

Is this their liberty, this their magnanimous fortitude; to obey every petty slave, every common soldier in that camp, whereof themselves are the general? The dog runs at the master's whistling; but for the master to go at the dog's commanding, is a preposterous servility. If I must but say, Get me such a beauty for my delight, the man hath no power to deny it; no means is refused, that makes to this brutish

fruition: is not this to be the servant of corruption? If covetousness say, Get me such a commodity; the man instantly obeys, plots, studies, contrives, breaks his peace, his sleep, his brains, to compass it: though he plough furrows on the backs of the poor, and run through the blood of orphans, though he ventures his ears, his neck, his soul, he dares not deny his slave, his dog, his devil, avarice. Call you this freedom, when a man cannot choose but sin? When I may drink wine, or refuse it, this is my freedom; but to be compelled to drink it, by a dry spirit within, if this be liberty there is no bondage. Therefore is God almighty, because he cannot err, nor lie, nor do evil; for these are the works of impotency. The saints in heaven cannot sin, yet sure they enjoy the fullest liberty. *Liberi, quia liberati*, i. e. delivered from the necessity of sinning, therefore free. If to sin be the only liberty, they have no liberty in heaven. No; this is the service of corruption; a thralldom, not a freedom; the tyranny of sin, not the kingdom of righteousness.

Every man is the servant of as many tyrants as he has vices. When Alexander found Diogenes in his tub, and disputed with him, whether was the freer estate, with Alexander to command the world, or with Diogenes to be confined to a barrel? the cynic answered, Thou commandest others, I command myself: I am a servant to the king, the king is a servant to his slave; yea, even to my slave: I am emperor over those affections, that exercise a dominion over thee. But as Nabal's servant was weary of so unaffable, uncharitable, unreasonable a master, the very son of Belial; so we have just cause to abandon that service, which must be obsequious to the vilest, proudest, basest grooms in our family, our own carnal lusts; which are no better (though they dwell with us) than the limbs of Belial. The acolaust loathes the service of that churl, that allowed him no better diet than husks, and thereof not enough to satisfy him: such is the wages of corruption, Gal. vi. 8. Therefore let us return with humbled and penitent souls to our Father's house, where all the servants have bread, good for the quality; bread enough, sufficient for the quantity; and to spare, abundant, even to satiety: where the fatted calf shall feast us; royal apparel, the best robe of glory, shall adorn us; heavenly music shall cheer us, and eternal peace and mercy shall receive us, Luke xv.

"For of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage." The metaphor seems to be taken from war; where the conqueror brings the vanquished into captivity, making them slaves and drudges, imposing on them vile and servile offices. And this misery of the captive differs according to the disposition of the victor; if he be imperious, and given to cruelty, he doth so much the more immitter the slavery. Pharaoh is not content to set Israel possible tasks; so long there was comfort: their diligence might save their backs from stripes. What with conceit of benefit to the commander, and hope of impunity to the labourer, they might take heart to venture on great difficulties. But those tyrants did measure their commands by their own wills, not by the strength of their inferiors. To require more of a beast than he can do, is inhuman; yet Pharaoh exacteth bricks where he hath allowed no straw. This was cruel enough; but what is the swartly king of Egypt to the black prince of darkness? his commands are less reasonable, his stripes more unmerciful: the former are not more plausible to the flesh on earth, than the other are terrible to the soul in hell. This is St. Peter's infallible doctrine, "Of whom a man is overcome," &c.; St. Paul's everlasting rule, "Ye are his servants to whom you obey."

Rom. vi. 16. Yea, he that was before them, above them, and from whom they spake, pronounced it a firm lesson out of the school of heaven, "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin," John viii. 34. For method; first, let us view Satan's victory over the wicked, and their slavery under Satan; then, how Christ overcomes the elect, and the freedom of their service under him.

1. Thrice did the devil set upon the Son of God, and fashioned his temptations to this method; "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life," 1 John ii. 16. To all these the first Adam was tempted, and in all miscarried; the Second Adam is tempted to them all, and overcometh. The former Adam was tempted, first, to a carnal appetite, by the forbidden fruit; secondly, to pride, by the suggestion of being as God; thirdly, to covetousness, in the ambitious desire of knowing good and evil. Satan having found all these motions so successful with the first Adam, in his innocent estate, treads the same steps in his temptations of the Second; first, the stones must be made bread; there is the motion to a carnal appetite; secondly, the guard and attendance of angels must be presumed on; there is the motion to pride; thirdly, the kingdoms of the earth must be offered, and their glory; there he is moved to covetousness and ambition. In every one there is an appearance of good, whether of body, mind, or estate. Once and a second time he is repelled, yet again he assaults: Satan is not foiled, when he is resisted. If neither the lust of the flesh nor lust of the eyes can overcome us, he will try us with the pride of life; as when neither diffidence nor presumption could fasten on Christ, he tempts him with honour, Matt. iv. 8. He is a cunning fencer, expert at all weapons: in vain shall we be skilful in some, if we fail in any. When he makes the challenge, it is not left to us (as in terms of duel) to appoint the ground, or the weapon; we must be prepared for all assaults, for all places. They that hold towers and forts of garrison, do not only defend themselves from incursions, but from the cannon and the pioneer. Still doth this subtle enemy traverse his ground for an advantage. When the wilderness speeds not, he hopes for some better luck in the temple; there failing, he climbs higher, to the top of a mountain: as foes in pitched fields, strive for the benefit of the hill, or river, or wind, or sun. He doth himself, as he taught his servant Balaam, change places, in hope of prevailing. If the obscure country cannot move us, he tries what the court can do; if not our home, the tavern; if not the field, our closet.

How many hath he wounded in one place, that were fenced in another! He would not only put some evil into all, nor all into some, but all into all. Nor does he prevail so much by his own power, as by our negligence. Therefore as no place is left free from his malice, so no place should be made prejudicial by our carelessness. Some he overcomes with superstition; and they die the death of Galileans; for he, like Pilate, will mingle their blood with their own sacrifices, Luke xiii. 1. Some he overcomes with vain-glory; and they die the death of Philistines, killed with the jawbone of an ass. Some with drunkenness; and they die the death of Nabab; yesterday as beasts, to-day as stones; then over-merry and light as feathers, in death dull and lumpish. Others with the world; and they fall under their own burden; the world, like the tower in Siloam, falls on them, and quasheth them to pieces. How great is his conquest, when he can set reasonable men to worship a little coloured dirt! Some with filthy lust; and they die the death of

Sodomites; if not with fire from heaven, yet with fire from hell. Still this conqueror proceeds; and some he overcomes with a multitude of small sins: one hair will not hang a man, many will, as Absalom was served. Or with some special dear sin, which is like a conspirator within, that will betray him the town. Either he disarms men of their sword, the word of God; and then who can fight without a weapon? or gets away their buckler, the shield of faith; and who can defend himself without a target? Faith is the foundation of a Christian: that once lost, all is desperate. An enemy, after long siege of a city, upon entreaty made, condescended to terms of peace; and this was his condition, that, in sign of homage, they should quietly suffer him to take from their city walls one row of stones round about: to this they yielded; and he laid hands on the lowest row, the foundation, and so left them no walls at all. It is a weak city without walls, there can be no walls without a foundation, city and walls are feeble without munition: where men have neither the grace, nor the wit, nor the will to resist, it is easy for Satan to overcome.

2. But now what is the event of this conquest? Bondage; "Of the same is he brought in bondage." The unhappiness of which estate appears in these conditions.

(1.) It is an ignominious state; the hangman's servant is an honour to it. Such was Matthew's first condition, a farmer of the miseries of his own nation. Informers, that, like crows, live upon carrion; and dorks, that pass the meadow or garden to light on a dunghill; or those wingless flies, that suck a living out of corrupt blood; all hear ill enough, and are odious in their offices. But to wear the livery of Satan, to be the pensioner of hell, at the command of that malignant and degenerate spirit, is the most dishonourable name and shame. Let them be lords of the earth, yet their report is fouler than clouds of the earth; by the base indulgence to their own lusts, their names stink above-ground. Their memory shall rot; yea, it is well if their memories do rot with their carcases, and their vices be buried with them in their graves. So basely ignoble, so inhuman, is it for a man to be the slave of his own affections.

(2.) A hard and troublesome condition. Both for the multitude of business, and, not seldom, contrariety of commands: as pride asks cost, whereas covetousness denies necessities; envy makes a sullen face, whereas ambition sets it in the smiling posture of flattery; so the mind is distracted with cross addresses. And for the hardness of their labour; like beasts, they are set to draw in Satan's team; sin with cart ropes, and iniquity with cords of vanity, Isa. v. 18. Cords are at first twisted of small threads; but once combined, they can bind heavy burdens, and hold great ships. As one says, Sins come easily, but they bind strongly. They are deceived that think the commands of Satan easy. Sin is no niggard of her pains; seldom ever do we find goodness so industrious. It is not Absalom's beauty and royal attendance that can make strong his party; but he must neglect himself, sit continually at the gate, giving his hand to kiss, and kissing their lips that did it; he must take pains to further his treason.

Unruly affections are like wild horses, that carry us over hills and rocks, till they be breathless. Yea, they soon recover breath and speed; and if they be restrained by a sudden violence, they plunge and career, and cease not till the saddle be empty, and then strike at the prostrate rider. Where sin hath once gotten a dominion, it seems to be repelled, but

hath recourse to the haunt, as humours fall toward their ill issue. Iniquity is laborious; the poet was deceived when he said, *Facilis descensus averni*, i. e. Easy is the descent to hell. The covetous make their passage through stony rocks of hardship and penury: to rise early, and rest late, and eat the bread of sorrows, Psal. cxxvii. 2; I hope this is not easy. The ambitious clambers up steep hills and craggy mountains, to get a place as tickle and slippery as the stool of Eli. Shall we say it sleeps in them? Nay, it will not let them sleep. The voluptuous tramples in dirt and mire, Isa. lvii. 20, besmearing himself with infamy and turpitudes: is not this a molestation? The revengeful breaks through hedges stuck with thorns, which makes him all gore and bloody. The envious walks in dark and shady places, that he may not see another's happiness: As many as are the blessings of the happy, so many are the torments of the envious, saith Seneca. He wastes his own marrow, and with sullen malice gnaws the flesh from his own bones: is not this a sad and a hard slavery? The drunkard pains his stomach in the devouring, his head in the digesting, his throat and heart in the returning, of his overladen cups. But especially the sin of mischief is a vigilant, painful, indefatigable sin. Judas will be awake, when Peter is asleep; the tare-sower in the field, when the husbandman is in his bed. They that worship the beast never rest, day nor night.

3. It is intolerable; we have heard of many poor souls condemned to the galleys, under the merciless tyranny of Turks and infidels. But what is the Turk to the devil? what a galley to hell? what the labour of oars to the toil of an afflicting conscience? Of all servants, they are in the worst case that are sold; of those that be sold, they are the worst that must do service in prison; of them in prison, their state is most lamentable that are bound with fetters. Such is the condition of the ungodly: they are the servants of sin, and sold under sin, and chained in prison. The jail is infidelity, they are shut up under unbelief; the jailer, Satan, so strait and tyrannous, that they cannot so much as lift up their head, or look to heaven for any deliverance. Pride is one chain, Psal. lxxiii. 6; though they wear it for an ornament of bravery, they shall find it the ligament of infidelity. Concupiscence is another chain, that binds them faster to the service of Satan, than ever the virgin was to the rock, to be devoured by the monster. Every sin strives for the regency: Within me they strive about me, whose I should be, saith Bernard. Other tyrants have some intermission in their commands; Pharaoh denies not Israel a season to eat, drink, and sleep; but these miserable captives are always in an habitual service, seldom out of actual. They must neither do, nor speak, nor think, but according to their master's injunctions. He labours to snare the children of God in their sleeps; as Augustine saith, He acts in them sometimes when asleep, what he cannot do when they are awake; suggesting unclean thoughts when their wills cannot resist them: how much more doth he turn out his slaves! If Judas's heart be wrought to the treason, he shall not rest till his hand have done it, and undone himself by it. He would not so much as suffer him to eat his supper, but hastened him from that sacramental bread to his bloody design. Amnon, enamoured on that incestuous act, melts away till he have committed it. Lust is not a fair, but a furious mistress, impatient of delay in her service. (Ambr. de Fuga Seculi, cap. 4.)

Oh that men would free themselves from this intolerable burden; where one is a slave to lust, another to ambition, another to fear! (Sen. Ep. 47.)

Sin is a cowardly thing; Eve had no sooner offended, but she sought out a fellow and companion. When Cain was stained with his brother's blood, how he trembled and quaked! there being none in the world to see him but his parents and sisters, yet in every bush he suspects an ambush. Satan is so cruel a master, and so niggardly a rewarder, that all his servants be timorous. Men of honest conscience, observers of order, as they are fearful to offend, so most courageous in a just cause: the servants of God are bold as lions. But guiltiness and conspiracy is of so ugly a shape, and horrid a representation, that the offender never dares look upon himself single and alone, but still runs as a deer to the herd.

4. It is useless, no good comes of it. It is both a servile, compulsory labour; and a dishonest, unjustifiable labour; and idle, fruitless, a mere labour in vain. "What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed?" Rom. vi. 21. The root is sin, the stock blame, the fruit shame, the end death, to be cut up and cast into the fire. There be some that sin, and shame not: "Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination?" Jer. vi. 15. No, they had gotten a meretricious front, the look of an impudent harlot, Jer. iii. 3. There be some that shame, and amend not; "As the thief is ashamed when he is found," Jer. ii. 26. Being taken in the manner, he is more ashamed of his apprehension than of his transgression: he Josiah all that modesty when he gains secrecy, and ceaseth not to be a thief. It is good when shame for sin is joined with sorrow, and sorrow with amendment of life, Jer. xxxi. 19.

This is one discommodity of such service, a shame before men; but there is a worse behind, even a shame before all the angels of God. But is there no benefit by it? Doth not the covetous store up gold? the voluptuous please his wanton flesh? the ambitious mount to honour? As Satan said, Doth Job serve God for nought? so, do these serve Satan for nought? They do: and as witches take apparitions for substances; are promised golden mountains, yet remain beggarly wretches; so these embrace a cloud instead of Juno, a dream for reality, and are in all their glory like a fool in a comedy, crowned with a coronet of painted paper, a bauble for a sceptre, a table spread with counterfeit cheer, and when the play is done, he may go seek his supper. It was never in any condition so true, as here, A young serving-man, an old beggar.

5. It is irretrievable, sold to sin with small hope of recovery. That powerful tyrant will keep his captives, till a stronger than he comes to ransom them. Some may haply have their faint reluctations against this bondage; and Satan's commands are so foul, that it grudgeth their conscience to fulfil them. To do injury where they have received courtesy, to fight in an unconcerning quarrel, to shed blood where they may have money to spare it, doth a little stumble them; and they have some languid wishes, Oh that we were free! But while they seek not constantly the means of their release, their captivity is the sorer, as the jailer lays more irons upon him that hath attempted to break prison. Lycurgus could say, that often assaulting the enemy without conquest, would at last encourage them to set upon us. They are presumptuous fools that think they can repent at pleasure; as if the weathercock could turn the wind, and not the wind the weathercock; as if because man can tame birds and beasts, therefore he could also tame himself; yea, as if a piece of clay fashioned to the picture of a man, could make itself living, and animate that lump with a reasonable soul. They are deceived; sin never made such a bargain

with them, as to be turned off at an hour's warning, or to be discharged with a *Miserere mei*, Have mercy upon me. No, that landlord will hold his own, except He come that hath a stronger power and a better title; and when it must out, it will rend the heart, as Satan tore the child, and do what he can to make the house untenable. It is more easy to exclude, than to expel. They will say with Pharaoh, "Why have we done this, that we have let Israel go from serving us?" Exod. xiv. 5.

6. It is pitiable, the grief of every Christian. Even such a temporary condition may well move compassion. Stood we upon a high mountain, and had as clear eyes to behold this large valley of tears and miseries, as our Saviour had to see the glory of kingdoms; did we perceive the lamentable cries of the famished for want of bread, the distressed shifts of the poor for want of harbour, the tortures and rackings of sensible limbs, both by the hand of justice and of injustice; the disconsolate sorrows of parents for their children, widows for their husbands, friends for all relations; or the exigents of besieged cities, the sound of trumpets, noise of drums, roaring of cannons, the pitiful groans of the dying and wallowing in their bloods, or swooning in the streets of famine, fathers and husbands mourning for the barbarous ravishment of their wives and daughters; or their anguish that are condemned to row in galleys, turn in mills, work in minerals; how they eat nothing but the bread of sorrow by weight, and drink nothing but the water of affliction by measure: their unpitied cries at the smart of their unmerciful lashings: surely tears were the poorest obsequies we could spend at these woeful funerals. The cheeks that are now dimpled with laughter, would change their position; the resty souls that sing now nothing but peace, would change their disposition, at these sad spectacles.

But now, by how much the soul is more dear than the body, more precious, more eternal, let our bowels yearn for these spiritual calamities. All outward sufferings are determined by death; as when it was told Anaxagoras, The Athenians have condemned you to die, he said again, And nature them. But the intolerable service of sin, the works of darkness, commanded by the prince of darkness, in the place of darkness; the gashes of a wounded conscience, fresh bleeding hurts plastered with corrosives, overburdened souls, neither able nor willing to ease themselves; if we have not sucked the breasts of tigers, these things will make us mourn and pray, Lord, have mercy on such miserable sinners.

Oh that men would consider, what they have been, what they are, what they hope to be! First, what they were; the images of God; that is their original glory. Thou that shouldst rule over all beasts about thee, art overruled by those beasts that are within thee. (Basil. Hex. Homil. 10.) Secondly, what they are, at least in invitation; the Son of God offers to make us free, and to restore all our forfeited privileges; and shall we neglect so fair an occasion? Show this favour to the captives at Algiers, and see if they will refuse it. When Cyrus king of Persia proclaimed liberty to the Jews, only those went from Babel, the place of their captivity, to Jerusalem, the city of their ancient liberty. "whose spirits God had raised up," Ezra i. 5. Christ came to proclaim freedom to captives, Luke iv. 18, yet none follow this gracious call, but only they whose spirits the Spirit of God raises up. Thirdly, what they hope to be, even kings in heaven; and will they be slaves on earth? Is not the kingdom above begun below? Is not the suburbs of grace the way to the city of glory? Doth the kingdom of sin reign in our mortal bodies, and shall

the kingdom of rest be given to our immortal souls? Have we the promise of Canaan, and of God's arm to conquer it, and do we stick at the sons of Anak? Certainly, if through grace we do not prepare ourselves for that heavenly kingdom, we can never say with a warrant that God hath prepared that heavenly kingdom for us. (Bern. de Persecut. Sustinenda, cap. 11.)

7. It is destructive; the end of every service is wages, and this is a wages without end, even everlasting pain. O horrible reward, to sow trouble, and reap vexation; still to bring fuel unto that fire, which must burn themselves; to plough with rods, and eat with scorpions; to be wearied in the ways of sin, and then to be worried with plagues of sin! "The wages of sin is death," Rom. vi. 23; a toilsome service, an irksome wages. "Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death," Jam. i. 15. He that was the tempter, becomes the tormentor; then he promised pleasures, now he inflicts tortures. First, he enticeth men to sin, and then accuseth them to God for the sins they have done by his enticement. Be assured of this, he that without cessation doth tempt thee to sin, will without intermission torment thee because thou hast sinned. Still the reprobates shall serve under their old master, but their work shall be changed, and the place: here they work actively, there passively; here Satan works by them, there he works upon them; here they are in a free air, with light and delight, there in a dungeon, with sores and sorrows. As Charles king of Sweden, a great enemy of the Jesuits, when he took any of their colleges, would first hang up the old Jesuits, and then put the rest into his mines, saying, That since they had wrought so hard above ground, he would try how they could work under ground; so when the wicked have done the devil what service they could on earth, he will confine them to his dark vaults in hell. O Lord, come down, cast out this tyrant and usurper, repossess thine own kingdom, erect a throne to thyself in all our hearts, that thou mayst here reign in us as our King, and we may at last reign with thee in thy kingdom. Amen.

"Of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage." The service of Satan is so full of troubles and perplexities, so destitute of comforts and relaxations, that there is no wonder if it be tedious to the sufferer, when it displeaseth the hearer or looker-on. Therefore as they that have visited hospitals, and smelt the offensive ulcers of lepers, are glad of a sweet air and healthful society; so after the view of that innumerable slavery, the bondage of sin and Satan, now let us refresh ourselves with the liberty of the servants of God. For we cannot deny God (in so general a proposition) to have his victory also. Let not Satan bear away the glory as if there was no king, no conqueror but he; for this master of slaves is but a slave to a higher Master; and as he can exercise no dominion over his servants but by God's permission, so God holds him in the strongest subjection, so hampered with invincible chains of servitude, that he cannot touch one of his servants, not one limb of their bodies, not one hair of their heads, not one beast of their herds, till God hath given him leave, and he will never give him leave to hurt their souls. You have seen the carriage of an inhuman tyrant over his slaves; come now to the court of a King, and see the usage of his free servants; yea, see a court of kings, Rev. i. 6, for all God's servants be no less than princes. Where we have two general occurrences. First, the conquest of some that stand out. Secondly, the happiness of them that are overcome.

1. God is sure to be Victor, for what force can

withstand him? But he frames the manner of his victories to the nature of his enemies; them that resist he overcomes by subversion; them that yield, by conversion. His conquest here is not by fury, but by mercy. "Fury is not in me;" the briars and thorns shall be consumed in his flame; but they that lay hold on his arm, shall hold back his arm; humble and faithful prostration shall make their peace, Isa. xxvii. 4, 5. This war on his part is all of love: the intention is the desire of peace. By preventing grace the war is undertaken; by operating grace the battle is begun; by finishing grace the victory is gotten. When God gives us repentance, he hath then overcome us. We were rebels by nature, and enemies to the grace of God; we must be vanquished, or we cannot be saved. They are "led by the Spirit of God," Rom. viii. 14. So gentle is this conquering, that it is called a leading: *Ducendo vincimur, vincendo ducimur*, says one: i. e. We are conquered by leading, we are led by conquering. Led by a superior instinct, not furiously, but familiarly. Nor is this conquest a necessitating of our salvation. Thus Augustine, He who is acted upon, is not properly understood to act any thing himself. Nay, thou art both acted upon and thou actest; men are acted on, that they may act. God gives the first motion or inclination, and so we begin: and by his continual help we follow on. We are not willing before we be overcome, but in the very conquest we are made willing to be overcome. The will acted on, becomes active.

(1.) This conquest is not sudden. Man's heart is naturally stubborn: this Jericho will not be won under seven days' siege, and then the walls must down too, worldly forces must fail us. Not seldom it holds out longer than Ostend or Troy; God is many years assaulting it with his spiritual weapons, his word, ordinances, favours, frowns, before it yields. Few are converted in an hour, or can tell that hour wherein they were converted. It is not here, to come and overcome. God doth weaken us before he vanquish us, taking from corruption here a fort and there a bulwark, now a trench, then a mine, together with the victuals and provision, even the magazine whereon sin feeds and lives. When the unthrift had no proviant left, he must yield and humble himself to his Father.

(2.) It is not hostile, as nation against nation with a deadly feud, but with terms of love. There is a dry wounding, a conquest without blows. Thou hast wounded me with one of thine eyes, Cant. iv. 9. And, Turn away thine eyes, for they overcome me, chap. vi. 5. Of all victories, love is the greatest, to "overcome evil with good," Rom. xii. 21. This is to be like God, whose image we bear in our creation, and to whose image we are restored in our redemption. Christ hath commanded nothing which he does not enable us to perform. If he had not overcome all our malice with kindness, he would never have charged us with such a practice. Saul hunts for the life of David: David hath a way to the life of Saul, and spares it. Such a feeling oratory did Saul find in the lips of David, and lap of his garment, that it lies not in the power of his envy, ill nature, and envious heart, to hold out from tears. He whose harp had wont to quiet Saul's frenzy, now by his kindness doth calm his fury; so that now he sheds tears instead of blood. Here was a victory gotten, and no blow stricken. Phoeon, that noble Athenian, being condemned to die, and lifting the deadly cup to his lips, was asked by his friends, what message he would send to his son; he answered, I charge him never to revenge this draught upon the Athenians. (Elian. lib. 12.) Baldwin, king of Jerusalem, having spoiled the Arabian Saracens, and put them to flight,

found in his return homewards a woman ready to travail, wife unto a chief prince of the Arabians, left behind in the pursuit; whom he covered with his own mantle, appointing both attendance and sustenance. This kindness was not lost; for afterward being besieged by the same Arabians, and put to great distress, he was delivered by that captain whose wife he had preserved. Yea, take an example nearer home: A malefactor, in birth and person a comely gentleman, was sentenced by a judge deformed in body. Hereupon he turned all his prayers to Heaven into cursings and revilings of the judge, calling him a stigmatical and bloody man. The patient judge for that time reprieved him: still he continued in the same language of invectives and blasphemies against him. The next session, being produced, the judge asked him if his cholour were any thing boiled away and spent: but then he redoubled his railings; yet he reprieved him again, as loth to let him die in so uncharitable and desperate a condition of soul. Before the third assizes, he sent for him to his chamber in London, and asked him if he were yet more pacified: still nothing came from him but words of inveterate rancour. Whereupon said the judge, God forgive thee, I do; and withal threw him his pardon. Whereat he was so astonished, that being but hardly recovered from his swoon, he refused the queen's pardon for his life, unless the judge would both pardon his malice, and admit him into his service. He did so, and found him so faithful, that dying he gave him the greatest part of his estate. Here was extreme evil overcome with extraordinary goodness. The Judge of all the world deals yet more mercifully with us: the law hath condemned us to die, we daily provoke him; he could presently sentence us, but he spares us; still we anger him: he feeds, finds us, gives us all we have; yet still we rebel against him. At last, to overcome us by the gentlest war that ever was heard of, he seals us our pardon in Jesus Christ, through whom he accepts us into his service, and makes us his own heirs. Lo, then he overcomes us.

(3.) It is not violent, he useth no boisterous force against us. Indeed his ordinance be his ordinances, his canons be his canons and laws. But against what does he plant them? Not against ourselves, but against our sins: as if he would not fight with us, but fight with our enemies for us. We have no foes but our faults; upon these he plays with his shot, and batters them down before us. He knows, that unless these die, we cannot live. He hath his sword, a two-edged one, keen on both sides: with this he wounds, not our spirit, but our flesh; not our flesh, but the lusts of our flesh; yea, not so much our lusts, as the corruption of our lusts, lancing the ulcer that would kill us. He hath his mines; but to blow up our pride, vain-glory, ambition, and such piles of vanities. He hath his fire-works: but to burn up our rotten affections of covetousness and uncleanness. This strict siege is but to furnish our riot, intemperance, drunkenness, and all those perjuries, soldiers that deserve no pay, the forlorn tatterdemalion of our sins. His ambushes serve but to resist our excursions, flyings-out, ramblings, and such extravagances of disobedience. Here is no boisterous turbulency in this war; all the violence is on our side: the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, not offers it. No man is saved against his will; but even in the act of our overcoming, we are willing to be overcome. We feel pain in the resistance, nothing but peace and sweetness in the conquest. I had rather thus be conquered of the Lord, than be conqueror of all the world. O poor Cæsars, poor Alexanders, poor Tamierlans, that won so many victories, and lost the best, in not being

overcome by God's mercies. Thus God overcomes us, by overcoming them that captured us.

(4.) It is not cruel, like Saul's charge for Amalek, or Israel's execution upon Benjamin: there none were left alive, here all are preserved from slaughter. As he said, *Perieram nisi perissem*, i. e. I should have perished if I had not been undone; so we had been butchered if we had not been conquered. If we had escaped from the Captain of mercy, we had fallen upon the captain of cruelty. For they that will not be overcome of God, shall be overcome of Satan. The Lord goes through every street, here he sets his mark upon a house, there upon a person: these be his, he hath fairly won them, and they consent to be his subjects; the rest he leaves to the destroyer, Ezek. ix. 4, 5. Those he hath conquered, he hath saved; and they that yield not to so gracious a subduer, perish by a pitiless destroyer. As a man seeking a tumult or quarrel, where enraged swords make gashing wounds, and through those breaches let out souls: spies one in this hurlyburly whom he loves, lays hold on him, and being stronger than he, bears him to his house, and locks him up fast as in ward, till all be quiet: so doth God snatch his chosen out of the broils of sin, binds them with the cords of obedience; and though they struggle for liberty, keeps them sure till this mutiny be over-past. Or as the shepherd in a tempest, finds a lamb, catcheth it in his arms, and shelters it, till the storm be blown over. The lamb strives, and thinks itself going to death, while indeed from death it is preserved.

So graciously doth this Conqueror deal with us: we kick at his precepts, fret at our restraint, and are impatient of our sufferings; whereas "we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world," 1 Cor. xi. 32. Two had appointed to meet in the field of blood; the quarrel was bad, the prosecution worse: the friend of one of them not being able to persuade him by reason, caused him to be arrested into prison; better a short bondage, than unredeemable death. This was a merciful cruelty, the other had been a cruel mercy. It is happy if a sickness can keep us from sin. When a wild horse hath got the head of his rider, and runs him with fury into deadly dangers, he does him no wrong, that kills the horse to save the man. They are the beasts, our lusts, that draw us in the coach of licentiousness, headlong to hell, as Pharaoh's chariot drew him into the Red Sea, against which God is severe and cruel; and when there is no other remedy, he will kill those beasts to save our souls. Here be then no lamentable cries, no merciless blows, no gaping wounds, no channels streaming with blood, in this conquest. No blood is shed here, but the blood of Jesus Christ. All the blood and life this victory cost, was spilt on the victor's part, not on the conquered. If God were cruel to any, it was to himself. To spare our blood, he shed the blood of his own dear Son.

2. Their happiness that be thus overcome, is seen in these two privileges.

(1.) They are the only free-men in the world: this bondage is the most royal liberty. This stands both, first, in the deliverance from evil; that neither the bond of the law to bring perfect obedience in our own person, obligeth us; nor the breach of that law, for want of that righteousness, condemneth us, Rom. vii. 1. When the king hath signed a transgressor his pardon, all his malicious enemies and accusers cannot injure him. Secondly, and in the ability to good, even to serve the Lord without fear, Luke i. 74. It is true indeed, still we sin, and alas, that we must: We are made "free from the law of sin and

death," Rom. viii. 2: not simply from sin and death, but from the law of sin and death. Not so delivered, that we can neither sin nor die; but that neither sin shall captive us, nor death confound us. Indeed we sigh, and fight, and fain would be delivered from all assaults of sin: but beggars must not choose their alms; we must be contented with our measure; we have this to humble us, not to condemn us. It is comfort sufficient, though sin disturb us, it shall never destroy us. We abhor a snake, for the nature of it; to touch it, is our fear; and it is but our fear, when all the malignity and venom is gone. Sin doth hiss at us, but cannot harm us: blessed be God, the fear is more than the hurt. Our life lies in our Head: if this serpent with all his sting could not hurt the Head, it shall never kill any member.

Indeed where it domineers, it damns. If a man sick on his bed, burning of a fever, fetching his breath with straitness and shortness, looking like earth, say he is well in health, we do not believe him; so if we see men swelling with pride, flaming with lust, looking earthy with covetousness, and yet flattering themselves with hope of salvation, we cannot credit them, all the world cannot save them. Here the condition is not kept, therefore the obligation is in force; they do not serve God, they are not free. But where is an endeavour to obey him, and a faith in Christ to supply the defects of that obedience, there the covenant is kept, the bond is void. Sin offers many assaults; but still we "stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free," Gal. v. 1. Death shall wholly quit us from these solicitations. Death is the burial of our sins, saith Ambrose. It is not so much the death of the man, as the death of sin in the man. As the worm bred in the tree, at last consumes the tree; so death is bred by sin, and sin shall be destroyed by death. This is the full accomplishment of our freedom, when that filthy flux of sin is dried up in an instant. Whatsoever depraved nature suggests, it is, not in vain to serve the Lord, for we are made kings by this service, Rev. i. 6. We may better say of heaven, than of this city, "whose merchants are princes," Isa. xxiii. 8, all God's subjects be kings; not kings born, but born again; not of a piece of earth, but of heaven; not of a mortal principality, but of an immortal kingdom. Courtiers may fail of preferment; they may be near high places and offices, and miss them: one compared them to fasting-days; they were next the holidays, but in themselves the most meagre and leanest days of the week: but God's servants are sure. Inferior men rise to honours and places by the death of others; those by their own deaths ascend to the glory of heaven.

But Christianity seems to afford very small liberty: is it not a yoke, and a burden? "Take my yoke upon you," Matt. xi. 29. Take a *yoke*, there is the condition of humanity; labour. Take *my yoke*, there is the condition of Christianity; an especial labour. And, Take *upon you*; which implies both patience, willingly; and obedience, servingly: not to touch it with one finger, but to bear it on our shoulders; submit all our actions and affections to it. Pride and ambition are above the yoke, and tread that under their heels which they should bear upon their necks. Indeed this is true: but still it is an easy yoke, a light burden. First, this yoke is not made of green wood, then it would be heavy; but of dry, therefore it is portable and easy. Secondly, it is not a new yoke, but hath been borne and worn before by Christ himself, to make it easy for us. Thirdly, it is oiled and lined with sweet comforts: God hath softened it with pillows of mercy, that it cannot offend us. Fourthly, we draw in it with 1 : 100.

Oxen that struggle and be unruly with their yokes, put themselves to pain: God hath given us the shoulders of patience, before he puts on the yoke of obedience. Fifthly, we do not draw alone, nor does the weight of the load lie upon our backs; we should then sink and shrink under it. But a yoke is made for two, and Christ is one of the two; his omnipotence assists our weakness; the greatest burden lies upon him. Sixthly and lastly, it is not perpetual; we draw it but during a short life. And if it be painful for the day, we are unyoked at night, when we go to bed, in death. But the wicked have a sorer yoke for the present, whereof the wood is green and ponderous; all sin is heavy. And though it seem qualified with pleasure and content, and is commonly drawn with a companion; as the broker and usurer both in a yoke, drunkard and drunkard both in a yoke, adulterer and harlot both in a yoke: and where a yoke-fellow fails, as the proud man loves no partner, no partner loves him, here the devil puts in a shoulder, to ease him and help it on. Yet still they draw with tyranny, pain, impatience, and feel many a prick of Satan's goad, that charioteer of hell, to set them forward. And last of all, at night, when they should put off one yoke, another, a heavier, a sorer is put on them, which they must bear for ever. But when the faithful shall be unyoked from the yoke, there is ease and eternal rest, Matt. xxv. 21. The mouth of the ox that draws in the yoke, is not muzzled on earth, and the soul shall find everlasting reward in heaven.

I do not exempt Christianity from all difficulty: it is no easy labour to serve God; yea, they that do it best, feel it hardest, and complain that they can do it no better. There be hot encounters, potent adversaries, and many adversities, against them that would go to heaven; malicious and subtle spirits, an alluring world, a vicious and stubborn nature. Sometimes we see them not, and complain of feeling them too late: sometimes we see them with amazement, fear them, and are ready to flee from them with an Israelitish cowardice: "Who can stand before the children of Anak?" Deut. ix. 2. Another time we stand, and resist as well as we can, but are foiled with indignation and shame. Up we get again, take heart, and renew the combat; yea, even prevail, and triumph. Oh how glad we are, if either we have not been thrown down by the temptation, or recovered ourselves from the fall, by compunction. In the height of this joy, we are again surprised with a sudden assault; whereof as we had no warning, we have no power of resisting. Thus are we hurried into sin, overruled to displease our Maker; yea, sometimes we can hardly struggle out of the snare for some hours or days; and when we escape, not without many wounds and bruises: so that coming to the surgery of repentance, we find a bleeding conscience. We look not that God should strew carpets for our nice feet to walk into our heaven; or make that way smooth for us, which all patriarchs, prophets, apostles, confessors, Christ himself, have found rugged and bloody; or to fare better than all the saints. Yet still we will not change conditions with the worldly: Paul was happier in his chain of iron, than Agrippa in his chain of gold. One rag of a saint is worth the whole wardrobe of a sinner: and that for the next privilege.

(2.) Their reward is infinite. We may well condemn the difficulty, when we respect the advantage. We serve a good Master, who not only pays, but gives; not after the proportion of our earnings, but of his own mercies. Hell cannot touch us, death cannot hurt us; if any evil do assault us, it presently brings us more good. Besides this freedom, how

large is our possession! all good things are ours, to claim, to enjoy; we cannot look beyond our own, nor beside it: we have right to the things we see, and no less to the things we see not. The heaven that rolls so gloriously over our heads, is ours: these celestial spirits, the better part of that high creation, are ours; they watch us in our beds, guard us in our ways, shelter us from dangers, comfort us in troubles; and as living they have kept, so dying they gladly receive, our souls. Yea, above all, the God of spirits is ours; and by a sweet and secret union, we are become heirs of his glory, and as it were limbs of himself. How incomprehensible is this blessedness! when we look to the reward, we could not wish the work easier. If every pain we suffer were a death, and every cross a hell, we have amends enough. It were injurious to complain of the service, when we acknowledge the recompence. What thou wilt, O Lord, so I may be thine, what thou wilt: though I should buy it dearer, I would be thy servant, a Christian.

"Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," 2 Cor. iv. 17. Where we have a threefold opposition; light and weighty, momentary and eternal, affliction and glory. What comparison, what proportion of the recompence to the service? I may justly be out of love with myself; nothing shall make me out of love with my profession: herein alone are we safe, herein blessed. "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of Jesus Christ," Gal. vi. 14: if we should prefer any worldly joys before it, we were unworthy of it. Gold may make a man the richer, not the better; honour may make him the higher, not the happier; and all temporal pleasures are but flowers, they have but their month, and are gone; this morning in the bosom, the next to the besom: "All flesh is as grass, and the glory of man as the flower," 1 Pet. i. 24. Grace is like the sun, which shines comfortably in this world, shall shine sevenfold more gloriously in the world to come, Prov. iv. 18; an honour not clouded, not envied, not exceeded; and such honour have all the saints, Psal. cxlix. 9.

To conclude with the sum of the verse. Deceitful promises are the bane, both of the forger and of the believer. They promise others liberty, while "themselves are the servants of corruption." As if a malefactor, that is himself chained in the dungeon, should promise his fellow to open him the prison-door, and let him out. Fair promises are the devil's bait, and it must be our wisdom to discern betwixt the deceit of sin present, and the fruit of sin to come. What a liberty did Satan promise our first parents that they should have, and so indeed stole from them the liberty that they had. As Laban promised Jacob beautiful Rachel, but in the dark gave him bleary-eyed Leah. Or as Hamor promised the Shechemites, that by their circumcision all the goods of the house of Israel should be theirs, whereas indeed the goods of the Shechemites fell to the house of Israel. The devil, says Cyprian, lies, in order to deceive: he promises life, in order to destroy. The wages that Satan promiseth, and the sinner would have, he shall not get; but the wages that God threatneth, and man would not have, this shall be assuredly paid him. The gain they sin for they shall leave behind them; but their sins they shall carry with them. "What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death," Rom. vi. 21. Surely there is no fruit but shame and death to be gathered from the forbidden tree. False promisers and vain-glorious boasters are the children of Satan, this is the top of their pidi-

gree; yea, the devil doth borrow the use of their tongues for a time. But faithful is He that hath promised, who will also do it. Fidelity and truth is the issue of heaven.

VERSE 20.

For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.

It is not the least happiness in this world, not to be taken with the happiness of this world. Pliny the younger could say, I take some pleasure from this (consideration), that I am not taken with this pleasure. To walk daily through this garden of temptations, and pluck none of the forbidden fruits or flowers, is a temperance so far above nature, that no man, but He that was more than man, ever attained it. If a mere stranger passeth alone through the streets of a populous city, and follows his affairs close, he may return uninfected, because unsaluted. But for a known citizen to do so, to blanch all his acquaintance with prejudice, to deny all those friends that offer their cruel courtesies at the next tavern, to refuse all the invitations of profit or pleasure, requires a well-resolved abstinence. Christ was a stranger upon earth, so should every Christian be: but this is the country wherein we are born, (though it be not the country whereto we are born,) and it is hard for a man to deny his country. The world allures, affects, infects us; and though we pretend for heaven, yet still we bear about us a twang of our native country. Even they that would fain get out of the world, yet cannot get the world quite out of them. They purpose well; and if those thoughts (not theirs) begin to lift them up from their earth, presently he that rules in the air, stoops upon them with his powerful temptations, or the world pulls them down again with a sweet violence; so as they know not whether they be compelled or persuaded to yield. There is in the best such a deal of infirmity, but a great deal more of treachery. How willing are we to be deceived, how loth to be altered! If, says one, the world has so much power over those who belong not to it, what sort of power does it exercise over its own? But now when a man is pulled out of these briars and thorns with a bleeding skin, and made sensible of those wounds which he hath received in this forest, and is in time healed of those hurts; if he rush again into that dangerous wilderness, and hazard new mischiefs, he falls (almost unpitied) into the hands of robbers and murderers, destitute of both rescue and resistance. To be recovered from the ways of death, to walk awhile in the ways of life; and after all this, to turn from the land of the living to the Golgotha of the dead, from the forsaking of sin to the sin of forsaking religion and goodness: this is the fearful condition of the apostates in my text, whose latter end is worse than their beginning.

We have three general parts:

A proposition, They have escaped, &c.

A supposition, If again they be entangled.

A conclusion, Their latter end is worse.

In the proposition are three particulars: first, what? viz. They have escaped. Secondly, from what? viz. from the pollutions of the world. Thirdly, how, or in what way? By the knowledge of Christ. In the supposition observe two particulars: first, the

easiness of falling back; If again; it may be so, it is no ways impossible. Secondly, the hardness of recovering them, which appears by the two phrases; entangled, it will cost labour to unsnare them; overcome, it will cost a price to redeem them; neither of both which is afforded them. But lastly, the conclusion follows. The latter end with them is worse than the beginning. The text begins with hope, They have escaped; goes on with fear, They are again entangled; and concludes in despair, Their latter end is worse than their beginning.

"They have escaped." Next to the finding an unexpected benefit, it is a great happiness to escape an unsuspected danger; yea, the escaping of a great danger, is more joy than the receiving of an ordinary benefit. David did not so much bless Abigail for relieving the hunger of his body, as for preventing the sin of his soul, 1 Sam. xxv. 33. She saved him from spilling the blood of another, he thanks her as much as if she had hindered another from spilling his blood. Nabal did not more rejoice in escaping death, than David in that he was kept from being the author of it. Never was a good man delivered from a known peril, but he blessed his deliverer. "Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare; the snare is broken, and we are escaped," Psal. cxxiv. 7: the church doubles the memory of that mercy; there it was mentioned but twice. He speaks thrice of compassing, of dangers, of enemies, of multitudes like swarms of bees, Psal. cxviii. 10—12; still he blessed God for escaping, even with the destruction of his foes: there it is thrice. How worthy is he to perish in the next danger, that is not thankful for escaping the former! "They that are delivered from the noise of archers in the places of drawing water, there shall they rehearse the righteous acts of the Lord," Judg. v. 11. They had set a song of thanksgiving for that deliverance. My soul is escaped from the lions, saith David, therefore will I praise thee. In that dreadful tragedy of Egypt, when every house had a dead body in it, and that of the first-born, Israel escaped; and shall the remembrance of this mercy vanish? No, every year they shall keep that day holy to the Lord, with the great feast of their passover. That treason which should have been done with a match, that matchless conspiracy, whereof the scene was laid at Westminster, the stage was the parliament house, the plot contrived at Rome, the intention was the confusion of a whole state; *Aras et facies, regalia, sacra, vetusta*: i. e. Altars and hearths, things royal, sacred, old; yet betwixt the fire and the powder, that short distance, we escaped. Shall that deliverance escape without our thanks? No, unbless shall be that year, where the fifth of November is not rubricked in the calendar, where our escaping is not acknowledged with thankful hearts. Our late king of happy memory, escaping the danger of a conspiracy in Scotland, contented not himself with a commemoration of it once a year: his subjects had the fifth of August; himself kept one day every week. He that escapeth a peril without thankful acknowledgment, is indebted for his deliverance. Now there is no danger like sin; for there could have been no danger but for sin; and the greater the danger the greater praise belongs to the deliverance. Daniel was among the lions; they could but have torn his flesh, and sent his soul to heaven through those painful breaches. But to escape from that roaring lion, whose teeth water at men's souls, as being too dainty to feed on flesh, how great is this happiness! Three servants of God were cast into that seven times heated furnace; all those flames could not scorch their souls, whatsoever they had done to their bodies. But the fire of hell hath a

secret and supernatural property to torment the soul : " I am tormented in this flame," saith the rich churl, Luke xvi. 24 ; that I must be his soul, his body was in the grave ; and that with a fervour not less violent than everlasting. To escape that, may well challenge thanks from either men or angels.

If we escape a dangerous sickness, and do not bless God with heart, voice, and life for our recovery, we rise from our beds, and owe for our physic. Hath God's angel forborne to sheath his sword in our bowels, when thousands have fallen under his impartial hand ? Let us be humbly thankful ; otherwise there is a worse plague left behind for us, yea, in us. Argue with all the world, they will conclude, there is no vice like to ingratitude. " Thou art made whole ; sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee," John v. 14. We commit new sins while we are thankless for escaping the punishment of our old ones. God justly, for the first sin, had concluded all the world under sin ; some through his grace in Christ are escaped from this condemnation ; shall they tear the instrument of their pardon ? No ; we see it done, let us kiss the seal, and confess his mercy. We were overwhelmed with sin and ignorance ; God hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light ; shall we put out the lamp whereby we are escaped ? No ; we must be thankful.

We make vows to God in our dangers ; shall we not pay them after our dangers ? Our obedience is a debt, though we had never revoked it ; shall we forfeit all these bonds ? Thou owest thy service to God for escaping sin and hell ; pay, pay. Thou hast received all, thou owest all ; think of payment. They are infamous that get the goods of others into their hands, and then break. The subject that is intrusted by his prince with keeping of a fort, and shall give it up to the enemy, is a desperate traitor. Our tongues, eyes, hands, bodies, and souls are delivered from the prince of darkness, by the Son of righteousness, and deposited to our keeping ; if we yield them back to their old usurper, by blasphemy, pride, uncleanness, we shall die the death of traitors. Thou slightest an offended neighbour ; I care not for him, I owe him nothing ; sure we owe Satan nothing, but our detestation ; why then should we do him any service ? We owe all to God, both for escaping hell, and for our hope of heaven. What shall we render to him for all ? Thankfulness and obedience are our vows, and we will pay our vows unto him, Psal. cxvi. 12, 14.

But we say, Alas, we have not wherewithal, Matt. xviii. 25. Men that are run far in debt, and pay, and pay, yet see small hope of coming out, often grow desperate. Not so ; we owe an infinite sum, and we have an infinite sum to pay it withal, the infinite obedience and merit of Jesus Christ ; this is able to discharge all, were the debt greater. For our own actual obedience, let us pay so far as we can. This is the difference between debts owing to God, and to men. The more of our debts we pay unto men, the less we have remaining of our own ; but the more we pay to God, the more we have, and are the better able to pay. God hath delivered us from the bondage of Satan, to whom (by reason of sin) we owed our souls ; Christ hath discharged that debt, and we are escaped ; yet still we are debtors, Rom. viii. 12 ; this debt is not cancelled, but translated ; every benefit is a new obligation. Only we are delivered from those scattering debts to that merciless creditor, Satan ; and God hath taken it into his own hand ; now all that we owe is to him. The principal we pay him in his own coin, the blood of his Son ; the interest is our thankful service and obedience. We are escaped from the captivity of that tyrant ; Christ

hath paid our ransom ; only we will pay him our praises, our service, ourselves.

" The pollutions of the world." Delivered from the world ? Perhaps this was none of their heart's desire. They found no danger in it ; and he that should promise them eternal riches, taking away the present possession of these temporals, they would think made them losers, Matt. xix. 21. They are so far from contending to escape the world, that the world shall not escape them. They court it as their chief paragon, the mistress of their affections. Tell them of any blemishes or defects in it ; as the cares, thorns, stings, treachery, and a thousand such inconveniences, which are nourished in the heart of this harlot ; no matter, they will take her with all faults. Samson will have his Philistine cockatrice, though he lose both his eyes.

It is true indeed, the world itself doth no harm ; for He made it, and all things in it, that could make nothing amiss. And that the good things there, are turned into pollutions here, it may blame sin, and sin may blame man, and man may blame woman, and woman may blame the devil. Nor yet does it defile us necessarily, as pitch defiles the handler ; but accidentally, as an unskilful mechanic cuts his fingers with good and useful tools. The pollutions of the world be even a world of pollutions ; they contend for number with the very creatures. There is scarce any thing made for man, whereby man doth not mar himself. Who would think that a spider should fetch venom out of a rose ? Woman was made a helper for man ; what a multitude of men have fallen by woman ! Bread and sustenance are necessary for the preservation of life ; yet how many have made their table a snare ! Here is field-room enough, and it were hard not to expatiate ; for it may be said of this land, as it was of Carthage, It is as full of pollutions as of people ; or as Augustine of Lazarus, So many sores, so many months, crying out for redress. But I reduce all unto three.

1. The pollutions which we contract from the riches of the world : not that riches are noxious in themselves, for then no good man would not have renounced them. " Charge them that are rich in this world," 1 Tim. vi. 17. As St. John distinguisheth of being in the church, and being of the church ; so men may be rich in the world, yet innocent and happy ; for while their estates are below, their hearts are above. But those are rich of the world, that are worldlings in heart as well as in estate ; whose affections have devoured as much of the world as they can, and are sorry that they cannot swallow it all. The rich of the world are in it, but the rich in the world are not of it. The world is in men's ears, the world is in their hearts ; and they are not in it only, but of it. And there can be nothing in them that are of the world, but enmity to God, and that which God repays with enmity ; so as there is no way for them but perishing with the world. It is not for nothing, that the same word in the Hebrew signifies both riches and unrighteousness : " The man that strengthened himself in his wickedness," or, in his substance, Psal. lii. 7 ; so closely doth wickedness cleave to many men's substance.

There be too many that sell the poor to slaughter, and yet thank God for the price ; but God will never thank them for it. Those butchers say, " Blessed be the Lord ; for I am rich," Zech. xi. 5. This is a pollution that will hardly ever be washed off ; no, not expiated with building of an alms-house ; for God will not be bribed with an hospital. There is not a penny got by such unjust courses, but it sticks a foul spot on the soul ; therefore the apostle calls it " filthy lucre," 1 Pet. v. 2 ; and Zephaniah for this cried out

against Jerusalem, Woe to the filthy and polluted city! Zeph. iii. 1. Many prophets have denounced the same woe to this city: they meant the men more than the walls, though peradventure the walls did as much observe them. Were your Thames ten Jordan, it could not wash off this leprosy. The covetous ride through plashes and puddles, through bogs, and sloughs, and quagmires: it is impossible they should escape the badges of their travel, the aspersions of mire. With what delight soever they hunt after riches, I am sure they have but a dirty way of it. At last they fall into the quicksand of all-swallowing death; and then they vainly wish that they were to begin a new pilgrimage, on condition they had lost all the pleasure of their former journey.

"Is not the life better than meat?" Matt. vi. 25. Yea, is not the soul better than dirt, that for dirt they pollute the soul? But alas, they are so rooted in the earth, that they are quite turned into the nature of the soil. Others may have a taste, a dash of the foul earth, by travelling through it to their home; but worldlings are rooted in the earth, and therefore not to be plucked up without violence. Satan showed Christ the crowns of the earth, but not the thorns of those crowns: so the covetous show their heaps and mounds of money, but not their stings of conscience. It is the honour of the holy, they are all glorious within, what outward wants soever would disgrace them. It is the disgrace of the worldly, they are all filthy within, what outward abundance soever doth honour them. God requires "truth in the inward parts," Psal. li. 6; but alas, we may say too truly of these, that "their inward parts are very wickedness," Psal. v. 9. When God sees the rich man's house kept neat and clean, the floors swept, the walls hung, the vessels scoured, his apparel brushed, his body adorned, all carefully arranged; only his heart filthy and polluted; certainly he will spit his contempt upon that heart. Therefore, "O Jerusalem, wash thy heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved," Jer. iv. 14.

2. The pollutions we derive from the honours and dignities of the world. Pride here challengeth the first place; and let her have it; even to be the queen of all sordid filthiness. This not only lifts men up above others, but above themselves. Nor is it any wonder, that they should not know their neighbours, that have forgotten themselves. This is a conglutinated ulcer, spreading over the whole soul: like a cloth that is taken from a leper; stiff indeed, but only stiff with corruption. The lash that hangs out, shows what we may look for within; a painted face argues a defiled heart. Every colour that art lays on the cheeks, sizeth into the soul, and dyes that in grain: quite of another hue than God ever made, or will own. For surely he will never acknowledge that face he never made, nor that hair he never made theirs, nor that body that is ashamed of the Maker, nor that soul that disguises the body. Let me tell them one thing which perhaps they never noted before. The first painted woman we read of in the Scriptures, was a witch and a harlot. So Jehu told Joram of the whoredoms and the witchcrafts of his mother Jezebel, 2 Kings ix. 22. And the first painted woman we read of in profane stories, was a harlot and a witch too, Medea: the end of them both was destruction, and a destruction without end, for the terror of all their proud followers. From hence ariseth the boil of burning malice, the carbuncle of envy, the plague-tokens of raging madness; yea, even the horrid and frightful aspersions of blood-guiltiness, a sin that thunders in the ears of justice. The homicide, through a killing favour, is pardoned, and granted his life: God draws his sword, and by his plague

spills a thousand lives for it. Water comes down to moisten the earth, but blood flies upward to bedew heaven.

It is the misery of greatness, to be lawless: how many had been good, if they never had been great! All the soot in the house is to be found in the chimneys. It was a grave and smart answer of a great statesman in the land, when he was consulted by the queen about the lawfulness of monopoly licences: We are all the worse for a licence. Place gives a licence to do ill; and in evil, the best condition is *non velle*, no will to it; the next, *non posse*, no ability to do it. Nor do they admit of reproof: when that wind riseth, we may well look for a tempest. "Touch the mountains, and they shall smoke," saith the psalmist, Psal. cxliv. 5. Great men are like mountains; when the word of God touches them, they presently smoke with passion. Alas, who shall show them their pollutions? Their own eyes cannot tell them, and the eyes of their parasites will not tell them. They have glasses to see all the disorders of their external habits: even to the ruffling of a curl, or the misplacing of a hair. But there is another glass which they seldom use, the word of God, that alone shows the spots of conscience. Therefore, as it was said of Naaman, that he was "captain of the king of Syria's host, a great man with his master, honourable" for his many achievements, and "a mighty man in valour; but he was a leper," 2 Kings v. 1. Here were divers noble privileges, but one thing dishonoured all the rest: But he was a leper. There may be great dignities, powerful offices, high commands, popularity, and applause; yea, even policy, and some good acts to the country. But if there be a stench of inward pollutions, a false heart to religion and innocence: this is a but, a bar in their arms, a blemish in their noble scutcheons, an indelible motto, But he was a leper.

3. The pollutions we deduce from the pleasures of the world. Oh what a torrent of turpitudes here stream in upon us! Immoderate diet, or rather surfeit; all the varieties and delicacies of nature, cooked with the most studious art, stand on our tables, like the goodly buildings of a fortified city. To this we lay fiery siege; where our sensual appetite is the great general, and our teeth the common soldiers: here we scale the walls, there we raze the foundations: our knives are the weapons, and the instruments of war are the instruments of music, Amos vi. 5: Bowls of wine the colours, innocent creatures the spoil, and songs of wantonness crown the triumphant victory. All which concludes in sleep, if that be not prevented by uncleanness. The people of Israel required meat for their lust, and the people of England nourish lust for their meat. Inebriety is akin to the former; both are sins ambitious to prevent the day of judgment, for then God will destroy both meat and the belly, 1 Cor. vi. 13; these will not stay so long, but beforehand destroy both the belly and meat. The honour of man is the image of God; but this vice flies at the very face of this image, and scratcheth it out of the soul. The drunkard is a certain thing that hath been a man; but now most prodigiously he hath swallowed down himself through his throat. So he lies entombed with the drink in his own bowels; and that doth bury him, which is buried in him.

Both these pollutions prepare for a third: the blood that is fired with Bacchus, must be cooled with Venus. The devil should forget both his office and malice, if he did not play the pander to concupiscence. Idleness makes way for loose company, loose company makes way for wine, wine makes way for lust, and lust makes work for Satan. No marvel if

the poets called it a *pegasus*; for it is a winged horse, whereon many ride post to hell. Our climate, and therefore our natural constitution, is not so hot, that it needs popish indulgence to the flesh; unless this artificial heat were unnaturally added to it. It is intemperance that prepares fuel for the fire of vengeance. Oh that our luxurious strumpeteers could read in their diseased bodies the estate of their leprous souls!

But the tongue of the soul is conscience, the voice with which she is best acquainted: this (when all the doors are shut to the voices of men) speaks within; and that with a language loud enough to be heard, easy enough to be understood. But the common course of such dissolute sinners, is to drown her voice with a louder: as he that was troubled with a scolding wife, made way to his quiet by out-scolding her. Who shall tell the family of their faults, when the monitor is dumb? They have stopped the mouth, and taken away the voice of their conscience, by loud and roaring excess; and who is left to reprove? John Baptist was called the voice of Christ, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness;" John i. 23. Herod cut off his head. Now Christ spake not many words to his apprehenders and accusers; not many to the high priest, nor to the judge, Pilate; but when he came before Herod, he spake never a word at all. Among other reasons, this is wittily given; he spake not a word to Herod, because Herod had taken away his voice, in beheading John; and how should he speak without a voice? There may be a voice without speech, there cannot be speech without a voice. So they have tongue-tied their conscience, taken away her voice, and who shall control them? But when God shall untie those strings, and unmuzzle their conscience, she will be heard; and ten concerts of music shall not drown her clamorous cries. Now their conscience is bound, and they are loose; but in the day of trouble themselves shall be bound, and God shall let loose their conscience. It shall be hard for them, with that frantic musician, to fall a tuning their viols, when their house is on fire about their ears: oh then, rather, one drop of mercy, yea, floods of pity, to cool the flame, and mitigate their sorrows.

All wise men affect the conclusion to be best: to ride two or three miles of fair way, and to have a hundred deep and foul ones to pass afterward, is uncomfortable; especially when the end is worse than the way. But let the beginning be troublesome, the progress somewhat more easy, and the journey's end happy, and there is fair amends. "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace," Psal. xxxvii. 37. Mark him in the setting out, he hath many oppositions; mark him in the journey, he is full of tribulations; but mark him in the conclusion, and the end of that man is peace.

"Through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," Wherein I desire to touch upon these four observations or conclusions. First, that there is no knowledge to do good in corrupted nature and filthiness of the flesh. Secondly, there is no escaping out of this filthiness and corruption, but by knowledge. Thirdly, no knowledge can deliver us, but that of our Saviour Christ. Fourthly, no knowledge of our Saviour can effect this, but that which is sanctified with faith and repentance.

I. Miserable is the estate of man, before he hath escaped from the world. As Adam's body was cast out of Paradise, to seek his fortune in the wide and wild earth; or as Nebuchadnezzar was turned off, from being a king among men, to become a companion of beasts: so by the corruption of nature,

man is debarred the society of God, and put out of the enclosure into the common, to shift for himself in the broad world, where sins and sorrows strive for number. This was the poets' meaning by their Pandora; a beautiful woman, framed by Vulcan; to whose making up, every god and goddess gave a contribution. They put into the hand of this fair enchantress a goodly box, fraught and stuffed with all woes and miseries; only in the bottom of it they placed hope. It was presented to Prometheus, but Providence refused it; then to Epimetheus, and Afterwits accepted it. Which he no sooner rashly opened, but there came out a swarm of calamities, fluttering about his ears. This he perceiving, clapped on the cover with all possible speed; and so with much ado saved hope, sitting alone in the bottom. Such an army of miseries, like the troop issuing from the Trojan horse, invaded the world, by opening the box of Pandora, by tasting the apple of Eve; that if the mercy of God had not left us hope, comforting hope, in the bottom, we had all perished. The precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold, whose Nazarites were purer than snow, whiter than milk, and more ruddy than rubies, and their polishing of sapphire, now have visages blacker than coals, Lam. iv. 2, 7, 8. The body, that is made of earth, can stand upright, and look toward heaven; the soul, that came from heaven, is become crooked, and looks toward earth.

All are miserable, only some know it, and others know it not. As Socrates put from himself the repute of wisdom which the Delphic oracle had ascribed to him; saying that here was all the difference betwixt him and others, He was not wise, and knew it; others were not wise, and knew it not. He that is escaped from the world, knows their unhappiness that be entangled with it, because he was so. But they that are entangled with it, know not the happiness of him that hath escaped it, because they never were so. Such were ye; but ye are sanctified, I Cor. vi. 11.

2. The way to escape the world's filthiness, is through knowledge. There is nothing in the world both more esteemed and disesteemed, than knowledge; valued by them that have some, contemned by them that have none. When the cynic philosopher was asked in a kind of scorn, what was the reason that philosophers haunted rich men, and not rich men philosophers; he answered, Because the one knew what they wanted, the other did not. Wise men want wealth, and feel it; rich men want wisdom, and are not sensible of it. Yet knowledge hath their well-wishes, and faint desires, though not their endeavours. "Wisdom is justified of her children," Matt. xi. 19; yea, even of the children of folly. So a Pharisee could say, "Come, let us deal wisely," Exod. i. 10. Even fools would pretend wisdom, and have their cunning absurdities pass for mature prudence, and the success for happiness. Herein Satan is subtler than they, who lays the plot to make them fools, by mistaking villany for virtue. There is no poverty of estate, or consumption of body, to a lean, starved soul, which neither knows nor cares to know.

The small love which the world bears to wisdom, appears by their usage of the children of wisdom. They will give more to a rider for breaking their horses, or to a dancer for teaching them the measures, than to any professor of learning for informing their souls. So Aristippus answered him, that wondered why men should rather give to the poor than to scholars; because they think themselves may come to be poor, never to be scholars. Of all the wants in the world, fewest complain the want of

knowledge. The opinion of having enough, is one of the greatest causes of having so little. Yet the very philosophers, by that knowledge of the world which they got from the light of nature, learned to condemn it; yea, they despised him that did not despise it. They did not envy the rich and potent, nor covet abundance; but rather, they saw enough to hate this world, though they saw not where to find a better.

3. Indeed no knowledge can do this, but only that of our Lord Jesus Christ. "I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified," 1 Cor. ii. 2. Paul was enriched with all manner of knowledge; he knew as much as the most learned Jew or pagan; nothing could deliver him from the pollutions of the world, till he became a Christian. Alas, the reason of man doth but oppose the wisdom of God. Mocking the apostles, they said, "These men are full of new wine;" which Peter confutes by affirming it to be but "the third hour of the day," Acts ii. 13, 15; it was too early to be drunk. Yet that is not all; for fulness of wine doth take away speech and disable the tongue: we have known it spoil men of the use of their mother tongue, we never knew it teach men to speak languages which they never learned. Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle, travelled and sought into every corner of the world, to confer with learned men: we never read that they went into Jewry; yet there the best knowledge was to be had. They knew not that; how could they? The wandering sheep do not seek the shepherd, but the shepherd them. The lost piece of silver did not seek the woman, but the woman it. Paul indeed was seeking for Christ; but how? to persecute him, not to believe on him. Christ must reveal himself to us, before we can set ourselves to seek him. And till that High Sheriff of the King of heaven comes with a writ of ejection the world will hold his possession, Luke xi. 22. The hands defiled with raking in the kennel of this world, cannot be cleansed but by washing them in the laver of regeneration. Nor can we wash in Christ's fountain till we know where he dwells, where that fountain runs. This is the only means of escaping the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of Christ: he must wash us. "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me," John xiii. 8. God hath ever showed himself a lover of cleanliness, as it appears by all those legal ablutions. He never showed it so much as when he vouchsafed to wash us himself, with his own royal hands; the bath being his own royal blood, Rev. i. 5. This, and nothing but this, could get out the long-contracted stains of our souls. Corruption had so sized into the very grain of our natures and whole compositions, that it must be blood, and warm blood, and the warm blood not of a mere man, but of him that is also God, that could fetch it out. None would wash us, we were so loathsome; none could purge us, we were so leprous; but only Christ. Elisha bade Naaman, "Go and wash;" Christ came himself to wash us.

Here then we learn that only means, whereby we can escape the pollutions of the world, the filthiness of sin; the sole fountain of the Lamb of God. Not all the mysteries of nature, not all the secretaries, the philosophers of the world, with their best principles of morality, could do this cure. No knowledge can purge the soul, but the knowledge of the Lord Jesus. "Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thou shalt be clean," 2 Kings v. 10. How did this appear to that natural Syrian as a mere scorn and mockery! Go wash! alas, what can water do? It can cleanse from foulness, not from leprosy. And why in Jordan? what differs that from other streams? And why

just seven times? What virtue is either in that channel, or in that number? In what a chafe did he fling from the prophet's door! Am I come thus far to be mocked? Could the prophet find no man to play upon but me? Thus doth the reason of man fight against the ordinances of God. What is baptism to purge the conscience? What is the sprinkling of a few drops on the face, to wash away corruption from the soul? One hath shed guiltless blood with his hands; let him wash those hands ten times a day in fresh waters, will it get out that murderous tincture from his conscience? Thus carnal minds despise the foolishness of preaching, the simplicity of the sacraments, the homeliness of ceremonies, the seeming inefficacy of censures; they look upon Jordan with Syrian eyes. So Naaman goes on: If water would do it, what needed I to come so far for this remedy? Have I not often done this in vain? Have we not better streams at home, than any can be afforded in Israel? "Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel?" Abana and Pharpar, two for one; rivers, not water; of Damascus, a stately and incomparable city: they are, who dares deny it? better, not as good; than the waters, not the rivers; all the waters, Jordan and all the rest; of Israel, a beggarly region to Damascus. Alas, how wretched be the devices of men to the institutions of God! How odious and damnable is it to make any comparison between them! One drop of Jordan, set apart by Divine ordination, hath more virtue than all the streams of the world. Indeed Naaman might have washed there long enough in vain, if the prophet had not sent him. Many a leper had bathed in that stream, and come forth no less unclean than he went in. It is the word, the ordinance of God, that puts efficacy into those means, which of themselves could do nothing. *Ista non tribuunt, quod per isto tribuitur*, as it has been expressed, They do not themselves bestow, what is bestowed through them. His institution hath put that virtue into the sacramental font, that it shall not more wash the face than purge the soul.

Let us therefore get the knowledge of Christ, if we would be happy; and wash off our sins in his blood, that we may be holy. He that knows Christ, knows that the pardon of sins, the ablation of uncleanness, the perfection of righteousness, the peace of conscience, and the heavenly inheritance, come along with him: he cannot dote on the world, that knows Christ. Can we unfeignedly say with Peter, Lord Jesus, "we have forsaken all and followed thee?" we need not ask, "what shall we have therefore?" Matt. xix. 27. For God tells us, that he hath given us his Son, and with him all things, Rom. viii. 32. How sweetly do those scriptures answer and satisfy one another, and both satisfy the heart of a Christian! Christ never comes alone, never empty, but his reward is with him. The shadow doth not more inseparably follow the body, than all blessings follow Christ. First seek the kingdom of God, and these things shall be added to you, Matt. vi. 33; like an *et cætera* in the end of a sentence. Yet alas, though we know this, we do not seek Christ in the first and chiefest place. In this drought, one seeks rain in the new moon, another in the turning of the wind, a third in this or that sign; none almost seek it in Christ; therefore God hath confounded all our signs and observations. Men may have temporal good things without Christ; but as the thief hath the true man's purse, or dogs the bread of the children. But we can want nothing, if we want not Christ; the prodigal doubteth not of bread enough, if he can regain his father. John of Alexandria, surnamed the almoner, did use yearly to make even

with his revenues, and when he had distributed all to the poor, he thanked God that he had now nothing left him but his Lord and Master Jesus Christ; to whom he longed to fly with unlimed and untangled wings. When Alexander the Great passed into Asia, he gave large donatives to his captains and men of merit; inasmuch that Parmenio asked him, Sir, what do you keep for yourself? He answered, Hope. Crosses, calamities, poverty may take from us all the goods of this world, or our charity may give them away; the worldlings ask us what we have left for ourselves; we answer, Only Jesus Christ.

4. That knowledge of Christ which is not joined with faith and obedience, repentance and amendment of life, cannot deliver us from perishing with the world. If it were enough to know, Satan would lose abundance of clients and customers. There is a floating knowledge swimming in the brain, like a piece of cork on the top of the water. Wicked men understand good things, but not in their true forms: they are sent them as Pharaoh's dream, which they shall never be able to understand. The mysteries of religion appear to them like a dim taper, whereof they are still disputing, picking out problems, and paradoxes, and subtleties; and so darken the truth by discoursing of it, like a man that puts out the candle with snuffing it. They read and mind not, or mind and understand not, or understand and remember not, or remember and practise not. There be some whose speeches be witty, while their carriage is weak; whose deeds are incongruities, while their words are apophthegms. It is not worth the name of knowledge, that may be heard only, and not seen. Good discourse is but the froth of wisdom; the pure and solid substance of it is in well-framed actions. "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them," John xiii. 17. Knowledge is but a prerequisite to the main of obedience, a stair to the turret of happiness. That was Christ's farewell-cloze, with a deep impression driving home his former counsels; like the last strong and loud knoll of a bell, that puts an end to all the foregoing peals; a sermon that did put life into all his other sermons, urging the life and practice of them; like that, "Blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it," Luke xi. 28, with which we commonly conclude our sermons. We say of statutes and proclamations, There is a multitude of them; but there should be one statute, one proclamation made, to enforce the keeping of all the rest: so that one text binds us to the observation of all others. Therefore he washed the disciples' feet, John xiii. 5, and showed them an example of doing; as if there was not so much need of teaching them what they knew not, as of pressing them to do what they knew. Because knowledge would not serve the turn, he first does the things, and then expresses his intent. These things it is not enough to know, but to do.

Knowledge and practice together bless a Christian, both in his cardinal virtues and arch-mysteries of faith, far more than the knowing and doing of all the natural, moral, or manual sciences in the world. Knowledge separated from obedience, doth but inflame a man's reckoning, and help him to a greater measure of condemnation. "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin," John xv. 22. Ignorance may seem to be a cloak for errors; but knowledge takes away that cloak, and leaves them naked of all excuses. Not that ignorance can acquit men; *Excusat a tanto, non a toto*; i. e. It excuses from so much, but not from the whole. It will not justify me, to say I did not know that I did sin, when I sinned in neglecting to know. Antecedent ignorance will not

save a man; much more will consequent ignorance condemn him. God will not favour a man, because he hath studied hard and known much; but rather the more punish him, because he hath known good and done evil.

I deny not that many sins are committed after knowledge: the lusts of the flesh, like the vapours of a replete stomach rising up and damping the brain, often obscure the beams of knowledge; during which violence and distemper, David and Peter fall into fearful sins. But the willing practice of known sins, and repentance, can never stand together, no more than fire and water can agree in the same subject. As a hot liver commonly makes a cold stomach, so the unnatural heat of continued sins soaks but a cold repentance. There is a deep well in the yard; shall a man therefore wilfully set his house on fire, because he knows where to fetch water to quench it? Alas, the fire suddenly takes, and ragingly goes on; but "the well is deep," John iv. 11, or the bucket is small, and can bring up a little at once. The well of thy heart is deep, it is a great way to fetch it: the screw or pulley is unwieldy, there is much labour to draw it. Yea, God must both put water into the well, sorrow into the heart; and help thee to pump it out, extract tears from thine eyes; as he did supply David and Peter from his infinite springs of grace; or this burning will not be quenched.

Rather let us labour to avoid sin by our knowledge, than venture to sin upon the conceit of repentance. No wise man will make himself sick, though he knows he hath a very good medicine. They be desperate mountebanks that wound their own flesh, to advance the sale of their balsams. Alas, that men should be skilful in the history of Christ, and wilful in their rebellions against Christ; that they should have the Bible in their brains, and blasphemy in their lips! like posts, that bring truth in their letters, and lies in their mouths. Alas, that men should frequent the temples, and flock to sermons, and yet be never the better in their lives! as boys go into the water, to play and paddle there only, not to wash and be clean. But let all them that have the knowledge of Christ, give obedience to him, that they may be saved by him.

If they are again entangled. This is the supposition; where I considered, the easiness of relapsing. If; it is no impossible thing. Yea, the commonness proves it too easy. How many have given up their names to Christ, and slunk away from his service! How many be Satan's subjects, and yet God's pensioners! How many have taken his press-money, and revolted to the enemy! Demas had been with Paul, professed with Paul, laboured with Paul; yet for this present world he forsook Paul, 2 Tim. iv. 10, and gospel, and Christ himself. Indeed he that loves God for himself, and goodness because it is goodness, can never turn from that goodness, from that fountain of goodness, God. Turn him loose into the world, trust him in the throng of temptations; his heart is so filled with Christ, that there is no room for a strange love to enter. But they that loved God only for his temporal blessings, fail him, when those blessings fail them. Muttinous soldiers; no longer pay, no longer fight; as that desperate mercenary said, he came not to fight for his country, he came to fight for his money. Like the law, logic, and the Switzers; they are for his service, that gives them the best ready wages. Here Satan takes his hint, to usurp upon the children of perdition. Religion brings crosses; The church is heir to the cross, says Gregory; they find their devotion answered with tribulation; and cannot be quiet, because they seem to be good. Now steps in Satan: Why should you

buy misery with want, when you may want misery? Why will you embrace certain cares, in hope of uncertain comforts? Why do you take pains to be poor, when you may be rich with ease? Here they that have not the grace, nor the face, to give Satan the lie, throw the plough into the hedge, and will not wait till harvest; but lay hold on these new offers of the world, and for a mess of pottage sell their patrimony.

There be some to whom God doth not so much as give an evangelical call, and they never look toward heaven. For where he takes away the key, it is a sign that he never means to open the door. There be some that have been called, and answered that call, and made a show of following it, bearing up towards the celestial kingdom; when on a sudden the world whistles, shows them their old love, newly dressed and painted, and tricked up with fresh colours. Back the fool runs, flings by counsel, treads upon conscience, trips up the feet of reason, and shows religion his heels, if he does not kick at it with contempt. "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall," 1 Cor. x. 12. Some think they stand, but do not; they look to be saved, and scarce can tell who should save them. They examine their conscience, as a favourable judge doth the malefactor whom he means to acquit; his very questions are so indulgent, that they teach him an answer; and then he concludes, I find no fault in this man, let him pay his fees and be gone. Thus they are like a man in a dream, that thinks he is travelling abroad, doing this or that business; but waking, he finds himself fast in his bed. We all dwell in a house ready to fall, sail in a ship full of leaks. Perhaps we do not stand; or have stood, and are fallen; are fallen, and know not how to rise; rise, and are ready to fall again. Am I a dog, that I should do thus? saith Hazael to the prophet, 2 Kings viii. 13. As if he would never do it while he continued man; count him a dog, when it comes to that. Yet by his leave, whether man or dog, he did it. None know what they shall be, few know what they are. There is no salt but may lose its savour; no flower but may lose its scent; no beauty but may be defaced; no fruit but may be blasted; no light but may be eclipsed; no state but may be changed; no soul but may be corrupted.

Man goes forth in the morning weak and unarmed, to encounter with powers and principalities. To fight this combat, he takes a second with him, and that is his flesh; a familiar enemy, a friendly traitor; the devil comes against him with his second too, and that is the world. Soon doth the flesh revolt to the world, and both stick to Satan; so here is terrible odds; three to one. Besides all this, the enemy hath gotten all the advantages; as the hill, the sun, the wind. The hill; for man is climbing upwards to heaven, and Satan comes down upon him with the stronger violence. The sun; for all the glorious beams of honour, pleasure, wealth, are on his side, dazzling the eyes of man. The wind; storms and blasts of raging persecution march under his banner, all against poor man. Now if he have no other succour but himself, he is surprised in an instant, and the adversary gets the day. But he that truly knoweth Christ, comes not into the field without this Captain; and then, if God be with us, who can be against us? Rom. viii. 31. Besides, he hath a shield that is armour of proof, darts of fire cannot pierce it; an invincible faith; if he do but lie under this target, he is safe. Divers cannot cunningly handle the sword, yet they can hold up the buckler. If thou be not able to give Satan blow for blow, yet hold up thy shield; that shall ward all his blows. But when a man is besieged in an impregnable fort, where he

hath enough both of provision to subsist, and munition and furniture to defend; yet if, through a coward pusillanimity, he shall leave his hold, and think to save himself by flight, he worthily falls into their hands, who otherwise had fallen under his. "He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler," Psal. xci. 4. That is a fort sure enough: he that forsakes it, deserves to be forsaken of it.

I conclude. If we forsake not Christ, he will never forsake us; it can never be showed by any observation, that he fell off first: the first in love, the last in hatred. But that it is easy to forsake him, for the present sweetness of gain and pleasure in this world, too lamentable experience proves. Thousands for scores follow after temporals, with neglect of eternal things; and souls that came from heaven, that should return to heaven, are bent to the earth. As if nature were become preposterous, the world turned upside down, and Satan had got the day of Christ. This Diogenes happily expressed, when he was asked how he would be buried: he answered, with his face downward; for within a while, he said, the world would be turned upside down, and then he should lie right. Let it be our endeavour to turn the right side upward again, to set our souls in the due position, trampling the world under the feet of disdain, and lifting up our spirits to heaven, which was made to receive all those that seek and love the Lord Jesus.

The difficulty of recovering them, after their relapse, follows; and is expressed by two metaphors: They are entangled, and overcome.

1. "They are entangled:" as birds are caught in an evil net; where the more they struggle to get out, the faster they stick. Or be taken with lime-bushes; where those feathers ensnare their bodies, which before did carry their bodies: nor can they save their lives, but by losing their feathers. The world sticks fast to men's hearts, and by embracing, imprisons them: the lime that holds them, is Satan's temptation; the feathers by which it holds them, are their own covetous affections. These loose wings betray their souls; and if ever they save their souls, it must be by parting with their feathers, by being stripped of their riches. Give all thou hast to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, Matt. xix. 21. Alas, his feathers were limed, his soul so entangled with the world, that he could not possibly mount up so high. "I have married a wife, and I cannot come," Luke xiv. 20. No wonder; he was wedded to the world, tied in the conjugal bonds of affection to sin, the strongest contract on earth; he cannot come. You may as well call a deer out of his toil, a prisoner out of his jail, yea, a dead man out of his grave; he cannot come.

Satan hath several ties for several sinners. The adulterer is tied by the eye, his mistress's looks enchant him. The drunkard is tied by the throat, he cannot come till he have his load; and then he is so laden, that he cannot come. The swearer is tied by the tongue; it were well if he were tongue-tied. The epicure is tied by the teeth; a disease he had from his grandmother. The slothful is tied by the foot; the lazy gout hath bound him to the chair of wickedness. The covetous is tied by the purse-strings; and he would hate even pleasure itself, if he should find it a cut-purse. The superstitious image-worshipper is tied by the knees, and he cannot rise from his puppet deities. The treacherous Jesuit is tied by the neck with a Romish chain; it were well if his neck were tied to the due place. The voluptuous is tied with a twine-thread of vanity, as a natural is tied with a rush, and thinks himself in

durance. Satan hath entangled these with the world, that you may as well bid mountains remove, or bid them remove mountains, as forsake worldliness: they cannot come. The devil ties worldly things to the affections, which are the feet of the soul: as the falconer, when he hath manned his hawk to his service, hangs bells at her legs, that whithersoever they fly out, he may know where to find them again: it is but casting up his lure, and they stoop to his fist, he presently hath them. "I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them," Luke xiv. 19: as if himself had been one of the team, tied up in the gears of his oxen; he must be excused. It is St. Gregory's counsel, So hold the things of the world, that you be not held by them yourself. Good men will not bind the world to themselves, and bad men bind themselves to the world. *Terrena res possideatur, non possideat; sint temporalia in usu, aeterna in desiderio; illa in itinere, hæc ut in termino.* Let earthly things be possessed, not possess you; let temporal things be used, things eternal desired; let the former be used as in the way, the latter as in the end. Gehazi's soul is bound up in the bags of Naaman's money: but what followed? Gehazi's flesh shall be bound up in the scurf of Naaman's leprosy. The sinner hath travail, Eccl. ii. 26, labour, sorrow, and care; these be the strings of his purse, and he keeps them: but for the purse itself, the riches he hath gathered, these God will give to another; even the purse itself.

Bonaventure compares him to the mole, in four respects. (*Dieta Salut.* cap. 6.) First, he is black, as a mole: white is the colour of innocence; the faithful have white garments: black is the contrary, even the colour of iniquity. Secondly, he is blind, as a mole; ignorance hath deprived him of his sight. In a contrariety to God, who sees clearly in all places, "The darkness and the light are both alike to thee," Psal. cxxxix. 12; night and day are all one, for he sees in neither. Thirdly, he is buried, as a mole: all his hoards and heaps of wealth are so many sepulchres to his soul, wherein he digs his own grave. Fourthly, he is preposterous, as a mole; which is still casting up the earth, that it may fall on her back, and cover her from the sun. So he lays himself under his riches, and interposeth the earth betwixt his soul and heaven: all his goods are so many strong terriers to him. When the serpent catcheth his prey, he so clasps and winds about it with his flexile and folding body, that he holds it sure. Satan, that old serpent, so twines himself about the world-addicted soul, and his spirits like a bed of snakes so entangle it, that nothing but thunder can dissolve them. There is no evasion out of this labyrinth, except the Spirit of God give us the clew of grace. With pleasure and ease sinners come in; but no pains, no industry, no wisdom of man can find the way out.

The poor sheep follows her pasture, and suspects no danger; but on the sudden she is so entangled with the briars and brambles, that she is glad, with some loss of her wool, yea, scratches of her skin, to be gone; and not seldom cannot do so, without the help of the shepherd. It is happy for us, if with loss of our fleece, of our flesh, we can be extricated from these temptations, and foolish lusts, which drown so many in perdition, 1 Tim. vi. 9. The Israelites were set by Pharaoh to gather straw for themselves, but not to make bricks for themselves; and when they had done their best, were beaten for not doing better. So Satan, that merciless tyrant, and swarthy Egyptian, employs his slaves to gather straw and thatch, the trash of this world; with all which they shall never build a house of rest or harbour for themselves, and at last be scourged with

impartial torments. A great fish devours a less; a greater, him; and he again becomes food for the greatest: yet at last this greatest is caught, with hook or net. They be fools, that sacrifice to their own nets, Hab. i. 16, with which they have caught others; but they are madmen, that sacrifice to the nets of others, with which they are caught themselves. Yet these desperate prisoners love their bondage, and find such sweetness in their entangling, that they desire not to be delivered. Only when aught of their sensual delights is taken from them, they mourn and blubber; and bestow that sorrow upon their shame, which they should have spent on their sin. I have heard, that when a man is wounded with a sword, look what medicine is proper to the patient, if it be applied to the sword, it shall cure him: anoint the weapon, and heal the wound. (I will not rack my faith, to believe it.) The weapon that hath wounded us, is the world; the medicine that can only cure it, is hearty sorrow. Shall we grieve for worldly losses? This were to apply the medicine to the wrong place; barely to anoint the weapon, while the wound rankles to death; for worldly sorrow causeth death. No; let us apply it to our heart, mourn for our sin, detest and abandon the world, and fix our confidence in God; then shall we be healed through Jesus Christ.

2. "And overcome." Some may say, this theme of entangling hath almost entangled me, as if I could not tell how to get you out of this argument: lo, now we are delivered. And yet methinks I am not sooner out of this forest, but presently I see a lion, even that roaring lion, with extended jaws, ready to devour; a malicious and merciless enemy mauling forward, to the conquest of souls: and my very next step falls upon that conquest, with the subversion of worldlings, They are overcome.

That which puts a man from the use of his reason, or a Christian from his exercise of religion, overcomes him. So we say of the drunkard, he is overcome with wine, when it shall get the better and upper hand of his wit. The dotting lover is overcome with fancy, when it hath blinded his reason. The ambitious are overcome with the desire of honour; so that they are not their own men. Of all, the worldlings are basely overcome; for they think they have the world in a string, when the world hath them in a strong chain. This worse than beastly appetite (for not many beasts desire more than will serve their turns) is like a violent stream, which beginning from a small current, *vires acquirit eundo*, takes in many emergent waters by the way, till it becomes a mighty torrent, bearing down all before it; yet at last itself is swallowed up into the sea. "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life," 2 Tim. ii. 4. For as it has been expressed, By being entangled he is involved, by being involved he is detained, by being detained he is overcome. No wonder if he that is entangled be soon overcome. David being to encounter with Goliath, in that unequal combat, is arrayed with the warlike habit of a king: thus furnished, he might look upon himself, and think his outside glorious. But when he offered to walk and move, he found these arms not so strong as unwieldy, more for show than use, that they rather hindered than advantaged him. Off he puts those accoutrements of honour, and craves pardon to go in no clothes but his own: he had rather be a homely conqueror, than a glorious spoil. He takes his staff instead of the spear, his shepherd's scrip for a brigandine; instead of the sword, he takes his sling; and for darts and javelins, five smooth stones out of the brook: thus got he the victory. So "the weapons of our warfare are not

carnal, but mighty through God,' 2 Cor. x. 4. Not the policy, the succours, the abundance of earthly things; these do but entangle us, and rather disable our resistance, than help us to the conquest. But the wisdom, the comfort, the powerful grace of the Holy Spirit, these be our arms; with these we shall beat down our enemies.

Cyrus said, that his poor soldiers were his best soldiers; for they had nothing to lose, but there was something they hoped to gain. Wealth is the rich man's strong castle, yet that castle will not hold out a long siege; death will demolish it, if it be not done to his hands before he comes. Hezekiah showed the ambassadors of Babylon his treasure; what came of it? Behold, all shall be carried away, Isa. xxxix. 6. It was the incredible wealth which Cleopatra showed Caesar, whereby she thought to overcome him, that brought Caesar into Egypt, to make himself master of it. As when Cræsus, for his glory, showed Solon his huge mass of gold; Solon told him, if another come that hath better iron than you, he will be master of all this gold. Any man that travels toward Jericho may fall among thieves, Luke x. 30; yea, how should he avoid them? Poverty is a thief, to steal away wealth; sickness is a thief, to steal away health; death is a thief, to steal away life; the world itself is a thief, to steal away the world. But we must thank God for that which so overcomes us, that it overcomes the love of the world in us.

There are some that profess an utter abdication of the world, as if it and they were not consins; ignorant votaries, and patched Cisterians; who so want holiness, that they place holiness in want. Yet the receivers of their rents, revenues, and incomes, know full well they are no beggars. Jesuits indeed profess no wilful poverty; yea, their main end is, next being mischievous, to be rich. It is their indignation, that they cannot persuade all men to abjure all earthly felicity, that they might engross it to themselves. They have gulled many rich men out of their estates, many nobles out of their honours, many wise men out of their wits; yea, they have attempted to persuade princes out of their royalties; they would be kings themselves; but they have not yet prevailed with them. Greatly may religion sway a prince, yet not so as to leave a crown. We read of divers that have transgressed, yea, left all religion for a crown; but of very few that have left a crown for religion. Yea, most princes hold it a point of religion, never to leave a crown, till a crown leaves them. Such devout beggars be these mortified papists, that they would beggar all the world.

"Entangled and overcome;" put them both together. It is the depth of misery to fall under the curse of Ham, a servant of servants. We remember how Israel blessed Issachar; comparing him to a strong ass, Gen. xlix. 14. When one wished the child like the father, Cato replied, Is this a blessing, or a curse? So, was this of Jacob a blessing or a curse? Some Hebrews understand it of their great labour and study in the law, 1 Chron. xii. 32; but we find few such asses among our lawyers. Others thus; they saw they dwelt in a fat soil, without lack of pleasures, and therefore, like asses, only plied with provender, without minding their burdens. Such asses be they that are overcome with the world; they refuse no burden that Satan can lay on their backs, not the most unreasonable sins, so he do not abridge them of their provender, the unbounded swing of their sensual appetites. It is true, indeed, that Satan doth too often even win the godly to commit sin, but never to love sin; and when he hath done but that, he may put all his gains in his eye.

For their very falls make them afterward stand the surer; and their yielding to one assault, for scorn and indignation of the foil, redoubles their valour to the resisting of a thousand; so that at once he is grown weaker, and they stronger. That which was sent and suborned by our spiritual adversaries to betray us, in a happy change fights for us; and is driven rather to rebel, than wrong us. All things work for our good, Rom. viii. 28; and through our Maker's grace, we come to gain by our sins. That which, while we were a repenting, we would have expiated with our blood, now, after our repentance, we find matter of comfort; the fruit of unhappy sin, happy repentance. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith," 1 John v. 4. There is no overcoming but this way, and this is a way that shall never fail. Faith is our buckler; Satan, the world, sin, death, are in the field; their shafts are fire; yet this shield shall quench them. Let me conclude this argument, with some motives to resist the world, and means to overcome it.

1. When a man is bidden to some excellent cheer, he were an uncivil and ungrateful guest, if he should fill his stomach beforehand with offensive garlick. We are invited to the heavenly banquet, the manna of blessedness: shall we first gorge ourselves with the garlick and onions of Egypt, the unwholesome lusts of this world? Neither can these things satisfy us; if a man eat and drink, and thrive not with it, he must confess some error and defect in nature, and should consult the physician for remedy. Let the covetous feed, devour, swallow, and ravin all; this neither improves his content, nor satisfies his appetite; yet this man doth not feel himself sick of a foolish drowsy, or canine stomach, or to stand in any need of physic. But reason saith, he that labours of such an unnatural grief, has no need of repletion, but of purgation: there is no way to cure him, but by letting blood of his rank and superfluous veins. Plato could advise such a one to take care, not to increase his possessions, but to lessen his desires.

2. If a man should dream of flying with waxen wings, would he attempt this project waking? Would he not rather be ashamed of so fond an impossibility? It is easier for the body of a man to fly over the seas with artificial wings, than for his soul to mount up to heaven by the strength of temporal riches. (Chrysost.) Trees, beasts, men grow up to their full stature and measure, and then stick till they decline: only worldliness grows always, and most at last. Therefore is covetousness called the root of all evil; because when the branches grow old and sere for want of moisture, and there is nothing but dryness in the arms, yet there is sap in the root: that lives, till they both die together: one grave must hold them; there only they shall be sure to find enough.

3. In vain do they flatter themselves with the name of God's servants. When we see two men walking in the way, and one dog following them, we cannot tell which is his master while they keep together; but when they part, then the dog discovers his master, by forsaking the stranger. Piety and prosperity sometimes walk together like friendly neighbours, and then you cannot tell to whether the follower of them both belongs. But when these two fall out, when persecution separates them, then farewell piety, the worldling will after prosperity. The good man scorns such baseness; though Nebuchadnezzar's image be made of gold; though it be attended with instruments of music, Dan. iii. 5, a consort of wealth, honour, pleasure, and prosperity, which bewitch the soul; all this cannot move the servants of God. They have vowed in an heroic disposition with Abraham, that the king of Sodom

shall not make them rich, Gen. xiv. 22, 23; no crooked or indirect means shall bring them in profit: they will not be beholden to the king of hell for a shoe-tie. Silivus the tyrant was slain by the soldiers for his avarice; and when they had fastened his head and right hand to the point of a spear, they caused a crier to proclaim in the army, Give an alms to this insatiably covetous man.

4. Love not the world; Love not, saith St. John, not, Have not. Wealth may be a palace of pleasure for our offspring, a fortress of defence for our posterity; and it may be a tower for the records of vengeance, a library for that flying book, which is threatened to destroy men and houses, Zech. v. 4. I should think myself blest in this day's errand, if every man would vouchsafe by the trial of his heart, to try the foundations of his house, whether they totter upon sand near unto destruction; or rest upon the rock, able to withstand the tempest of God's indignation. The danger of my profession, a burden under which the shoulders of angels may justly shrink, calls upon me to call upon you for this examination; whether the world hath overcome you, or you can say with Christ, "I have overcome the world," John xvi. 33.

5. He that directs an awful eye toward his last account, will by many degrees be more careful of the manner, than of the matter of his gains; how he gets, than what it is he gets. The matter of his unjust profit he shall leave behind, perhaps to those that will never thank him for it; an instrument of their sin, and an occasion of their ruin. But the unlawful manner will either bring a judgment home to his doors here, or at least follow him to judgment hereafter. Most men are too forward admirers of them that swell with riches, and swim in pleasures; as if they were the only darlings of Heaven: who are the happy men but they? But as Paul saith of his shipwreck, We should not have gained this loss, Acts xxvii. 21; so we lose by our gains, when those gains come from wickedness, wherein a good conscience suffers shipwreck.

6. Yea, worse; for a temporal loss a man grieves but once, but for his unlawful gains he must grieve for ever. It seemed to be a less matter for which that worldling forfeited his soul, Luke xii. 20. Therefore as you tender your barns and dearest dwelling-places; as you would not have the stones and timber destroyed; alas, what hath timber and stones deserved? yet because the vulture hath carried all to her nest, nest and all must be set on fire. As you tender the fruit of your loins, and would not consult shame to your own house, nor wrap up your posterity in the same destruction with yourselves; be not entangled, be not overcome with this world. We abhor the beast that kills her young ones with too much indulgence; let not us then destroy a child in the gain of a child's portion, as if a man should sell his horse to buy him provender.

7. Alas, they know not the price of a soul, that chaffer it away in the market of this world; they bear that rich treasure in their bodies, as a toad doth a precious stone in his head, and knows it not. O then lay not up your hearts there, where riches abound and multiply; lay not up riches there, where thieves break through and steal; lay not up thieves there, where vengeance may break in and consume; lay not up vengeance there, where is no hope of redemption for ever.

8. There be other riches, if our hearts could light on them: as Augustine distinguisheth of *pauper in animo* and *pauper in sacculo*, poor in mind and in purse; so may we of the rich: there is a spiritual wealth as well as a secular; and so true and precious

is the spiritual, that the secular wealth is but stark beggary to it. The cabinet of it is the soul, and the treasure in it God himself. O happy resolution of that blessed father, All my wealth, besides my God, is penny. (August.) Let them seek after the earth, that have no right to heaven: let them desire the present, which believe not the future. The Christian's wealth is his Saviour: can he complain the lack of any thing, that hath the Author of all? "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want," Psal. xxiii. 1. He is rich in God, and may well sing that contented ditty, "The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places, I have a goodly heritage," Psal. xvi. 6. God gave the water to fishes, the air to fowls, to beasts the earth, the heaven to angels; but he gave himself to man: "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee," Psal. lxxiii. 25. Let us give ourselves to God, and God will give himself to us, and nothing shall be wanting to our blessedness.

"The latter end is worse with them than the beginning." Where two states are compared, and one of them preferred, they both must be considered. We must see how bad the beginning is, before we can perceive the latter end to be worse than it.

The beginning is a state of sin, and that is bad enough; let us investigate the infelicity of it. *Rectum est index sui et obliqui*—the warps and crookedness of a table are discerned by the rule. Sin is a want of rectitude, and must be brought to the rule for demonstration. Good is honest, profitable, pleasant. Some things are honest, not profitable, nor pleasant: as to be simple as a dove, and not wise as a serpent, is honest; but there is both loss and displeasure in it. Some things are profitable, not honest, nor pleasant; as the gains of unrighteousness, which both make a dishonest soul and a melancholy conscience. Other things are pleasant, not profitable, nor honest; as wanton and luxurious mirth, which neither becomes the person, nor is commodious to the estate. A bitter medicinal potion, though it be not pleasant, puts on the name of goodness, because it benefits the health. Good is all these, and sin is contrary to all these; which discovers the unhappy condition of it.

1. It is vile and dishonourable, therefore it seeks corners and lurking-places: it is so conscious of its deformity, that it is loth to be seen; as the woman that hath a blemish on her face, would still be hiding it. Adam was ashamed as soon as he had sinned, when there was yet none to look upon him, but only she that was in the same predicament. How did David seek to palliate his sin! first with a tawny cloak; the husband must shelter his dishonesty with the wife: when that would not serve, then with a scarlet cloak; through the blood of the husband making way to the bed of his wife. Why did he put himself to these shifts? was he not a king? who durst accuse him? who durst whisper against him? O but the sin of greatness is the greatness of sin, and hath evermore a proportionable shame.

2. Sin is grievous and irksome, "an evil thing and bitter," Jer. ii. 19; like some wine that pleases the palate, but hath a harsh farewell. That which tasted pleasant to concupiscence, lies bitter on the stomach of conscience; for this monitor is left behind when all the rest miscarry. As the devil spared one of Job's servants on purpose to affright him with the news, and torment him with the relation, "I only am escaped," Job i. 15; so conscience is reserved to afflict the heart of a sinner, when the other faculties are suspended from executing their functions; I alone am escaped to tell thee. There is also in it a guilty fear; sin is the executioner of the sinner; as a malefactor changeth countenance before the judge.

The wicked fleeth, and no man pursueth. The seminary suspects every traveller for a pursuivant; the thief, every man for an officer. Add to all this the servility of a sinner, that dares not displease his slave. For whom he hath admitted as a slave, he finds to be a tyrant; those rude and barbarous retainers whom he hath fed with indulgence, are ready to cut his throat. Poison hath been put in a cup of gold; yet you may wash it so clean, that you shall drink out of it without danger. But sin so infects the vessel, body and soul, that nothing but the blood of Christ can cleanse it. The viper, the basilisk, or whatsoever serpent, is not killed with its own proper venom; but sin destroys the subject wherein it is bred. This is bad enough, but not the worst of it.

3. Besides all this, it is deadly and damnable. It repels God himself; not as the stronger does the weak, or the greater the lesser, but as the filthiness of the house does the inhabitants of it; it does not bid him go, but so offends him that he will not stay. When the wife that hath a noble and kind husband, gives those conjugal rights to another which she owes to him; yea, doth her endeavour to make her lord wait upon his slave; this cannot command his separation, but gives just cause of a divorce. If a man sojourns with his tenant, and finds by his wilful neglect of him, the unwholesomeness of his diet, unhandsoneness of his lodging, and slutish carelessness of all service to him, that he would be glad to be rid of him; it is time to be gone. Jacob left Laban when he saw his countenance change upon him, Gen. xxxi. 5. How grievous is it upon such terms to lose our Maker's society! Every sinful hand is ready to wrong the widow, because she wants a friend to defend and plead her cause; her husband is gone. All our malicious enemies let drive at us with deadly violence, when God (our Husband and Head) hath forsaken us; they presently conclude, "God hath forsaken him; persecute and take him, for there is none to deliver him," Psal. lxxi. 11. The hairs of a man's face or head do grace him, for even these excrescences are ornaments; but when they are clipped off, they are trodden under feet. He that is joined to God, is so long honoured; but when a separation is made, there is nothing more contemptible than that man.

Now lay all this together, and we shall find the former condition woeful enough: can there be a worse? Yes, there is a worse. If I had not spoken to them, saith our Saviour, they had had no sin, John xv. 22. That is, no sin respectively, or in comparison of that sin whereof they are now guilty. God made us able to continue holy and happy, but we soon forfeited all; he did put us in a fair way by nature, but we went out of it at the town's end. Again, he calls us in Christ; (for we were another's, and are God's but at the second hand;) if after this we fall away, our latter end is worse than our beginning. Worse in divers respects.

1. Their sins are worse now than they were at first, therefore their estates must needs be so. As nothing can make a man bad but sin, so nothing can make him worse but the greater measure of sin. When is a reprobate at the best? only when he is born; then as his sins be fewest, so his judgment were easiest. "They proceed from evil to evil," saith the prophet, Jer. ix. 3: yea, they "wax worse and worse," saith the apostle, 2 Tim. iii. 13: as a river is small and fordable at the head, but greates as it runs on, by the accession of new waters. It had been best for them not to have been at all; or if they must have a being, to be abortive; or if they must be born, not to live to know that they are born, but to bate of those months in the world which they had in the womb; or if they must live, never to die, for

death, that ends others' miseries, begins theirs. Augustus and Severus did much mischief in their beginnings of reign, much good towards their ends; therefore it was said of them, That it was pity for the commonwealth, that either they had never been born, or never died. So it had been less unhappy for these apostates, if either they had had no beginning, or no end, whose end is worse than their beginning. Nor be their sins only worse because of their number, as two evils are worse than one; but worse for the nature, more malicious, and full of venom, than the other were. An old serpent casts forth the more deadly poison; an old dog bites sore, and rankles the flesh; an old fox hath the more odious stink; a bloodied robber is more merciless; a long-festered ulcer is almost incapable of cure; an inveterate sinner commits the more execrable villany.

Parity of sins is an idle dream, fit for those old Stoics and Jovinian heretics. It were superfluous to say, that God will reward sinners according to their works, if all their works were equal: as if Judas had not done a fouler act than Pilate. There be twofold worse; as the Pharisee made his proselyte twofold more the child of hell than himself, Matt. xxiii. 15. There be threefold, fourfold worse; "For three transgressions, and for four," Amos i. and ii. There be sevenfold worse: such was Mary Magdalene, before the seven devils came out of her; and such was that other sinner, when the seven flesh devils entered into him, Matt. xii. 45. There be tenfold worse; They have provoked me ten times, Numb. xiv. 22: every provocation made them worse than they were, because it was a worse sin than the former. Yea, reprobates aged in sin, die a thousandfold worse than they were born. St. Jude speaks of some that are twice dead; and we say of the cheating bankrupt, that dies without repentance, or any conscience of satisfaction, that he is five times dead. First, dead in honesty and conscience; that was long before putrified flesh. Secondly, dead in estate; which is either drowned in riot, or smothered in cheating. Thirdly, dead in credit; his name stinks worse than a new-opened grave. Fourthly, dead in body, the common debt of nature. Fifthly, and lastly, dead in soul, and that for ever, the worst death of all. Thus their state, like their sin, is worse in the end than the beginning.

2. Besides all their other sins, they have the sin of unthankfulness to answer for. While they were bond-men, God contented himself with such works from them as became bond-men; if they neglected their service, it was but according to the nature of slaves, who will do nothing without blows. But when they are emancipated, and by God's grace taken into the number of his free servants, from the bondage of Satan, now their rebellion becomes treason. Before, their opposition to God was but hostility, now it is treachery. And their end is accordingly, worse; because the Lord fights against them, not as against enemies, but against rebels. One enemy may find mercy of another, but destruction is the due meed of a traitor. A man is poor, and cannot subsist: a rich friend lends him money to stock himself, and drive a trade; he mispends this portion in riot; so loseth both his fortune and his friend, and becomes of a poor beginner, a wretched beggar. We had nothing to set up withal, were not worth the ground we trod on; our whole estate being forfeited in Adam: God, who is rich in mercy, took pity on us, forgave that infinite debt we owed him, soldered up our broken subsistence, trusted us with a new talent of grace, trying whether we would thrive better with that. And when we could put him in no security for it, he took bond of his own Son for us; who sealed the covenant with his own precious blood.

If after all this favour, we shall either bury our talent in the dark earth of supine carelessness, or waste it in overchargeable licentiousness, we worthily again become bankrupts, and lose all hope of reparation. Then will our Almighty Creditor begin to call in our debts, both principal and interest, together with the former arrears; and when it is found, that we have neither wherewith to pay nor whereof to live, what will follow but miserable imprisonment, till we have paid the uttermost farthing, that have not one farthing towards it?

Here is indeed a latter end worse than the beginning; for then we had some credit, now God will trust us no further. To him that hath, shall be given: but from him that hath not, shall be taken away even that he hath, Matt. xiii. 12. Then we had a Surety, now we have nobody to undertake for us: "There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins," Heb. x. 26. Before there was possibility of recovering ourselves, by repentance; now we cannot be renewed by repentance, Heb. vi. 6. Now come those old sins to be required, which before we thought pardoned, and that God had as fully buried them in remission as we had in oblivion. But remember that unmerciful servant, Matt. xviii. 32, who had his pardon cancelled, because he would not forgive his fellow. This new sin calls all the rest to remembrance, and the book is found uncrossed; so he that yesterday thought his estate good, sufficient to pay every man his own, and to live on besides, is to-day worse than nought. So severely doth God plague ingratitude; yea, in effect he plagues men for nothing else. He doth not condemn Christians for sin, but for the habit and obduracy in sin; not for impurity, but for impenitency; not so much because they have sinned, but because they have not repented. "I gave her space to repent, and she repented not," Rev. ii. 21: this is the indictment that shall cast her at the great assizes. A man may be pardoned that wants innocence, but he can never be pardoned that wants penitence. Not the weakness of faith, for Christ will not quench the smoking flax, but the want of faith, excludes from heaven. The world shall be convinced of sin, "because they believe not on me," saith our Redeemer, John xvi. 9. The soul is not without sin, that believes on Christ; but the soul shall not perish for sin, that believes on Christ. Not because they have done some works of darkness are they condemned; but because they have loved darkness more than the light, this is the condemnation, John iii. 19. The tenants are put out of the vineyard, not so much for non-payment of their rent, as for abusing their landlord's servants, and killing his son, Matt. xxi. 41; for their unthankfulness they are displaced. It is not one breach of charity that sends men to hell; but it is uncharitableness that is turned away with that malediction, Go, ye cursed, Matt. xxv. 41. The wise judge at once pardons him that hath done a great robbery, and condemns another for cutting a purse of small value; and both with equity. The former is spared, because it was his first offence, and there is hope of amendment; the other hath made it his trade and desperate disease, not to be cured but by the halter. Seeing therefore that the mercy of God doth not condemn us for our faults, but for our impenitency in those faults; not for contracting spots, but because, being spotted, we will not make ourselves clean; not for casual wanderings, but wilful declining the way; not for sometimes leaving off our innocence, but for never wearing it, yea, wearing nocence instead of it; therefore let us say with that good old hermit, Though I cannot hinder birds from flying over my head, yet I will keep them from making their nests

in my hair: though we cannot avoid all sins, we will be truly sorrowful for the sins we have not avoided, and hereafter strive against the sins for which we have sorrowed.

An ungracious soul may be burdened with many sins; but she never makes up her full load, till she hath added the sin of unthankfulness. He leaves out no evil in a man, that calls him unthankful. Ingratitude dissolves the joints of the whole world. A barren ground is less blamed, because it hath not been dressed. But till it with the plough, trust it with seed; let the clouds bless it with their rain, the sun with his heat, the heavens with their influence; and then if it be unfertile, the condition is worse: before it was condemned, now it is cursed, Heb. vi. 8. Take an offending servant, chide him, chastise him; then second this with encouragements to goodness, the promise of favour, honour, reward; if after all this he mend not, turn him out of doors, let his end be worse than his beginning. (Chrysost. Hom. 5. in 2 Tim.) No wonder, if God that is not praised for so much, hold his hand from giving more; if when his good is requited with evil, he proportion his reward to that evil. The dunghill will stink worse after it is heated with the beams of the sun; the wicked are the worse for all God's favours; and the worse they grow toward the end, the worse it shall be for them in the end.

3. Because custom in sin hath deadened all remorse for sin. Man first goes into sin, as a young swimmer into the water; not plunging himself over head and ears at the first dash, but by degrees, till he come into deep water, and then he cares not for it. Samson is bound with green withs, they will not hold him; with new ropes, they will not hold him; with the woof of his own hair, none of these can hold him. But he was fettered with the invisible chains of a harlot's love; and these hold him. She cuts off his locks, deprives him of God, enervates his strength, plucks out his eyes, makes him a scorn to boys, casts him into prison, and condemns him to a perpetual mill. Thus doth sin (insensibly) weaken grace, darken knowledge, dishonour abilities, cast into the dungeon of hell, and bind to the mill of everlasting pains. When a man comes first to dwell by a pewterer or hammer-smith, the beating mallet upon the brawling metal so disquiets him, that he can neither take his rest by night nor enjoy his thoughts by day. After a while he is so used to it, that he finds no trouble in it, but can sleep supinely in the midst of those thundering peals; yea, even that harsh music of Tubal-cain rocks him asleep: as we say, When his master knocks loudest, the smith's dog sleeps soundest. This renders his last condition the worst: before he committed foul acts but sometimes, and had his lucid intervals, sober thoughts and modest recollections; that reprover within him, who is always known by her tongue, conscience, was like the prophet to David, or the cock to Peter, disturbing his unjust peace; but now either she speaks not, or she speaks and he hears not, or he hears and cares not. So his end is worse, God giving him over, as the physician does a desperate patient. Before his wounds were green and smarted; now they are all dead flesh, insensible, therefore incurable.

4. Because their hypocrisy prevents all ways of remedy. For known diseases there be known medicines: he that tells his grief is not always cured, but he can never be cured that tells it not. When winter comes, the viper vomits out her poison, and hides it in the earth; but in the spring, there is bred in her a new and more pernicious venom than the former. (Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. 8. cap. 39.) In some foul weather or sharp storm of affliction, hypocrites seem

to lay aside their rancour; but the summer of prosperity breeds a worse in them. Now God abhors all sin as we do venom; and where he finds it worse than it seems, he leaves it worse than it is. They are like men that walking the streets of a city in the night, and hearing the bell that warns all to lay by their weapons, leave their swords with some friend for a time, as if they (of all men) meant no harm; but they know when to fetch them again. They can make a shift to fast, and pray, and weep for the season, or at least dissemble these, that they may assume the more unsuspected liberty to their sins. As you have seen a company of children dividing themselves (as it were) into two armies, whereof one is held the other's enemy: they make a show of fighting, and running, and wrestling, and contending for the victory; but when the play is done, they go home hand in hand, and laugh at their skirmishes. Or as advocates, that wrangle bitterly in the courts, and embrace one another friendly in their chambers; all their quarrel was but to get their clients' purses. So these hypocrites loudly contest against those sins, which they secretly embrace with all their hearts. Their beginning was only sin, which is a single iniquity; their end is hypocrisy, which is a double iniquity. Therefore their latter end is worse.

5. Because they wilfully destroy themselves, by forsaking and renouncing all gracious remedies. They are so much the worse, as they might have been better. Relapses are held by physicians to be our own faults; imputed to ourselves, as occasioned by some disorder in us: and so we are not only passive, but active in our own ruin. For their bad beginning they may thank their parents; for their worse ending they must blame themselves. They were born sinners, they have made themselves rebels. They do not only stand under a falling house, but pull it down on their own heads. They are not only executed, that implies guiltiness; but executioners, and that implies dishonour; and executioners of themselves, and that implies impiety. To be born in sin, is bad; but there were some noble faculties of the soul left; to deface these, is worse: yet Christ is offered to recover all; to reject him, this is worst of all. In their first estate there was some comfort derived from the universality: All men are sinners; and it is some degree of comfort to be but in the state common to all. But by this backsliding they fall from that comfort into self-condemning despair; charging themselves with improvident carelessness, and unthankful wickedness, in destroying that with their own hands, which the hand of God offered to preserve. Many a one loseth his life, but these cast it away; and who can help him that will needs perish?

"Thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee," John v. 14. There is then a worse thing behind; and yet the former evil was sore enough, even a sickness of thirty-eight years long. But what is a diseased body to a condemned soul? What is the lying in rags to being wrapped in torments? There was a pool or bath of healing, some hope of recovery, with an angel to move the water. But in hell there is no angel, no pool, not a drop of water; neither room for a physician, nor hope of a remedy. Therefore observe the prescript, (what is prescribed, or written before,) that you may not rush into the postscript (what is written after): if thou sin again, there is a worse evil to come. A tedious sickness tires the physician; especially when the patient will not observe his prescribed diet. It hath been said, that in sickness there be three things material: the physician, the patient, the disease. When any two of these join, they have the vic-

tory; the third cannot prevail. If the physician and the disease join, down then goes the patient: if the cure be mistaken, the very medicine advances the madady. If the patient and the disease join, then down goes the physician; for he is discredited, though he could not help it. But if the physician and the patient join, then down goes the disease; for the sick person recovers. Sin is the soul's sickness, whereof every man is a patient and God the Physician. Now if the Physician, for the patient's frowardness, join with the disease, justly punishing sin with sin, the soul is lost. If the patient join with the disease, if the sinner make much of his sin, and will by no means forego it, here the Physician is dishonoured so far as in man lies: not because God is not skilful, but the patient is wilful. "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean," Matt. viii. 2: he can, but the other will not. But if the Physician and the patient join; if Christ preaches, and Mary Magdalene repents; if Christ promises, and the sinner believes; here out goes the disease, though it were as strong as seven devils, and the patient is restored. Something lies in the patient: if we take our sins' part against Christ, we perish; but if we take Christ's part against our sins, we shall be saved.

6. Because a relapse is ever more dangerous than the first sickness; sooner incurred, more hardly cured.

(1.) Sooner incurred, and that for divers reasons. First, as when the body is recovered of a disease, there still remain some embers, and coals, and fuel of that disease; the branches are cut down by proper physic, the root and occasion is left behind. So ruinous a farm did man take, when he took himself; all the ground being overspread with weeds; every turf, every stone, every muscle of the flesh, and bone of the body, hath some infirmity belonging to it: not a tooth in the head is privileged; so that the house is still ready to fall down. Yet the soul is in worse case; not a faculty, not an affection, without dis-temper. To undertake the cure of it, man being the physician, were but to perfume filth; to drain, not a marsh where earth is mingled with water, but a moat where all is water; where sin hath not invaded a part, but possessed the whole substance; yea, even to raise the dead, for we are naturally dead in sins. To cure the accidents, even actual sins, is a great work; yet civil education and goodness of disposition may do something to that. To cure the strength of sin is greater, yet the grace of Christ doth that. But to cure the root of sin is the greatest work, reserved only for that great Physician; and he doth it by a strange medicine, even by death. By death he gives this perfect life: so that the body of death is only helped by the death of the body. Till then, the action of sin may be restrained, and the body of it mortified, but the root remains. We are laid as it were upon a pile of faggots, and ourselves (if there were no other) are the bellows. Ignorance blows this coal; for even for sins of ignorance was a sacrifice required, Numb. xv. 24, therefore a sin imputed. Knowledge much more blows this fire. They know the judgment of God awarding death to such things, yet they do them, Rom. i. 32. Nature blows this coal; that disposeth us to sin: and the law blows it; sin took occasion by the commandment, Rom. vii. 11; as if we did some things because they are forbidden. Original sin is another bellows, whereby that first imprinted seed infuseth a spring of sin into us; and we have done worse than our fathers, Jer. vii. 26. Temptation is another bellows, that continually blows this spark: and as though we yet wanted wind, we tempt ourselves, and blow it with our own lusts,

Jam. i. 14. Not yet satisfied, as if we were not cunning and able enough to undermine and demolish ourselves, we suffer others to be our bellows, and even sin for their sakes. So Adam sinned for Eve's sake, and Solomon to gratify his wives. The judges sinned for Jezebel's sake, and Joab to please David in the loss of Uriah, which was a slavish and bloody sin. Pilate sinned to humour the people, and Herod to give further contentment to the Jews, Acts xii. 3; which was a popular sin. So easy is it to sin upon sin, to sin upon the recovery of a sin.

Secondly, when a man is a little restored from a grievous fit, he thinks the danger past; that he is able to eat and walk; and therefore will be going abroad into the air, while his weakness is too penetrable; and chooseth repast not easily digestible; hereupon he relapseth. Thus the soul rising from a sin, presumes too much of its own strength; and does not feed upon those delicate cordials whereby the heart may be fortified; but falls to gross meats, unexamined actions, dangerous courses. The Israelites were so fleshed with two or three victories, that they let fly upon Ai, as confident of the victory, and contemning the enemy, Josh. vii. 3; but they were beaten for their labour. It was a good preparation of mind;

Si modo victus eras, ad crastina bella parato;

Si modo victor eras, ad crastina bella paveto.

If conquer'd, for to-morrow's fight prepare;

If conquer'd, of to-morrow's fight beware.

The counsel is good; After propitiation, yet be not without fear of sin, Eccles. v. 5.

Thirdly, if the recovered patient, besides the choice of his diet, do not also addict himself to moderate exercise, a worse disease may breed on him; as the jaundice follows an ague, and the gout becomes the effect of a surfeit. So speeds the soul, that doth not exercise itself in good works and religious duties. So the unclean spirit returning found his house swept indeed, but empty of faith and good works, Matt. xii. 44. Alas, what is sweeping only? The besom cannot get up the dirt that is baked on the floor; it cannot reach the cobwebs in the roof; here is work for the paring-shovel; repentance must cleanse the bottom, humility must rectify the foundation, and prayer, that is of an ascending quality, must purge the roof, the higher faculties of the soul. And when all this is done, if the rooms be left empty of positive goodness, there is entertainment for seven worse spirits. Thus is a relapse sooner procured.

(2.) It is more hardly cured. Among the many weights that aggravate a relapse, this is one; that it proceeds with a more violent despatch, and gives an irremediable wound, because it meets with no defence nor prevention. When a disease first invades a strong constitution, it finds something to wrestle withal; and as it weakens the body, so the body weakens it; both their forces spend together, one upon another; and here is a battle fought hand to hand, upon some terms of equality. Suppose the body gets the victory, and the disease yields and departs; yet being as it were left breathless, if a new adversary, a new sickness, sets upon it, here is great odds; for the one is fresh, the other quite out of heart. Before it could endure the opening of a vein, the correction of proud humours, and expulsion of superfluous matter. Now it is so weak, that it lies at the disease's mercy, and hath changed all resistance into patience. In the former estate, the soul did grapple with sin; and if it were foiled, yet not without reluctance; sometimes it got the better, never willingly the worse. It could then bear the

correction of pride by discipline; the evacuation of tough humours, stubborn affections; all which might bring it low, but not take away the life of it; yea, indeed, rather quicken life in it. But being thus far hopefully restored, if it again wilfully admit a habit of sin, this will so enervate all the strength and virtue, that it resists no more, but yields patiently to so pleasing a captivity. The enemy comes upon it, and is not withstood; as upon a country that was weakened and depopulated before. Now it quite disarms the soul of all weapons, and munition, and possibility of resistance. As Iphicrates the Athenian, when he treated with the Lacedemonians for peace, stood so hard upon security of performing the articles agreed, that he refused any but this: That the Lacedemonians should yield up to them all those things whereby it might be manifest, not that they would not hurt them though they could, but that they could not hurt them though they would. Thus the relapse is more dangerous, not only because of the potency of the disease, but also on account of the impotency of the subject; because sin is stronger, and man is weaker.

Lastly, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning, in respect to the church, in respect to themselves, in respect to God, and in respect to Satan.

(1.) In respect of the church. While they carried a face of respect to the church, they were wrapped up in the general prayers of the church; and seemed to be of that number, for whom, as the friends of God, there was a continual remembrance in good men's intercessions. "There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it," 1 John v. 16. Samuel will pray for Saul, till he perceive that he hath given over the Lord, and the Lord him. "How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him?" 1 Sam. xvi. 1. If Samuel mourn, because Saul hath cast away God by his sin; yet Samuel must cease mourning, because God hath cast away Saul by his just punishment. To be deprived of the benefit of good men's prayers, is a heavy loss. Such a one is singled out for one of God's enemies, and his judgment hastened by the entreaty of God's servants. "So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord," Judg. v. 31: this is the prayer for him. They that despise the chaste love of their Saviour's spouse, and are bewitched with the painted but ill-favoured harlot of Rome, are no longer reputed friends, but adversaries, and apostates. The church may lament for them, not because she fears she shall miss them, but for that she knows they shall want her. They have her compassion, they have lost her benediction. And if any sparks of goodness lie covered under their cold ashes, it shall but show them a glimmering of how happy they might have been, how wretched they are. But as those that are suddenly come from a bright candle into a dark room, are so much the more blind as their light was clearer; or as the purest ivory turns with fire into the deepest black; so at once their eyes are taken away, with their hearts; and those souls that seemed white, as rinsed in the blood of the Lamb, become as black as hell, or the black prince that rules it. Before they sat in the congregation of saints; now neither sermons, sacraments, nor prayers shall do them more good, than a meal of meat put into a dead man's mouth.

(2.) In respect of themselves. They were at first stated in sin, then put into a fair way of deliverance; if after this they go back to their first imprisonment, they have destroyed themselves. This is done three ways. First, they have steeled their foreheads. When a man for his first theft is cast into prison, he becomes disconsolate and melancholy; he looks

upon his friends with shame, upon his accusers with fear, upon the judge with awe and trembling; but through frequent imprisoning he casts aside the shame of imprisonment, he blusheth not for his foul facts, nor is sensible of his bondage; but drinks, riots, blasphemes, as if his jail were a tavern; and that without thought of calling or being called to the bar for a reckoning. "Thou hast a whore's forehead, thou refusedst to be ashamed," Jer. iii. 3. Secondly, they have petrified their hearts, that ordinary stripes will not reach to the quick. "Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more," Isa. i. 5. Their long tugging at Satan's oars, and wearing his shackles, hath so tanned their flesh, that they are not sensible of the servitude. "A stubborn heart shall fare evil at last; and he that loveth danger shall perish therein," Eccles. iii. 26; not he that runs into danger, that is every man's case; but if men love dangers, it is fit they should perish. A garment may be so old and near worn, that being rent, it cannot again be sewed together; it is not capable of the needle and thread. No compunction can enter into such a heart, nor make way for the thread of comfort, to heal the breaches. They have need to beg for, not, with David, a clean heart, but a new heart; for the old one is quite past mending. We did cast three men bound into the fire, said that tyrant; and lo, I see four men loose, walking without hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God, Dan. iii. 25. Other sinners have but three enemies to deal withal, the devil, the world, and the flesh; but these have a fourth foe, and that the most inveterate, a hard heart; and the form of the fourth is like the son of perdition. Thirdly, they have stupified their conscience, disgraced it as a scold, and condemned it for a common wrangler. Before they carried their clock about with them; now they have left it off, that they might not know how their time passeth. But at last God shall set it a-going, and to their horror on their death-bed, they shall hear it strike their last hour, with a dismal sound and heavy knell; when Satan, that long held them in the pleasant gallery of hope, shall take them aside, and show them the dark dungeon of despair. If their old festered ulcers come but to a new incision, they shall confess their end worse than their beginning.

(3.) In respect of God; who will no longer acknowledge them for his people, that have rejected him for their God. "I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you," Rom. x. 19. The Jews counted the Gentiles dogs, such as would be glad of their crumbs; now, for the others' apostacy, the Gentiles are come to their full tables, and the Jews are turned out of doors. As a mother sometimes, for a fault done by her little one, thrusts it from her, and saith it shall be her child no longer; withal taking up a stranger's child into her bosom. This she does not seriously; but God did so indeed, rejecting the Jews, and embracing the Gentiles. Or as a man divorces his wife for adultery, and before her face marries her handmaid, clothing her with the rich robes and jewels of his forsaken spouse; saying to her, You have chosen another lover, I will choose me another wife. So the Lord to Israel: You have taken another god, even your idols; I, another people, even the Gentiles. You have angered me, by giving my honour to idols; I will anger you, by giving your prerogatives to strangers.

The bondage of this land was lamentable, under the tyranny of antichrist; when we were driven to eat the bread of superstition, and to drink the wine of fanaticism, or fast. God hath delivered and con-

firmed us under the hands of three gracious princes; if we shall now apostate and revolt from the integrity of his service, our latter end will be worse than our beginning. Instead of popery, we shall find Turcism, yea, atheism, and infidelity; till we can only say, Here was the church of God. Why should we wonder, that God forgets Shiloh, when Shiloh hath forgotten God? Indeed, this is the ground of tears; to see the Turk casting out, not only Christians, but Christ, and placing his Mahomet in the room; proudly blaspheming, that his law is above either Moses' or Christ's; as being after them both, and none (say they) to come after it. Not unlike the Jesuits, who interpret the smallness of their society to be an honour above the ancientness of all other orders. To see the prevailing papists not only casting out the true professors of the gospel, but even the gospel itself; and setting up their idol, the mass, in God's temple! Remember old Eli sitting by the way-side, and seeing a messenger coming with his clothes rent, ashes on his head, all his face covered with tears, so that he might read the heavy news in his countenance: yet he had strength to ask him, "What is there done, my son?" He answers, "Israel is fled before the Philistines;" that troubled him; yet he sat still: what more? "There hath been a great slaughter among the people;" that came near him; yet he sat still: what more? "Thy two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead;" that made a deep gash in the heart of (so kind) a father; yet he sat still: what more? Can there be any worse than this? Yes, saith the messenger, the worst of all is behind; "the ark of God is taken;" that word struck him dead, 1 Sam. iv. 16—18. He that had power to hear all the rest; Israel turning their backs before their enemies, the people massacred, his own sons slain; yet no sooner heard this, but his strength forsook him, he expires with a groan; he fell down and died. The report comes to his daughter-in-law, being great with child, and near her travail; she hears the news of so many deaths; of the people, of her brother-in-law, of her father-in-law, of her own husband, with the surprisal of the ark of God: these griefs were above the griefs of child-birth; she presently falls in labour, and yields out a son. The women about her cheer her with this comfort; "Fear not, thou hast borne a son;" which digests the sorrows of the former pains, John xvi. 21. But she answered not, nor regarded it, but cried out, "The glory is departed from Israel; because the ark of God was taken, and because of her father-in-law and her husband." And lest the standers-by should think that her grief for all these losses was alike, she as it were corrected herself, and insisted only in lamenting the loss of the ark, and died with that in her mouth: these were her last words, "The glory is departed from Israel; for the ark of God is taken;" and so she died, ver. 19—22. In the cause of Christ we have lost much people; perhaps some of us our fathers, some our brothers, some our sons, others their husbands and friends; many worthy soldiers, whose funerals we bedew with our just tears. But if the ark of God should be taken, our candlestick removed, the gospel darkened, we have too woeful cause of weeping out our very eyes, and crying, Our latter end is worse than our beginning.

(4.) In respect of the devil, who losing a soul which he deemed his own, rageth, and "walks through dry places, seeking rest, but findeth none," Matt. xii. 43. *Non quia nusquam alibi consistere potest, sed quia nusquam alibi consistere cupit.* Not because he cannot find a footing any where, but because he does not desire to find it. But when he recovers

it, *tanquam prædam e manibus, vel bonum e faucibus ereptum*, as a prey snatched from his hands, or a morsel from his jaws, he hampers it with greater cruelty. A prisoner, for his fair and noble carriage, and round payment, hath the favour to be allowed the liberty of the prison; to have those chains and fetters forborne him, wherewith other malefactors are bound. But through their negligence or indulgence, he breaks prison: now let him look well to himself; if ever the jailer catch him again, he will make him fast enough. Taken he is; and now what can he look for but cruel usage? Before he had no shackle, now he is bound with two chains for failing. Before he had the freedom of the prison, now he is cast into the dungeon. Before he might sleep in the night and not be disturbed, now day and night he is watched. Before one lock was thought enough to hold him, now many doors, and locks, and bars are shut upon him. Before he had but one keeper, now he hath seven worse to intral and vex him: so far is this last durance worse than the former. They that have escaped the servitude of Satan, by the revelation of the gospel of Christ, and adhere to a new Master, their Maker, are safe under his almighty protection. But if they shall again revolt, and forego the bounds of obedience, till they be reapprehended by their old jailer, how grievous is their misery! Now will he blind the eyes of their souls, stop their ears from hearing sermons, feed them with nothing but temptations, harden their hearts, sear up their consciences, and at last hale their souls to everlasting torments. For where the sorrows of this world end, the pains of hell begin, and (which is most fearful) shall never end. Oh then the latter end with them is worse than the beginning!

If this be their end that relapse from God to the world, then the contrary holds in them that are wholly recovered from the world to God; the latter end with them shall be better than the beginning. Better in regard of holiness; good ever, and best at last: "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day," Prov. iv. 18. Better in regard of happiness: "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace," Psal. xxxvii. 37. The wicked begin pleasantly, and go on without interruption; but the end pays for all. Rejoice in thy youth, follow thy delights; spare for no cost, want no jovialty; but when the Host comes in with the reckoning, all is dashed; "for all these God will bring thee into judgment," Eccl. xi. 9. So Abner to Joab concerning that unkindly war: "Knowest thou not that it will be bitterness in the latter end?" 2 Sam. ii. 26. Yea, such a war had bitterness enough in the beginning. Lazarus began with pains, and the rich man went on with pleasures; but now the one is comforted, and the other tormented, Luke xvi. 25. Sin and punishment are like the twins of Hippocrates, they are born together, they go together, and they grow together: but they neither laugh together, nor cry together; for sin rejoiceth while misery weeps to see it, and misery will laugh at sin while it weeps to feel it, Prov. i. 26. As Naomi said to her two young daughters, Leave me, my daughters, leave me; whereupon Orpah kisses and parts, but Ruth clave to her, Ruth i. 14. So the soul in distress dismisseth her two children, Pleasure and Pain; Let me alone, forsake me: Pleasure will be gone; yea, even leave her, without taking leave of her; but Pain sticks by her: for where sin is let in, punishment will not be kept out. Sin hath a forenoon's face and an afternoon's face. (Bern.) It looks lovely to ill-affected eyes, painted with glorious colours, decked with roses and lilies, all the day.

But it changeth countenance in the evening; like a painted harlot, that when she washeth off her complexion, looks full of horror. To lie upon beds of ivory, and to tumble upon soft couches; to eat the lambs out of the flock, and calves out of the stall; to sing and dance to the viols, and drink wine in bowls, Amos vi. 4-6; this is the forenoon's countenance of sin. Cast the unprofitable servant into outer darkness, where is weeping and gnashing of teeth, Matt. xxv. 30; that is the evening face.

But to the children of God there is first sorrow, then joy; the best last. There is "more kindness in the latter end than at the beginning," Ruth iii. 10. The Christian begins in crying, and goes on in mourning, but this shall bring him peace at the last. "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy," Psal. exsxi. 5. The Israelites were first brought to the bitter waters of Marah, before they might taste the pleasant fountains, the milk and honey of Canaan. In vain do we expect the river of God's pleasures, before we have pledged Christ in the cup of bitterness. There must go a wind before us, blustering persecutions; and an earthquake, strong temptations; and a fire, even a fiery trial; before we hear that still voice of comfort, 1 Kings xix. 11, 12. Joseph dealt roughly with his brethren at the first: he bound one, he sent for another, he troubled them all; but at last he breaks forth in compassion, I am Joseph, fear not, I am Joseph your brother. So Christ first lays his cross on our shoulders, to see how we will move under it with patience; he chastiseth us with scourges, to prove our obedience: and when we begin to think him angry with us, he appears to our souls in another face, in another voice; I am Jesus, fear not, I am Jesus your brother. When we have pledged him in his gall and vinegar, then he will drink to us in the new wine of his kingdom. He that is the Door and the Way, hath taught us that there is but one way, but one door, but one passage to heaven, and that a strait one; though with much pressure we get through, leaving our superfluous rags behind, as torn from us in the crowd, we are happy. He that made heaven, did on purpose make it thus; narrow and hard in the entrance; when we are entered, wide and glorious; that after our pain, our joy might be the sweeter. Through many tribulations we enter into heaven; but we shall enter, and into no worse a place than heaven. Not unlike the way by which Jonathan and his armour-bearer ascended to the garrison of the Philistines, between two rocks, Bozez and Seneh, foul and thorny; but when they were got up, they obtained victory. By what hard shifts soever we climb up to heaven, we have abundant recompence in the triumph and glory. After the roaring of waters, flashes of lightning, and noise of thunder, comes the delightful music of harps and songs, Rev. xiv. 2.

The devil serves men as Jacl did Sisera: she speaks peaceably to him, "Turn in, my lord, turn in:" he asks her water, she gives him milk: she covers him with a mantle, keeps him close and warm; gets him asleep, and then she kills him, Judg. iv. 18-21. So Satan gives sinners the kisses and language of peace; Turn in to me, I will secure you: "Therefore his people return thither, and waters of a full cup are wrung out to them," Psal. lxxiii. 10. He surpasseth their desires in kindness: "They have more than heart could wish," ver. 7. He wraps them up in riches and sins together, that they know not whether they are more safe or secret; lulls them asleep with mirth and prosperity; but when all is done, he destroys them. But Christ chooseth us, as the Israelite was to choose a captive woman: first he sets her a mourning forty days, cuts her hair and nails, pre-

pares her with humiliation, then takes her home, and makes her his wife. Christ first taxeth us with severe repentance, exerciseth our patience, and shaves off our superfluous lusts; which though they were but the excretions of the soul, we held dear as the vital parts; but when this is done, he takes our souls home to his own kingdom, and marries us to himself in eternal blessedness. At the marriage in Cana of Galilee, he turned their water into wine; much more at his own royal wedding will he turn all the water of our tears into the wine of endless comforts. The weeping soul shall never go to the place of weeping; but what then shall become of the laughing? Luke vi. 25. There is provided for them a dismal place of weeping, howling, and gnashing of teeth. Weep here, and weep never: mourn not here, and mourn for ever. Thus while the beginning of the ungodly doth seem a paradise, and their end is hell; our beginning might be a kind of purgatory, but our latter end is heaven.

VERSE 21.

For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.

BACKSLIDING hath ever been a sin most odious to God; yea, it is a pack or bundle of sins trussed up together, all derogatory to his honour, and contrary to his nature. For there is in it, first, hypocrisy; which is adverse to him, as he is the God of truth. Secondly, inconstancy; which is opposite to him whose motto is, "I am the Lord, I change not," Mal. iii. 6; "with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning," Jam. i. 17. Thirdly, infidelity; which is held the highest disparagement to his goodness. Disobedience breaks his word, infidelity will not take his word. Fourthly, ingratitude: to which all sins give way, and make room for in the highest place of damnation. Fifthly, impenitency; which seals up the impossibility of forgiveness. Saith Ambrose, I have more readily found those who preserved their integrity, than those who exercised a suitable penitence. It is better sleeping in a whole skin, than hazzarding wounds to try the virtue of an approved medicine. All hurts are not recovered; but where no hurt is done, there needs no remedy. Well therefore may our apostle further aggravate this impiety; it had been better for them if they had not known, &c.

God did easily pass over many sins in his Israel; yet he vehemently insists in those, into which they so often relapsed. Such were their murmurings against him in his ministers and instruments: their turning upon other gods, and embracing the idolatry of their neighbours. Murmuring is a slippery way to an irrecoverable bottom; and he comes near to God himself, that murmurs against him that comes from God. The magistrate is the garment in which God apparels himself; and he that shoots at the clothes, cannot say he meant no ill to the man. Idolatry is the next slip to this fearful precipice and downfall. Their murmuring against God's ministers did too often end in a departing from God himself: when they would have other officers, they would have other gods; and still to-day's murmuring was to-morrow's idolatry. Their murmuring induced their idolatry, and they often relapsed into them both. Not so much their murmuring and their idolatry, as

their relapsing into those sins, did seem to affect the Lord. "They turned back and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel," Psal. lxxviii. 41. That was their sin: but before he chargeth them with the sin itself, in the same place he chargeth them with reiterating, with redoubling of the sin: "How oft did they provoke him in the wilderness!" ver. 40. How often! This was that sin which so exasperated the Lord against them. Their driving out of God whom they promised to serve, did cause him to bring in the nations whom he promised to drive out, Josh. xxiii. 12, 13. They have seen my wonders, and yet provoked me these ten times; therefore they shall not see the land which I swear unto their fathers, Numb. xiv. 22, 23. Though God had sworn it, he will rather break his oath than leave them unpunished. Why? because they had so often grieved him; ten times. No tongue but God's own can express his indignation against a relapsing people. Every general disobedience in a nation is deadly; but when the disease is complicated with a relapse, after knowledge and profession of a former recovery, it is desperate. Nor is God's anger only incensed, where the evidence is complete, and without exception; but where there is but a rumour, a suspicion of such a relapse to idolatry, Deut. xiii. 12, &c. Hereupon that message was sent by Israel to the Reubenites: "Is the iniquity of Peor too little for us, from which we are not cleansed until this day?" Josh. xxii. 17. Wherein they object to them, not so much their present declination to idolatry, as their relapse into a sin formerly committed, and punished with the slaughter of four and twenty thousand delinquents. At last they are satisfied, that altar was not built for idolatry, but for a testimony; a monument, whereby they professed themselves the servants of the same God: and the army returned without blood. It came not near a relapse: but because there was a suspicion, and fear of it, they were jealous. So odious to God, and so aggravating a weight of sin lies upon a relapse. Admit therefore our apostle's further declaiming against it, It is better, &c.

The text is comparative, or an argument from bad to worse, from what is dangerous to what is more dangerous, between what is simply ruinous and what is more so: wherein we have two states specified, and the worse of them remonstrated. First, the state of iniquity, before illumination. Secondly, the state of apostacy, after illumination. Thirdly, the worse of these decided by the comparison. First, the condition of nature and sin, they knew not the way of righteousness. Secondly, the tergiversation after knowledge, they turn from the holy commandment. Thirdly, there is a weighing of both these in the balance, to try which is the heavier; and certainly, the former condition is found to be the lighter burden; sin in ignorance hath not so much to answer for, as impiety after knowledge; it had been better for them. First, consider we wherein the former state is defective: they knew not the way of righteousness; a blindness of heart, an averseness from the truth. Next, wherein the pravity of the latter state consists: and this is discerned in two things. First, the excellency of the direction; a holy commandment given them. Secondly, the obstinacy of their turning away; they wilfully turn from it. The rule or direction hath three conveniencies: first, it is a commandment; therefore they are bound to obey it. But a command may be defective or redundant, and so fail of integrity. Therefore, secondly, this is a holy commandment; perfect, without weakness; safe, without danger. But a command may be holy and good, and yet not known: and who can fulfil an unrevealed law? Therefore, thirdly, it was delivered

unto them. Though they were bound to take notice of it, and ignorance will not excuse; yet this is delivered to them, and they have known it; that the mouth of all wickedness might be stopped. The last point, is the trial of both these estates, and a verdict given, which is the better, which the worse. The last is found the heavier; and if they had perished in the former, without being guilty of the latter, this for them had been the better. The better, that is, the easier; or the better, the less evil: both conditions are bad enough; one is the worse.

They have not "known the way of righteousness." Wherein we have two things. First, the happiness of the object, The way of righteousness. Secondly, their unhappiness, in being ignorant of it. They have not known it. "The way of peace they have not known," Rom. iii. 17.

The way of righteousness is so called, because both formally, it is a righteous way; and effectively, it makes the walkers in it righteous. Certainly, there is but one way to heaven, and this is it. There be many ways to some famous city upon earth, many gates into it; the east gate, and the north gate, &c. But to the city of salvation and glory, there is but one way, but one gate, and that is a narrow one too, the way of righteousness. There was a way at the first; the way of the law, or rather of nature: Adam was put into it, but he quickly went out of it. Of all his nine hundred and thirty years, he kept not this path one whole day. Since that, no man ever kept it one hour; but only he that knew the way, that made the way, that is the way, even the new way of righteousness, Jesus Christ. Now this way is not demolished; but we are all weak, and not able to travel it; except it be some Romish Pharisee that undertakes it. And yet St. Paul will lay no less a wager than the credit of his doctrine upon it, that he never goes through with it: Being ignorant of the righteousness of God, they go about to establish their own righteousness, Rom. x. 3. Silly men, they blow at a glow-worm, instead of a coal of fire; and when all is done, they find a cold squalid matter, far unable to heat them. The metaphor is there taken from shoring up an old rotten house, which no props can uphold; or setting a dead man upon his feet, to make him stand. They go about it, as the Nimrodians went about their tower, emulating heaven; but left it a rude heap of confusion, and a monument of their impious presumption. And, their own righteousness, as if they would not be beholden to God for a righteousness of his appointing.

What then is the way of righteousness? "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish," John iii. 16: this is the way, walk in it. If the righteousness of the law, that is, our righteousness in observing the law, could have justified us, God had been too prodigal of a needless blood; all those unconceivable agonies and sufferings of Christ had been superfluous; he needed no Peter to say to him, Master, favour thyself, Matt. xvi. 22, for he would have spared those pains. But if our infinite Creditor took no other way to satisfy and pay himself, than in that precious coin, the dear blood of his only beloved Son; sure we shall find no way to get our own discharge, but by resting on the blood of that Son. Now in all this, God did not ordain a new righteousness, but a new way of righteousness. The law is too weak to justify us, indeed it is strong enough to condemn us: let us not seek that which the law cannot do, but fear that which the law can do. It can never make us righteous before God, through our best obedience; let us never hope for that: it can pronounce

us unrighteous before God, and without faith and repentance condemn us; let us fear that.

"Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth," Rom. x. 4. The end of a thing is either mathematical, or moral. The mathematical end is the utmost part of a thing, in which the length or continuance is determined; as a point is the end of a line, death is the end of life, the day of judgment is the end of the world. The moral end, is the scope and perfection of it. Christ is the end of the law both ways. First, he is the mathematical end, and that both of the ceremonial and moral law: of the ceremonial, by a direct signification; of the moral, by an accidental direction. The ceremonies signified Christ, and ended at him; yea, ended in him. As it has been expressed, They were liable to death before Christ, dead with Christ, and dead after Christ. The law of manners did also (upon the reckoning) lead to Christ: for it led them to the curse, and then reason would teach them to inquire for the remedy; as the sense of the disease guides a man to the medicine or physician. Secondly, he is the moral end of them; for both he is the body of those shadows, and the perfect fulfiller of the decalogue. So that whatsoever the law required that we should be, suffer, or do, he hath performed for us. He is *τελος*, the end, or tribute; and we, by his payment, are tribute-free, discharged by him before God. (Aret.) Here is then still the same righteousness which the law requires; but not the same way of performing it. The former way required it in our own persons, the new way accepts it done for us in Jesus Christ: the law would have it inherent, the gospel admits it imputed. He that believeth in Christ, hath the way of righteousness. Says Jerome, He who believes in Christ is such on the very day that he begins to believe, as the man is who has fulfilled the whole law. We have a right to all the precious promises both in law and gospel, in the first moment of our faith; yea, even an earnest, and partly a possession of heaven. "He hath made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus," Eph. ii. 6. It is as possible to pluck Christ from thence, as to hinder believers from arriving thither. Whosoever denies, that we do even now possess heaven in Christ, denies Christ to be in heaven. Even when our vessel splits, and the floods of temptation assault us, we shall by faith escape the shipwreck, and swim to shore.

This is the way of righteousness, which can only make us righteous here, and happy hereafter. Indeed this way hath two boundaries, repentance, and obedience.

1. Repentance on the one side, a mourning for sins past; which is as sure an effect or demonstration of faith, as faith is a cause of the peace of conscience. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God," Rom. v. 1. Conscience cannot be good, without faith, nor faith lively, without a good conscience; as the lamp yields no light without oil. Sins will be contracted; we cannot keep the way without some wanderings; therefore had need to be often rectified. This is the office of repentance, to set all straight again. Yea, faith itself may suffer shipwreck, though it cannot be cast away. A horse of the best mettle, when he falls into the hands of a carrier, and is made a pack-horse, becomes dull and jadish. Let us not overload our faith with the unnecessary burden of wilful sins: letting blood often, will lose much spirits. A cordial is ever precious; but the force is abated when it is turned into a diet. The frequency of disorders will weaken the virtue of the receipt.

2. Obedience on the other side; for though we live by faith, yet our faith doth not live, if it pro-

duce not good works. We suspect the want of sap in the root of a tree, if we find barrenness in the branches. If either it have bad fruit, or no fruit, it is but a dead faith. This new way of righteousness doth not exclude obedience to the old, the gospel does not abolish the law; yea, without our endeavour to keep the law, we have no comfort in the gospel; the one is the rule of believing, the other is the rule of living. "Shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid," Rom. vi. 15; we "have not so learned Christ," Eph. iv. 20. Of all the marks set up in the way of righteousness, this is a principal one, good works and obedience. Christ is the end of the law; not the destructive, but impletive end; not the killing, but the fulfilling end. (August.) The noble heir, when he is come to his lands, neglects not his schoolmaster; nay, if he be of an heroic disposition, he rather prefers him. Though the law were sharp to thee in the infancy of a Christian, yet (consider) it hath brought thee to Christ; and for this office thou wilt love it. The matured scholar is far past the first rudiments of learning, yet he doth not scorn his grammar; nay, he will hardly make congruous speech, if he directly cross those first rules. "Now we believe, not because of thy saying" (it was the Samaritans' speech to the woman); "for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ," John iv. 42: yet still there is some respect due to the first messenger. When the merchant is come aboard his ship by the help of his boat, he does not presently sink his boat; but fastens it to his ship, because he may have use of it another time. The law hath been a means to bring us to this way of righteousness; but it is not itself out of the way. "We are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which he hath before ordained that we should walk in them," Eph. ii. 10. This walk was ordained for us, before Christ was actually given unto us. Yea, it will be the delight of a Christian, then to be doing, when Christ is with him. Peter is ready to cast out the net at his Master's bidding, in hope of a happy success. When so good a Lord stands by him, that at once puts strength in his hand, and courage in his strength, with, Well done, good servant, Matt. xxv. 21; this will make him work out his heart, if he be faithful.

"The way." A way is ordained for going; they that go in it, be called travellers; and those must have many requisites.

1. They inquire the nearest, fairest, and best way: in our journey to heaven we shall often be out of the way, if we do not ask direction. "The priest's lips should keep knowledge," Mal. ii. 7.

2. In dangerous and unknown paths they seek for a sure guide. We have two that offer their assistance: the Spirit, a gracious guide; the flesh, a giddy guide. Let us take the Spirit, and take heed of the flesh.

3. Travellers are loth to go alone; yet rather alone, than with bad company. Let us seek out the saints, and such as excel in virtue, Psal. xvi. 3. Good society takes away all tediousness from a journey.

4. They do not clog themselves with superfluous luggage. Long garments and heavy burdens take away both ease and speed: impertinent and unnecessary cares will make us lag behind. Herein the poor Christian hath advantage of the rich: this is before him for this world, the other gets the start of him for the kingdom of heaven. He hath no barns to build, nor farms to let, nor monies to dispose; no such trouble in his way.

5. Travellers go not without weapons, for fear of robbers. Our way is dangerous; a great number of

thieves lie in ambush for us. Satan is the grand thief; all temptations be his prowlers. Let us hold fast our faith; this shall serve us both for a weapon to fight with, when we are beset, and for a staff to rest upon, when we are weary; a shield of proof to ward all blows, a pistol ready to despatch all enemies. This shall uphold us if we hold up it. While Peter kept this staff in his hand, he could walk upon the sea; but when he let it fall, he presently began to sink; "Lord, save me," Matt. xiv. 30.

6. They are well shod that know they have a long rough journey, lest they be laid up by the way. Our passage to heaven is full of tribulations, thorns, and stones; we had need of greaves; and our "feet shod with the preparation of the gospel," Eph. vi. 15.

7. Travellers carry with them some cordials and comfortable waters, to cheer up their spirits when they faint with weariness. We have a cellar of the waters of life ever ready, the gospel of salvation; every promise is a cordial, able to fetch back the swooning soul. "There is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus," Rom. viii. 1; a blessed cordial!

8. They meddle not with unconcerning quarrels, but mind their way and business. We cannot hear our God contemned with patience; nor with impatience, ourselves. For the brawls of the wicked, though we wish peace, we dare not thrust in (without a calling) to make it. Much less do their tumults breed a war in our bosoms: we do not beat ourselves, because they beat one another. Some indeed, because they see contentions about religion, give over all religion. As if a man seeing a fray, wherein he needs not to have a hand because they will not put up their swords, must therefore go hang himself. What a desperate pusillanimity is this! Shall we go out of the way, because others quarrel about the way? or be of his mind, who seeing some suffering as protestants for denying the supremacy of the pope, others as papists for denying the supremacy of the king, at one time, said that he would be neither? God forbid.

9. Travellers linger not at every bush; nor tarry longer at their inn than for necessary refreshing, and renew their walk the next morning. Thus must we use the world, as though we used it not; requiring only our needful repast. So far it may have our custom, as to be buyers of requisite provision, a moderate provision for the sustentation of life; but not to be purchasers: we settle our inheritance in no land but the land of promise. As for carnal pleasures, we pass them by unsaluted; we dare not drink of that cup for fear of enchantment. He that looks for worldly joys in the way of righteousness, thinks to find Canaan in the wilderness.

10. They go on to the end: walking is a perpetual motion; not going round, so the ungodly move like a horse in a mill, but going forward. Howsoever their natural corruptions do sometimes bear them aside, or into some cross way, yet they look to the main journey. A snail creeping on a grindstone may keep on her pace though the grindstone be whirled the contrary way. The inferior orbs, though they be violently moved by the upper, yet have a particular contrary motion of their own. A traveller is stayed against his will, by a stronger force; from which he no sooner gets loose, but he runs his own way the faster. As in walking there seems to be a kind of emulation between the feet; as if the one did strive to be before the other, and the body would be before them both, and the mind before the body; so must our desires labour toward the improvement of goodness, and to be better to-morrow than we are to-day. Thus let us go on in love and peace; and as Joseph charged

his brethren, let us not fall out by the way, lest we fall out of the way. But with humility and charity let us follow the way of righteousness, and our end shall be everlasting peace.

They have not "known the way." I will not charge their ignorance so far, as to say they knew no God, or believed none. Atheism destroys the nobility of man; for man is akin to the beasts by his body, and if he be not of kin to God by his soul, he is a base and ignoble creature. Yea, it confounds all magnanimity, and the advancement of human nature. Take a dog, and mark what a generosity and courage he will put on, when he is maintained by a man; who is to him instead of a god, or at least a better nature; whereby it is manifest, that that creature, without the confidence of a better nature than his own, could never be so courageous. No man, when he resteth himself upon the Divine protection and favour, gathers a force and ability, which human nature itself could never attain. Therefore that ignorance (if at least there can be any such ignorance) is in all respects hateful, that deprives human nature of the means to exalt itself above human frailty. But whatsoever the fool says in his heart, every man knows in his heart, that there is a God. None will deny there is a God, but those for whom it maketh that there were no God. Never any nation fell wholly to atheism; they acknowledge some god, though they missed of the right.

Nor will I charge their ignorance with a false god; they were better to have no opinion of God at all, than such an opinion as is unworthy of him. The one is unbelief, the other contumely; and certainly superstition is the reproach of Deity. Yield them to know God, and the true God; were they yet ignorant of his worship? Did they not know the law? Then their punishment were less heavy, unless their ignorance were voluntary. Or rather say, they knew the law, but with a pharisaical knowledge; as if they could be justified by the law, Rom. ii. 12. Herein, as wide as the whole heaven, they erred from the way to heaven. Not that there is any imperfection in the law, as if it were not able to justify us; but the imperfection and fault is in ourselves, that are not capable to be justified by it. A cunning carver can cut the similitude of any creature, but not on rotten wood; yet is it no imputation to the skill of the carver. The law hath ability enough to justify, but cannot perform this work on our rotten nature. The law, thus, is weak even to save one, but it is strong enough to damn thousands. What then?

They knew not "the way of righteousness;" that is, the salvation which comes by Jesus. All ignorance is a curse, but that which knows not Christ is the most miserable. If a man be ignorant of that which concerns him not, he is excusable: as for a preacher to be ignorant of the art of physic, or a physician of the art of navigation; but if the physician be ignorant of medicines, or the divine of the Scriptures, this ignorance is unpardonable. Ignorance is the mother of error; and as well may we expect a voice from fishes, as virtue from the want of knowledge. Why do men avoid religious company to frequent the wanton? Because they have more mind to be wanton than to be religious. "To be carnally-minded is death," Rom. viii. 6. They say of a wild, graceless man, He hath a good wit; but it is indeed a naughty wit, that ends in death. Of the covetous worldling, He is a wise fellow; God says, he is a very fool, Luke xii. 20. Come, let us deal wisely, saith Pharaoh; but indeed he played the fool. Gehazi thought himself wiser than his master; Naaman shall not carry away all his money: this wisdom got him the leprosy. Peter would be

counted a wise fellow, Master, favour thyself; but Christ puts upon him a worse name than a fool, even Satan, Matt. xvi. 23. Ahithophel lived a deep politician; but he died a natural, an unnatural fool. There is wisdom in the worldling, but it is as life in one that hath the falling sickness, or sense in a madman, far from the life and sense of sound men.

They "turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them." The second estate is described by the clearness of the direction, and by the foulness of their recidivation. The direction is set forth by three just prerogatives. First, it is a commandment; they have no exemption from it. Secondly, it is holy; they can find no fault with it. Thirdly, it is delivered unto them; they cannot plead ignorance of it.

1. "The commandment." Some have thought all the duty of a Christian to be contained in the decalogue, and that there are but ten commandments. As if the gospel were but a thing upon the by; counsel rather than precept: a remedy proposed to us, not imposed on us. But does not Christ call love, a new commandment? You will say, This, and divers other, had their institution in nature, their reordination in the law; only they were lost in the corruption of manners. So that now, *non nova, sed notula*; i. e. not new, but made new; they are new, not in themselves, but to us. Nor was Christ's, "But I say unto you," Matt. v., a contradiction of the law, but a clear explanation. He did not cavil at, but vindicate the law: nor did he lay it aside, as a garment no more to be worn; he set it forth, as a light, that was clouded by their false glosses. This is true; but is there no more in the New Testament but that which expoundeth the Old? Why is it called a new law? Can there be a law without commandments? Most plainly; "This is God's commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ," 1 John iii. 23. Indeed this does not bind those pagans that know not Christ: for this commandment is not delivered unto them; but every soul within the pale of the church. The Spirit of God shall convince the world of sin, because they believe not on Christ, John xvi. 9. Now there can be no sin, in not doing that which is not commanded to be done. Vengeance shall be taken on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of Christ, 2 Thess. i. 8. The gospel therefore is a law, which they shall perish that obey not.

Indeed it is *jugum facile*, and *onus leve*, an easy yoke, a light burden: "His commandments are not grievous," saith the apostle, 1 John v. 3. I know, that of ourselves it is as possible to keep the whole law, as to believe. But the gospel does not only command what it pleases, but gives what it commands. A king, when he commands a castle to be built, may allow the materials; but he cannot give arms, or veins, or brains; neither strength, nor will, nor skill. But God, together with his precept, gives the power of performance. Believe the grace of the gospel, the gospel shall give thee grace to believe. Now the obedience to this commandment is faith, as the obedience to the former was love. This is the fulfilling of the law; that other, the fulfilling of the gospel: "Thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace," Luke vii. 50. But, "They have not obeyed the gospel: for, Lord, who hath believed our report?" Rom. x. 16. The obedience to the gospel, is called the believing our report. There are two things required to faith; first, the determination of that which is to be believed; secondly, the inclination and persuasion of the heart to believe it. (Aquin.) Preaching determines this commandment; but it is God that persuades by preaching. God can do this without

preaching, but preaching cannot do it without God. Our voice can say, Repent; but repentance is the gift of Heaven. Paul preaches to Lydia's ear, but God only hath the key of her heart. Rebekah cooked the venison, but Isaac gave the blessing. Paul may plant, and Apollos may water; but without Christ nothing shall prosper. Faith cannot well be without preaching going before it; but preaching may be without faith following after it. But if the hearer do not obey this commandment, yet the preacher shall not lose his fee. The advocate is rewarded, however the cause goes. Though we preach and you repent not, yet we shall never repent of our pains; if we may not be a sweet saviour to you, yet we are a sweet saviour to God in you. And well may we be content to lose our labour, when God loseth the seed, whose the ground is. Give we then our hearts to Christ, like the two tables, to write his whole law upon them. Upon the first tablet let him write faith; upon the second, love: so shall we have both the law in the heart, and the heart in the law, and give obedience to the commandment of God, which is

"Holy." The Father is holy: "Ye shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy," Lev. xix. 2. The Son is holy: "Ye denied the Holy One," Acts iii. 14. The blessed Spirit is holy; therefore called the Holy Ghost. Thus we treble the word in our praises of God: "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of sabaoth." Yea, God is holiness itself; therefore from him can come no commandment but that which is most holy. Holy, for the Author, the holy God: holy, for the matter, a holy truth: holy, for the effect, it makes us holy creatures: holy, for the end; it unites us to the Most Holy, both in present grace and future glory. A good air may make a man healthy, meat and digestion may make him strong and lusty, great achievements may make him famous and worthy, the prince may make him noble and mighty, industry and thrift may make him rich and wealthy, company may make him pleasant and merry; nothing in the world, but the grace of the gospel, can make him holy, and nothing but that holiness can make him truly happy.

The law is indeed "holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good," Rom. vii. 12; but the holiness of it did not comfort us, because it could not make us holy; not through its own debility, but through our own incapacity. The law speaks in stones: it is impossible to make bread of stones. It came in lightning and thunder: thunder and lightning are no medicines to cure a broken heart. The gospel is not only holy, but comforts us in the remedy of our unholiness. To this purpose was it given us before the law; for before Israel received the law from Mount Sinai, they had both manna and the water from the rock; which Paul plainly says, was Christ in the gospel. The sacraments of grace were before the legal covenant; so did the goodness of God go before our obedience: therefore should we keep the law, because we have a Saviour. Oh the mercy of our God, which before we see what we are bound to do, shows us our remedy, if we do it not! We all fail in our duty; Christ supplies all, and makes us holy.

This is this doctrine holy, not only subjectively, in itself; but effectively, to us: as when we call meats wholesome, we mean not so much in themselves, as of the actions they transmit to us. So they be not only sound commandments, but in reference to us, salutary. This is that which turns all those legal terrors into comfortable effects: for God is gracious and holy, both in the oil of his promises, and wine of his menaces; and through both, he makes us holy. Therefore Paul calls it "sound doctrine," 1 Tim. i. 10; making us

of a sound constitution, if we follow that diet. For the word of God is a diet, to keep us in health; if we sin, and be sick, we must confess that we have not kept the diet. This attribute, holy, doth illustrate in the gospel two excellencies.

1. The perfection of it: for if the law were perfect, Psal. xix. 7, that doth condemn us, how perfect is the gospel, which doth save us! "As many as walk after this rule, peace be on them, and mercy," Gal. vi. 16. The professor of any art, or quality, must have a certain rule, or principle, whereby to order it; and that must be a true rule, or else he is subject to error and obliquity. Here is a rule, and a perfect rule; a commandment, therefore a rule; a holy commandment, therefore a perfect rule. A commandment, that we might not walk without a rule; a holy one, that we might not walk by a false rule. He that hath no rule, goes whither he knows not; he that hath a false rule, goes whither he should not. To preclude the pretence of ignorance, here is a rule, a commandment. To prevent the danger of error, here is a perfect rule, a holy commandment. Bellarmine says, there be two things requireable in a perfect rule; certainty, and evidence: if it be not certain, it is no rule; if not evident, no rule to us. Traditions betray their own credit in both these regards; but this holy commandment is no less conspicuous than infallible. This was Christ's sword against all the powers of darkness, "It is written." Fabulous legends are a wooden dagger, and traditions a rusty scabbard; but this is, in truth and manifestation, a perfect rule. A holy commandment, the true canon: other writings may have canonical verity, this only hath canonical authority.

This is the judge of all differences and doubts. As an earthly father, fearing that his children will fall out after his decease, and wrangle for legacies, or about the division of his goods; sets down his will in writing, under his hand, not without witnesses. If there arise any debate among the brethren, presently they have recourse to the will, and that ends the controversy. If there fall out any dissension about our Father's inheritance, whether should we run, but to our Father's will? (August. in Psal. xxii.) "To the law, to the testimony," Isa. viii. 20. But as we have some evil expounders of the law, that interpret the will against the Testator's meaning; and so make it their own will, rather than his: not that there be knots in good men's testaments; no, the knots be in the lawyers' imaginations. So by those popish spirits of contradiction, the will of Christ, this holy commandment, that should decide all questions, must come itself to be questioned. Blasphemous presumption! where God himself must be brought to the bar, the pope sitting as judge, with a parliament of Tridentine fathers, and a jury of Jesuits, to pass upon the Lord Jesus. How can he not take this dealing worse than that he had under Pontius Pilate?

2. The honour of it: holiness is right nobility, without goodness there can be no true glory. Therefore is it called a "glorious gospel," 1 Tim. i. 11. "If the ministration of condemnation were glorious, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory," 2 Cor. iii. 9. The law was a glorious fear, the gospel is a glorious joy. Old Simon calls it "the glory of Israel," Luke ii. 32. First, glorious for the testimony; glorious angels brought the news, and their song to it was "Glory to God in the highest." Secondly, glorious for the matter propounded, which is our reconciliation to God. Honour forsakes the man whom the king disfavours; we were in disgrace with God by our sinful nature; the gospel restores us to honour, clothes

us, like Mordecai, with royal robes, our Saviour's righteousness; gives us princes for our attendants, the blessed angels; and proclaims before heaven and earth, Thus shall it be done to the men whom the Almighty King will honour, Esth. vi. 11: and such honour have all his saints, Psal. cxlix. 9. Thirdly, glorious for the object, which is Christ, God and man; that sits in the glory of his Father, even "the brightness of his glory," Heb. i. 3; and shall come in his glory to judge the world. Fourthly, glorious for the power; it vanquisheth all enemies, subdues the flesh, overcomes the world, foils and confounds the devil, even while it seems to be conquered it gets the victory. When the martyrs of it lie bleeding at the feet of persecution, who would not think the honour of it eclipsed? No, even then it is glorious; every drop of blood that comes from a Christian breeding a new Christian; that which intended to kill us with infamy, crowns us with glory. Fifthly, glorious for the end; through glorious grace it brings to gracious glory; for the seed of grace is the root of glory, as seed is of corn. I commend you to the word of his grace, that builds you up to eternal glory, Acts xx. 32.

It is holy, honourable, glorious; what confusion then belongs to that face which despiseth it! He that caused the gospel to be brought with the blood of his servants, will require the blood of the contemners of it. It hath made many forsake their families, their goods, and dearest lives; and can it not make us leave our bad and base courses? You will say, It is full of scorn and pain. But it is no gospel of pain and scorn, except only by accident: it is the gospel of glory. It teacheth us patience; and it is the nobility of virtue to suffer; a man's patience is his honour: there is glory enough even in that to swallow up the world's shame.

Let us maintain this glory, not only with our lips, but in our lives. Then do we glorify it, then shall it glorify us, when it subdues our rebellious and vile affections. Let us beware of a relapse, for this crosseth Christ's resurrection: let us not stoop down to the world, for this crosseth Christ's ascension. Then do we honour it, when we honour them that bring it. How beautiful be the feet of such men! Rom. x. 15. Then do we honour them, when we give them due maintenance; when they that preach the gospel live of the gospel, 1 Cor. ix. 14. They that will not allow us to live of the gospel for the welfare of our bodies, shall never live by the gospel for the comfort of their souls. It should be the shame of Christians to rob their teachers. But when a Spaniard was so pitiless to his slave, as to let him go extremely bare and naked in the dead of winter, and was reprehended by his kinsman for his hard heart; adding (besides his want of mercy) that it was a shame for him; answered, Let him make what shift he can with the cold; and as for me, I shall shift well enough with the shame. So let us take care how otherwise we may live; and for the shame of defrauding us, they will abide that. But they that dishonour the gospel, shall have no honour of Him whose it is.

"Delivered unto them." What, was it only by tradition? for this *traditum illis* is a golden word with the church of Rome, the very sound of it makes them crow. But God did not leave his church without a stronger testimony than that which passeth from mouth to mouth: though it be also true, that we have heard from our fathers, and have handed down to our children. But, "I have written to him the great things of my law," Hos. viii. 12: this was God's course. Shall we interpret this of an invisible manuscript? "I will write my law in their hearts," Jer. xxxi. 33. Indeed this is a blessed writing; and be

all our hearts like Ezekiel's roll, thus written upon within and without, Ezek. ii. 10. But the Lord did not so trust his sacred truth only, that no visible characters of it should be upon record, to convert or convince the world. The same Spirit which persuaded Jeremiah to receive what God had commanded, moved also Baruch to write what Jeremiah had dictated. Therefore both for suggestion of the matter, and direction of the manner, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God," 2 Tim. iii. 16. The word of God is called the Scripture, 1 Cor. x. 11; Rom. xv. 4; John xx. 31: that great Testator left his will in writing; and left it with his wife, the church, to teach her children; as to the Jews were committed the oracles of God.

God thought letters the chiefest means, both for preservation and propagation of religion. Experience teacheth us that the words of the best preachers are but fleeting sounds; moving for the present, but soon removing away, unless they be taken alive, as it were while they are upon the wing, in the snare of this profitable invention. So is the loss of the ear restored to the eye, and truth secured in the memory. Elian writes of the Egyptian frogs, that taking a kind of reed in their mouths, they save themselves from being devoured by the water-serpents. The weakest conceits taking hold of writing, cannot be consumed by the revolution of years, whose hieroglyphic was a serpent; a fit emblem. Thus the tyranny of time, which, like Saturn, would devour his own children, is beguiled. *Non ferrum poterit, nec edax abolere vetustas*, i. e. Nor sword, nor all devouring time consumes. "This shall be written for the generation to come: and the people which shall be created shall praise the Lord," Psal. cii. 18. It is but a trick that Rome puts upon the church, the needless overplus of their unwritten supplies; by which deceit, themselves that are the parties conveyed into the room of judges. But these written evidences (we are sure) be God's own deeds and specialities; and they are cursed and abominable, that shall offer to piece his word, to mend his workmanship, to mingle and sophisticate his precious gold of the temple with the base dross and unsanctified refuse of their own inventions, Rev. xxii. 18. Yet this hath been the silly shift of Roman brokery, to discredit the Scriptures, for the better vent of their own traditions. Yea, when they were opposed in the setting up of their unwritten fancies, they fell in the end to open railing at the Scriptures; calling it a mute, a brute, a dumb or dead letter, a black gospel, or a piece of inky divinity. So did the luxuriant wits of Rome end in barrenness and beggary; when they had spent all their colours, and could find no more evils, turning the edge of their malice from our cause against God's ordinance; and at their lowest ebb, in the ruins of their strength, they bid battle to the Lord of hosts, their strongest and mightiest adversary. God delivered his holy commandment to the people; they sacrilegiously take that away, and deliver their own. Thus they deal with them, as the soldiers did with Christ; first blind them, then strike them, and last ask them, Who is it that smote thee? Do but open their eyes, and show them this holy word, and they will soon perceive who hath so long abused them.

Well, it has been delivered; there is no denial of this. Our eyes see it written and published, our ears hear it preached; oh that we could prove it practised! Many make it the argument of their discourse, as if they would be critics in divinity; but you see not a syllable of it in their lives. Plutarch laughed at those that would be counted wise as Plato, yet would be drunk with Alexander. The church doth bring

up divers, and nurse them with indulgence, which prove like water-fowls hatched under a hen; they remain with their dam for a while, but according to their kind, they run to the water. They learn this holy commandment of the church; but they leave both church, and commandment, and all, for the world. A hare, when she is hotly pursued and down-hunted, plies her to some beaten path; not for any love she hath to it, but that there, by the feet of the passengers, she may lose her scent, and deceive the dogs. Many will be in the church way, the road of profession; not for any love they bear to devotion, but that their turpitudes might not be discerned. As this law is given to us, so we must be given to it, that we may be saved.

They "turn from the holy commandment." This is the foulness of their backsliding; justly aggravated from the three excellencies of their charge. First, they are commanded, and that by the Highest, no less than their Maker. Secondly, that command is holy; to be honoured, for the matter. Thirdly, it is not wrapped up in obscurity, but published to them in such a manner; yea, they receive it, and covenant with God to keep it, in their baptism. Yet they turn: first, from a commandment; which manifests their disobedience; secondly, from a holy commandment; which argues their profaneness; thirdly, from this delivered, and accepted; which shows their revolting and rebelling wickedness.

1. They turn from the commandment. As philosophers say, what is moist cannot be bounded by its own term or substance, because it is by nature fluid; but it is properly bounded by another, because it hath a matter in which to subsist. Our nature is moist, airy, waterish, apt to flow into the aspectable things of this world; if it be terminated only by our own wills, and have no other banks or boundaries, it will run out into infinite lusts. Therefore it must be hedged in by a more constant and perfect will, as the sea is shored in with limits: and this is the commandment of God: to transgress that term and fence, is disobedience. Corrupt nature and carnal reason will plead for more scope, as if the commandment were not broad enough. (Contradicting that of the Psalm, "I have seen an end of all perfection: but thy commandment is exceeding broad," Psal. cxix. 96.) But it does not make the tether so long, as to fetch in all their own commons into God's several, his laws into so large a compass as their desires. Therefore first they will not obey, and then study evasions why they should not; as Saul first took the booty, and then thought on an excuse. The gate is too narrow: What, not think a loose thought? not speak a false word for an advantage? Who can keep himself within so strict confines? But if a man were imprisoned for some foul fact, condemned, and sure to die the next morrow; and his friends in the mean time tell him a means of escape, There is a window or grate in the jail, through which he may creep; would he not strip off his clothes, yea, be content to rase his skin, Job ii. 4, to save his life? We are by nature Satan's slaves, shut up in his prison, the bondage of sin: there is but one way to escape into the glorious liberty of God's children; this is a narrow gate, a narrow grate, our new obedience. Shall we not put off our lusts, our riches, our pleasures, our dear wills and desires, to save our souls?

2. They turn from the holy commandment: this is their profaneness. *Fanum a fundo*: the temple was so called, because it was the speaking place, where God did speak to man, and man to God. They that contain holy things, have no part in the holy place. The church cannot hallow them, that dishallow the church. *Procul hinc, procul este profani*, Hence, ye

profane, far hence. I know there be some that put on holiness as a loose garment, to cover their pollutions; and seem to pray devoutly in those temples, which they have spoiled by their sacrilege; and these do more hurt than they that profess no holiness at all. It was said, There were many oppressors in Rome, but they were all drunk, except Caesar, and he was a sober one. Licentious libertines, the idolaters of Bacchus and votaries of Venus, are all profaners of the holy gospel; but they be drunken ones. But demure hypocrites, black saints, that worship God in their pews and mammon in their closets, these be the secret underminers of the gospel, though they be sober ones. For howsoever they call for sermons with their voices, they destroy the livelihood of preachers by their deeds; and root up the holy ground, while they call for holy fruits.

Let them talk what they will, they love the lawyer better than the preacher; for they give their money to the lawyer, that he may defend them from paying their dues to the preacher. No charity to the poor, no equity to the church, no love of neighbourhood is in them. For the first table: they will be no idolaters, no swearers, no sabbath-contemners, no friends of papists; and all this is well; you would think these men very holy. But come to the second table: try them with obedience to magistrates, with all those holy duties to their brethren; here they betray themselves. Sure if they had been in Moses' time, they would never have gruded at the miscarriage of the second table; but were well content it should be broke then, for they have broke it ever since. Thus, as if they could part the commandment and holy, they would fain be holy without the commandment. But all their holy shows of observing the former table, when they perpetually violate the second, in their pride, and malice, and covetousness, are but flowers in the window, to hide the dust and stutish cobwebs. As if he that forbade us to swear, did not also forbid us to lie; as if he that commanded us to sacrifice, did not also charge us to prefer mercy. Go, thou fool, that thinkest holiness to consist in hearing sermons, and not in a conscionable obedience of the text. At sermons, some have large memories, and can gather many observations; which they keep a while, to rehearse, not to practise. Another hath a weaker capacity, but he gets the root and substance of the text, plants it in his heart, feeds on the fruits of comfort; and his soul is nourished to eternal life.

3. This is a commandment delivered unto them; which they have received, yea, covenanted and sworn to keep; yet as if they had only taken it upon liking, they turn from it: this is their apostacy. It was not delivered with such terror as the law, but with sweet mildness. Then, the very hill where God appeared, might not be touched of the purest Israelite; here, the very hem of his garment was touched by the woman that had the flux of blood; yea, his very face was touched with the lips of Judas. There, the very earth was prohibited them where he descended; here, his very body and blood is proffered to our touch and taste. So gracious was God in this delivery of the gospel: how unthankful are we, if we do not acknowledge this mercy to us, above his ancient people! They were his own, yet must stand off, like strangers; we were strangers, and he hath made us his own. It is our sin and shame, if in these means of enticement, we be no better acquainted with God, than they which in their greatest familiarity were commanded aloof. Yet we have counted this favour "a strange thing," Hos. viii. 12: not only through simple ignorance, but want of reverence and respectfulness. A man may be strange, either when he is

not perceived, or not received. Not understood: that God calls a strange nation, whose language they know not. Not accepted: "They that dwell in mine house, count me for a stranger," Job xix. 15. This holy commandment may be said strange, when it is unknown; and so the hearers are fools privative: or when it is neglected, and not cared for: and so they proceed higher, and are fools positive. They turn from it: first, because there is a negative indisposition in them to receive it; through ignorance, wanting faith; or through unbelief, wanting knowledge; as the Septuagint render that, Isa. xi., If you will not believe, you shall not understand; which is a sound position, though I dare not call it a sound translation. Secondly, because there is a positive disposition of resistance against it, in their own wisdom; for the wisdom of the flesh is enmity against God. The more a man adheres to the judgment of sense, reason, and experience, the further off he is (without special grace) from the kingdom of heaven. Nicodemus was a great doctor in Israel, yet he wonders at regeneration: the doctrine of the gospel begets in such men a question, How can these things be? "What will this babbling say?" Acts xvii. 18. Yet these were not the vulgar, but philosophers; of no vile city, but of Athens; the Greece of that Greece, which counted all the world, but themselves, barbarians.

Hence ariseth that contempt, both of the gospel, and of them that bring it. "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace!" Rom. x. 15. The feet: not because they wore slippers embroidered with gold and pearl; as that scripture is abused, to the consecrating and kissing of the pope's toe; but because the feet are the instruments of going: as we familiarly say of poor men, They get their living by their fingers' ends, because they are the instruments of working. This commandment is holy: holiness and beauty go together; as the psalmist speaks, The beauty of holiness, Psal. xxix. 2, which makes the holiness of beauty. Like youth, which we call the pride and flower of life; wherein is that mixture of white and red, which is called beauty. Like the spring, when the fields begin to be adorned with buds, blossoms, grass, and flowers, in which all creatures rejoice. The gospel turns the squalid winter of barren sins, into the flourishing spring of heavenly graces. Yea, and like autumn too, for the ripeness of fruits: unripe fruit is dangerous; ripe, is both well-coloured and well-tasted, wholesome. The beauty of the saints doth not decay, but increase, with their years. We may more truly say of souls, than Euripides could of bodies, that retained beauty in their age; Not only the spring is pleasant, but even the autumn. Yea, this tree yields fruit every month, Rev. xxii. 2; ever seasonable. Many of our daintiest meats are not, but the gospel is, always in season: in the winter of trouble, in the summer of ease, in the spring of youth, and fall of age; never out of season. The glory of it perhaps is not illustrious to carnal eyes: alas, That is less conspicuous which is more noble; the most excellent things are the most secret things, says a writer. We see the leaves, the flowers, and fruits of a tree; but the precious sap is hidden. In man, the body only is visible, not the soul; we see the accidents of things, not the form and substance. Men may love others, for sensible respects; God loves his children, for their secret and invisible graces. "The King's daughter is all glorious within," Psal. xlv. 13. The glory of this evangelical law is only seen of spiritual eyes; and of them, with desire and ravishment. These love it, and all the servants God employs in it. Some love their ministers, because they keep

good hospitality, which is commendable: some, because they gain by them in their altargates, which is carnal: some for loose respects, which is sensual: some, because they seldom preach, which is abominable: some, because they would be held religious, which is hypocritical: but to love them for their work's sake, this is conscionable; and those men shall find peace to their hearts, and salvation to their souls, which is comfortable.

The sum of the verse.

The text riseth in full strength against apostatical backsliding: which is twofold; of faith, of manners. The last is dangerous, the former is deadly: together with truth, it loseth shame: and not seldom swells up to the sin against the Holy Ghost; for which, because there can be no remorse on earth, there is no forgiveness in heaven. Oh how happy were it for such stragglers, to be driven home to the fold, though with shame, though by death! For these doth our common mother mourn, both pitying their loss, and disdaining thus to be robbed of her children; not that she needs them, but they her. Troops of souls in their stead daily creep into her bosom, and humbly embrace her knees on their own. She hath had sons, which seeking idolatrous Rome as resolved papists, left the world as holy martyrs; dying for the detestation of that they came to adore. How many willfully lose their souls, where these went to lose and found them! Their zeal dies where the others' began to live; and they like to live where the other would but die.

But alas, what shall we say to the apostacy in manners, that epidemical relapse of the world to the world? It is not in man, as in the city: when the curfew-bell hath rung, we cover our fire, rake up our embers, and then lie down and sleep without fear. He that hath repented and escaped from a sin, hath not yet eradicated and escaped from the root of that sin; the seed of the same transgression is still within him. No sanctification is so perfect on earth, as to expel all corruption. If after many sighs and tears we have attained to do well, and resolve better; yet this good estate is far from constant, and easily inclining to change. God is the God of security, and the enemy of security too; he would have us always be sure of his love, and yet always be doing something that we may be sure of it: so to apprehend him, as ever present with us; yet still to follow him, as fearing lest he should go from us. He enlarged Hezekiah's lease for fifteen years, he renewed Lazarus' lease for a time we know not; but he never so put out the fire, that he left no embers, no sparks. He wrapped up a future mortality in that body, which he had so reprieved. So for the soul; he doth not so pardon sin, that the sinner can sin no more; he makes no man so acceptable, that he makes him impeccable. As therefore, on the one side, we do not look on those sins with a despairing eye, which we have heartily repented, and transferred upon our Saviour; as though they were not sufficiently dead in him, but must be again raised to life, to condemn us to death: for this were to diminish the largeness of his bounty, and to derogate from the fulness of his mercy. So, on the other side, to think that God's present mercy extends to all our future sins, and that he had already forgiven whatsoever we durst venture to do amiss hereafter, were an unwarrantable anticipation, an insolent presumption. God's favour must not be made an antidote against all wilfully received poisons, nor a licence to expose ourselves to temptations. That mercy which hath holpen us from the falls of our infirmities, may be to seek when we have cast ourselves into new offences through too rash confidence of it.

If our soul were as sensible of sin, as our body is of pain, we would be fearful of a relapse. Suppose a man hath been sick of some dangerous disease, whilst on many weary days, and not more easy nights, in languishing fits, been the exercise of physicians; yet after all is recovered and well. But now when the same disease comes again, how terrible! To think of panting through all those fiery heats, and sailing through all those overflowing sweats, of watching all those long nights, and mourning all those long days; for sick men think that perverted nature hath put the longest day and longest night together, which should be six months asunder; every day of their patience appearing to them a St. Barnabe's day, and every night a St. Lucie's night; to think of standing at the same bar, expecting the return of physicians from their consultations, and not be sure of the same verdict in any good indications; that he must go the same way over again, and not be certain of the same issue: this is so woeful a condition, that the former sickness seemed a kind of convalescence to it. We have heretofore run into a foul sin, did it cost us no labour to work ourselves out? How many weeping prayers, and groaning tears, and trembling fears, and bleeding sorrows, have we gone through, before we could get assurance of God's reconciliation to us! It may be, we have been driven to roar out of the depths, yea, even to despair in the depths, before we could obtain the testimony of forgiveness. God's favour is no trivial thing, to be regained as easily as it is lost. Mary lost Christ suddenly; it cost her many a weary step, and pearly drop from her eyes, in those three days, ere she found him.

The privilege of not sinning, is too high a favour for this militant estate: it could not be militant if it had no enemies; it had no enemies if it were free from sins. There is a transmigration of sin; and when the soul of it is dead in one sin, it passeth to another. Our youth dies, and the sins of our youth with it: some sins die a violent death, and some a natural. Penny and misery kill some sins in us, and some die of age. The change of our condition makes us unable to do some sins; as the beggar can be no usurer, the slave no tyrant. Yet the soul of sin lives, and passeth into another; and that which was wantonness becomes ambition, and that which was riot becomes covetousness. We have three lives in our state of sin; where the sins of youth expire, those of middle years enter, and those of age after them. So still God finds in us, and his finding shows us, that there is left the matter of sin in us, which inclines us to a relapse. Yea, which of us hath not multiplied relapses already? Which case is fitly and fearfully expressed, in a storm at sea; "They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths," Psal. cxvii. 26. Repentance lifts us up to heaven, and relapse bring us down again to hell. "Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee," John v. 14. Not only death, which is an end worse than that long sickness, that was the beginning; but hell, which is a beginning worse than that end.

The dearest children of God have fallen foully, miserably, but never finally. How dreadful was the miscarriage of the man after God's own heart, in the business of Uriah! With what a trembling soul must we look upon it! Who can promise himself to stand, when he sees David fallen, and in the fall remained? Who can assure himself of an immunity from the foulest sins, that sees him offending so heinously? Who ever noted so foul a blot in his rejected predecessor? He sins in lust, drunkenness, dissimulation, homicide; and yet was recovered. Saul did but go about to colour his sin, and was cursed. The

vessels of mercy and wrath are not distinguishable by their actions; he makes the difference, that will have "mercy on whom he will, and whom he will he hardeneth," Rom. ix. 18. But the just and holy God will not so put it up at David's hands; he that hates sin so much the more, as the offender is dearer to him, will let him feel the bruise of his fall. If God's best children have been sometimes suffered to sleep in a sin, at last he hath awakened them in a fright. Since the first man Adam, the world never yielded so great an example of wisdom, or so fearful an example of apostasy, as Solomon. The knowledge, which Adam had by creation, Solomon had by infusion; both fully, both from one fountain. Adam called all creatures by their names; and Solomon spake, from the cedars of Lebanon, to the moss that springs on the wall. Besides vegetables, there was no fish, fowl, beast, that escaped his discourse. Yet both fell, and fell by one means; and Solomon might say, as well as Adam, The woman deceived me. It is true indeed, that Adam fell as all; Solomon, as one; yet so, that this one is a pattern of the frailty of all. If knowledge had been a privilege from sin, both had stood: yet both fell; this last frequently, neither finally.

I might abound in this exemplification: all have their backslidings. The wicked fall like elephants, yea, like rotten houses, without rising again. The just fall seven times a day, but then they rise as often. Prov. xxiv. 16: their sins teach them repentance; that repentance, carefulness; as Peter was better after his denial than he was before. The righteous fall on their faces, they see where they fall; the wicked fall on their backs, as the apprehenders of Christ did; they see not where nor when they fall. The children of God have sinned, as it were, to teach us repentance: their falls are recorded, not to disgrace them, but to admonish us; not for our imitation, but instruction: they repented what they did ill, and shall we do what they repented? They were taken as sinners, and delivered as penitents; their soul escaped as a bird out of the snare, Psal. cxxiv. 7. It is good for us, that they were both taken, and delivered; taken, that we might not presume; and that we might not despair, delivered. They sinned, that we might not sin; they were restored, that we might not sink under the burden of our sin. Let me shut up this point with two useful applications.

1. As we must be jealous of all sins, so exceeding fearful of a relapse into our former sins. We are like little children that overthrow themselves with their clothes; now up, and down again at a straw. "Be not high-minded, but fear," Rom. xi. 20. The vine, olive, fig-tree, will not leave their cheerfulness, fitness, sweetness, to get a kingdom: the bramble did; if we be brambles, what shall we do when the fire comes? Though the children of election cannot be condemned, yet they may be injured, dangerously wounded by their sins, lose the sense of former peace in their souls, be brought to the pit's brink of horrible desperation, and think that the very torments of hell are not more grievous than those they feel in their own consciences. If one act of filthiness hath thus distressed us, that we would give all the world for a pardon; if it hath made us groan, and bleed, and roar for the very disquietness of our hearts; what torments will the same sin bring, when it is again repeated! There is a propriety, a *meum* and *tuum*, both in pains and pleasures; and as we are most affected with that pleasure, the sweetness whereof we have tasted in former experience; so we are most intimidated with those pains, whereof we have had a bitter sense. A covetous person, that hath

preoccupied all his senses, filled all his capacities with the delight of riches, wonders how any man can have any taste of any pleasure in openness or liberality. The drunkard fears to tell the place where he hath found the best wine: for he thinks all the world must needs come to the same place. So in sickness, he that is tormented with the stone, wonders why any man should call the gout a pain. And he that hath felt neither, but only the tooth-ache, is as much afraid of that, as either the other of theirs. When we have felt torments in their exaltation, we tremble at a relapse.

Certainly, our former transgressions did not put us to the true pain of repentance, if we do not quake to repeat them in our practice. Had we apprehended the wrath of God for those sins, and complained (with David) of our broken bones, of our broken hearts, we would shudder at our new provocations. Why is a relapse so odious to God? Because he that hath sinned and repented, hath (as it were) weighed God and Satan in a balance: he hath heard them both plead; and when he hath heard them, gives judgment on that side to which he adheres, by his subsequent practice. If he return to his former disobedience, he decrees for Satan, prefers sin before grace; and in contempt of God, declares the precedence for his adversary. Now look how far a contempt wounds deeper than an injury, so far a relapse is more heinous than the first iniquity. And that which is more odious to God, must needs be more dangerous and pernicious to us. For there is no other measure of the greatness of our danger, but the greatness of his displeasure. We delight to wear flowers while they are fresh and sweet; but when they fade and wither, we throw them away. If ever Adam had been again received into Paradise, how abstinently would he have walked by the forbidden tree. Scarce should his eye have looked toward it, but sure his hand would never have touched it. If the lost angels had been readmitted to their heaven, how would they have fixed themselves upon God, and preserved the integrity and honour of their creation! If Gehazi could have (like Naaman) washed off his leprosy in Jordan, he would never have run after that rich Syrian for gold, yea, he would have refused it, though brought home to his door. Oh that we could be so wise, never to hazard those favours, which after our first forfeiture we have recovered!

2. Let us not despair of God's mercies, though we have relapsed into our former disobedience. We have been wounded, and that wound is almost healed, so that nothing appears but the scar: again we expose that tender place to the enemy's weapon, and receive there a new hurt: though the danger be grievous the remedy is more gracious, there is virtue enough in Christ to heal us. That great servant of his denied him again and again, but all before repentance: here was no relapse. If there had been, He that with a look recovered the former, could with a touch have healed the latter. God's justice hath taken some at their first fall: the reprobate angels sinned, they never relapsed. He hath not made our case so desperate: "As the Lord's majesty is, so is his mercy," Eccles. ii. 18: both infinite. He hath pardoned many relapses in his servants; and his arm is not shortened. If death were ill in itself, God would never have raised up any dead man to life again, because that man must necessarily die again. If his mercy in forgiving forepast sin, did so far aggravate a relapse into the same sin, that there were no more mercy after it, our case were the worse for that former mercy. For we are all under a necessity of sinning while we live here: provided that we

place this necessity in our own infirmity, and not in his decree. Not that we should hence take encouragement to relapse out of presumption; but when we have relapsed through weakness, to preclude all access of desperation.

That God of patience and compassion, who hath commanded us to pardon our offending brother seventy times seven times, hath limited himself to no number. It is true indeed, God is jealous of his honour, and there is nothing that comes nearer to the violating of that honour, nearer to the nature of a scorn to him, than to sue out his pardon, and make it a licence to sin; to obtain the seal of his reconciliation and forgiveness, and then to turn upon that sin for which we needed that forgiveness. This comes too near a contempt, when we shall make his holy ordinances, his word, his sacraments, the seals and instruments of his grace, to become the instruments of our licentiousness. Yet there may come a victorious repentance, to scour the coast of all these rebels; a potent grace, to strengthen all these weaknesses; and the stock of God's mercy cannot be made poor by the payment of all these our debts. Wherefore did the Lord Jesus run through such a variety of sufferings, but to answer for the variety of our sins? He did not shed his blood for this sin, and not for that; for the sins of our morning, and not for the sins of our evening. He was not so often buffeted and wounded, but to satisfy for us that have so often trespassed. Six times was his blood shed, that though our sins be iterated six thousand times, we might find sufficient expiation for them all. He is the God of constancy and perseverance, and whom he loveth, to the end he loveth, John xiii. 1: we may lose ourselves, we cannot lose him, because he will not lose us.

"It had been better for them." This is the last point, the balancing of both these conditions, a trial whether of them is the more unblest and dangerous; and it falls upon the knowing part: if a man will be ungracious, it had been better for him to be so in the dark. Ignorance is unhappy enough; indeed Peter lent his buckler to the Jews, therewith in part to defend themselves against the weapons of God's wrath, in the most cruel deed that ever the sun saw attempted, and to keep them from desperation; "I wot that through ignorance ye did it," Acts iii. 17: but wital he calls them to future knowledge. The days are evil, whether we respect their troubles, or that which troubles them, our sins; and not likely in either of them both to mend: The former times of ignorance God winked at, Acts xvii. 30; but now ignorance shall no longer hope for such a connivance. If ignorance had a sufficient tongue to plead her own innocence, why did the blood of Christ cry from the cross, Forgive them, Father, they know not what they do? There is an invincible ignorance, like Seneca's blind Harpastes, an old beldam, so insensible of her own blindness, that she would often entreat her guide to go forth of doors, because the house was dark. And there is a wilful ignorance, that refuseth the light for fear of seeing its own wretchedness. But the cockatrice that lies close in her hole, will sometimes come forth, to warm herself at the sun; and it is more for the prosperity that waits upon the light of the gospel, than for the light itself, that these crafty serpents come out of their dens. There be simple souls that cannot, and subtle spirits that will not, know the truth: the former shall not escape from rods, the other shall be scourged with scorpions.

But their plagues shall far exceed, that know their Master's will, and will not do it. If Tyre and Sidon burn in hell, and the smoke of their torment ascend

for ever, wherein never was miracle wrought, nor oracle taught, to reclaim them; what shall become of Chorazin and Bethsaida, whose streets were honoured with the gracious words and glorious wonders of Jesus Christ! Many shall say in that day, Lord, we have prophesied in thy name, &c. Matt. vii. 22. Many; for this shall be the case of multitudes; yet their knowledge of Christ shall not gain his knowledge or approbation of them; I know you not. Our knowledge shall then be weighed to the smallest grain; and if our holiness, being put into the other balance, be found too light, our sorrows shall make it up. How curious critics would many be in the arts, ignorant of no congruities, no proprieties! But not to know Christ, is no false Latin with them; to wound him through with desperate oaths, is no breach of good manners. But where was Solomon's wisdom, while his affections ran away with him into a wild voluptuousness? What boots it to know all things, while we know not ourselves? The perfections of speculation do not argue the inward powers of self-government; the eye may be clear, and yet the hand palsied. It is not so much to be heeded, how the soul is informed, as how it is disciplined. The light of knowledge doth well, but the good ordering of affections doth better. Never any mere man, since the first, knew so much as Solomon; many that have known less, have had more command of themselves. A competent estate well husbanded, is better than a vast patrimony neglected. "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them," John xiii. 17. Here is the labour and difficulty, here is the comfort and felicity, the conjunction of practice with knowledge. The end of speculation, is operation; we are created not to know, but to do good works, Eph. ii. 10. Who praiseth a horse that feeds well, and is good for nothing else; neither for speed nor length, race nor labour.

Obedience joined with knowledge, shall have double honour, because God is doubly honoured in them. Cornelius, a man fearing God, and giving alms; the centurion, that hath built a synagogue; Dorcas, that made garments for the poor; Gaius, the host of the church: these were rich styles of commendation, and shall have far richer favours of retribution. "Come, ye blessed," Matt. xxv. 4, for you have done me good: for such deeds, God is blessed of men; and in their deeds, such men shall be blessed of God. But where there is plenty of knowledge, and penury of good works, God is blasphemed; as if he had wanted foresight in the bestowing of his gifts. These things if ye know, cursed are ye if ye do them not. God shall reward every man according to his works, Rev. xxii. 12, not according to his knowledge. The discourse of faith and godliness, are but dry things to the practice. Search all over the Scripture, and see if any covenants or grants were made to knowing, and not all to doing. It was the ancient tenor of the law, Do this, and live. The gospel says, Believe, and live; which implies an act to be done; and that act draws on many consequent fruits. Not he that saith, Lord, Lord, but he that doth the will of my Father, shall enter into heaven, Matt. vii. 21. If a man had all the Vatican in his head, and could repeat every syllable of the Bible, without living after it he had better have never heard of it.

They put a stumbling-block before others, both the weak within and the wicked without: they buy by one balance and sell by another; prescribe a good rule and live by a bad: unclean beasts, for all their chewing of the cud, their repeating of sermons; because they divide not the hoof, walk without any difference. As if men had eyes for no other purpose,

but to be raking in gutters and puddles; their knowledge serves them to choose out the most sordid pollutions. Men loathe the good light of such candles, for the smell which the tallow yields; as the poor Indians resolved, what religion soever the Spaniards were of, they would be of the contrary: thinking it not possible, that such cruel deeds could proceed from any true religion. The infidel disputes against the faith, the impious lives against it; both deny it, the one in terms, the other in deeds; both are enemies to the gospel. But of the two, it is worse to kick against the thorns we see, than to stumble in the dark at a block which we see not. It shall go ill with sinful pagans, but worse with wicked Christians. How will they in hell curse their knowledge; and unprofitably wish, that they had been born idiots, and never so much as heard of Christ! For the honour of God, for the peace of conscience, and for the salvation of our own dear souls, let not this glorious light be a means to cast us, like unprofitable servants, into outer darkness, Matt. xxv. 30; and drive us to say with the poet, *Cur aliquid vidi?* Why saw I any thing? or with Job, Why was the light given unto me? Job iii. 20. Thrice blessed souls, wherein the tree of sincere knowledge is rooted, and the worm of security and contempt hath not eaten up the fruit of it. The Lord shall in this life water it with the dew of heaven, and at last plant it in his most glorious paradise of joy.

VERSE 22.

But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.

STILL doth the apostle proceed in a further conviction of apostasy; so odious is it to revolt from that truth, to which men have bound themselves by holy covenant. This is a returning indeed: first, they were all turned from God and their creative goodness in Adam; then, their Maker called them by his grace in Christ, and they turned again to him: now lastly, from this grace they are returned to the state of sin; a returning in the worst sense: God send them yet another turn, that they may return from this wretched condition to repentance. Young plants bend their bodies with the wind, and grow that way which those violent blasts incline them; a northern wind inclines them to the south, a southern wind bends them northward: but when they are become sturdy trees, they grow according to their former position; a new wind may stir their boughs and leaves, it cannot alter their bulks and bodies; unless it be such a one as came to Elijah, that rends up their very roots. So desperate is it to be rooted in sin, and to grow on stubbornly warped to disobedience. Let a mountain be covered with snow all winter long; yet when the sun in the spring doth cast his beams upon it, the snow melts; and of the water distilling from the snow, arise great floods. The ice and snow which a cold heart contracts in the winter of stupefying sin, are dissolved by the bright rays which the Eye of heaven, the Sun of righteousness, reflects upon it, and fall into penitent tears. But the heart that was frozen in the winter, and begins to thaw in the spring; if by a new unseasonable cold it gathers a second hardness, and becomes congealed in summer; like snow or ice in a vault or deep pit, which antiperistichally waxeth cold for the neighbouring heat; here

is no means left for repentance, for the very moisture that should make tears is turned into obduracy. It must be a miraculous and extraordinary heat of grace, that thaws such a heart.

A sheep is untoward enough to drive in the way; but when it is once strayed out of the way, and re-entangled, this requires more pains in the shepherd, to reduce it; yea, so it troubles him, that sometimes in anger he lets it even alone. Sinners may so weary the invincible patience of God, that he will say of them, as he did of Ephraim, "Ephraim is joined to idols; let him alone," Hos. iv. 17. But when they that were sheep, become beasts of a worse nature, and degenerate into dogs and swine, this more incenseth him. When that great Shepherd of Israel comes to look for the sheep he made, and finds them transformed into curs and swine, how can he own them? Not but that he made such creatures; but he never made *them* such creatures. The Spirit of God so detests gross turpitudes, that he sticks not to shadow them out by the most homely comparisons. He does not only call them the worst of men, but beasts; and the worst kind of beasts, swine and dogs; and these in their worst actions, their natural, unnatural filthiness; the dog licking up his own vomit, the sow wallowing in the dung-hill: and that in the worst manner and season of these actions; the one after his sickness, the other after her washing. The dog resumes that with greediness which he disgorged with sickness; the sow is but lately made clean, and presently returns to the mire. Nor is this strange and rare, though it be loathsome; but familiar and customary with them, and noted by a proverb.

The general parts appear to be two; a conclusion, and a comparison. In the conclusion are two particulars: first, the verity of the proverb; A true proverb; secondly, the verification of it in them; It is happened unto them according. In the comparison there be two creatures, two actions, two objects. The creatures are both beasts, their actions or motions are both returnings, their objects are both filthy, vomit and mire.

To begin with the verity of the proverb. The first and second King of Peace taught much by parables and proverbs. Parables are dark speeches, till they be expounded. Proverbs are plain and pithy expressions of evident truths. Solomon wrote three thousand proverbs, 1 Kings iv. 32; the choice rules of his divine arts, ethics, politics, economics; for the government of behaviour, commonwealth, family. No doubt, he had also his physics and metaphysics, and herbals; for of mere man, since Adam, there never was so great an herbalist, who wrote, from the cedars of Lebanon, to the moss on the wall; neither did the vegetables, nor irrational creatures, escape his discourse. Only it pleased the wisdom of God to bereave mankind of his profound commentaries of nature; but to reserve his divine morals, to outlive the world: as knowing, that those would but feed men's curiosity; these would both direct his life and judge it. The Lord hath done this, in expectation of our good, and his own glory; which if we answer, the benefit is ours. He was the royalist philosopher, the wisest king; and hath given us those precepts, which the Spirit of God gave him. From him is this proverb derived, Prov. xxvi. 11; who so well understood the nature of these beasts, that he could draw experimental observations from them, and make them useful to the best reason of man. Good proverbs are commended to us for five special excellencies, wherein they transcend other discourses.

1. For their antiquity. The sayings of our fathers and ancestors have a reverend estimation among us;

nor do we wrap them up in the bundle of our ordinary lessons, but preserve them as dear relics of their happy memories. As mottos in the heraldry of arms descend to their heirs, together with their honours, and brook not alteration. This was the saying of my father, or grandfather: how awful an impression doth it make in the heart of the posterity! *Antiquiora, nobiliora*; i. e. the more ancient, the more noble. An Egyptian priest thus twitted Solon, You Grecians are ever children; you have no knowledge of antiquity, nor antiquity of knowledge. Certainly, there be many precious jewels locked up in the casket of antiquity. It hath been said, that age appeareth best in four things; old wood best to burn, old wine best to drink, old friends best to trust, and old authors best to read; and of those old authors (let me add the piece of a fifth) old proverbs best to be observed. We call them old-said sayings; matters seen by the wisdom of the ancients.

2. For their brevity. They are concise and compendious, and so more portable for the memory. Tedious discourses induce a lassitude on the memorative faculty, and fall like violent showers upon a steep hill, which as suddenly fall off; whereas fine dews abide, and cause fertility. Many a one says, when he hears a pithy apophthegm, or material proverb, I shall remember this as long as I live. Not that I would have discourses of the Lacedemonian cast, who used to speak with laconic brevity; which being in fashion, they might do by authority. But Epaminondas answered them home: when, after a defeat, they made an invective speech against him of some length; he stood up and said no more but this, I am glad we have taught you to speak long. Proverbs are for ornament, not for the whole stuff: pearls grace a garment, but it were a strange garment made of nothing but pearls. "We will make thee borders of gold with studs of silver," Cant. i. 11: studs and borders; the vesture itself is made of another piece. "The words of the wise are as nails," Eccl. xii. 11: nails finish the building; other materials went before. Otherwise we may say of a speech, as Nero did of his master Seneca's style; It is like mortar of sand without lime; or a body made all of bones, without nerves, sinews, ligaments, and a skin; most ugly to behold. But when proverbs are used as ornaments, sums, and corollaries, brief and happy conclusions; they both leave a deeper impression in the heart, and take a stronger hold of the head.

3. For their significancy, comprehending much matter in few words. They are called *micrones verborum*, i. e. pointed speeches: yet not riddles and paradoxes, hard to be understood; but no less familiar than profound; as intelligible as succinct. If they were enigmatical, their shortness could not make amends for their darkness; they would be more troublesome for the capacity, than easy for the memory. But these be plain and brief expressions of our meanings. Otherwise, as arras that is spread abroad, shows us fair images and portraiture; but being contracted and wrapped up together, it is like packs. All countries have proverbs familiar to themselves; whose uses are sometimes confined to their own orbs. Yea, there be some, which we wish determined with their own coats, or rather extermined out of all coats; profane, senseless, superstitious proverbs. Live an honest man, and die a beggar: profane! for to live otherwise, is the way to die an infamous scoundrel. Every man for himself, and God for us all: senseless! it overthrows all charity and common society on earth. Indeed, if we be not one for another, God will be against us all. The nearer the church, the farther from God: atheistical! it would destroy all holy profession. But we cannot

come into a perfumer's shop, and not carry away some of the sweetness. Ignorance is the mother of devotion; a proverb digged out of the dark caverns of hell; intended to stupefy the conscience, by putting out the eye of knowledge. A young saint, an old devil; a devilish proverb! it would rob God of the prime of our youth, under colour lest we should not yield him our rotten age; it forbids us to be good at first, for fear of not being good at last. But the Spirit of wisdom hath other manner of proverbs: "Train up a child in the way he should go," &c. Prov. xxii. 6. "Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth," Eccl. xii. 1. "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?" Psal. cxix. 9. These be the proverbs of grace, the other are the adages of hell.

4. For experience. The sages have tried that doctrine themselves, which they commend to others. "I gave my heart to know wisdom," Eccl. i. 17; upon all Solomon's rules and medicines of the soul, he did set a *Probation* est. Proverbs are the extracts of experience, wrought out by practice: *credimus expertis*, we believe what we have experienced. They paid for their experience, we have them without expense; as if we did feed at another's cost. "One soweth, and another reapeth," John iv. 37. Our progenitors purchased lands with their monies, and left them to us for inheritances; and they purchased rules by dear experience, and left them to us for holy legacies. Solomon receives from David counsel, and at the same time a crown. "Keep the charge of the Lord thy God, that thou mayest prosper," 1 Kings ii. 3. Himself had found the sweetness of a good conscience, and now he commends it to his successor. If Solomon were wise, David was good; and if old Solomon had well remembered the counsel of old David, he had not so foully miscarried. We are miserably unthankful, if we seem to be wise good-cheap. Thou thinkest to gain by lying; but remember the proverb, "A poor man is better than a liar," Prov. xix. 22. Or to grow rich with falsehood; but remember the proverb, "Bread of deceit is sweet to a man; but afterwards his mouth shall be filled with gravel," Prov. xx. 17. Or to insinuate by flattery; but this shall be a curse unto thee, Prov. xxvii. 14. Or to thrive by covetousness; but the proverb says *Nota* it, "It tendeth to poverty," Prov. xi. 24. There is a proverb for the lazy, Prov. xx. 4, and here is a proverb for the filthy, The dog turneth to his vomit again. For the direction of our manners, I would we were better acquainted with these holy proverbs; so vice could not assault us, but we were able proverbially to repel it; as Christ sung an It is written in the face of the tempter.

5. Lastly, for their truth. False proverbs are Satan's logic, which he hopes will be received for their wit, though they savour not of honesty or verity. It is no shame to steal, but to bring it home again: false! for it is better to abide shame in this world, than be condemned to everlasting shame and sorrow in the world to come. Wealth is the best wisdom: false! for God calls the rich man a fool, Luke xii. 20. He that knows not to dissemble, knows not to live: false! a deceitful proverb that teacheth deceit; for God takes none up into his mountain, but such in whose lips is found no guile. Do as the most do, and the fewest will find fault; but God chargeth us not to follow a multitude in evil; and the broad way hath most passengers, yet it leads to hell. Serve the times: wicked counsel! we are made to serve God. It is safe being of the king's religion; impiously false! Jacobam by this made Israel to sin. There can be no safety without faith, there is no faith without a promise, and no promise is made to disobedience.

If thou offend because thou art commanded, thou shalt go to hell because thou hast offended.

There is a number of these false proverbs; but that which is dictated by the Holy Ghost, hath both Divine verity and authority; we need not rack our faith to believe it, nor put ourselves to the cost and pains to try it. When pride comes, shame comes. Idleness shall bring poverty. Envy shall waste the marrow of the bones. Drunkenness shall sting like a serpent. These be true proverbs: let them instruct us, lest they be fulfilled upon us.

To conclude this point. Proverbs are not only ornaments, but especial arguments of a discourse; whereof wisdom is neither so niggardly as that any guest should complain, nor yet so prodigal as to cloy their stomachs. Dainty dishes are wont to be sparingly served out; homely ones supply in their largeness what they want in their worth. Brevity, where it is neither obscure nor defective, is very pleasing even to the quaintest ears. As some affect to have great personages drawn in little tablets; or as we see the countries of the world, worlds of countries, described in the compass of small maps; or liads in a nutshell; so most men desire much good counsel in a narrow room. The powers of good advice being thus united, are the stronger; and brevity makes counsel more portable for memory, and readier for use. Let us observe the proverbs of God, lest God make us a proverb to the world. Job became poor to a proverb, yet he was restored. But the Lord threatens Israel, that for their disobedience and revolting, he would make them a proverb and a by-word to the nations, Deut. xxviii. 37. Happy are we, if proverbs, parables, or any way of doctrine, can bring us to holiness and salvation.

"It is happened unto them." This is the verification of the proverb; there hath been and will be found still some such unclean beasts to justify it. But woe unto them the while! "The Son of man goeth, as it was determined; but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed!" Luke xxii. 22. "Offences will come; but woe to him through whom they come!" Luke xvii. 1. Swine and dogs will return to their old filthiness; but woe unto those men that shall degenerate into such brutish qualities! It becomes them worse than those beasts, and a far worse end shall come unto them than unto beasts. The beasts perish that they may vanish, but these perish to perish. There is not an example of God's fearful judgment upon apostacy and unrepented wickedness in all his holy book, but the like or worse shall betide them: "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish," Luke xiii. 3. There is not a curse on all Mount Ebal, nor a plague threatened in any of those sacred leaves, whereof they may not likewise perish. There is no judgment on earth, no torment in hell, from which they can plead a privilege. If these things be dreadful to hear, how horrible will they be to feel! They begin with mirth, and proceed in jollity, and never think of sorrow; but their end shall be in such desperate sorrow, that they shall never think of comfort, Luke vi. 25. Their weeping shall much exceed their laughing; all their joys are momentary, but there shall be no end of their woes; tears shall not fail continually to gush from their eyes, nor shall they ever be wiped off. If they were to shed but one tear for every year they remain in that bottomless dungeon, yet those tears would swell to a greater number and measure than there be drops of water in the ocean. Though we cannot number the drops of water in the sea, yet God can tell precisely how many they be to a drop. But the tears and sorrows in hell are past all enumeration, for they are infinite. And who would buy a taste of

sensual pleasures with the sense of everlasting torments? Let them wallow in their sins like beasts; but let us mourn for our sins like turtles, and chatter like cranes; not miring our souls after they are washed with tears. And then the streams of Jordan shall be divided before us, and we shall pass with comfort and thanksgiving to our Canaan of blessedness. "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy," Psal. cxxvi. 5.

"The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." First, I am to speak of the two creatures; and of them jointly and separately. Together considered, we have two observations.

1. Sin doth liken men to beasts, to sordid beasts, and that in their basest filthiness. If men do sensual acts, let them not think scorn to be called beasts; for beasts would scorn such sensual deeds if they were turned to men. Beasts cannot sin, for they had no law; and where is no commandment, there can be no transgression. Man hath a law, reason to obey that law, knowledge of grace to guide his reason; yet he often does things whereof the very beasts would be ashamed; and if they had the privilege of Balaam's ass, they would open their mouths to reprove their impotent governors. The ox knows no owner but man, and him he doth acknowledge, Isa. i. 3; had he the like knowledge with us of his Maker, he would worship him better than doth his master. We find the beasts praised for thankfulness and obedience, we read them not charged with wickedness; they groan under our corruptions; ours causally, their own only passively. "Man that is in honour, and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish," Psal. xlix. 20: he is like them in death, not like them after death; for they at once cease to be miserable, and to be at all; which is a far better condition, than to end a short beginning of pleasure and to begin an endless end of sorrow. And if those creatures that survive at the final and universal dissolution of the world, be restored to that primordial state and dignity which they had in the creation, Rom. viii. 21, as some have probably conjectured, then how happy shall it be with them in comparison of reprobates! They have a renewed and beautified earth, whereas the other are jailed up in the dark and stinking dungeon of hell. How must it vex the wicked, to think, that a stone or tree shall be preferred before them! How will they vainly wish to change conditions with those creatures, which in the pride of their life they have contemned and abused! It is high time for us to convert and amend our lives, or we are in worse case than the very dog that lies under our tables.

Dives denied Lazarus crumbs, the dogs licked his sores: when those dogs are extinct and gone, their master is begging a drop of water to ease his torments. Who sees this, and would not refuse to be that rich man; yea, not rather choose (of the twain) to be that rich man's dog? Let us not be like the apostate Jews, that offer up their beasts to God in the way of sacrifice, and themselves to Satan in the way of service. Sure those beasts were in better case than their masters, and had a fairer honour. But now, how odious are those sins, which can thus transform men into beasts! The poets laboured of their fabulous metamorphoses, and monstrous mutations, turning men into brutish substances. We will not so far discredit their judgments, as to think that those misshapen dreams had no further scope; their moral intended to show, how far vice is able to bestialize men. When Circe had turned Ulysses' followers into beasts, and Ulysses had again obtained of her, that they might come back to men if they

would; custom had so far corrupted nature, that they refused to return to that prerogative and excellency of kind by choice, from which they were estranged by necessity. They preferred the simples of the field before the drugs of the apothecary. Yea, they alleged reasons against such a regression: as that now they were not distracted with cares, but content with present supplies; they know their friends from their foes, by nature; they could skill their own diet, their own physic, and neither trouble cook nor trust physician. Therefore they utterly renounced the benefit of Circe's grant, and desired Ulysses that he would not press them with the reaccepting of reason. How many are called by the word of grace from their brutish sensuality, and deny it! What, make them men? No, they thank you as much as if you did, they had rather be beasts still. We would not have our horse turned into a toad, because we think that a worse creature; nor our dog into a serpent; but our bodies be better than our beasts, our souls than our bodies; and yet filthy sin is able to turn them into leprosy, into carcases. Corrupt nature sits upon the soul like a tub placed on a grass-plot; whereby not only the grass or remnants of original goodness wither away, but many an ugly toad, evet, and such venomous vermin continually breed. Inasmuch that the dampish and sour vapours of a new-opened vault are not more offensive to us, than such polluted souls are to God. And his grace only can overturn the tub, make the vermin fly from us, or die in us, that fresh flowers may spring up in the plot.

2. God made us little inferior to angels, and we make ourselves little superior to beasts. Who would have thought that had seen Adam sitting like a universal monarch, and summoning all creatures before him, to receive from him their names, as they did from God their natures; that any son of Adam should become baser than all those creatures? that man, taming and subduing the dog and swine to his use and service, should through his own folly become worse than they? Was this our eagerness to perk above our creative condition? "Ye shall be as gods." Thon liest, Satan, they shall rather be as beasts. The mark wherewith our first parents roved, was equality with God; the bow wherewith they shot, was vain-glory; the shafts, aspiring thoughts, feathered with misbelief, and drawn out of the quiver of inconstancy; the wind that carried them beyond the mark, was misprizing of God; Satan himself gave the aim; the woman undertook to make the wager; Adam was persuaded to shoot the match; then came disobedience and struck up the game. Thus they lost the stake, eternal life; yea, more, for their arrow rebounded from the mark (which was too impetrateable) and recoiled upon themselves with shame, remorse, horror, and banishment from bliss. Thus were they wounded with their own arrows shot upward; and could not be cured till Christ was wounded for them; and that by the arrows of God's wrath, when he hung on the cross as a mark in the butt. St. Augustine says, (In Prognost.) that Eve took up sin from Satan by loan, at first upon her own bare word; Adam by his unadvised consent subscribed to the bond; the burden of the interest lies upon their posterity: they that inherit their parents' goods, must pay their parents' debts. Adam sinned, but he fell not alone, 2 Esd. vii. 48; the fault was his, the fine is ours; and so we have the success of that unhappy match, wherein man would shoot with his Maker.

What gained Pan by comparing with Apollo? or Arachne with Minerva? Silenus with Mercury? or Phaeton by managing the team of Phœbus, though

he were his father? or Icarus by mounting up with his waxen wings, though directed by Daedalus? or Farfalla, the poor fly, who for love of the light would be sporting with the flame? or the satyrs, that presumed but to kiss the coals in token of humility, which were kindled by Prometheus? or the bird, that for more security would needs build her nest within the circle of the sun? All which fictions were but resemblances of man's ambition, who contended to be like his Maker. Still doth mankind labour of this disease; and while they would be wiser than the angels, they become more foolish than the beasts. Thus we rely upon our own crazy hopes, which the prophet compares to the shelter of a naked hedge in a frosty night, Nah. iii. 17: or depend upon the title of a tenant, which holds neither by soceage, nor knight's service; but by sufferance and courtesy at will; whereas we might have an estate from the Lord of lords, paying but the fine and rent, faith and obedience; not for three lives, or one and twenty years, but for ourselves and our heirs for ever. Who craves favour of the jailer, that may surely receive it at the hand of the prince? Who would be at the trouble to dig a deep pit, that hath ready prepared a clear fountain?

These be our two evils, (for mischiefs at least come by couples,) to forsake the fountain of living waters, for waterless cisterns, Jer. ii. 13, dry pits: pits indeed; and such, wherein we may sooner furnish a Joseph, than take up a Jeremiah. Thus is man a beast, by his knowledge; yea, I would that only ignorance had thus transformed us, and not flagitious filthiness. Our brutishness consists in our wickedness: we were born sinners, but we have made ourselves dogs and swine. Oh that this could work in us a just estimation of sin! How then would our souls abhor that, for which God doth abhor our souls! She that hath any tolerable opinion of her own fairness, seeks not to corrupt her face with foul aspersions; yea, she will rather help it with art, than spoil it with neglect. We are unreasonable souls, if we make no more account of the beauty of our conscience, than so to pollute it with sordid lusts, that the great Prince, our Suitor, must needs in scorn and detestation turn from us. Decked bodies are for kings' courts; and not sluttish, but fair, pure, holy souls, are for the bride-chamber of Christ.

Thus of them together; now severally. 1. The dog hath many good qualities, and is divers ways useful and serviceable to man; either for our pleasure, in hunting other beasts, or profit, in defending our houses and goods; yet still he is a dog. A wicked man loseth not his substance, or faculties, so that he ceaseth to be specifically a man; but he ceaseth to be a good man. There is such a corruption diffused through all those powers and faculties, that he is a wicked one. God's common gifts are not denied to the very reprobates: the Tyrians may be curious embroiderers, Tertullus famous for eloquence, the children of this world wise in their generations; Ahithophel may give shrewd counsel, and policy be found in a Machiavel. These natural endowments, improved by art, are truly the gifts of God; and such he gives even to them that be his enemies. Yea, divers moral virtues may appear, where saving grace is not. So we may find in them that magnanimity, which is rather great than good; that justice, which will give every man his own, but cares not to give God his own. Respect of their credit teaches them to pay their debts, while they think it no discredit to rob Christ. Divers civil men will not be drunk; they abjure intemperance for fear of sickness, not out of conscience. The foundation of all this virtue is weak; a mere self-respect, not in relation to God.

The dog loves his master, but it is because he feeds him; so sinners flatter their patrons, but it is a collateral love, their main scope is themselves. They refrain the doing of some evils, not because they would not, but because they dare not.

To render good for good, is humane; evil for evil, is belluine; evil for good, is devilish. If they do not the last, which is the work of devils; yet they allow the next, which is the mind of beasts. And for the first, not to return evil, they think requital sufficient for any good received. The fox got the crane to pluck a bone out of his throat, wherewith he was almost choked: the crane did it, and then required a reward; but the fox replied, That he had sufficiently rewarded her, in that he did not bite off her head when he had it in his mouth. But now to render good for evil, which is Christian, this is a lesson which they omit to learn, or learn to omit. Thus though dogs fawn, and lick, and scent, and hunt, and give warning, yet still they are dogs: unregenerate men may have excellent knowledge, and arts, and faculties, yet still they are sinners.

Our apostle here compares them to dogs, for one special act of filthiness: let me borrow by the way so much liberty, as to tell you, that in some other respects there is a likeness.

First, for barking: men that delight in snarling at others, are therefore called cynics. Hypsiphiles' dogs will bark at the moon; and bunglers will quest when there is no game. Dogs do not always bark for eurstness, but sometimes for custom. And some men swear, detract, rail, because they know no other language. A dumb dog is useless, but a biting cur is mischievous. Such a dog was Shimei: how well was that cur worthy of stones, who both did cast stones and speak stones against David and his army! The husbandmen (in the apologue) were commanded to tie up all their dogs, that their lord's game might not be marred, by their disquieting of those wilder beasts. But in the mean time, those farmers' fruits were spoiled and destroyed; while the hart of ambition, the boar of voluptuousness, the fox of imposture, the wolf of oppression, and the little cunny of adulation, might range undisturbed. Some cynics are not unnecessary; for they teach authority to apprehend those thieves whereto they are still barking. The pasquin on Tiber tells Rome of her faults: Pope Adrian the Sixth was angry at it, and threatened to have that bawling cur thrown into the river. But one wittily answered, that that was no good course; for then the dog would turn frog; and whereas now he barked only by day, then he would never lin croaking both day and night. But those dogs, whercof David complained, that are always grinning at the corners of the streets, snarling at all passengers, and slandering all actions with their venom-mouthed murmurs; that no great man, no good man, can escape their slanders; deserve, like shepherds' curs, to have their teeth beaten out, to prevent their biting; yea, and their chaps muzzled for fear of opening. Beware of these dogs, Phil. iii. 2.

Secondly, for flattering: the dog is a fawning creature; but sycophants are worse dogs, whose tongues do more hurt than their teeth, and make deeper festering wounds with their lickings than with their bitings. These be called the court-dogs, that wait upon great persons. Flattery and treachery are but two names of one vice, attired in two sundry sorts of mischief. For flattery is but gilded treason: poison in an enamelled cup. It is an evil more tame, not less dangerous. It were better for many princes not to have been, than to have been in their conceits more than men. For this unnatural tumour they may thank those mealy-mouthed dogs.

Treachery spills the blood, flattery spills the virtues of the rich and noble, yea, even of kings. That takes them from others, this bereaves them of themselves. That, in spite of the actors, doth but change their crown, this steals it from them for ever. How many have been so bewitched with the enchantments of their parasites, as to allow temples, statues, altars, and sacrifices, dedicated to the greatness of their glories! Now all their actions must be good, comely, and with a grace. Nothing can come from them that is worthy of blame, unworthy of admiration. Their very blemishes are beauty, their errors witty, their paradoxes divine, their humours justice, their excesses heroic. Such is the houndish servility of base minds, that will persuade others of that, which themselves laugh to see believed. But virtue ever scorns to borrow the false colours of adulation; and will break those glasses which shall present her a face not her own. If we were not all self-love, we would banish these as the most mischievous curs.

Thirdly, there be more resemblances of these canine properties; which I will but touch, because they are out of the centre of the argument. First, there is a canine appetite, a greedy and insatiate covetousness, which devours a man and his heritage. What they swallow on earth, they digest in hell. These be "greedy dogs, which can never have enough," Isa. lvi. 11. The overcharged dog must needs vomit; and though they have swallowed down riches, they shall vomit them up again, God shall fetch it out of their bellies, Job xx. 15. That is a ravenous dog, which devours more than he can put over; but worldlings have such a greedy worm, that they labour of a Never enough. Secondly, there is a canine sleep; the dissembling hypocrite sleeps dog-sleep. You will trust him with the fold, as confident that he will do no harm; turn but your back, and have at a lamb: the sheep-keeper becomes a sheep-biter. Thirdly, there is a canine servility: hold up a crust, the dog comes fawning; hold up a cudgel, he runs away leering. Let God multiply his blessings on the wicked, that they may be rich with ease, and merry with riches; and so long he is their good Master. But if he comes with affliction, poverty, and trouble, to correct them for their faults, they are gone to seek a new master. Yea, some kind of dogs, as they report of spaniels, are the better for beating, and will love the hand that struck them. But ungodly men are the worse for all God's chastisements, as the anvil is the harder for all the blows.

There is also a base cruelty among dogs; they will take the strongest part against the weakest; that if two set upon a third, and wrong him, all the curs in the town will do the like. To tread down the poor, to persecute the smitten, is a merciless dog-trick: a fault wherewith the land is justly charged, and whereof I would it were discharged; when the weakest are put to the wall; as if there be a contusion in one of the members, all the ill humours in the body run thither to make it worse. Thus as if the Isle of Dogs were broke loose, as if the bandogs of Satan and antichrist were no more restrained, as if the most were born under the dog-star, we may call these (too truly) dog-days; full of barking clamours and biting furies, as Tertullian called it: and those dogs that should be glad of the scraps which fall from the servants' board, now snatch away the bread of the children. "They have me in derision, whose fathers I would have disdained to set with the dogs of my flock," Job xxx. 1: they deride, and load him with contumelies, whom in his prosperity he would have scorned to make his dog-keepers. But

without shall be dogs, Rev. xxii. 15; they must lie without-doors, and scarce be favoured with kennels. Let us pray with David, "Deliver my darling from the power of the dog," Psal. xxii. 20; that we neither suffer under his malice, nor partake of his bad qualities.

2. The hog is not without some good properties. There is no creature not endued with some goodness in its kind; though nature be corrupted, it is not abolished. He that made all things exceeding good, kept them by his providence from being altogether evil. First, swine will be kept in order by the herdsman, and fall under a kind of discipline: to the conviction of those men, who will not be bound by the lawful authority of their superiors. A king that hath a great multitude to govern, might as safely be a keeper of bears and tigers, (Petrarch.) The lion will kiss his keeper, the elephant will be ruled and led about by a little dwarf, swine will obey the whistle; but man is an indomitable creature. Secondly, swine are naturally apprehensive of wind and weather, by an ingrafted knowledge; and run crying home before the storm, seeking shelter in their cots and sties. Sinful men do not foresee the judgments of God, but run on their ungracious courses, till they be overtaken with the tempest of vengeance. But my argument is their filthiness; and here (not to prevent the principal quality touched by the apostle, their wallowing in the mire) observe, first, that the hog is a churlish creature, grudging any part of his meat to his fellows. And have we no such covetous men, whose insatiate eye envies every morsel that enters into their neighbour's mouth? Secondly, the swine is ravenous, and devouring all within his reach: a fit emblem of worldly men, who because they have no inheritance above, engross all below; nor is there any means to keep them quiet, till they see no more to covet. The still sow eats up all the draff, but if you vex these hoggish men, they will leave their own food to take away yours.

Thirdly, swine are ever rooting in the ground, and destroying the very means of increase. If the covetous could have their wills, the whole earth should not yield a handful of corn, but that which grows on their own lands, or lies mouldering in their garners. Their affections, the looks of their souls, are still grovelling, and digging in the earth, their proper element; as if they would make a way to the antipodes, for the finding out of golden mines. Fourthly, if the swine be troubled, he sets up his bristles, and foams with anger. Such a savage impatience possesseth many hearts, that with fierce wrath they foam at their mouths, and strike with their toshes, and supply the defect of their words with wounds. Fifthly, the swine cannot endure to be handled; offer but to touch him, he grunts and cries, because he thinks it can be with no good meaning towards him. The sheep being taken with man's hand, is patient; because she knows that she shall but lose a little wool, and so be let go again: the cow stands till the hand hath stroked her, knowing that milk is to be taken from her, which was her burden: the horse yields to the bridle, and the dog to the couple, mistrusting no harm, but only the present use of their service. But the hog is sensible of his own barrenness, that he hath neither milk, nor wool, nor any other commodity acceptable to the taker, but his life; and therefore suspects every touch for death. The covetous man, while he lives, is neither acceptable to God, nor useful to man, and he knows it; being conscious of his many iniquities and injuries, but of no good quality, for which he should be desired. Therefore he trembles at every approach of death; because then there will be a dissipation of his hoards, a gaol-delivery of

his imprisoned riches: the poor will rejoice, his executors fill their purses, the world is glad of his ridance; only his body must be tumbled into the earth, and his soul hurried by fiends into torments. This is the miserable condition of these reasonable swine: they are ringed and yoked for the present; restrained by Divine Providence from doing all their intended mischiefs: any excellent art or singular quality in them, is but like a ring of gold in the snout of a swine. At last, when they are saginated and franked, their turn comes to bleed, and that by the knife of an unmerciful murderer.

St. Hierome tells us, that the swine hath three properties which no other living creature hath besides. First, he eats of more diversity of meats than any other. Kine feed on grass, not on flesh; dogs feed on flesh, not on grass; but no food comes amiss to the swine, he feeds on all. The ambitious is all for honour, the voluptuous for pleasure, the malicious for revenge, the proud for praise; the covetous is for all, all is fish that comes to his net. Secondly, the more a swine is adorned, still the more unhandsome: put a garland about the neck of a sow, deck her with flowers and the pride of May, hang her with jewels and ornaments; she appears so much more ugly. The more cost that God is at with worldlings, the less worship; the more they have to feed on, the leaner and more ill-favoured they look. Such a one cares more to fill his eye than his stomach. All his honours sit on his back as the caparisons of a horse upon an ass; and he appears like an ape clad in scarlet. Midas's gold cannot hide his large ears. Nabal's feast, like a king, at the shearing of his three thousand sheep in Carmel, cannot keep him from being a man of Belial. Thirdly, the swine never looks up to heaven, but he cries; lay him on his back, and he cries continually. So the worldling hath all his delight downward; his thoughts are downward, his desires downward. From the earth ariseth all his felicity; and to the earth he repays all his devotion, thanks, and duty. He cannot look up to heaven with any comfort: he knows he hath no patrimony there: he hath laid up no treasure within those glorious doors; no prayers, no alms, to entertain him in that court: yea, from thence he expects judgments and wrath, death and vengeance; and therefore whines forth desperate cries, when he is but showed those celestial and immortal riches.

I conclude. These are both sordid and uncleanly beasts, yet there be worse. First, some beasts are profitable alive, not dead: as the dog or horse, serviceable while they live; once dead, they are thrown out for carrion. Secondly, some are profitable dead, not alive: as the swine, that does mischief while he lives; is wholesome food, dead. Thirdly, some are profitable both alive and dead: as the ox that draws the plough, the cow that gives milk, while they live; and when they are killed, nourish us with their flesh. Fourthly, some are good neither dead nor alive; as the wolf, noxious in life, and stinking in death. First, men that are profitable living, not dead, are the politicians, that have subtle heads, without religious hearts: Ahiathophel did much good to Israel by his counsel; but dying, he left an odious report behind him. Secondly, they that are commodious dead, not living, are the covetous worldlings, that oppress and wrong the poor all their life; only by their death, some good comes of their goods. Thirdly, they that be good neither living nor dead, are the profane and luxurious epicures; who swallow the fat of the earth, drink the sweat of poor labourers, without returning them so much as crumbs; and by that time they come to die, their estates are quite spent, they have not a legacy left to give, but their bodies to the worms,

and their souls they know not whither. Fourthly, they that be good living and dead, are the charitable; who do not only feed the hungry and clothe the naked while they live, but also leave them somewhat to live on when they are dead: that not only adorn the gospel with holy lives, but are ready to witness it with their own blood, and so convert souls by their very deaths: that have shined like lights in the world, winning others by their good conversations; and taught the way to heaven by their blessed examples, drawing men to Christ by their sweet encouragements. Happy are we, if we be of this number; so the mercy of God shall shadow us while we live, and the glory of God shall crown us when we die. I come to their actions, which are returnings; where we have two considerable observations.

1. The force of nature. One would think, that the sick dog should loathe that he hath disgorged; that the washed sow should abhor the mire, wherein she wallowed. But the medicining of the one, and cleansing of the other, did not take away their nature; still the one remained a dog, the other a hog. If there could have been an alteration of their natures, there would have followed a cessation of these odious qualities. Turn them into sheep, they will detest both mire and vomit. You may bend a tree by violence; but when your hand and hold is off, it will return to the former position of crookedness. Want of stomach, or want of drink, may keep the drunkard sober; but let him come to ability of body, and convenience of being intemperate, and he returns to his old vomit; nothing can cure him, till his nature be changed. Paul was a ravening wolf in the evening, the Lord made him a peaceable lamb in the morning: but as his name was changed, so was his nature; otherwise he would have returned to his former disposition. Lock up the wolf, and your flocks be safe; but if he get loose, ware the lambs, for he is a wolf still. "The carnal mind is enmity against God," Rom. viii. 7: not an enemy, as the Vulgate reads it, in the adjective, or concrete; for that will neither agree with the gender of the substantive, nor with the accenting of it. But enmity, in the abstract; noting the excess: as we say of the proud man, There goes pride. An enemy may be reconciled, enmity cannot; a vicious person may be made virtuous, but vice can never be made virtue. Enmity is a mutual malevolence: so God hates the flesh, and the flesh hates God: though man by this hatred hurts not God, but himself; for he is God's enemy, not by injuring, but by resisting, saith Anselm. The cause is in us; for Adam was the friend of God, and God was the friend of Adam. This enmity came from sin, which we have cause to bewail with tears of blood. For a creature to hate its Maker, what can be more monstrous? For the Creator to hate the creature, what can be more grievous?

"The carnal mind is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be," Rom. viii. 7. It is usual for enemies to cross one another. It is not subject, there is contumacy; it cannot be, there is impotency. If the sun, created to give light, should cast abroad darkness; if the fire, made to give heat, should cool us; we would think it preposterous. All the question betwixt God and man is but this, whose will should be done, Isa. xlv. 9. But God chargeth them to do his will, and they will not; they would have their own will stand, but they shall not. What is so penal, says Austin, as always to will what never shall be, and always to will what ever will be? They shall never obtain what they desire, and they shall ever sustain what they dislike. "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God," Rom. viii. 8. In the flesh, not that have the flesh in them. We

*say of a man overcome with anger, he is in heat; of one overcome with wine, he is in drink: as Simon Peter told Simon Magus, "Thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity," Acts viii. 23. Not only these were in him, but he in them. These cannot please God: as snow can never be made hot, while it is snow: for fire will dissolve it into water, and then it may be heated, but it ceaseth to be snow. Carnal men, in that state, cannot please God; change them into a sanctified condition, then they can. Change the nature of these beasts, and then they will put off these filthy habits. But otherwise, the stone doth not more naturally incline to the centre, than they incline to sin; if either of them be stayed, it is by violence.

Thus easy is it to discern sheep from hogs and dogs; as between musk and a muckhill, by the scent; or between gall and honey, by the taste. The bee delights to be among flowers; but no garden can stay a dorr, he passeth by all till he comes to a dunghill. The worldling is dog-weary of all religious exercises; (let Christ go into his garden, to gather lilies, Cant. vi. 2:) this is none of his felicity; nothing pleaseth him till he return to his sensual courses: nor can thus be helped, till his dunghill disposition be altered. Every thing lives according to its kind; the horse in the pasture, the fish in the water: present holy things to a carnal heart, either he sleeps or dislikes, for he is quite out of his element. In diet, that which is one man's meat is another's poison, because of their different tempers and constitutions. It is impossible for the same creature to be both a lion in the forest and a little dog in a lady's lap. Repentance is a change of the mind, and regeneration is a change of the man: till the first Adam be changed into the Second, there is no hope of entering into heaven. "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God," 1 Cor. xv. 50. All are flesh and blood, but some are not all flesh and blood; there is corruption in the best, but there is something in them beside corruption. The better part, if not the greater part, is the seed of grace; and this shall fructify to life eternal. But they that are all flesh and blood, will return to the works of flesh and blood.

He is an unhappy man, that adviseth with his flesh for the rule of his life: it is as if a king should call a traitor to his council-table; or as if a man should commit his body and goods to a bottom, that is steered by such a pilot, as ever drowns all the passengers. Paul being sent to preach, "conferred not with flesh and blood," Gal. i. 16. It was Christ's rule in our alms, Let not the left hand know what the right hand doth; let not the flesh know what the spirit doth: as Abraham would not tell Sarah, when he went to offer up Isaac, lest she should dissuade him. The best policy of state, is to disarm the rebel: so let us disarm the flesh of idleness, intemperance, high feeding, pompous clothing; taking away the arms, munition, and artillery; that though it would, it cannot do mischief. The Jews offered up a sacrifice for sin: let us offer up sin for a sacrifice; this is most acceptable. A city being hard besieged, and not able to hold out, did light upon this policy: in the night-time they took all their dead men, which were many, what with war, and what with famine, and set them upright in their armours on the outside of their walls. The enemy seeing this bold spectacle in the morning, and not suspecting the stratagem, thought them alive, resolute, and supplied with fresh forces, and so raised the siege. Let us mortify our carnal affections, and set them up in Satan's view, with a resolved defiance; this will dismay his courage: dead lusts disappoint Satan. The king of Edom removed the siege, by sacrificing his son, his eldest son, that should have

reigned in his stead, and that for a burnt-offering to Satan, 2 Kings iii. 27. The God of heaven abominates all such unnatural facts: not our sons, but our sins, are the burnt-offerings he requires; such holocausts shall both remove his judgments, and dishearten all the assaults of our spiritual enemies. But alas, can the leopard change his spots, or the Ethiopian whiten his skin? both, as easily as we can alter our own natures. Only He, that can turn the highest mountains into humble valleys, can take away the corruption of our natures; and of unclean beasts, make us holy lambs unto Jesus Christ.

2. The danger of returning to old sins. We are all conceived on the sea, and born upon a sloping rock, in manifest danger of drowning in the main: there our parents left us, as their parents left them, and our first parents left us all. The undeserved, unexpected grace of God did lay hold on us in Jesus Christ, and put us off from these quicksands, in a vessel of hope, steered by his ministers, the compass being his holy word, and the promise of heaven that shore where we all are to land. Now if we, thus mercifully delivered, shall wilfully return to the first danger, and be led by the false marks of gain or pleasure, to those desperate sands, how worthy are we to miscarry! It is true indeed, that the elect cannot turn from God with all their heart; or if they could fail totally, yet not finally. But when we read, "Because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not high-minded, but fear," Rom. xi. 20: and, "Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown," Rev. iii. 11: it may provoke us carefully to look over our evidence, that we may be sure. I know there be some that would shake the foundation of a Christian, urging that of Paul, "If thou continue in God's goodness, otherwise thou shalt be cut off," Rom. xi. 22; and inferring an absolute proposition from a conditional. As if one should collect thus; If the sun rise not to-morrow, it will be dark, therefore it will be dark to-morrow. But the sun holding his course, it will be light: and God's promise holding, which cannot fail, and grace continuing, believers shall not fall from salvation. They as weakly conclude from that of Christ, If those mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented in sackcloth and ashes, Matt. xi. 21, that a little knowledge had saved them. We might as well presuppose a power of speaking in stones, because our Saviour says, "If these should hold their peace, the stones would cry out," Luke xix. 40.

Yet let none presume: "For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee," Rom. xi. 21. Behold (not thine, but) the goodness of God: if thou be saved, the praise is his; if lost, the fault is thine own. There be two things that carry men away from God; despair, and presumption. As the act of seeing is hindered two ways, either by seeing too much light, or no light at all: so the comfort of conscience is prejudiced, either by seeing no mercy, or by seeing nothing else but mercy. To keep us from the one, despair, let us meditate of that infinite mercy, which never failed the most odious sinners, when they became humble converts. To prevent the other, presumption, let us remember how God punished relapsing David, the man after his own heart: and Moses, whom he called friend; and that for one fault; and that so secret, that by reading the story we can scarce find it out. This way a thousand perish, for one the other way: desperation is a course that Satan takes but with few; because it is tedious to flesh and blood, and (not seldom) the occasion of true repentance; and so Satan is over-shot in his own bow. But presump-

tion is pleasing: to fly out when we list, to enjoy our pleasures, to return from our devotions to sensual lusts, and then to be sure of heaven when we have done; what can sooner win us? Though we have committed sins, and been bitten by them, and smitten for them; yet forgetting all that anguish, those fears, and tears, and sorrows, we return to the cause of all those mischiefs. The merchant, after a three years' voyage to the Indies, hath with many doubtful hazards of rocks and pirates, brought home store of gold; and is no sooner come ashore, but in one night plays it all away. You will say, He may fetch more: he is not sure of that: but the man is far less sure of regaining God's favour, that hath so prodigally spent it in wantonness.

The Almighty Father hath been our Physician, the glorious Son hath been our Physic, the blessed Spirit hath prepared and applied all to us: shall we now, our wilful selves, overthrow the work of all them three, by relapsing into those sicknesses, from which their infinite goodness hath delivered us? Shall the bounty of our Maker fill our measure with mercy, and shall we still empty it as fast? Hath God nothing else to do with his riches, but to wait upon our riot with supplies? He hath corrected us, and then we came home: again he received us; shall we, after all this, return to our old aberrations, and re-embrace those sins, which brought upon us his former judgments? Yet, alas, so slippery the custom of sin hath made the ways of sin, that if the God of constancy and perseverance should not hold us up, we could not stand one moment. St. Paul was shipwrecked thrice, 2 Cor. xi. 25, and yet escaped. So do the rocks and sands, the heights and the shallows, the prosperous and adverse fortunes of the world, diversely threaten us; so do our own leaks endanger us; so do temptations, like pirates, assault us; so do the mariners, our own thoughts, mutiny within us; that nothing but the everlasting mercy of our God can preserve us. But let us be careful, never to put ourselves aboard with Hymeneus, nor to make shipwreck of faith and a good conscience, 1 Tim. i. 19. Though infirmities overtake us, and God hath graciously warned, "My son, hast thou sinned? do so no more," Eccles. xxi. 1; though that which we most earnestly pray against should fall upon us, a relapse into those sins of which we have truly repented, and God hath fully pardoned; yet let us beseech him that is Jehovah, and changeth not, that the spirit of remorse and compunction may never depart from us; yea, that the Spirit of consolation may never forsake us. A garden once digged, and then let alone, becomes more weedy: a backsliding Christian proves most ungodly. "The just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." Heb. x. 38.

The objects to which they return follow: the first whereof is vomiting. This proceeds from an ill-affected stomach, and a sick stomach from a bad repletion. This may be an argument offensive to the weak, nauseating their stomachs; but to show the odiousness of sin, the Scripture often useth it. And that both literally, when the prophet applies it to the drunkards, "shameful spewings shall be on thy glory," Hab. ii. 16; and figuratively, as Zophar awards it to the oppressor, "He hath swallowed down riches, and he shall vomit them up again: God shall cast them out of his belly," Job x. 15. Yea, God himself is said to vomit out some kind of sinners; "Because thou art lukewarm, I will spew thee out of my mouth," Rev. iii. 16. Though he seemed to have received them into his inward parts, because of their form, by profession; yet being offensive to his stomach, he spews them out; and certainly God will never re-

turn to his own vomit. The conscience is to the soul, as the stomach is to the body; sm doth dis-temper the one, as unwholesome meat or surfeits do the other. Both are sick alike, both complain of their burdens. Vomit is a forcible clearing of the stomach, confession is a voluntary unloading of the conscience. The physician prescribes a medicine, the patient takes it, and is eased. The minister chargeth the surcharged soul to confess and acknowledge his iniquities, he doth so, and is comforted. That man worthily perisheth of his disease, that lets it rangle without revealing it. If we know a burdened conscience, we give it a vomit: "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whose confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy," Prov. xxviii. 13. No wise man will fall upon that dish again, which hath made him dangerously sick; and he is a madman, that after such disgorging his offence, will return and lick up his own vomit. No less foolish and desperate is that sinner, who having emptied his heart of all his troublesome and indigestible faults, by a liberal and frank acknowledgment, shall again wilfully relapse into them: what is this, but, with the dog, to return to his own vomit?

Saul, as if he were again new-entered into the bounds of Nuboth in Ramah, prays and prophesies good to him, whom for good he maliced. "The Lord reward thee good for that thou hast done unto me this day," 1 Sam. xxiv. 19: and he lift up his voice and wept. There is no heart made of flesh, which at some time or other relents not: even flint and marble will in some weather exude drops. Nor can we think those tears and protestations feigned; doubtless, Saul meant as he said, and passed through sensible fits of good and evil. Let no man like himself the better for some good motions; the praise and benefit of these guests is not in the receipt, but in the retention. Who, that had seen this meeting, could but have thought all had been sure on David's side? What can secure us, if not prayers, and tears, and oaths? Yet behold in the end, Saul goes home, but David and his men go up to the hold, ver. 22. One would think Saul had emptied his stomach of all those crudities, rage, envy, malice; yet stay awhile, and you see him return to his own vomit, hunting after the blood of the innocent, and gives not over David, 1 Sam. xxvi. 2. The adulterer comes to confession, pours out all his uncleanness in the ears of his confessor; and now having cleared his mind, returns with the fiercer appetite to his former vomit. The friend of riot and disordered company visits the church in the forenoon, prostrates his body, and opens his mouth with the congregation, in a general acknowledgment of his (inordinate) sins; and now, as if he were exonerated of all his corruption, and had only made room for more excess by his confession, he regrets that sin for which he regretted, and falls afresh to his luxurious cups.

I know there be some constitutions so strongly retentive, that scarce physick can procure a vomit: there be stupefied consciences, that will not confess. Let the covetous man hear his unjust practices aggravated to his face; yet custom hath so preoccupied his heart, that he never grows sick upon it; as poison by familiar use becomes natural food. We cannot say this man returns to his vomit, for that unrighteous mammon never troubled his dead conscience. But he shall vomit once for all; the earth shall vomit out his body, his body shall vomit out his soul, his soul shall vomit out his riches; nothing shall vomit out his sins, they shall make him sick for ever in a bed of quenchless flames. The law of God, repeated by Christ himself to a rich young man, was but answered with, "All these have I kept," Matt.

xix. 20; it could not bring him to a sense of his sins. All these have I kept. Miserable and false man, he had kept never a one of them; yet he would not be brought to a vomit. That other churl talked of filling his barns, Luke xii. 18, not emptying his sins. But for men to disburden their troublesome iniquities by humble confessions, and then to resume them; as the viper vomits out her poison in winter, and takes it again in the spring; (Plin.) this is most dog-like. We may not take the children's bread and throw it to dogs; such dainties are not for reprobate stomachs: the whip and cudgel are for dogs. The Jews counted the Gentiles dogs, and grudged them any of their own meat, as if they should not have sufficient for themselves. But Paul rather compares the Jews to dogs, and such as lie in the manger, to keep the Gentiles from their food. Repiners, that lie like some churlish curs at the door, to keep away beggars, and hinder them from their master's alms, should be driven away, that humble suppliants might have access to heaven-gates.

But *quis medebitur cani resorbenti vomitum?* who shall cure the dog that swallows again his own vomit? There is no vomiting without pain: a man's stomach rejects that which made him sick, and he feels the head-ache; his conscience is troubled with the sense of his errors, and he must needs feel heart-ache. Why do we not consider how dear such a morsel of sin hath cost us, before we suffer it again to pass down our throats? Was not our conscience loaden with agonies, and labouring with pangs, more than a travelling woman with throes? Did we not feel a thorn in our most tender, sensible, and vital parts, stinging us at the very heart? Did it not appear like a black bill against us, written with our unanswerable debt to an infinite justice? Did it not make us pant and roar for the very disquietness of our hearts? Did not sleep forsake our eyes; and after many tumblings and tossings, did we not still complain the want of ease? Did not Satan set us hard with desperation, for a monstrous and (under the name of an) unpardonable sin? Did not our souls weep blood, and our eyes run down with tears? Were we not brought to the pit's brink of forlorn unhappiness, before we could feel any comfort of forgiveness? Have we now forgotten all that smart, woe, grief, and horror? Can the short and scarce sensible pleasure of any sin make amends for such torments? Or if we could slight our own sorrows, and let the memory of them die with the feeling, yet let us consider what those sins cost the Lord Jesus. Was he reviled with taunts, beaten with buffets, macerated with scourges, harrowed with thorns, crucified with thieves, and slain with unspeakable sufferings, to expiate them; and shall we embrace them, and so recrucify the Lord of life? Have we received a medicine of so dear ingredients, Christ's meritorious passion and our own compunction, to disburden our souls of that which offended both God and them; and shall we drown the remembrance of all in a deluge of vanities, recoiling to our former vomits? God forbid it, and the thankful respect of his honour and our own souls heartily forbid it.

The dog returns to his own vomit. There be some that seek up another's vomit, that will sin by precedent: they will adulterize, because David did; they will drink to sleep, because Noah did. Indeed those holy men committed such unholy deeds, but they humbly repented, and begged pardon for them, in the anguish of their hearts. They confessed them to be evil, these men take them up for lawful, or at least tolerable: what is this but to lick up their vomit? But whether it be their sins, for which they have repented; or our own sins, under which we

have groaned; let us never return to so loathsome a vomit. Sin, like stibium, will tarry with nobody: up it must, either here by a humble confession, or hereafter by a wretched confusion. Let us disburden our consciences of those sins wherewith they are surcharged, but never turn again to them whereof they are disburdened.

Observations. 1. Both the sexes are mentioned; the dog in the masculine, in the feminine the sow. In Christ there is neither male nor female; men have no more privilege of salvation than women. Nor is there any difference out of Christ; women have no more immunity from damnation than men. Indeed, bad men are more apt to nimble sins, as the dog ranges abroad; and bad women are more prone to lazy sins, as the sow wallows in the mire.

2. There are more ways to hell than one, as we say there are to the wood. Whether men go by the dog-like rapacity, or swinish turpitude, it matters not; either will serve turn, to bring them to destruction. Heaven is a glorious city, yet hath it but one gate, and that a narrow one: hell hath a thousand, and they are always both easy and open. They that refuse the way of pragmatistical mischief, with the dog, may take the path of sordid uncleanness, with the sow: yea, which is strange, men may even sit still, and yet get thither too soon; for idleness is able to bring them unto hell.

3. The very washing of the wicked is a preparation to their worse foulness. Hogs will wade through the ford for no other purpose, but to come to the mire on the other side. Some are so graceless, that they come to the temple, mingle themselves with the saints, and partake the holy mysteries, to this end, that they may with less suspicion follow their filthiness. Do you see that sow, and in what a state she is now? she was in the river this morning. Do you see that man, and how debauched he is now? he was yesterday at the communion. A woeful hearing, that a man should be the fouler after washing!

4. Of all sins, Satan hath most power over uncleanness. Since the first possession of the serpent, we do not read that Satan entered into any beasts but swine. He set the Sabeans, Chaldeans, and fire, to destroy Job's oxen, sheep, camels; himself did not enter into them: But when the devils were cast out of the men, they petitioned Christ that they might enter into the herd of swine; and the whole herd ran violently down a steep place, and perished in the waters, Matt. viii. 31, 32. The impetuosity was no less than the speed: it was no small force that could do this; but if the swine had been so many mountains, those spirits, by God's permission, had thus transported them. How easily then can they carry those souls that are under their power to destruction! Swine love the mire, therefore the devil loves swine: unclean beasts that wallow in the mire of sensuality, brutish drunkards transforming themselves by excess; even they are the swine, whom the legion carries headlong to the pit of perdition.

5. All sins are foul, some be more dirty; and the practisers of them may be said to wallow in the mire. First, the brutish lusts of the flesh, whoredom and uncleanness, a mire and sordid wickedness; which makes the body not more leprous than the soul, and turns the temple of the Holy Ghost into a pig-sty. Will any man in his wits prepare to entertain his king, yea, his ordinary friend, in a pig-sty? Shall that Almighty King, our Maker and Comforter, have no room allowed him, but that heart which filthy lust hath made a pad of dirt? Thou receivest the sacrament, and hopest to feed upon thy Saviour, that he may enter into thy soul: but bethink thyself; wilt the God of all majesty come into that house in the morn-

ing, where the swine have lain all night? How noisome is that dwelling, where the best room, the parlour, is but a stable; and the lodging-chamber, the heart, but a pig-sty! Weigh it rightly; thou liest in thy bed of uncleanness, as a sow in a puddle of mire. Thy luxuriant thoughts, thy lascivious dalliances, appear more odious to God, than can to thee any swine tumbling in the mire. Secondly, intemperance, ingurgitating more meat and drink than a well-ordered appetite desires, is not only a swinish, but a muddy sin; not so much by that effect, because it makes men muddy-headed; but by a worse, it makes them muddy-hearted. Their body is become a dunghill to their soul, their soul a dunghill in respect of all goodness; nothing breeds in it but weeds, nothing moves in it but worms, nothing wallows in but swine. The drunkard is but a moving muck-pit, a speaking dunghill. The unclean spirit could find no rest in dry places, Matt. xii. 43, but he finds rest

in drunken quagmires. Thirdly, worldly covetousness is a dirty sin; and howsoever men think that they swim in pleasures while they wallow in riches, yet they are deceived, they do but roll in miry paddles. It may be a discredit, it is no slander, to riches, to call them dung: for to the most they are no better. Muck, when it lies upon heaps, gives but an ill odour, a very stench; but when it is spread abroad upon the ground, it is a cause of much fruit. All our hoards of coin and wealth are but heaps of muck; which thus abused, do not only stink of themselves, but make a stench in our hearts. Let us spread them abroad by our charity, in useful, merciful, and pious deeds; then will they help the barren ground of our souls to bring forth fruit unto everlasting life. Lord, lift us up out of the mire and deep pit, wherein we stick fast by nature, wash us by thy grace, and present us undefiled in the day of Jesus Christ. Amen.

AN

EXPOSITION

UPON

THE SECOND EPISTLE GENERAL OF THE HOLY APOSTLE

SAINT PETER.

CHAPTER III.

VERSE I. THIS SECOND EPISTLE, BELOVED, I NOW WRITE UNTO YOU; IN BOTH WHICH I STIR UP YOUR PURE MINDS BY WAY OF REMEMBRANCE.

THE whole Scripture, saith St. Ambrose, is the banquet of wisdom, and the several books are several dishes. Or an apothecary's shop, wherein is found sufficiency of holy drugs, to cure all our spiritual diseases. Or a blessed treasury of heavenly riches, to supply any indigence of our souls. An infallible rule, to keep us within compass, both for civil and religious allegiance. There be two sorts of men that ramble from the right way of godliness: the misbelievers, and mislivers. To inform the one, and reform the other, is the great undertaking of the Holy Ghost in this place, and the main scope of his secretary, the blessed apostle St. Peter.

Reading this first verse, we may well think of a father sending a token of love to his children. The father is an apostle; the token, an epistle; the dear children, those elected and dispersed Jews, to whom he wrote both these letters.

To join the spiritual father and his children together in our meditation, as nature hath knit them in relation, St. Peter commends his love to the church of the Jews: for the church of the Jews was never cast away, only the unbelievers were broken off, Rom. xi. 17. The olive was cut, not cut off; the body, and some of the branches, remain; and we are grafted into them, not they into us. We bring nothing to the Jews, but we receive all from them; not only "the oracles of God," Rom. iii. 2, but even the gospel; "for salvation is of the Jews," John iv. 22. The Gentiles do not make a several church by themselves, for there is but one church; but they are called to be members of the church of the Jews. Other sheep I have, that is, the elect Gentiles: them I must bring to this fold, that is, the church of the Jews: I do not make another fold, nor carry this fold to them; but bring the Gentiles to the Jews, that there may be one fold, and one shepherd, John x. 16. Not then the church of Rome, but the church of the Jews, is properly the mother church: and we are not children of the pope, we find no such adoption; but the seed of Abraham, not natural, but by incision. The same root bears us both, the same fatness nourisheth us both: there is no difference between the way of salvation in the

Old Testament, and the New, but this; they were the natural branches, we are ingrafted. In grafting, there is clay used, and binding about: the Jew is bound about with a red ligament in regard of circumcision; we with a white, in respect of baptism, at which the primitive times did put on white garments.

The unbelieving Jews indeed are fearfully cursed. "Let their table be made a snare," &c. Rom. xi. 9, 10. This was their just recompence; they were still like snares and traps to stumble Christ; therefore "let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumbling-block unto them." They blinded his eyes, and then smote him; theirs are smitten with blindness for it. They called him down from the cross, in mockery; in earnest the greatest cross is come down upon them for it. They accused him that he would destroy the temple, therefore was their temple destroyed. They charged him to be an enemy to Cæsar their king, now therefore they have neither king nor Cæsar. They bowed his back with the cross, now their own backs are always bowed down; not only like slaves, their bodies are subjected to burdens, but like beasts, they have grovelling minds, always on their money; as they are indeed the greatest usurers. *O curvæ in terris anima, et celestium inanes!* i. e. O souls bent down to earth, and void of heaven! Thus is "the wrath come upon them to the uttermost," 1 Thess. ii. 16. Yet God had his chosen among them in their greatest apostacy; and it is probable, that the blood of Christ did cleanse some of those souls, that had the aspersion of his blood on their guilty hands. Still St. Peter calls them his beloved; and there is no name of any nation under heaven so honourable as the name of a Jew. "Boast not against the branches: for if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee," Rom. xi. 18. Let us not reproach them, but bless that God who hath now honoured us above them. St. Paul is not more moved with indignation against them, as malefactors; than with compassion of them, as miserable wretches, Rom. ix. 2.

"Beloved." The thriving of the sheep is the

glory of the shepherd; and in the wound of his flock the pastor is more wounded, saith Cyprian. The loss of a graceless child cannot but grieve the father, though the father himself were in danger of mischief by that child: as David mourned for Absalom, that would have killed him. We would have you also prosper in this world; but our special care and prayer is, that you may thrive in spiritual graces, and grow rich in the favour of God. As that father rejoiced when his son came home a convert, though he had not a rag to hang on his back, Luke xv. 22. To delight in men's sins, is the sport of devils; recovery from those sins, is the joy of good men and angels. If we see a man deadly wounded, fetching deep groans and drawing his last breath, we are moved with pity. How then should rebellious sinners; procuring the destruction of their own souls, wring from us tears of blood! We lament the death of those bodies that shall be raised in glory; how much more the ruin of those souls that sink down to infelicity! It is possible that our grief for men's offences, may work a grief in the offenders; as the sight of others falling heartily to their meat, brings on our stomachs. Instead of a smile, let us afford all sin a tear: our tears may move them to repentance, whom our smiles encourage in lewdness.

"Beloved." Love is the ornament of the church, the cement of Christianity. "How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" Psal. cxxxiii. 1. But how bad and pitiable, for the father and children not to dwell in unity! When there is either a defect of paternal office, in providing spiritual food for the family; or of filial duty, in granting temporal food to the father; how miserable are the whole household! Love descends; it is not possible the pastor's love should fail to his people: but it does not ascend so certainly; for we see universally, that the people's love doth fail to their pastor. It is a question, whether natural parents are to be loved above the spiritual: we know that Christ preferred his spiritual kindred to that of the flesh; and, as Beza saith, Greater is the conjunction of hearts than of bloods. Why should we love them more that brought us into this sinful and miserable world, than those that bring us into a better world, where is neither sin nor misery? Why them that live with us on earth but a while, equal to them that shall live with us in heaven for ever? We must clear this by a distinction: Our spiritual parents are more to be loved estimatively; our natural, more intensively; those with the love of benevolence, these with the love of beneficence. A man may not give all his goods to a fraternity, and leave his parents destitute of relief, as the Capuchins do; for God esteems mercy above sacrifice. We are to love our nature in all; but the most bonds of nature require a greater degree of love. Nature teacheth this, and grace perfecteth nature. Christ first preached at Nazareth, to requite the place of his education. Still the nearer in blood, the dearer in good. But they that will not allow their spiritual fathers so much as they do their carnal flatterers, that spend more upon their lawyer than upon their preacher, they are bastards, none of his children; imposthumes, rather than members of the church.

From what root grows all this sacrilege, this robbing of the church under the name of custom, but from this, the want of love? The love of custom hath quite eaten out the custom of love. It will be found in a higher court, where not a lawyer shall be heard, that it was a damnable custom for children to rob their parents. The world is full of clamour, the law is full of favour, for customs: all cry out for

their Diana, but especially Demetrius; it toucheth his copyhold: men think they are undone, if they give God his right. Not only our craft shall be despised, but even the temple of Diana, whom all Asia and the world worshippeth, Acts xix. 27. How cunningly this orator pleads! more for his goddess, than for his gain; but if it had not been for his gain, his goddess might go whistle. Thus loud orators will Demetrius and Tertullus be, pleading against Paul, before judges like themselves; but when Christ shall be the Judge, they will have nothing to say; like the poor intruder, that was even speechless, Matt. xxii. 12. Some have haply guessed this man to be a lawyer, whose tongue had been nimble enough, but this awful presence daunted him; he had spoken so much before that now he was speechless.

To conclude. If we do not feed you with the word, you are not our beloved; if you do not render us our dues, we are not your beloved. So here is no love lost, but God's; who hath loved us (as it were) on this condition, that we should love one another. We have heard much of the Pyldes and Pythians, and such inviolable friends; but it would be miraculous now if any should die for love. I dare say, there was never more love in the world, never less; never more in protestation, never less in demonstration. Christ will come when faith shall be scarce found upon earth; but if he had threatened to come when charity is scarce to be found, we might look for him to-day. Except you be our beloved, we are sure of hell; and except we be your beloved, you are not sure of heaven. Heartily therefore do we love you, do you as sincerely love us, that Jesus Christ may everlastingly love us all.

I come now to the token of his love, which is set forth by

The nature of it, A letter written.

The number of it, A second after the former.

The tenor of it, or contents, To stir up their minds.

The order of it, or manner of this excitation, By way of remembrance.

For the former; it pleased God to reveal his will to us by writing, and that both the law and the gospel. The law was written with his own hand; prophecies and evangelical discourses he hath written by others. Never did he write any thing himself, but the tables of the law; the hand, the stone, the law were all his. That which he dictated to his servants, the prophets, doth challenge just honour from us; how much more doth that deserve veneration, which he wrote immediately with his own hand! The more precious the record was, the greater was the fault of defacing it: no king holds it less than rebellion, to blemish his seal, and tear his writing. Yet Moses did it, and God forgave it. He that was the meekest man upon earth, abandons that in a sudden indignation, which in cold blood he would have held faster than his life. Israel had fallen into idolatry; and Moses forgets the law written, when he saw it broken. Not only the decalogue was written, but the prophetic testimonies, and all called the law. So God thought meet to consecrate and hallow for ever this outward form of revelation. Some conjecture, that the prophets did write the sum and abridgement of their errands, and fasten them to the temple doors; which after some days' view, were taken down, and laid up in the treasury for a second monument. (Calv. Praefat. in Isa.) The poet said, but he appeals to fame for the author of the device;

*Phonices prini (fama si creditur) ausi
Mansuram rudibus vocem signare figuris.*

If fame be true, Phœnicee's sons first graved
In rude, but lasting records, what before
The mouth alone could utter ———.

But certainly writing began with Moses.

It was the discipline of God's own house, for two thousand years, to feed his eldest sons only with tradition. This is a great argument with the pontificians. But by their leaves, the divers restitutions and reformations of God's true worship, argue that those times were not so generally fortunate for religion. And suppose that in one or two families, when men were at the fewest, their hearts at the purest, and their lives at the longest, religion were so retained; yet was it not only by tradition, but by visions, oracles, and other rudiments, which might be to them instead of writing. But when the number of men was increased, and their years shortened, and their hearts more corrupted; the convenience of writing was taken up, both for the spreading abroad, and better learning at home, the will of God. Thus Moses, Samuel, Esdras, were not only for their own times, God's holy orators; but for the perpetual benefit of after-ages, his full secretaries. We are told of the Druids, certain pagan priests of France, that in their rules abhorred writing. But now where are those rules? what print remains of their precepts? Their very names had been unknown, but for writing.

The gospel also is written: whatsoever may cause our joy to be full, whatsoever may perfect us for every good work, whatsoever may make us wise to salvation, all this is written. Let no man presume to be wise above that which is written; especially, not to be wise against that which is written. These holy manuscripts were highly prized by our forefathers: as the old woman that sold books to Tarquin, did set such a price on them, as might have made a Tarquin's ransom. Printing hath yet more advanced this benefit; that it is a question, whether ever learning so far excelled ignorance, as scholars have by this help exceeded scholars. "Their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world," Rom. x. 18. Their sound; yea now, if we will, their line; and for their words, their writings: that God's will is near as well known as his works; and the book of grace is now become like the book of heaven. There was nothing wherein Israel outstripped all the world, more than in this privilege; the pledge of God's holy covenant, the law written with his own finger: He hath not dealt so with other nations, Psal. cxlvii. 20.

But how great a favour is done to that nation, where he bestows his gospel! That was but a killing letter, this is the power of God to salvation. Never is God thoroughly displeased with any people, where that continues. Suitors that have intended love to virgins, when upon just cause they fall off, call for their tokens home again. So when God begins once perfectly to dislike, the first thing he withdraws is his gospel. If our forefathers had but told us some part of our duties concerning the worship of God, many whole countries (that are to this day without God in the world) might well have envied our happiness. But we take not what we take, upon trust of men's report; for we have a sure and written word, and may survey at the full that great mystery of godliness, which not only kings and princes, but even saints and angels, have desired to behold. If this meditation did thoroughly sink into our affections, if our affections were truly moved, they would call upon us for thankfulness, and this thankfulness would appear in our careful obedience: yea, this motive would set all able pens on work, to write the praises of God. Not that I desire, that those who travail only with

the wind, should be delivered of their emptiness; there be too many foaming brans in the world, that soil white virgin-paper with their unchaste scurrilities: such weeds, being manured with carnal humours, grow too fast of themselves. So the farm of antichrist commands many ploughs in Europe, seminaries of heretical seeds, to make a harvest for Satan. They violate the works of all writers with the clipping-shears of their expurgations; which dealing is as cruel to the dead, as their Spanish Inquisition is to the living. Against him, if we employ not our tongues and pens, according to our several abilities, they are both worthy to lose their cunning. Here both let our tongues be like the pens of ready writers, and our pens like the tongues of ready speakers.

To conclude. What shall we render to the Lord for his mercy, in writing these blessed covenants? We can give nothing but the tables, it is he that must write on them. Our hearts are but a bare board, till God by his finger engrave his law in them. Yea, more; we are a rough quarry, and it is he that must hew us out, and square us fit for himself to write upon. God committed the law to Moses' hands; his hands were whole, but the tables were broken. God hath intrusted his gospel to our hearts; if we abuse it, the gospel shall remain whole, but our hearts shall be broken. He is more resolute than Pilate; "What I have written, I have written," John xix. 22. It is our woe, if we break that blessed writing, which is a covenant of mercy for us; for then that other hand-writing, the law of wrath, shall stand in force against us. Let us beseech him, that hath written these things to be read with our eyes, also to write them in our hearts; that so we may find our names written in the book of life.

The number follows: it is a second epistle. Abundant caution does no harm, especially where the matter is of consequence, and the danger of such desperation, as concerns the saving or losing of the soul; which if a man have once lost, he hath nothing else to lose. "This second;" not so much fearing the miscarriage of the first, as hoping to work better confirmation by the next. Some will come at the first call, as Matthew did; some tarry to the third, as Samuel did; some stay it out to the last hour of the day but one, as those labourers did, Matt. xx. 6. God calls at any time, preachers must call at all times: the second exhortation may speed better than the first: one sermon may have happier success than all the rest. The faithful servant, whom his Lord hath made ruler over his household, gives them their meat in due season, Matt. xxiv. 45. First, it must be good meat, for wholesomeness: fancies of their own brains, will but fill them full of wind. Secondly, it must be seasonable: comforts to the obstinate, and thunders to the desperate, are dishes quite out of season. Thirdly, it must be given them: we may not tarry till they call for it; their souls commonly are not so apt to be hungry. Fourthly, it is not enough to purvey well, and stock our own heads, but we must dispense it to their hearts. There may be a whole magazine of knowledge, and the people never the fatter for it, unless it be imparted. Fifthly, it must be given by way of distribution: it is not sufficient to set it before them in gross, but in the retail of particular application; as the surgeon not only makes the plaster, but lays it on too. In vain doth the rich man discourse of bread to the empty; or the physician read a lecture on the patient's disease, and so leave him. Sixthly, all this must be frequent; we must do as we pray, Give them their daily bread. "God hath spoken once, twice have I heard this,"

Psal. lxix. 11: yea, twice and thrice, "oftentimes," saith Elihu, Job xxxiii. 29. Sin is not so easily killed, that we should say of it as Abishai said of Saul, "Let me smite him to the earth at once, and I will not smite him the second time," 1 Sam. xxvi. 8. It were a happy riddance of so mischievous an enemy, if we could hit him as cunningly, as Joab did Amasa treacherously; who "smote him in the fifth rib, and struck him not again," 2 Sam. xx. 10. But this Hagar will abide many blows, before she be turned quite out of doors.

The building of the church goes slowly forward. It were an injurious censure, to tax Solomon of slackness in founding the house of God. Great bodies must have but slow motions. Much time is required to the preparing of the materials: albeit David had laid a great part of the timber and metals; yet many a tree must be felled and squared, many a stone hewn and polished, ere this foundation be laid. Neither could those large cedars be cut, sawn, seasoned in one year. Though he had a hundred and fifty thousand labourers employed in bearing burdens and hewing stones, besides their three thousand and three hundred overseers; so did the main stress of the work lie upon proselytes: though he raised a tribute for the work, of the nations; not of money, but of men: though thirty thousand Israelites were levied for this service: yet four whole years are spent in so vast a preparation. Christ hath many builders, for the perfecting of his church: thousands of preachers have spent their days and labours upon it, yet still it needs more; still let us pray him for more labourers, and for the redoubling of their pains. Our souls be such knotty trees, and our hearts such rough and hard quarries; that without the mighty pains of many hands, we will hardly lie right and fit in our designed places. Line must be added to line, and letter to letter; a second epistle to the former. It may be, we answer at first with Peter, "Not so, Lord," Acts x. 14; yet after a second or third motion, we grow better advised, ver. 15. It may be, we pass the first and second year without a spiritual tillage; we have heard this holy doctrine once and again, but it bred no cogitations in us, except such as grow of themselves, Isa. xxxvii. 30, natural, worldly, corrupt; yet the third time we may be won with these heavenly comforts, and bring forth the fruits of obedience.

Yet let us beware of protracting our conversion: when we repel or neglect one good motion, we are not sure of a second; yea, he is justly hardened against the second, that hath resisted the first. Sin hath a shrewd title, when it can plead prescription; and Satan thinks his evidence as good as eleven points at law, when he hath once got possession. Let him be sure of thy youth, and he will be confident of thy age. There was an abbot of this land, that desired a piece of ground which lay conveniently for him: the owner refused to sell it; yet with much persuasion was contented to let it. The abbot hired it for his rent, and covenanted to farm it only for one crop. He had it, and sowed it with acorns; a crop that lasted three hundred years. Satan begs but the first crop; let him sow thy youth with acorns, they will grow up with thy years to sturdy oaks, so large and deep-rooted, that they shall last all thy life. Let us take the first opportunity of God's gracious motions and motions; or if we have omitted the first, let us apprehend the second; or if (as it is too true) many have passed unanswered by us, let us embrace the present invitation, and even now with faith and repentance turn to our Saviour, that he may never lose a second labour.

The tenor follows: which is, to stir up our minds. We use not to stir up cold ashes, but embers that be

warm, to rekindle the live coals that are hid under them. The apostle does not profess to teach them new lessons, but to hear them say over their parts: not to catechise them in the foundation and principles; but rather to rub up their memories with a recollection of their former notes, as it were a repetition of his sermons. It argues some mistrust in the master of non-proficiency in the scholar, when he turns him back to the beginning of his book, and appoeth him in his first lesson. St. Peter will not so discourage his disciples, but rather takes it as granted that they knew, and more needed excitation than information; as if he meant not to press the doctrine, but the use. When we lay on green wood, we blow the fire, not stir it; when dry, we stir the fire, and need not blow it. Proselytes stand in need of kindling; well-improved Christians require but stirring. There is mettle in many a good horse, which he will not show till you give him the spur; put him to it, and he answers your desire. Samson sleeps, till he hears, "The Philistines be upon thee," then he ronseth up himself, to their bane. How many a good deed had been lost, if the doer had not been seasonably stirred up!

Why are the words of the wise compared to goads, Eccl. xii. 11, but to show, that the best in God's team need pricking forward? An easy rhetoric draw us to evil; yea, it is hard not to run down the hill. The proneness to sin is so much stronger in our nature than to good, that every least motion prevails for the one, scarce any instigation for the other. Our war against sin and Satan is perpetual; other hostilities admit some truce, ours is not determined but with our lives. Lest therefore we should take a dangerous and unkindly rest, God hath set his ministers, like trumpets and drums, to call us to our arms, to stir up our strengths, that we be not surprised unawares. Let our weapons be always in readiness; as Seneca said of Cæsar, that he did quickly sheathe the sword, but he never laid it off. The sight of a weapon discourageth a thief: while we keep our javelins in our hands, we escape many assaults. It is our office to give you the alarm, and to stir you up; be it your care to maintain the battle. And as the end of all war is peace, so your militant conflicts shall be crowned with victory, and your souls received into the everlasting peace of Jesus Christ.

The order is last, By way of remembrance. This is a just order and method; first to teach the way of the Lord, then to remind men of walking in it. We are not only called teachers, but remembrancers, Isa. lxii. 6. And as this epistle seems to be called after a sort by the author, a rehearsal epistle; so all our sermons are but rehearsal sermons, pressing the doctrine you have already learned, by way of remembrance. There is reasonable good strength in our judgments, but a great decay in our memories: "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them," John xiii. 17. Because you hear these things, you have happy ears; because you see these sacred mysteries, you have happy eyes; because you tread in God's courts, you have happy feet; if you remember these things, you have happy memories; these things if you purpose to do, you have happy resolutions; but these things if you practise, if you do indeed, you have happy souls: and the Lord make us all thus happy.

"Your pure minds." This is the object of his excitation. There is a purity of the skin, an outward profession of purity, an inward corruption of hypocrisy. All the care of hypocrites, is to seem pure: a strange kind of atheism; as if they thought, that their thought was not known to God. Not an oath comes from them in a month, that is well; but scarce

a true word in a twelvemonth, and that is very ill. Sapphira will not stick to lie unto Peter, that durst lie to the Holy Ghost, Acts v. 8. Hypocrisy is a lie unto God, as dissimulation is to man. Such men's actions are but real equivocations. They are not only *lupi in orili*, but *lupi in orilla*; i. e. wolves in a sheep-coat, yea, wolves in a sheep's coat. Like the fruit that undid us all, which was fair to the sight, soft to the touch, sweet to the taste, deadly in its effect. There be many that have pure, shining skins, glorious shows, but black insides. Moses perceiving that the people durst not look upon the sun of his face, clouds it with a veil, Exod. xxxiv. 33; and would rather choose to hide the work of God in himself, than want opportunity of revealing God's will to the people. He does not stand upon terms of reputation: if there be glory in my skin, God did put it there; he would not have set it in my face, if he had meant it should be hid: rather do you hide your faces, that are blushed with your sins; and do not look that, in favour of your weakness, I should wrong God and myself, in seeming less happy than he hath made me. But without all self-respects, he rather modestly hides his glorified countenance from them, that by this means he might deliver God's message to them. Hidden purity is more gracious and acceptable to God, than that which is openly boasted. Such a happy talent is best improved by being laid up; as Moses had more glory by his veil than by his face.

Christian modesty teacheth a wise man, not to expose himself to the fairest show, and to live at the utmost pitch of his strength. There is many a rich stone laid up in the bowels of the earth; many a fair pearl laid up in the bosom of the sea; that never was seen, nor ever shall be. The stones which were laid in the foundation of the temple, were not rude and rugged, but hewn and polished. Albeit they lay buried in the earth, from the eyes of men, they were of equal value with the rest; though less conspicuous, no less precious. No small number of the noble graces of God's servants lie hidden and undiscerned; which are not less acceptable to him, because less notable to others. Hypocrites are all for show, God is all for truth; even the grace concealed shall be crowned. There is many a goodly star, which, because of the height, comes not within our account. The Lord Jesus himself did hide the glory of his Deity under the veil of his flesh, majesty under vileness; and did shut up his great and Divine miracles with, See you tell no man. Not that I would have graces unprofitably buried, but I would not have them proudly boasted. Let us be pure, not puritans. Those hearts be foulest, that care only to seem the purest. The world makes no account of unknown riches; whereas I had rather be rich than be accounted rich. To what end should we dazzle men's eyes with admiration, when God and ourselves are conscious of our secret corruption? Why should we seek to be above those in show, to whom we are inferior in worth? Moses' face was fairer than his veil, his heart fairer than his face: too many have their veil fairer than their face, their face fairer than their heart. Modest virtues shall shine through their veils, when the vain-glorious shall bewray their shame through their coverings. How contrary are hypocrites to that faithful servant of God, Moses! He spake to God bare-faced, to the people veiled; he showed his worst to men, his best to God; but they show their best to men, to God their worst. But God sees both their skin and their heart; and I know not whether he more hates, their skin of dissimulation, or their heart of corruption.

There is purity of mind, without which all other purity is but uncleanness. There is legal purity, that

is, of nature; irrecoverably lost in Adam. "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" Job xiv. 4. Blacks will sooner breed white children. There is evangelical purity, that is, of grace; which all must have that shall be saved. "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart," Psal. xxiv. 3, 4. This pureness is either imputative, whereby the pureness of that immaculate Lamb is made ours: They "have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb," Rev. vii. 14. Or inchoative, inherent pureness: Every man that hath hope in Christ, purifieth himself, as he is pure, 1 John iii. 3. For there must be something of our own in us, though not from us. After that the sun hath given his light to the stars, they shine; principally, by that borrowed light; accessorially, by a light of their own. Whatsoever Christ hath wrought for us, that he hath wrought in us. Or it is comparative, in regard of others: so the godly are myrtles, but in a field of nettles; lilies, but in a forest of thorns; wheat, because there is much chaff by them. Wool may be pure white in respect of pitch, but compare it with the lily; the lily is pure white in respect of wool, but compare it with the driven snow: there is no pureness of man that dare stand the judgment of God. "The stars are not pure in his sight," nor "the heavens," nor the "angels," Job xxv. 5; xv. 15; iv. 18. The right puritan, that saith he hath no sin, 1 John i. 8, is convinced out of his own mouth: even therefore he hath sin, because he says that he hath no sin; that very speech is a sin. The purity of God consists in being without sin; the purity of man in sin not being imputed. The Scripture propounds many examples of purity, yet they all had their blemishes; the brightest day was not without some cloud. "Howl, fir-tree, for the cedar is fallen," Zech. xi. 2: if the gallants be loiled, what shall the underlings do? That is a woeful purity, which does not only choose to stand in the sight of mercy. For perfect purity, *optandum est, conandum est, petendum est, confidendum non est*, we must desire, we must strive, we must seek, but we must not be confident.

Wherein then consists this pureness of mind? Not in any perfection, as if it could be so in the sight of God's justice: what is he living on earth that must not confess, "Against thee, O Lord, have I sinned?" Psal. li. 4. But he is said to have a pure mind, that lives *sine secundato*, without scandal, though not *sine peccato*, without sin; or that takes no liberty to do the least evil: though he doth often admit sin, he does never intend sin. A pure mind cannot consist with an intention of sinning. He that hath resolved to be noent, though he do not the purposed act, before God is not innocent. The undertaking of treason, though the fact be hindered, is treason. Or he that is pure in the inner man. He that is born of God sinneth not, 1 John iii. 9: if with any fighting he could get the victory over flesh and blood, he would never sin. Or he that endeavours to be pure; as having always a respect to that eye, which hath always an eye of respect to him: "Walk before me, and he thou perfect," Gen. xvii. 1. The mind may be said to be pure in three respects.

1. Purity of faith. Faith apprehends the blood of Christ, and this purifies it. So it is rather passive than active; not so much pure as purified. The air no sooner receives the clear aspect of the sun, but it presently becomes light. If Christ send forth the beams of his righteousness into the heart, it is made pure. Blessed is he whose sin is not imputed, Psal. xxxii. 2. That which makes us blessed, makes us pure, for none but the pure in heart are blessed, Matt. v. 8. This is the sole perfection of a Christian, the imputation of Christ's pureness, and the not

imputation of his own impureness. It is in a manner all one, not to have committed sin in act, and not to be held culpable of that sin in guilt. A garment that is thoroughly washed, may be as clean as though it never had been stained. Such were ye, saith Paul, 1 Cor. vi. 11; which implies, that such they are not. If the Lord wash us, shall we not be clean? "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow," Psal. li. 7. It was a costly bath, wherein we were washed before we could be clean: but if any thing could do it, this must. "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin," 1 John i. 7. He prayed till he groaned, he groaned till he wept, he wept till he sweat, he sweat till he bled, he bled till he died; and all to make us a warm bath, wherein our cold and foul souls might be washed pure and clean. Never was any thing washed at so high a rate as the Christian soul. Namaan had an easy cure; "Wash in Jordan," a common and unforbidden river. The diseased in Bethesda found some more difficulty, John v. 7; they must wait the moving of the water by an angel, and be waited on by an officious friend, or they were never the better. Some have washed their bodies in the fairest flowers of the garden, the choice delicacies of nature, the clearest fountains. Histories tell us, that the blood of infants and innocents hath been prescribed for a bath to tyrants. But the Christian's bath is the bath royal, the precious blood of the King of all the world. This only can make us pure. It was the Jews' imprecation, and it proves their vengeance, "His blood be upon us, and upon our children," Matt. xxvii. 25. It may, in a good sense, be our appreciation, and shall be our blessedness. His blood be upon us, and upon our children after us.

2. In purity of repentance: so the conscience knows no foulness by itself, which true repentance hath not sorrowed, and which the mercy of God hath not pardoned. For God esteems sin indeed repented, as if it had never been indeed committed. This, though it finds not the heart pure, yet leaves it purified. The garment of our life gathers many spots, which God suffers us to wash out with our penitent tears. This was David's physic and bath, whensoever he had been sick or fouled with sin: "I make my bed to swim; I water my couch with my tears," Psal. vi. 6. Yea, it seems they were his food also, even his meat and drink: for meat, "My tears were my meat day and night," Psal. xlii. 3. And for drink, "I mingled my drink with weeping," Psal. cii. 9: that was the spice of his cup. Thou writest bitter things against me, when thou makest me to remember the iniquities of my youth, Job xlii. 26. The ten fingers of Moses write bitter things against us, till the finger of Christ wipe them out. St. Paul calls it a hand-writing against us, Col. ii. 14: not that God's laws, like Draco's, were writ in blood; for "the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, and just, and good," Rom. vii. 12. They were holy characters; but our sins made them letters of blood against us. When we commit a sin, we write a bill of our hand against ourselves; whereby we acknowledge our souls to stand indebted to God's justice. Now unless this debt be discharged, and the bond cancelled, to prison we must go; and there lie till we have satisfied the uttermost farthing: and that (God knows) will be long enough; for a farthing is more than we are or can be worth. This black bill is cancelled by Christ only; whose blood hath so defaced and obliterated the reckoning of believers, that God doth not read our receipts, nor call us to accounts. Unbelievers only suffer the whole forfeiture to fall upon their necks.

Now what Christ did with the blood of his body,

that in some sort we must do with the blood of our souls, our penitential tears, that we may be discharged of our sins for ever. One colour laid upon another, doth away the former, and remains itself: as the cunning paintress deals with her face; sometimes she blots out pale, and writes red. Our sins are red as scarlet, our tears white as snow; let these latter fall upon the former, they shall not only blot them out, but stand in their room: so we beautify our conscience, by blotting out red, and writing white, pure innocence. Our sins stand in God's register, till our sorrows come. "Thou tellest my wanderings: put thou my tears into thy bottle: are they not in thy book?" Psal. lvi. 8. The first give place to the last: our wanderings were written in that book; but when our tears come, God blots out wickedness, and writes repentance. And so we have our acquaintance, even a general one, from the beginning of the world; Adam's sin and all, to the day of the date thereof; a full discharge. Pharaoh and his host were not surer drowned in the Red Sea, than Satan and all our sins are drowned in our tears. These the fathers call our second baptism. No soul so polluted, but repentance can wash it clean and pure, and present it blameless to God through the faith of Jesus Christ.

3. In purity of grace; sanctified to a holy life, and devout obedience. Not that sin does not remain, but it shall not reign in us. It will be a tenant, it may be a tyrant; it shall have no dominion, or at least no peaceable one. This usurper would fain be king of man, as the devil writes himself prince of the world; but the pure mind will never acknowledge fealty or allegiance to him. She feels his assaults with grief, but she knows it would be a worse grief to yield unto them. She will not buy her peace with her loss, being assured that this trouble will not last ever: resistance shall be crowned with victory. From sudden thoughts of ill, no man is free; but here is no deliberation, no consent, no delight. There is the conception of sin, and the birth or action of sin. None are pure from the former: the sun cannot be rid of clouds, but he labours to disperse them. It is better to marry than to burn; he does not say, than to be hot. There is great difference between passive fits and heats, and voluntary inflamings. The will of this purified mind in sinning, is not properly *voluntas*, sed *reluctitas*, as it were a will against a man's will. (Aquin.) As the mariner in a tempest doth cast his goods into the water, his rich freight overboard; or the true man assaulted on the way, gives his purse to the thief; yet neither of these with full consent of will. If the regenerate be overcome to do amiss, it is with reluctance before, and with repentance after: sin neither comes in without reluctance, nor goes out without repentance; it got in with blows, it is thrown out with tears.

We are not sin's voluntaries; at the most, but pressed soldiers against our wills. As in a rebellion or tumult, a drum is beaten up, a trumpet sounded, to call a faction together. Some are glad of the occasion, quickly up in arms, apt for mutiny, ready to do mischief: a loyal subject opposeth the conspiracy, strives against it, but cannot prevail with the unruly multitude; yea, he is taken by force, compelled to join with them, and to draw his sword against his awful and lawful sovereign. The subject thus drawn in, is in as much danger as the rest; but a wise and gracious prince doth here distinguish, and while he executeth due vengeance upon the mutineers, he gives this man his free pardon. In an ungracious soul, one passion is enraged, and presently all the affections muster up their forces, and join in the confederacy of sin. But in the faithful there is a resist-

ance, the fear and love of God withstands the hurly-burly; and though the throng of natural lusts prevail against grace, and overcome man to sin, yet the God of wisdom and mercy will forgive him, when the other receives the reward of a rebel.

The pure mind abhors dissimulation; that man neither wrongs others with the sin of deceitfulness, nor wrongs himself with the deceitfulness of sin. In the one he is *rectus corde*, upright in heart, in the other *mundus corde*, pure in heart. (August.) His soul is like Canaan, "a land of brooks and fountains, that spring out of valleys and hills," Deut. xii. 7: there be the springs of knowledge to guide his ways, and brooks of ears to mourn for his errors. His charity stands like those fields of wheat and barley; vines, fig-trees, and pomegranates, are his fruitful meditations and contentful thoughts; oil and honey are the grace of his lips, ver. 8. His understanding is full of good things; his whole life, wells and vineyards, to relieve and comfort himself and others, Deut. vi. 11. His very rocks are iron, and his hills yield brass, Deut. viii. 9; his most barren works have some profit. His whole self is like the garden of Eden, wherein stands the tree of life, Jesus Christ. When he dies, one paradise enters into another.

This is the blessedness of a pure heart: but in the world there is heart enough, and good store of pureness; yet they have ill luck, they cannot meet; it is rare to find a pure mind. It comes to my memory, what I have found observed of the word *conscientia*; that it ever had ill luck in the church, and could never be found at once in full syllables. *Conscientia*, all together, he calls devotion: take away the first syllable, it is *scientia*, knowledge: cut off the next, it is *entia*, means, or worldly maintenance. First, in the times of profaneness, there was *sci* and *entia*, learning and living, knowledge and maintenance: but *con* was left out, devotion was wanting; they were ungodly men. In the next age, there was *con* and *entia*, devotion and exhibition; a rich and religious, yea, a superstitious number; but *sci* knowledge, was failing; they were not the most learned clerks. In the third age, *con* and *sci*, learning and devotion, were both lost, and only *entia* was left; they had the honours and manors, the fat of the land. But now in this last age, it is come round; we have *con* and *sci*, (let our thankfulness bless God for it,) a learned and religious clergy; only our *entia* is taken from us, our livelihood and subsistence is exhausted by sacrilege. The like fortune hath a pure heart in the world; pureness goes one way, and the heart another way, and these two have much ado to meet. There is no lack of hearts, every man hath one, some have more than one; and for pureness, it abounds: proud dames will have pure houses, pure tables, pure floors; their ruffs of the purest linen, their garments of the purest stuff, their diet of the purest meat, their chains of the purest gold: hypocrites will have pure eyes, pure tongues, pure habits, pure garbs and gestures. The profane sort are all for a brave heart, they make a pish at pureness: the dissembling sort are all for a show of pureness, no matter for the heart. This is the devil's plot, to keep pureness and the heart asunder. Purity will do well in nothing without the heart; the heart can be happy in nothing without purity. It is great pity two such sweet companions should be kept asunder; the God of all grace and mercy bring them both together.

Travellers, when the ways be fair and pleasant, make the longer journeys: a pure mind and a holy conscience are such sweet and delightful things, that I take leave to prosecute this argument a little further, by way of application. We all desire a clean soul; where shall we have it? "Create in me a

clean heart, O God," saith David, Psal. li. 10. Neither saint nor angel stands in his way; he troubles not them with his prayers. Abraham knows us not, Israel cannot hear us: David loved and honoured the memory of Abraham and Jacob, his fathers; yet he does not present them his petitions. I touch it, with indignation at that superstitious prayer of the Romanists, "O holy virgin Dorothy, bless us by thy power, and create in us a new heart." But let us know, none can create a clean heart, but he that made all hearts: he only that formed the spirit of man, Zech. xii. 1, can reform the spirit in man. And to show that a pure mind is so far from being a common blessing, or easy attainment, it is called a point of creation.

1. God made the world by his word, and by his word he makes a pure heart within us. If he give but his *fiat*, or his "Be thou clean," Matt. viii. 3, our leprosy is gone. Yea, this seems to be more difficult; for the world was created by the word of his mouth, but the mind is purified by the blood of his heart.

2. God made the world of no pre-existent matter; for before it, there was nothing but himself, and himself cannot be parted. This was wonderful, yet the creating of a pure heart is a greater wonder. For then, as there was nothing to exist, so nothing to resist: he made the mass, and that was a passive matter, to be formed at his pleasure. But here is a rebellious opposition, a stubborn will to be subdued. There God said, Let it be so, and it was so: here he hath spoken a hundred times by his word, Thus I would have it; and we retort, Thus we will not have it. I would have gathered thee, but thou wouldst not, Matt. xxiii. 37. Thus he is more troubled to make a pure mind, than he was to create a world. How do they abuse the opportunity of grace, and cheat their own souls, that promise themselves an easy conversion at their own pleasure! God made the world in six days; how many years hath he been in purifying our hearts, and yet it is not done!

3. God took six distinct days in creating the world, and he seems to have six distinct works in the cleansing of our minds. First, in the first day he made the light, when darkness was upon the face of the deep: light and darkness were not *duo posita*: but he "divided the light from the darkness; and he called the light, day, and the darkness, night," Gen. i. 4, 5. Darkness overwhelms us by nature, and God's first work is to enlighten our understandings by the knowledge of his will. He that "commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ," 2 Cor. iv. 6. Yet some darkness still remains; and we may call the light, knowledge, and the darkness, ignorance. Secondly, in the second day he made the heavens, and set them a moving in their right courses. His second work here, is to frame in us a heavenly will, to rectify our obedience; that we might do his will on earth, as it is done in heaven. He "divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament," Gen. i. 7. Our firmament is *terminus cognoscibilium*: i. e. a limit of things that can be known: school-tricks are waters above the firmament. Thirdly, in the third day he separated the sea from the dry land: and he "called the dry land, earth; and the gathering together of the waters, seas," ver. 10. So here, he causeth the deluge of natural corruption to sink down, that the firmness and beauty of this new heart might appear: and he calleth the dry land, grace; and the confined waters, nature. Fourthly, in the fourth day he made the sun, moon, and stars, ver. 14, all those refulgent lights of heaven. So here he createth in us faith, charity, joy, patience, and

peace; those lamps and ornaments, that give lustre to a renewed soul. He "made two great lights; the greater to rule the day, and the less to rule the night," ver. 16. Our two great lights are faith and charity: one rules the day, keeps our mind in a perpetual light; the other governs the night, doth good in the darkest shadows of necessity, of discomfort. The sun shines smilingly on thee in thy prosperity; the moon, that is thy comfort in adversity: but take heed of abusing either; for so thy sun may be darkened, and God will turn thy moon into blood. Fifthly, in the fifth day he replenished the air with fowls, the sea with fishes, the earth with beasts, ver. 20. So here, he fills every corner of the heart with sanctified affections. We are full, as the world then, of creeping things and flying things: let us mount up to heaven by grace, though we creep upon the earth by nature. Now came that Increase and multiply, ver. 22; the seeds were sown that should soon multiply. The Lord sows in our hearts his holy word, the seed of eternal life; let us be fruitful of good works. Indeed bad doctrine is a seed too; but God did not see it was good. Lastly, in the sixth day, he made man, ver. 26; and here he remakes him, creates him a new man in Christ Jesus. You will say, he is able to do this in a moment, as he wrought upon the malefactor on the cross at his last hour. So he could have made the world in a day, in an hour, in a minute: but it pleaseth his wisdom to take longer time, both in that work and in this; that we might take heed of fouling that heart, which he hath taken so much pains to make clean. As exquisitely and deliberately as the great world was made, as perfectly good as all things were, the sin of man soon corrupted all. After all God's cost and labour upon us, our minds may be quickly defiled. Now when God had despatched all his works in six days, he rested the seventh: so if we labour, with him, in the cleansing of our souls, all this week of working-days, we shall then rest with him in the seventh, the heavenly and eternal sabbath of the saints.

To conclude. We see how sweet the condition of this pure mind is. Hugo saith of that man, He deals with his friend in a way of favour, with his enemy in a way of patience, with all in a way of benevolence, with whom he can in a way of beneficence. God doth not charge him with his own sins, as if he had never done them; nor with the sins of others, because he did not approve them. He is composed in prosperous fortunes, with adverse not dejected. Set Belshazzar in the midst of his princes; his cupboard of plate furnished with the sacred bowls of Jerusalem, the spoil of God's holy temple; and in contempt of their Owner, carousing healths in them to his mistresses, and singing carols in the praise of his carved gods; yet because there is a foul heart within him, this sumptuous, this presumptuous feast shall end in horror; and that such a horror, as shall put the blood out of his face, the music out of his head, the joy out of his heart for ever. But lay Lazarus at the gate of unmercifulness, lay Job on the very dunghill of miserableness, and give them an honest and quiet heart; and Adam could not have been so happy in Paradise without it, as they were out of Paradise with it.

The man of a pure mind is always of a cheerful look, because there are no secret snibblings within him; he is not troubled with that they call sobbing of the heart: the good man may be evermore the merriest man. The holy soul is the love of God, the joy of angels; her eyes dare look upon the glorious Judge, whom she knows to be her Saviour. Her heart is courageous, she dares stand the thunder; and when guilty minds creep into corners, she is con-

fident in Him that will defend her. She challengeth the whole world to accuse her of injustice, and fears not the subordination of false witnesses, because she knows the testimony of her own conscience. Her language is free and bold, without the guiltiness of broken stops. Her forehead is clear and smooth, as the brow of heaven. Her knees are ever bent to the throne of grace, her feet travelling toward Jerusalem, her hands weaving the web of righteousness. Good men bless her, good angels guard her, the Son of God doth kiss her; and when all the world shall be turned to a burning pile, she shall be brought safe to the mountain of joy, and set in a throne of blessedness for ever.

VERSE 2.

That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour,

The pretended title of that great usurper over the consciences of the Christian world, is fetched from the succession of St. Peter. How do his sycophants magnify St. Peter! But it is their cunning, to reflect all that honour upon their master. Otherwise, they would shuffle him up in the crowd of the saints, and make no more reckoning of him than they do of St. Paul; and that is little enough. But now they call him the *coryphe* of the apostles, the prince of their souls, the porter of paradise, and supreme lieutenant of the crown of heaven: as we find it in a book of theirs, which they call, The Occupation of the Soul: certainly, the vainest occupation that ever soul was bound apprentice to. They tell us, that he was ever placed first; first mentioned; that he wrought the first miracle upon Ananias; that he made the first sermon to the Gentiles after the coming down of the Holy Ghost; that he did first visit such as were newly baptized; that he called and held the first council; that the church prayed solicitously for him, as for her head, when he was in prison; that St. Paul did not hold his revelations for assured and authentic, till they had passed under the approbation of St. Peter; that the churches where he was resident as bishop are all patriarchal; that by his appointment Rome is the mother and mistress of all the rest. They have a world of other glorious titles for him, all which they mean to themselves. As even a pope said, Æneas Sylvius, that was Pius II.: The former popes did wisely in setting the lawyers on work to debate, whether the donation of Constantine the Great to Sylvester, were good and valid in law, or no; the better to skip over the matter in fact, whether there was any such thing at all, or no. So he doth now employ his parasites, to heap mountains of honours and attributes upon Peter's successor and to strive who shall most deify him: by this means to smother up the question, whether the pope be St. Peter's successor, or no.

I need not tell you of other differences, they are too palpable: Peter forsook the world, and followed Christ; the pope hath renounced Christ, and follows the world. Peter had neither gold nor silver, Acts iii. 6, but he had gifts and graces; the pope hath neither gifts nor graces, but for gold and silver, abundance. Peter would not suffer Captain Cornelius to crouch to him; the pope rides on men's shoulders, treads upon emperors' necks, and keeps a coil like Satan in every kingdom. But to pass over these, St. Peter refers us to the doctrine of the prophets

and apostles, for our only direction; the pope tries his own title, and imposeth upon our consciences only by tradition. I hope forbidding of marriage was none of Peter's commandment; worshipping of images, none of his; prayer to the saints, prayer for the dead, far from any rule of St. Peter's. He never taught subjects to shake off allegiance to their sovereigns; he never allowed, much less sainted, traitors. "Fear God, honour the king;" this is the voice of Peter. Fear God, kill the king; that is the voice of his successor. How diverse, averse, adverse, perverse is this successor!

Let all them that will hearken to that which St. Peter says, (and all they must hearken to it, that will come to the place where St. Peter is,) observe my text; "Be mindful of the words," &c. Let all human inventions, in the matter of salvation, die abortive; this is the way, let us walk in it: "Be mindful of the words," &c.

Wherein he commends to us, first, a treasure. Secondly, the use of that treasure. The treasure is the doctrine of the prophets and apostles: the use of that doctrine and treasure is our carefulness to observe it; Be mindful.

The general parts then are two:

1. The object of their mindfulness, The words, &c.

2. Their mindfulness of that object, Be ye mindful.

Of the object first severally, and then jointly. The former speciality of the object is,

"The words which were spoken before by the holy prophets." Not to dwell upon the particulars; as that, first, they are words, for their plain certainty; not shadows, and abstruse paradoxes. Secondly, spoken before, for their antiquity; not things of yesterday, no new devices. Thirdly, spoken by the prophets, for the authority; men that had their commission immediately from God himself. Prophet hath ever been a reverend and honourable name. Fourthly, by holy prophets, for the sanctity: they passed not through the lips of a Balaam, or Caiaphas; but from men whose persons God hath sanctified for his heavenly errands. They were the protonotaries of heaven, the registers of the truth, the secretaries of the Holy Ghost, the spokesmen of the Deity, the mouths of Him who is the fountain of wisdom and oracle of all truth. We see accomplished what they foretold, and their prophecy become history.

The words of the prophets, is the law of God. "This is the law and the prophets," Matt. vii. 12. "All the prophets and the law prophesied until John," Matt. xi. 13. God hath joined them together, let no man put them asunder. But it is objected, "The law and the prophets were until John," Luke xvi. 16; why then should we be mindful of them now? They were until John, as a preparation and prediction of Christ's coming: he being come, that prediction, that preparation is ended; but still the law and the prophets remain, both to confirm us in the faith of Christ, and direct us the way of obedience to Christ. A man doth not despise his schoolmaster because he hath learned his lesson. The prophets were expounders of the law, the law was the text of the prophets. The decalogue was that Magna Charta, to which, as to their common principle, all their conclusions were reducible. As in arithmetic, when we pass the number of ten, all the latter numbers be but compounded resumptions of the former; so all the doctrine of the prophets is but the exposition and application of those ten words, which God's own finger wrote in two tables. Therefore Malachi, the last of the prophets, to make a transition to the gospel, in the very point of his passage towards the prediction of Christ and of John Baptist, seals up the

Old Testament in his last chapter, with, "Remember ye the law of Moses my servant," Mal. iv. 4. Moses was a prophet, and a servant; the law-bringer, not the law-maker; yet God calls it the law of his servant Moses.

The sum, then, of these words of the prophets, is the law of God: to this the apostle here refers us; as Isaiah did before, "To the law and to the testimony," Isa. viii. 20. How great is the honour of it, how honourable the greatness! "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul," &c. Psal. xix. 7: there is the great honour. "I have written to them the great things of my law," Hos. viii. 12; and, "Fulfil ye the royal law," Jam. ii. 8: there is the honourable greatness. "Master, which is the great commandment in the law?" was the lawyer's question, Matt. xxii. 36; whereas all God's commandments were great, upon assignation of any one above the rest, he meant to take occasion of accusing him. (Hierome.) Therefore Christ's answer is full of circumspection: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," ver. 37: this he calls, "the first and great commandment." To this epitome of the first table he subjoins, that "the second is like unto it;" and lastly adds, "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets," ver. 40. To this all laws are subjected, and from this all good laws are derived. For authority, it gives all the decrees of men the check-mate. St. Augustine hath from Seneca a plain confession, that the Jews, otherwise a contemptible people, wheresoever they came, *victi victoribus leges dederunt*: i. e. the conquered gave laws to their conquerors. (Civ. Dei, lib. 6. cap. 11.) To make a law, is the chiefest point of majesty; and the best law-makers have commended their best constitutions, by deriving them from God's commandments; as if they could no way better confirm them, than by confessing where they stole them. Some of them have been so short of this conformity, that they have set down gross sins for their learned statutes, and trespassed upon common principles. Among some of them, murder hath scarce been punishable, adultery was pardonable, and robbery commendable. But the pure, perfect, and unchangeable law of God leaves no evil uncensured, no good uncommended; for which large comprehension, Peter Martyr compared the ten commandments to the ten predicaments.

The best of this world's wisdom, is but to drive corruption inwards; *Vitia non abscondere, sed abscondere*: i. e. Not to cut off, but to conceal vices: (Lactant. lib. 3. cap. 26.) and in making men conformitants, many times to make them hypocrites. But God's word hath a reach to the very secret purposes and inmost affections; sharper than a two-edged sword, dividing between the joints and the marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intents of the heart, Heb. iv. 12. Like an anatomist, searching and prying into every piece of a member, and reading a sound lecture upon the smallest particle of a particle, spelling, like a critic, the fractions of imperfect, and as yet unshapen, cogitations of concupiscence. Whereas of a thought, kept within the compass of a thought, no law of mortal man can determine. So that if a sinner can wash his guilty hands with Pilate, and not betray his wicked heart by word, deed, or writing, he cannot be by man found out.

Such is the perfection and majesty of this sacred doctrine, though all advocates should be corrupt, and all champions cowards, that it is not a bare advertisement, which is granted by the papists, but a rule; not a potential rule, only in regard of fitness, but an actual rule, Gal. vi. 16; not partial only, for that is contrary to the nature of a rule, which admits of no

addition, but totally definitive and directive for God's service and all our actions. "I have seen an end of all perfection: but thy commandment is exceeding broad," Psal. cxix. 96. Broad enough, but we have staggering feet: the drunkard can scarce keep his path, though it be as broad as the king's high-way. Our souls' legs are born crooked, and by the custom of sin we warp them more and more. We take perverse, irregular, and crooked steps, because we walk in the night of our own wilful blindness. The way is broad enough, but the proud bear too great a breadth for the way. The rule is straight, but we are crooked; and, that which is crooked can hardly be made straight, Eccl. i. 15. Crooked branches are straightened two ways; either by the hand of man, or by the fire. Those whom the hand of God's grace doth not rectify, are bound in bundles like thorns, and cast into that unquenchable oven, the fiery pit of hell.

"The commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour." This is the other speciality of the object. The prophets were legal apostles, the apostles are evangelical prophets. Both these came to the world with commandments: they do often indeed persuade us, counsel us, beseech us; ("I beseech you, by the mercies of God," Rom. xii. 1; "We pray you in Christ's stead," 2 Cor. v. 20;) but even those requests be precepts. Doth not God therefore command, because he entreats? The very suits of kings are imperative; they must not ask and be denied: much more shall we find the persuasions of God obligations to us. It is his gracious merey, that entreats us to do that, which we are bound to do without entreaty. Every wise man will be easily requested to do himself good. When God sues to us to save us, yea, to accept of salvation, we are sullen and desperate fools, to hinder our own preferment. Paul pleads to Philemon, his age and bondage, for arguments; the power of his authority, and patent for it, in Christ; yet, as if love were the strongest charm, "for love's sake I rather beseech thee," Philem. 8, 9. Was not this petition as valid as any injunction, in the heart of a friend, of a brother?

That the apostles had power to command, is so far from being a question, that it is plain they could convey this power to others, by the imposition of their hands. "I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things," 1 Tim. vi. 13. And, "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded," ver. 17. I charge thee, to charge them. In the former, there is episcopal authority: he that gives the charge, if he be not the chief on the bench, yet is he greater than the jury. In the other, there is evangelical sufficiency; by virtue whereof, Timothy is enabled to charge men, that they receive no other doctrine, 1 Tim. i. 3. Charge the rich: the rich are commonly great; nobility and wealth are joined together. Curse not the king in thy thought, nor the rich in thy bed-chamber, Eccl. x. 20. That rich nameless churl, Luke xvi. 19, is guessed by some to be Herod, or some other king. The rich man is a little king among his neighbours, a petty god to his underlings; *Dires, quasi deus*. Yet, be they rich or noble, they are under the command of an apostle; yea, under the charge of a priest, in the word of Jesus Christ. Kings themselves are not here exempted, though they have absolute command over all men in their dominions: as the fathers interpret that of King David, "Against thee only have I sinned," Psal. li. 4; because he could sin against nobody else; yet Nathan may reprove him in the name of God. That transported hireling soared too high a pitch, when in his imperious bull he commands the angels. But we may

safely say, that all powers beneath the angels are liable to our spiritual charge. Even the rich men, that speak with command to others, must be commanded by their preachers. "I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me," Matt. viii. 9. The centurion had many under his authority, himself is under the authority of another. We have a spiritual charge over their souls, that have a temporal power over our bodies.

God hath committed the keys of heaven to his church: some let them rust in their hands, for want of use: teachers, that do not teach; that can neither open the doors of heaven for others, nor for themselves. Some alter the wards, that they can neither open nor shut. Alas, who sees not, that the pontificians have so bruised the keys with breaking men's heads, and so furred them with the blood of innocents, that they are not able to open the gates of heaven? Some keep them bright, with fair and continual usage, whom God blesteth with the letting in of many souls.

Surely, if now we shall appeal to your consciences, the fault is not in the keys, but all the rust is in the locks, your worldly hearts. God hath set us to command; and we command, and go without. Alas, by this contempt we cannot gain, but you are sure to lose; for if our word have lost its power in you, you have lost your right in heaven. We dare wager our own coming there, that you ordinarily come not (thither) without us. It is true, men come to church, look us in the face, and give us the hearing; but we have not the credit with them to believe us. "Lord, who hath believed our report?" Rom. x. 16. We are weak, and you are strong; you are honourable, and we are despised. But if we may not be your commanders, yet let us be your counsellors. Or if that place be too good for us, yet still we will be humble petitioners to you, that you would be pleased to save your own souls. If your houses were on fire, and we should command you to quench them; if your bodies were sick, and we should charge you to send for the physician; you would think it a kindness in us more than needs: you would do all this, though we held our peace. Of all your utensils and movables, do you make least account of your souls? Alas, that all our precepts must be turned into tears, weeping over you, as Christ over Jerusalem, for "ye would not!" Alas, that we should give a charge, and no soldiers come in to the standard of Christ! You will say, we are servants; and servants are not to command, but to obey. Indeed we are Christ's servants, and your servants for Christ's sake; and if you could set us to a meaner office, we would not refuse it, to win your hearts. But servants may be employed to bring their master's commands to their fellows. God called Moses his servant, yet he gave him authority to make laws for the government of his people. God hath sent his servants, and his farmers evil entreated them: he sent his Son, "saying, They will reverence my Son," Matt. xxi. 37; but they did not. If he now see men misuse his servants, he will no more trust them with his own Son Jesus.

But if men disregard our command, let them reverence a higher than ours, the apostles'; yea, a higher than theirs, the commandment of God himself. Nor can we here distinguish, but to the wilful deceiving of ourselves; for you receive from your preachers none other command, than they received from the apostles, and the apostles from the Holy Ghost. It is not our word, but theirs; not theirs, but the Lord's. The apostles were the trumpets of the word, the cornets of the living God, the notaries of heaven, the secretaries of the church, the first princes and chief

peers of Christianity; whose mouths were filled with oracles, and their hands with miracles, and their pens with mysteries: the publishers of mercy, and engrossers of the covenant of grace: the master-builders of God's house, and the noble columns in the building. The twelve patriarchs, from whose heavenly seed of the word descend all true Israelites. The twelve princes, generals and conductors of God's army, that camped about the great Moses, the manhood of the Son, the tabernacle of the Divinity. The twelve searchers, sent to take a view of the land of promise; who have brought us certain news of the inestimable blessings there, flowing with the milk and honey of eternal joys and comforts. The twelve selected men, that took twelve stones out of the channel of Jordan, and pitched them in Gilgal; not omitting to set twelve other stones in the midst of Jordan, where the ark of God had stood; placing their holy monuments both in the river, for a witness to the Jews, and out of the river, for a testimony to the Gentiles. The twelve fountains, which the people found in the desert, at Elim, Exod. xv. 27; those wells of salvation, where thirsty souls sit down and drink. The twelve loaves of shew-bread, which stood before the face of the Highest; that only the High Priest Jesus brake in morsels, and gave to his church. The twelve precious stones, set in the pectoral of Aaron; choice living stones, taken into the breast of Christ. The twelve young lions, which support the throne of the great King; not the like in any kingdom, 1 Kings x. 20. The twelve oxen, that carried the molten sea of God's infinite mercies to all parts of the world; three looking east, and three to the west; three to the north, and three to the south, 1 Kings vii. 25. The twelve officers of the glorious Solomon, our King of peace; that make his provision of holy souls, throughout all the coasts of Israel. The twelve stars in the crown of the church, that spouse of Christ, Rev. xii. 1. We may call them the twelve months, that make up the year of grace. The twelve manner of fruits of the tree of life, that yields her fruit every month, Rev. xxii. 2. The twelve angels, the twelve gates, the twelve foundations, of the new Jerusalem; whose length, breadth, and height was twelve thousand furlongs. And they shall "sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel," Matt. xix. 28. So precise is the number of twelve, that when one of them miscarried, another must be chose, to supply his place, Acts i. 25. From them we are said to receive the twelve articles of our belief; from them we know that we receive the doctrine of the gospel. "Ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus," 1 Thess. iv. 2. So work, "as we have commanded you," ver. 11. They had power to command; I would we thus far as were sure of grace to obey.

Thus far we have considered these objects severally; now take them jointly, and they afford us some more observations.

1. Neither prophets nor apostles did ever command in their own names; but the former came with, "Thus saith the Lord;" and the other in the name of Christ. By virtue of this commission and victorious name, they commanded all things, even diseases and devils to depart, and were not disobeyed. "By the name of Jesus Christ doth this man stand here before you whole," Acts iv. 10. As they did all by his power, so they referred all to his glory; and added, "This stone, set at nought of you builders, is become the head of the corner." This is the fundamental stone; "We are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone," Eph. ii. 20. They are foundations to us, Christ is the sole foundation of all.

"The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb," Rev. xxi. 14. They are foundations of the wall, not of the city; not of salvation, but of the ministry of salvation; not principal, but instrumental; not the builders, but the stones. A foundation cannot lay itself, it must have a builder. Christ laid them first of all other, in the bottom of the wall; in that respect they are called foundations. As Ezra vii. 9, "Upon the first day of the first month began he to go up," or, was the foundation of the going up; that is, the first or chief leader.

Thus, not one apostle, but all are equally foundations. Contrary to that senseless, ungodly, unlucky corruption of the text, that would transfer all to Peter, under the colour of the words, "upon this rock;" whereas the Scripture calls the twelve apostles equally fundamental. Mind the commands of us, not of me, saith Peter himself here. Christ himself indeed is that Rock; "Other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ," 1 Cor. iii. 11; Eph. ii. 20. First, he is the foundation-stone, the foundation of our faith; upon whom we build so sure and firm, that neither gusts nor floods, neither storms nor streams, can overthrow us, Matt. vii. 25. Secondly, he is the corner-stone, the root of love and peace, which binds us together in the unity of the Spirit. Malicious and contentious souls are loose rubbish and refuse, not stones in God's edifice. In all our book controversies, and sword controversies, let us refer the decision to him: then do we set the corner-stone in the right place. Thirdly, he is the peace-making stone: all sin is a make-bate, he is the peace-maker between God and us: that Jacob's stone, whereon we rest our heads and hearts, and see angels descending to comfort us: upon this stone we lie down, and have quiet rest, Psal. iv. 8. Fourthly, he is the covenant-making stone: a stone of covenant betwixt Jacob and his father Laban, Gen. xxxi. 45; the league between our heavenly Father and us: Mizpah, a beacon or watch-tower, to warn us of our enemies. Fifthly, he is the triumphal stone, that shall give us the victory; David's stone, wherewith he slew the giant; by this we shall be able to conquer Satan and the most monstrous sins, and triumph over them. Sixthly, he is the rock stone, which being smitten by the rod, gushed out floods of water. When he was stricken with death, there issued out streams of blood to save us; better than all their privileges, though they had oil out of the rock, and honey out of the stone. "Let the inhabitants of the rock sing from the top of the mountains," Isa. xlii. 11. But if a son ask bread, will his father give him a stone? Matt. vii. 9. Nay, but this stone is bread; a living stone, the bread of life. He did command this stone to be made bread, Matt. iv. 3: therefore we may as well say, Give us the living rock, as, Give us our daily bread. But let us take heed of offending this stone: for "whosoever shall fall upon this stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it shall grind him to powder," Matt. xxi. 44. We may fall upon this stone, or this stone may fall upon us; and then it had been better that a millstone were hanged about our necks, and with us thrown into the sea. But blessed are they that conform their lives to the doctrine of the apostles and prophets, and build their faith on this foundation.

2. St. Peter refers us to the words of the prophets, and commandments of the apostles, and precisely chargeth our mindfulness with these lessons. Not human traditions, not the constitutions and impositions of usurpers, that pretend the authority of the apostles; fond men, that undertake to devise a better way to heaven, than he that dwells there hath

set down, who will admit none that come not his way: these are but artificial paper walls, set up against the apostolical canons. Not the inventions of men, though of those pure brains that pretend most, yea, mainly, for the word; for sometimes they prove but knowings, that cry, Here 'tis, here 'tis, when their nests are far enough off. Athenus tells us that the Stoics had an opinion, that no man could do well but a wise man; not so much as make good lentil-broth. And therefore because no man was held wise but Zeno, no man would make lentil-pottage but after his receipt; and that receipt was so curious and exact, that it prescribed the twelfth part of a coriander seed. We have many simple men, and more simple and sinful women, that have little or nothing besides a will and a tongue; yet are so conceited of doctrine, that if Zeno prescribe it not, the broth is naught, death is in the pot: and for every sup of broth they must run to Zeno; when all at the best is but a poor mess of pottage. These men have coats of their own weaving, whose inside is altogether their own lining; only they face it with the words of a prophet or apostle, and have their text from the Bible.

Not the wisdom of the philosophers, nor all the morality that dropped in verse from the pens of the poets, are the instruments of our building up to heaven. The wine that is made of the vines of the mountains, is finer and pleasanter than the grapes of the valleys. What are the dregs of this flat bottom, man's knowledge, to the wisdom that descendeth from above, Jam. iii. 17, the hill and throne of God? I grant, there is use of the other: secular arts are like lobbies to the lodging chambers; nay, not so good, but rather the garnish and painting of the rooms; nay, inferior still, (for the former are for muniment, the other for ornament,) but indeed stairs to the parlours, as we make them to our pulpits: herbs in a glass of wine; salads and sauces to tempt down our meats; but still the meat itself is the word of God, that Christ may be All in all.

3. Neither the prophets without the apostles, nor the apostles without the prophets, but both together. The gospel without the law may lift men up to presumption; the law without the gospel may sink them down to desperation. God hath provided a gracious remedy for both these fatal evils of man; the sweet composition of severity and mercy, the mixture of law and gospel; as Moses and Christ met upon the mount. To direct our obedience, he hath given us his law: to answer for our disobedience, he hath added his gospel; that what we could not do in ourselves, we might see perfectly done for us by Jesus Christ. The law by commanding binds; faith by obtaining loosens, says Austin. The prophets wrapped up the gospel in the shadows of the law; the apostles opened the law in the clear light of the gospel. The law was given that grace might be sought, grace was given that the law might be fulfilled, says Austin again. "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ," John i. 17. Woe to them that adhere to the law, and think to fulfil it well enough without the gospel! the gun-powder shall sooner be able to stand the fire, and not be blown up. Woe to them that so stick to the gospel, that they cast away all respect of the law! they would be fed from God's own trencher, and that of his daintiest fare, and yet do him no service. But their livery shall be pulled over their ears, and they sent away with an "I know you not." But blessed are they that join them both together in heart and life; that have one eye upon the words of the prophets, the law of God, to give it obedience with all their powers; and the other eye upon the doctrine

of the apostles, the gospel of Christ, to believe in it with all the hearts. The Lord shall bind them up in the bundle of life, lift up their souls to the participation of joy with the prophets and apostles, and make them heirs with the Lord of all, his holy Son Jesus Christ.

4. The rule of truth is delivered to us by the prophets and apostles. Truth is God's peculiar, appropriated to his holy word: "He begat us with the word of truth," Jam. i. 18. "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth," John xvii. 17. The law is his truth: "The judgments of the Lord are true," Psal. lxxix. 9. The gospel is his truth: "Ye have been taught, as the truth is in Jesus," Eph. iv. 21. Yea, an eminent truth; distinguished from natural or philosophical truth. Nature is true in her principles, philosophy true in her deductions and conclusions, the law true in her impositions; all true, but no man can rest his salvation upon them. The law was perfect truth, but we were weak. It could not save us, because we could not keep it. Natural truth is like the sea; there is abundance of it, but so salt that it can never slake our thirst. For legal truth; suppose a malfactor comes before a just judge; you may rest upon it that he will do him justice, but he must look for no mercy: but on the evangelical truth we may repose our souls. The good man will yield to all truth, and never be ashamed of such a victory. What is more glorious than to overcome of truth? (August.) This truth is the word of God; let it overcome us with our willing submission, or it shall overcome us against our wills to our confusion.

This word and truth is written by the holy prophets and apostles; for both in creation and redemption, God wrought all by his word. "Peter shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved," Acts xi. 14. This is that rule which binds the conscience; let us walk by this rule, Phil. iii. 16. Our neighbours of Rome have set up new Lesbian rules, which they prescribe as necessary to salvation. The rule of St. Francis, the rule of St. Dominick; their Augustines, Jacobins, Benedictines: yea, they hold one man's baptism better than another's, one man's order holier than another's, one man's rule perfecter than another's; any rule better than that which St. Paul so blesseth, the rule of regeneration: "And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God," Gal. vi. 16. If that apostle were now living on earth, to see their innumerable orders, and ask them as they pass, what they are; and hear one answer, I am a Franciscan; another, I am a Dominican; another, I am a Carthusian; and scarce any one say, I am a Christian; he had cause to think them all antichristian. He was angry enough at that, when one said, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; and called it carnal, I Cor. iii. 4. But now Moses and Samuel, Paul and Apollos, are almost worn out, and we have monks and friars in their room. Yea, that whore of Babylon hath in these latter days brought forth a monster, Jesuitism; a mongrel, begot betwixt superstition and policy. Which though Pope Nicholas the Fourth, in a blasphemous bull, preferred before the Franciscans, and the Franciscans before the angels; yea, that Ignatius Loyola lived a more perfect life than Christ himself; yet certainly, to all honest hearts they appear that "mystery of iniquity," which St. Paul prophesied should wait upon the antichrist, 2 Thess. ii. 7. If the manifest profession of lying, of murders, of treasons, of the butchering of princes, and raising tumults in states, be not iniquity, what is? If again, for kings to admit them to their council-tables, to follow their damned advices, to give them colleges

and mighty exhibitions, be not a mystery, there is none. Put them together; that the horriest sinners upon the face of the earth should screw themselves into the favour of rich men and princes, surely can be no less than the mystery of iniquity; and this, to me, is instead of a thousand proofs, that their master is the antichrist. That they should do all this under colour of the Christian faith, and make God himself his own executioner, is a monstrous mystery.

O ye blessed secretaries of heaven, how would you disdain to have their Decretals come in competition with your sacred canons! How would it grieve you, to see Jesus persecuted by a Jesuit! That blessed name hath always cast out devils, it never brought in any; though these sons of Sceva have made bold to usurp it, and come in fiends, under it. Shall we call that Christ's religion, which is not derived from the prophets and apostles; nay, which contradicts both apostles and prophets? Even the prelates of our own church have compared their schoolmen to astronomers; who to save the phenomenon, framed to their conceit eccentrics, and epicycles, and a wonderful engine of orbs, though no such things were: so they, in the council of Trent, to save their Romish polity, devised a world of distinctions, evasions, shifts, and paradoxes; and instead of prophets and apostles, brought us poets and philosophers; that not only we, whom they hold adversaries, but many of their own, have said, concerning the laws of that council, That they are beholden to Aristotle for divers articles of their faith. This I thought good to touch, to show the difference betwixt St. Peter's direction in my text, and his direction that pretends himself St. Peter's successor, and that he can never err out of that chair. If they have forsaken the prophets and apostles, it is time for us to forsake them. If they allege, that they still retain the Scripture, and keep themselves to the words thereof; I answer, that Saul kept part of God's commandment, in destroying Amalek; yet for all that, Samuel tells him plainly, "Thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord hath rejected thee," 1 Sam. xv. 26. Or if they should take nothing from these words, yet their adding to them, and equalizing their own constitutions with them, shall make them liable to that fearful curse, Rev. xxii. 18.

"That ye may be mindful of the words." This mindfulness consists in two things; our observation, and our conversation.

For observation; God never meant his word for a vanishing sound; that which is kept upon eternal record in heaven, and is a constant dweller in the elected heart, Col. iii. 16, must not be a sojourner, much less a passenger, with us. The Lord takes it in foul scorn at the hand of his creatures, to speak, and not be heard; to be heard, and not minded. Most men hear sermons, as they entertain news out of the Indies; matters unconcerning them. Let us mind these things; if any virtue be commended, to practise it; if any vice be condemned, to avoid it; if any consolation be insinuated, to appropriate it; if any good example be proponned, to follow it: so mind that thou hearest, as if it were spoken only to thyself. Is it comfort? repent, and it is thine. Is it judgment? repent, and it is not thine. They minded John Baptist's preaching, that came to him after the sermon, with those material queries, "What shall we do?" Luke iii. 10. As Domitian, perceiving many of his predecessors in the empire to be so hated of the people, asked, How might so vile a man be so loved? and was answered, *Tu fac contra*; i. e. Examine what they did, and do thou the contrary. Hearing prepares us for the way of salvation, minding disposeth us for the travail of it, doing is the

journey itself. The remaining flesh will tempt us: Joab's sword had not got a more usual trick of falling out of the sheath, than our corrupt nature to run into pollutions. Those Agags, that are spared by the indulgent eye of Saul, favoured by the flesh, must be hewed in pieces by the sword of Samuel, by the word of the Spirit. He that is furnished with weapons, and suffers a feeble, unarmed enemy to overcome him, hath no courage in him. If the flesh, which in all regenerate souls hath received its death's-wound, foil us at every bout, we do not mind our weapon, or (which is more cowardly) are afraid to use it. Some indeed feel no assaults; they have believed and minded the word always, as they pretend; but the state which was always good, was in very deed never good.

We are bound to mind both prophets and apostles. The large looking-glass presents to a man his whole self; when it is broken into many small pieces, the least of them doth so still, but not so perfectly. Every line of the law shows us our miserable estate, every promise of the gospel yields matter of comfort: let this glass stand whole before us, that we may observe all our lineaments by it; then shall we be known to ourselves, Jam. i. 25. He that receiveth the seed into good ground, heareth and understandeth, and brings forth fruits, Matt. xiii. 23. The ground must be susceptible, fit to receive the seed. The seed must be fit for the quality of the ground. As we do not thunder judgments to the broken heart, nor offer the breasts of mercy to the lips of profaneness; so let every one mind his own portion: let sinners apply those threatenings that belong to them, that by repentance they may have right to those blessings which yet belong not to them. The word of God is like gold, saith the psalmist. Gold is so ductile that an ounce of it will be made to cover an acre of land. We can have no wants, which this riches cannot supply, if we mindfully apprehend it. One says, The law is a glass to show our spots ("I had not known sin, but by the law," Rom. vii. 7); the gospel is a fountain to cleanse them. The law is the hand which points out the way; the gospel is the arm which carries into the way, saith another. They that mind not the prophetic hand of direction, shall not have the evangelical hand of comportation. We cannot find the truth without God, nor know God without Christ, nor reach Christ without the Spirit, nor receive the Spirit without the word, nor profit by the word without faith. (Tertull.) If we truly mind the law and the prophets, we find ourselves miserable sinners. The whole of man is the decalogue inverted; to stand in a full contrariety to all the law, is the very definition of man. The minding of this, will work sorrow: Abraham cannot but be troubled with malapert Hagar; the flesh is a curst concubine; as Anthony of Guexarra would not wish a man worse sorrow for his sins, than to have an ill wife. The feeling of this smart will teach us to decline the cause: contraries are cured by contraries. Hast thou cursed? Bless. Hast thou defrauded? Restore. Hast thou envied? Love. Hast thou offended in excess? Fast.

Many a sin had been avoided by this mindfulness; and yet that sin is the worst that is done after mindfulness. There is a practical judgment in the heart; while it considers (on the one side) the danger of sin, in offending God, and (on the other side) the pleasure and profit of sin, which redounds to the flesh; while it puts in the one balance, God and all his commandments; in the other, sin and all its appurtenances. If now after this poisoning, it prefers sin, it had better never have weighed them: this is indeed to refuse Christ, and to choose Barabbas.

There was never more need of motives to mindfulness (for this connects the two verses). If the pure minds had need be warned and awakened, what shall we say to the dissolute and indisposed souls, that love on the Lord's days their own private thresholds, or a room in taverns, better than the courts of God's house? We cry to drunkenness, that wallows in the puddle of excess; Be mindful, lest the day of judgment find you beasts; and leave you no drink, but a draught of the lake of brimstone, that shall ever inflame, never cool your tongues. Yes, and they are mindful, upon the next occasion to follow their cups. We cry to adultery, tumbling in the luxurious bed of uncleanness; Be mindful, lest yourselves and your harlots be bound up in bundles, and cast into an unquenchable bed of flames. And they are mindful; but it is to watch the next opportunity of their former wantonness. We cry to idolatry, that lulls herself in the bosom of that Babylonish whore; Be mindful, or God shall throw you and your Jezebel into the bottomless pit, Rev. ii. 22. And they are mindful; but it is for the next mass, to worship that stepdame on their knees. We cry to voluptuousness, that swaggers in the supposed jubilee of her endless pleasures; Be mindful, lest your pastime be shut up in weeping, and howling, and gnashing of teeth. And they are mindful; but it is of their next rendezvous appointed for riot. We cry to oppression, that crusheth the bones of the poor with her bloody jaws; Be mindful. And they are mindful; but it is of the next cruel purchase. It were great pity, if all their violence and extortion should not extort from the hands of God their own portion of vengeance. We cry to blasphemers, with whom oaths be as common as the stones in our streets; Be mindful, or God shall fill your mouths with lamentations and curses. We cry to all sinners; Be mindful of the words of prophets and apostles: but as Marius said, he could not hear the laws for the noise of arms; so they cannot be mindful of these things, for being mindful of their sins and pleasures.

This is the fulness of time, wherein God gave his Son unto sinners; and this is the fulness of sin, wherein this gift is despised by sinners. Salvation is preached to the lost, and it is lost among them: life is offered to the dead, and it is become dead with them. God came unto men, and men will not come unto God. Wonder, O heaven, and be amazed, O earth, at the dulness of our unthankful hearts. It is time for you to be mindful; yea, the time is almost past: now is your salvation nearer than when you first believed; and now is your damnation nearer than when it was first threatened. We are come to the eleventh hour of the day; there is but a twelfth, a few minutes of time between us and judgment. The Son of man hastens his coming, more than the sun of heaven hastens his going down: O be mindful. Shall we tarry to be started with the shrillest trumpet that ever was blown? Our mindfulness shall then grow perfect, and we shall be wise, but too late. Then will it only serve to revolve those infinite favours of God, that could not win us; and those innumerable persuasions, that could not work upon us. "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head," Matt. viii. 20. The foxes have holes in us; crafts, deceits, and subtleties lodge in our hearts: the birds of the air have nests in us; pride, vain-glory, and ambition, dwell in our heads: but neither head nor heart will give any room to Christ: he hath no chamber, no bed, no pillow in our souls, whereon to rest his weary head, that is wet with the dew of heaven, while he stands waiting at our doors. It will grieve all the veins of their

hearts, to be mindful of these things when they are past recovery; to think in hell how easily they might have been saved, while they lived on earth, and did not regard it. But now let us be mindful of God, and he will be mindful of us. Is he so near us, even within us, and do we forget him? Shall a whole day pass, and neither we speak to God, nor hear him speaking to us? This were too much between man and wife. No, Lord, we will be mindful of thee, in giving heed to thy word. Be thou mindful of us in thy mercy, and remember us in the day of Jesus Christ.

Next, this is for our conversation. It is a barren mindfulness that does not declare itself in a holy fruitfulness. I have heard of a child of nine years' old, that could say every syllable of the New Testament by heart, and not fail in returning a line in the right chapter and verse: here was an admirable memory. But if all this mindfulness be so confined, if it extend not to practice, we had better never have heard of God's word. The use of operative arts is all in all, especially in divinity; without which the vine (through mindfulness) may yield sweet juice, but (through want of practice) it will not make so much as a pin or peg for service. The prophets and apostles did not only teach, but do the will of their Master: as we are mindful of their doctrines, so let us also heed their examples. A speechless life hath more force in it than a lifeless speech. Good works are unanswerable syllogisms, invincible demonstrations; and make any men preachers; even preachers like the sun and moon, that their sound goes over all the world, publishing God's glory; not in Hebrew, Greek, or Latin, which many barbarous nations understand not, but in a common language, the mother tongue of every country. The bells that tolled to the sermons of the prophets and apostles, were their miracles; these made way into men's hearts for their doctrine. (Chrysost.) Miracles are ceased, and now good conversation comes in their place. They carried, as the soldiers of Gideon, in one hand the burning lamp of a good life, in the other the shrill trumpets of preaching: with these weapons they conquered the Midian world. Two things are to the being of a Christian; profession, and practice of the truth. The best argument of our conversion, is our good conversation: our works justify that faith, which doth justify us.

The apostles did not only preach heavenly sermons, but do gracious deeds; therefore a whole book was written of their acts. St. Luke wrote of "all that Jesus began to do and teach," Acts i. 1; who was a Prophet mighty, not only in word, but in deed, Luke xxiv. 19. "Go and tell John what things ye have seen and heard," Luke vii. 22. Words are but wind, and vanish into wind; a ship leaves as much impression in the sea, as they do in many a heart. There is an artificial argument, which is all the countryman's logic: as the martyr answered Bishop Bonner, My Lord, I cannot dispute for the truth, but I can die for the truth: and that was a taking argument. To do well, is the art of a Christian: to do, is every man's; to do well, is the Christian's. *Bene*, well, is of few letters, of great operation; for it is the force of all arts. Rhetoric is the art of speaking well; logic, the art of disputing well; magistracy, the art of governing well: so Christianity is the art of living well. Every magistrate that governs, doth not govern well; nor doth every Christian that lives, live well. Be ye doers of the word: we must distinguish between *agere*, to act, and *facere*, to do: the first is to do a business whereof nothing comes after it: *facere* is to make a thing; as when a building is made, it remains. Actors present a show

on the stage, which being spoken, and ended, there is an end of it; it hath no further extent. But factors trade and traffic in foreign countries; and bring in their masters commodities and adventures, out of which ariseth profit. All the gain of our souls comes from the doing of these things; without which knowledge leaves us but dishonourable to God, uncomfortable to ourselves, scandalous to others; in no nearer terms to happiness, than Balaam, and Judas, and the devil himself; who the more they know, it is the worse for them; they do but teach God how to condemn them.

Thus he that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow. Erasmus in a dialogue calls such a man, *Cyclops evangeliphorus*, A gospel-bearing Cyclops; a swaggering ruffian that would be thought a Christian. He had hanging at his girdle, on the one side, a Testament fairly gilt, bound, and bossed; on the other side, a bottle of rich sack. To convince him, he is asked, What if he were tied to carry that bottle always at his girdle, and never to taste of it; or to taste it only, and never to drink it down: were not this a punishment as real, as that of Tantalus was poetical? But what if he did, as his manner was, drink soundly of it; would it not then warm his heart, quicken his spirits, cheer his countenance? Yes; but much more would that book do so, if he would spiritually feed on it, concoct, digest, and turn it into nutriment, in his life and conversation. Alas, to carry a Bible in our hands, and not to have a lesson of it in our hearts, not to be mindful of this doctrine in our practice, is but like the ass that carries dainty burdens and feeds upon thistles: as the worldling hath indeed no more riches, than he useth to his comfort. The Hebrews had an imprecation; "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning," Psal. cxxxvii. 5. If men will not do the good they know, they shall soon lose the knowledge of the evil they do. It being just with God to punish the shipwreck of a good conscience, with the loss of the freight of knowledge. He that never gave prescript, does not write himself physician: why dost thou refuse good deeds, and call thyself Christian? The angel called his name Wonderful, because he did wonderfully, and made good his name by his action, Judg. xiii. 18, 19. If we lay claim to that honourable name of Christians, let us do the works of Christians. Here lies the difficulty of all: the doctrine of the prophets and apostles is contained in a little room; the sanctions and rules to be done, are set down in brief summaries; so they are soon learned, easily known. But the motions, directions, reprehensions, persuasions, and such appurtenances of practice; these have enlarged the volume of the Scriptures; these lengthen our sermons, and multiply books. Line upon line, and precept to precept; not for new laws, but pressing obedience to the old. To be effectually mindful,

1. Let us desire the faculty and facility of doing: earnestly to desire it, is one half, yea, the best half. Socrates could say, He that would be an honest man shall soon be one, and is past the hardest part of the work. A hearty affection to goodness, is the first step to goodness, a great help to goodness, a special sign of goodness. This will breed prayer for goodness, to the fountain of all goodness, Christ; without whom we can do nothing, but lie becalmed, unable to move; as a ship on the sea, or a mill on the land, without the wind, and breath of his Spirit. Thus let us begin the morning in a serious acknowledgment of our own disability and deadness to every good work; praying for will, as if we had none; and begging grace, as if we were quite empty; grace preventing and subsequent, grace operative and co-

operative, grace preserving and perfecting. Let us beseech him not only to regenerate us with new principles of motion, but to renew his inspirations upon every act of ours; that we by Christ, or rather Christ by us and in us, may do all things.

2. Let us be thrifty husbands of time and means to be spiritually rich. If a man neglects the occasion, the occasion will neglect him. As we desire that all sermons should be pertinent and applicatory to us, (as if, like our suits of apparel, they were made for us, and for nobody else, they do so fit us,) so let our ears drink in the matter, that our eyes be fixed on our own conscience. Let us lay ourselves to the rule, and examine how we and that do agree. At the end of every period let us ask our heart, How have I obeyed this precept? how have I been bettered by this reproof? how comforted by this promise? Wanton hands gather only the flowers, but good housewives look to the fruit and herbs of the garden. Some, like little children, mind not the liquor in the cup, but only the paint and garnish; and in fondness of that, spill the liquor. Or like monkeys, who looking in a glass, think they see another monkey's face, not their own. We are so kind to ourselves, that we can find any man's fault in the glass of the Scripture sooner than our own. "We have piped to you, and ye have not danced," Matt. xi. 17; all that you observe, is the sound of our pipe, not how your own feet do dance unto it.

3. Let us reduce all to practice. Surely, preaching shall do us no good, except we come with a mind to be bettered by it. Now it were hard, if after all this discourse of mindfulness, you have not been mindful of the discourse. The alarm of a clock is set, to summon us to business at such an hour; but if we wake not with the alarm, all is lost. It is a common saying, Now the sermon is done; and it may be, you long to say so at this time. But consider, it is not done, till you have done it. The Christian Tell-truth speaks of a lady, who asked her servants whether the sermon was done or no. They answered, Yes, it is done. But she smartly replied, *Dieta, non facta conio*; i.e. It is spoken, it is not done. You have had many sermons; for constancy against backsliding, for patience against murmuring, for charity against covetousness, for sobriety against excess, for refraining your tongues from profane speeches and ungodly oaths; for obedience to the words of the prophets and apostles, against the formal profession of perfunctory hearers: sermons ever spoken, never done. O these were tedious orations; but on whose side lay the tediousness? How unhappy are all these holy discourses lost, through unmindfulness! How is unmindfulness itself lost in the want of practice! The doer is blessed in his deed. It is our deed, to speak God's word unto you; to do it, is both ours and yours: doing crowns all. I will hold you no longer. Now you may say, This sermon is spoken and done by the preacher: God grant we may say, It is practised and done by the hearers.

VERSE 3.

Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts.

THE main scope of the apostle, both in the latter part of the former chapter, the beginning of this, and the connexion of both, is to caution his converts of relapsing into those sins, from which they are re-

deemed by the knowledge of Jesus Christ. This strong bulwark he hath fortified against all the battery of the world, and assaults of Satan, by many arguments. First, by discovering the policies and villainies of seducers, those fatal engines of hell, set to bring back escaped souls to the kingdom of darkness, chap. ii. 18. Secondly, by the miserable deceit of those that are perverted by them; who leaving the true liberty, which they counted a bondage, ver. 19, fall into the true bondage, which they vainly count liberty: so, of God's servants, they become Satan's slaves and sin's drudges. Thirdly, by the execrable event of this apostasy; whereby they become besotted men, entangled birds, polluted beasts, incarnate devils, ver. 20, &c. Fourthly, by redoubling his epistles, to inculcate and drive this holy nail of admonition into their minds, chap. iii. 1; that they may never forget the wretched estate from which they are delivered. Fifthly, by way of encouragement, comforting them in the benefit of their happy progress; wherein if they persevere with steady faithfulness, their end shall be everlasting life, ver. 2. Sixthly, and lastly, by preventing a scandal, and removing a block, which the malicious spirit might lay in their ways; the atheistical impiety of many in the latter times; who both by their mouths and manners, persuasions and examples, call Christianity into question, and move a doubt, whether there be a God or no, ver. 3. Nor do they only dispute this by way of problem; but are impudent and audacious in the negative, and labour to destroy all opinion of that Deity in the world, which made both the world and them. This then being the main centre, the pole, and cardinal axletree, whereon this place moves, I will in general say a little of it.

1. What man hath so steadily trod on God's earth, that he hath not stumbled; or stumbled, and not fallen; yea, fallen, and hath not lain some space on the ground? With what a trembling heart may we look upon the miscarriages of some of God's dearest servants! Noah and Lot by wine, David and Samson by women, and Solomon worst of all. Who can do other than yearn and fear, to see the woeful wreck of so rich and goodly a vessel! Was not Solomon he, whose younger years God honoured with a message of love? to whom God twice appeared in a gracious vision, renewing the covenant of his favour? whom he singled out from all the generations of men, to be the founder of that glorious temple; which was as clearly the type of heaven, as himself was of Christ? Was not he that deep sea of wisdom, which God had ordained to send forth rivers and fountains of all divine and human knowledge, to all nations, to all ages? Was not he one of those select secretaries, whose hand it pleased the Almighty to employ in three pieces of the divine monuments of sacred Scriptures? Yet even this Solomon fell into a foul defection. Which of us can hope to aspire unto his graces? Which of us can promise to secure ourselves from his ruin? We fall, even to the lowest hell, if God do not prevent us, if he do not sustain us. "Uphold me according unto thy word, that I may live," Psal. cxix. 116: all our weakness is in ourselves, all our strength in God. Let the Lord be strong in our weakness, that our weak knees may be ever steady in his strength. If we fall from our God, as Mephibosheth from his nurse, we presently grow lame. If these holy ones fell, we have cause to look to our standing.

2. Sin hath a thousand tongues to plead for it, God hath lent me a weak one to plead against it. Let us think thus, when we are tempted to sin; that we are now about to lose our God, to cast away all the hopes and comforts of another world, to rob ourselves of all those sweet mercies we enjoyed; to

thrust the Spirit out of doors, which cannot abide to dwell within the noisome stench of our sins; to lock ourselves out of the gates of heaven; to open the gates of hell, and cast ourselves down headlong into that dungeon. Thus let fear teach us to repel temptations, but love more prevailing. Have we found our God so gracious to us, that he hath denied us nothing, either in earth or heaven; and shall we not deny our own lusts for his sake? Hath our dear Saviour bought our souls at such a price, and shall he not have them? Was he crucified for our sins, and shall we by our sins crucify him again? Do we take his wages, and do his enemy service? Was his blood so little worth, that we should tread it under our feet? Hath he honoured us, that we should dishonour him? Is this the fruit of his beneficence, our thankfulness? Doth he mean us blessedness, and is this the way we take to come unto it? Hath he prepared heaven for us, and do we thus prepare ourselves for heaven? Is this the recompence of his love, to do that which he hates? If we would make surer this remedy, let us look upwards, backwards, inwards, forwards. First, upwards, at the omnipotent greatness and infinite goodness of that God, in whose face we sin. If we could truly discern the holiness of his nature, the nature of his mercy, though there were no hell, no punishment, we would not transgress. Secondly, backwards, to the innumerable favours wherewith he hath blessed, graced, honoured us; all which are so many bonds, that oblige us to obedience. Thirdly, inwards, to that noble calling wherewith he hath dignified us; the holy profession we have made of that calling; the eye of the world fixed upon that profession; the vow and covenant whereby we have confirmed it; the gracious beginnings of God's Spirit in us, which by this present sin we are about to extinguish. Fourthly, forwards, to the joy which will follow upon our forbearance: compare but the momentary and unpleasing delight of a sin in doing, with that sweet peace of conscience and blessed expectation of glory, which we preserve by avoiding it. If we could think of all this in a temptation, we would fling defiance in the face of Satan; and refuse for the short pleasure of a filthy sin, to lose all these happy and lasting comforts.

3. But alas, there be many that sin and live not, but there are none that live and sin not. Our comfort is, we have a constant God; who, whom he loves, to the end he loves, John xiii. 1. "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed," Mal. iii. 6. "My loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail," Psal. lxxxix. 33. The fall of Solomon was a spectacle able to affright all the sons of men; yet not without some glimpse of comfort. Sensible grace might seem to leave him, not final mercy. In the desperate winter, the sap was gone down to the root, though it showed not in the branches. Solomon removed; the word of God removed not: "My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips," ver. 34. The Lord's favour doth not depend upon man's obedience. If Solomon shall suffer his faithfulness to fail towards his God, God will not requite him with the failing of his faithfulness to Solomon. If Solomon break his covenant with God, God will not break his covenant with the father of Solomon, with the son of David. His correction is limited, he shall smart, he shall not perish. This is our only tenure, The mercy of God endures for ever: his promise is yea and amen in Christ; and while we change, his word shall stand. This is that which gives strength to the languishing, comfort to the despairing, to the dying life. Whatsoever we are, God will be still himself; true to his

covenant, constant to his decree. The sins of his chosen can neither frustrate his counsel, nor outstrip his mercy. Their offence hath gone before, their repentance shall follow after; not more slow than sure. Almost ten months doth David run on impetuously in a way of his own, rough and dangerous; at last the conscience of his sin, and fear of judgment, shall bring him on his knees; "I have sinned greatly in that I have done," 2 Sam. xxiv. 10. It is possible for a sin not to hurt only, but to sojourn in the holiest soul; but though it sojourn there as a stranger, it shall not dwell there as an owner. The heart that shall be saved, after some rovings of error, will not be long ere it return home to itself; and fall out with that ill guide wherewith it was misled, and with itself for being misled. Now it is resolved into tears, and breathes forth nothing but sighs, and confessions, and deprecations. Solomon, of a wanton lover, shall become a grave preacher of mortification, and quench those inordinate flames with the tears of his repentance. You might hear him sighing deeply betwixt every word of that his solemn penance, which he would needs enjoin himself before all the world: I have sinned, and am weary of my vanities. Hear now the end of all, Fear God, and keep his commandments, Eccl. xii. 13.

4. But as they that fear the Lord, will not from this mercy fetch matter of presumption; so if any do presume, let them hear their correction. The justice of God is inseparable from his love; there be rods for the backs of sinners, though they be the children of his own fatherhood. All their devout penance cannot avoid temporal punishments: no child would be whipped, if he might escape for crying. Nothing but love and peace sounded in the name of Solomon; nothing else was found in his reign, while he held in good terms with God. But when once he fell foul with his Maker, all things began to be troubled; and he found many enemies. God that did put away David's sin, even his adultery clothed with murder, upon his penitence, did not yet forbear to strike him; not only in the death of a misbegotten infant, but in the ruin of his children that nearer concerned him. When with great humiliation he sought for pardon of that needless muster, yet he hath but the choice of three terrible scourges, with which of them he had rather to bleed. He shall have the favour of an election, not of a remission. God would have us make account that our peace ends with our innocence; the same sin that sets debate between God and us, arms all creatures against us. It is pity we should be at any quiet, while we are fallen out with the God of peace. Sleep pays no debts, but debt breaks many a sleep. When the household-stuff of a merchant that died far in debt was set forth to sale, there was one that bought only a pillow; because he thought it had some rare virtue in it to get one asleep, seeing he could sleep on it that owed so many debts. But if men be deep in arrears with God, far in his debt, and yet can sleep and be secure, God bless me from their bed or pillow. Surely I will not go up into my bed, nor give sleep to mine eyes, until I find out a place for the Lord, Psal. cxxxii. 3—5: yea, till the Lord find a place in me. If the father be angry with the son, no joy will down with him; he refuseth not only his sport and pleasure, but even meat and sleep, till he be reconciled. Only then we can be merry, when God hath spoken peace to us in Jesus Christ.

"Knowing this first," &c. There be some that allow of the prophets, not of the apostles; as the blinded Jews. Some stick to the apostles, and mind not the prophets; as profane libertines, that would have the benefit of the gospel, but not be tied to the

law. Some deny neither the prophets nor apostles in word, but both in effect; while they prefer to them both their own traditions and constitutions, as do the papists. There be other that deny all, reject all; which are the atheists: upon whose discovery we are now fallen.

"Knowing this first;" be not ignorant of so infallible a truth. "That there shall come;" if none such yet appear, they will be manifest too soon. "In the last days;" all times have been evil, the last are the worst: some perhaps may antedate this term, for the apostles' time was not free from infidels. "Scoffers;" such as make a mock of all religion and godliness, and labour to disgrace the worship of God with foul aspersions. "Walking after their own lusts;" this is the end and scope of all their forced and forged imputations: they would put out the candle, that they might walk the more securely in the dark. The word of truth controls their vicious affections; therefore they, to maintain those affections, control the word of truth: but the truth shall confound them all.

In the former verse St. Peter charged us with the mindfulness of the prophets; now he is become a prophet himself, foretelling future things that shall happen in the latter times. The parts of the text are,

A preparation, Knowing this first.

A predication, There shall come in the last days.

A description, Scoffers, walking after their own lusts.

In the preparation we have to observe three things.

1. The carefulness of the apostle to remove a scandal, that might trouble them in their way of integrity. If this be the way of truth, why is it not generally embraced? Why do the great politicians of the world, which have so deep an insight into the nature of things, despise it? Why do they expose it to contempt, if it were the infallible rule of verity? To clear this dilemma, to resolve this doubt, know this first, that such men shall come in the last times; it stands with God's ordinance; not a scold shall fall upon his gospel, nor any misusage be done to his servants, without a providence. It is his just will to befooled all those that will be wise without him. Yea, therefore is it the more likely to be the truth, because the wits of the world dispute against it. Where shall you find Tertullus, but feed and retained against Paul? If a stranger come, all the dogs of the town will be barking at him. There is nothing causeth so much noise and wrangling, as the opposition of goodness.

Example is a cruel tyrant, and commands imitation. There is one artless persuasion, that prevails more with the world than all the places of reason: Thus did my forefathers: Thus do the most: I am neither the first nor the last. How many millions miscarry upon this ground! Men commonly think that either safe or pardonable, for which they can plead a precedent. But they sail in a weak vessel, that have no more warrant for their resolution, than the practice of others. The mind can never be steady, while it stands upon others' feet; nor until it be settled upon such grounds of assurance, that it will rather lead than follow: till it can say with Joshua, Whatsoever becomes of the world, I and my house will serve the Lord, Josh. xxiv. 15. Woe be to him, whom the scoffs of the world can deprive of his faith! Say, the stream of the time doth run against godliness, shall we not swim against the stream? You will reply, What can one man do against a whole throng of wickedness? Yet this good comes of an unprevailing resistance, that God forbears to plague where he finds but a sprinkling of faith. As the celestial bodies, which being carried about with the

sway of the highest sphere, yet creep on their own ways; so let us continue the course of our own holiness, against the swing of common corruptions. Thus shall we both deliver our own souls, and help to withhold judgment from others. The hooting of the owl stops not the singing of the nightingale; nor doth the eagle forbear her flight, because there is a raven in her way: the barking of the dog stays not the shining of the moon. Never let the taunts of Ishmael make Isaac out of love with his inheritance.

2. Knowledge is needful, not only of the main substance, but even of circumstances: there is no instructive matter whereof God would have us ignorant. The way of salvation, that is the best knowledge; that one thing needful, without which we cannot be happy. Seek for it as for hid treasures, Prov. ii. 4. The mine of gold lies not within the reach of the first spade; we must dig deep to find it. First seek the kingdom of heaven, Matt. vi. 33; then refuse not temporal things. There be some things we would know for avoidance: "Mark them which cause divisions, and avoid them," Rom. xvi. 17. It is a true saying, Knowledge is no burden; the more a man hath, the less he feels the weight. That he wants, you may hear him confess; you never hear him complain of too much. He that sits down with an imagined sufficiency of knowledge, is not at all delivered from the mist of ignorance. The pontificians flatter their people, as those confederates of Korah did Israel. The congregation is holy enough; The people are wise enough. But what, do we look to be made wise by miracle? to have all knowledge inspired into us at once? Must not Moses be trained up in the wisdom of Egypt, and Paul in the school of Gamaliel? It may be, we are but newly dedicated to the Lord, and God hath but begun with us, because we have yet but begun with him: we may not look for sudden motions, and strange inspirations, without time, growth, and degrees. Scholars do not shoot up in a night, like mushrooms; nor is their coming to knowledge like Caesar's expedition to conquest; *Veni, vidi, vici*, I came, I saw, I conquered. Some early wits have presumed to wrest knowledge from their mother in a short space; as the prodigal son did wring his portion out of the hands of his father: and I would to God, that what they got by sudden and uncouth achieving, they would not, as he did, waste it again by riotous living. Shall they that never fig at their desks, so quickly know enough to serve their turns, that they should sit down, and sing *Plautite*, to their own brains?

A little knowledge puffs up, much humbles. The famous wits of the time, that are the gardens and ornaments of secular learning, scorn to hang on the lips of a priest for knowledge. Who can teach them? Preachers are but bunglers: they will scarce consult the book of God, except it be for niceties and criticisms. Daniel humbly went to the Lord for his revelations: are they wiser than Daniel? *Proficiendo lego, legendo proficio*. In improving I read, by reading I improve; (August.) and yet he was no small clerk that said so. Other men are fain to search the bowels of the earth for gold; they are strangely happy that find it in the superficial skin. What are they the heirs of Solomon, and so have wisdom by entailment? Alas, he could not give this to his own son for a legacy. He bequeathed all his labour to him; yet he saith, "Who knoweth whether he shall be a wise man or a fool?" Eccl. ii. 19. As the greatest persons cannot give themselves children, so the wisest cannot give their children wisdom. He that reads the story of Rehoboam shall find that Solomon's wit was not propagated. Many a fool hath had a wiser son than that wisest father.

There is store of wit in the world; I dare not so much commend the plenty of wisdom. This is pure, peaceable, gentle, &c. Jam. iii. 17. But the evils of the age bewray, that men contend rather for credit than for instruction: as wrangling gamblers show they play for money, not for recreation. Pride is the fruit that too commonly grows on this tree of knowledge. Thou thinkest thyself a knowing man, quick in apprehension, present of invention, sound in judgment; praise God for this; thou wast not born so. Another is neither witty, nor intelligent, nor judicious; despise him not for this; God knows whether thou thyself mayest not die so. Presumptuous knowledge may be overcome with distraction, and subtlety end in an apoplexy; yea, and beat out her own brains. Common experience maketh it more than probable, that unless wit be seasoned with grace, and understanding with sobriety, a man may most miserably survive his own wit, and outlive his own understanding. Knowledge, only for private satisfaction, is but a courtesan, more for pleasure than for propagation. Yet God would have us know, and that both good and evil, not only his friends, but even his very enemies; as here the scoffing atheists. As himself hath *scientiam apprehensionis*, i. e. the knowledge of apprehension, whereby he knows all; and *scientiam approbationis*, i. e. the knowledge of approbation, whereby he only knows his elect. 2 Tim. ii. 19: so we are to know both good and evil; both by the knowledge of distinction, good only by the knowledge of approbation.

But many refuse to know, because they would not be bound to do; they are mere sceptics, because they would not be practicers. They care not to examine which is the true religion, that of Rome, or this of England, because they desire to be of neither the one nor the other. So the slothful unthrift hears how one neighbour is troubled with preserving his young lambs, another with ploughing his grounds, weeding his grain, inning his harvest; how unseasonable showers cross their hopes; therefore he applauds himself in his stupid sluggishness, and cries, Well fare nothing once by the year. The indifferent worldling sees this man vexed for his zeal, that other hated for his knowledge; a third persecuted, martyred for the profession of his faith: and he says within himself, Well fare a quiet ignorance. So his body is but like a lump of scarce-moving earth, and his soul a standing puddle in the midst of it. He cares not to put any difference between the right and the wrong, between the scoffers and the contemned; the holy and unholy are all one to him. But, as one saith, because they will not know what it is to distinguish, they shall be forced to feel what it is to be distinguished; when Christ shall put them on the left hand, among the goats, with a Go, ye cursed. "Then shall ye discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not," Mal. iii. 18. Alas, for the common religion of our times, which is scarce better than Socrates' uncertainty: the people perish for want of knowledge; not that there is any lack of manna, but they will not gather it. They are ignorant, because they desire to be so. I know there be some, that of evident truths make disputable problems; as, Whether Rome be the true church, Whether God may be worshipped before images, Whether the sabbath be not a fit day to play and revel on, Whether the elect can finally fall from grace: shortly it will come to this, Whether the Scripture be Scripture; and, Whether there be a God, and Christ, or no. But woe to them that doubt, where God is plain! The Lord shall come "in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of Jesus

Christ," 2 Thess. i. 8. If flaming fire be their portion, that knew not God, and could not; how terrible shall be their vengeance, that might know him, and would not!

3. We must know this; that is granted: and then the place is assigned; we must know it first. The apostle doth not mean a priority of excellency, but of convenience. There be far greater and more noble objects of our knowledge, which he had formerly propounded, and presumes they had happily digested. But now he comes to discover certain spirits of contradiction, and chargeth them to take notice of this first, that such men shall be in the last days; whom they may know when they meet them, by these qualities, as a thief is descried by his marks; as a traveller is premonished, there will robbers lie in the way: lest they close in with you unsuspected, by these tokens you shall discern them, and avoid them. If you meet with profane beasts in the shapes of men, scoffing at all religion, and giving themselves over to sensuality, you see nothing but what you did foresee. You knew first there would be such, and you see now there are such; it falls but out according to my prediction. Behold, I have told you before, John xvi. 4.

This then is the sum of it: Know this first, learn this lesson before you take out a new; when you have rehearsed this well, I will read you another. There be some that care not to know, and there be some that care for nothing else but to know. "Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth," 2 Tim. iii. 7: yea, ever knowing, but never coming to the practice of the truth. Like some sick men that lie bed-ridden, having their senses, memory, and speech; but no faculty locomotive, no power to stir hand or foot. Or like tedious musicians, ever tuning, never playing. They would devour ten sermons a week, but digest not one rule or doctrine. Still they are calling for more lessons, not minding to learn this first. He was no common fool, that being somewhat fearful of the water, when the king bade him ride in further and deeper, for fear of foundering his horse; answered him, Soft and fair, let him drink up this first. Let those unnatural appetites be so served, that are calling for their afternoon-bevers, before they have concocted their dinners; Soft and fair, digest this first. Know this first, saith our apostle; let us see some good proof of that you have already heard, in your new lives, and then we shall cheerfully come to you with new lessons. Be content to know first one thing, and then another; that by degrees you may come to the fulness of knowledge, and grow up to the measure of the stature of Jesus Christ.

Thus for the preparation: the prediction follows; wherein are two points. First, They shall come. Secondly, when they shall come, in the last days.

1. They "shall come." Far be it from us here, to touch God with the least aspersion of sin. Shall any man inquire, how there can be such stirs, tumults, and garboils in the world, whenas God sits at the helm? The question is hard, and being pressed too far may prove dangerous. St. Augustine himself confesseth, that after it had racked and tortured him, to find out the cause of evil, it turned him into a Manichean heretic. A modest and short answer is that of the school. In particular administrations, a provident ruler preventeth, what in him lies, all inconveniences. But in the universal government, it seemed best to the Divine wisdom to suffer some evil; not for want of power to hinder it, but out of his abundant goodness. If God did not permit some evil, we should want much good; the good of his justice and mercy, which shine forth both in his severe judgments and gracious indulgence. Goodness (without this) had

not been so illustrated; her opposite makes it more amiable. As out of the salt, brackish sea sweet showers are exhaled, so from man's evil the Almighty power hath drawn the comfortable dews of grace in our Lord Jesus Christ. These deriders of religion cannot fetch in God as a patron of their impiety; God shall fetch in them as unwilling instruments of his glory. They are not thus wicked because God foretold it; but therefore God foretold it, because they will be thus wicked, that their wickedness might not hurt his chosen.

As sin is a punishment of sin, it is a part of justice: the Holy One of Israel doth not abhor to use even the grossest sins to his own just purposes. While our wills are free to our own choice, his decrees are as necessary as just. The house of Judah would have fought against Israel for Rehoboam, but God forbade them: "For this thing is from me," saith the Lord, 1 Kings xii. 24. We may observe, Jeroboam's plot, the people's insolence, the young men's misadvice, the prince's unseasonable austerity; all disposed by the omnipotent Providence to accomplish his just decree: he had purposed it, what shall hinder it? All these might have done otherwise, for any force that was offered to their wills; all would do no otherwise, than if there had been no preordination in heaven. Israel had forsaken the Lord, and worshipped Ashtaroth, and Chemosh, and Milcom: God owes them a whipping; the frowardness of Rehoboam shall pay it them. Who would not have looked any whither for the cause of this evil, rather than to Heaven? yet the holy God challengeth it to himself, "This thing is from me;" but so, as neither their sins shall taint him, nor his decree justify them. He will be magnified in his wisdom and justice, while sinners wittingly perish in their follies. It shall double our guiltiness, if we place the necessity of our sinning in God's decree. The philosopher's servant being reproved for filching, excused himself, that it was his destiny to steal; but his master answered, so it was also his destiny to be hanged. Desperate wretches may talk thus now; it will be no plea at the last audit, against a Go, ye cursed, into hell-fire.

2. "In the last days." There is much questioning when these last days be. St. Paul says it was not at hand, 2 Thess. ii. 2; St. Peter says it is at hand, 1 Pet. iv. 7. They are thus reconciled. Peter seems to speak of *ultimum tempus*, the last time, and that is at hand; Paul of *ultimum temporis*, the last point of time, and that was not at hand. The end is at hand; but the last period and line of the end might not be at hand. But how then is it called by St. John the last hour? Because there is no alteration to succeed it. In the former ages God still altered the condition of the church: after the covenant made with Adam, it stood in the same state till Noah; then was the world drowned. After the reparation of it, so it continued to Abraham; then was there a renovation of this covenant. From Abraham to Moses, it remained a stranger in the world; then God settled it in the promised land. From Moses to David, it was governed by captains and judges; then God stated it in a monarchy. Thus it abode until the captivity; and again (after that time of bondage expired) was restored to some glory. In the fulness of time God sent his own Son: before it went through many changes and sundry conditions; one while it had only the light of nature, then was it informed by the law written, now it is blessed and established with grace. And this is the last state, because it shall not be followed with any renovations or alterations; the condition of it by the grace of Christ shall endure to the end of the world; nor can we

look for any change but one, which shall be at the universal dissolution of all things. "There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins," Heb. x. 26; lose this, and lose all; for he shall come no more to die, but at once to judge quick and dead. Thus the time from Christ's ascension to the world's end, is called the last day, because it immediately (without any general alteration) goes before it. The end in the apostles' time was not far off, now it must be very near; if that were the last day, this is the last hour; or if that were the last hour, this is the last minute.

These being the last days, the last day of them must be at hand. Concerning that day, there are two errors in the world. First, curiosity of critics; and they ask, When shall it be? Secondly, security of sluggards; and they never ruminate whether it shall be at all. That is the excess, and possesseth the wit; this is the defect, and disables the will. The former is of men over-wise, and they hasten the judgment; the other, of men too supine and careless, and they would slacken the judgment.

First, for the busy inquirers; they are such as refuse the plain ground, to walk upon pinnacles. Like the Bethshemites, that were not content with seeing the ark, but they must see into the ark, and so perish. Hierome saith, Things past before the world, and things future after the world, we cannot know; the things that are between we can only contemplate. There are some things which the wisdom of God desires to conceal; wherein irreverence is not more faulty than curiosity. Secret things to God, revealed things to us and our children. Why dost thou inquire my name, which is secret? says the angel, Judg. xiii. 18. In that vision of theirs, the moral whereof was good, inquiry was made what became of Samson's soul. The answer was, It is a secret; that none might dare to destroy himself after his example; whose act was rather for wonder than for imitation. What became of Solomon's soul? It is a secret; that none might dare to fall from the light of knowledge into the works of darkness. What became of Origen's soul? It is a secret; that none might presume to dally with the Scriptures, and make a shadow of plain history. What became of Trajan's soul? It is a secret; that none might venture to do all that Trajan did. Men may soon be too bold with hidden mysteries: he that modestly looks upon the sun, sees a glorious torch, and receives a comfortable light; but he that fixeth his eyes too earnestly upon it, is struck blind; and because he will see more than he should, comes in the end to see nothing at all.

If we stand a moderate distance from the fire, it warms and comforts us; if too near, it will scorch and burn us. "Our God is a consuming fire," Heb. xii. 29. Every seraphim had six wings; with two he covered his face, with two his feet, and with two he did fly, Isa. vi. 2. He covered his face, keeping us from the secrets of God's eternal predestination, in the beginning: he covered his feet, not disclosing when he will come to judge the world, in the end. Therefore saith Austin, Let us not go on to inquire, what God has not gone on to say. Solomon tells us, that the locks of the spouse are curled, and his hairs black as a raven, Cant. v. 11. The secrets of God's providence are curled and intorted, we cannot unfold them; his hair black, his ways past finding out. "O the depth of the riches of his wisdom; how unsearchable are his judgments!" Rom. xi. 33. As a man wading into the sea, when he comes up to the neck, and feels the water begin to heave him up, and that his feet fail him; he cries, O the depth, and goes back again. Paul's last doctrine ("God hath concluded them all in unbelief," &c. ver. 32)

was a secret enough to swallow up any created understanding: therefore he sets a bar against all further search; O the depth, not to be fathomed by any reach of man: we may sooner fetch mould from the centre of the earth, or dig through it to the antipodes. "His ways are past finding out," a metaphor taken from quick-scented hounds; who will be at a loss, when there is left neither track, nor print, nor scent of the pursued game. We may as well line out the way of a ship on the waves, or the walk of an arrow through the air, as find out the reserved ways of God. Such is man's pravity and nothingness in comparison of his Maker.

Let us not dote about questions that are too high for us: we may think it a wisdom, St. Paul calls it dotage, 1 Tim. vi. 4. Though the Lord dwells in a light, yet is it such a light as no man can attain unto, ver. 16. Some are more lousy to learn what and where hell is, than the means how to escape it. Or, what God did before the world began, than what he will do with them when the world is done. Or, whether we shall know one another in heaven, than to know that themselves have an inheritance there. Or, whether Christ did locally descend into hell, in soul, or in power; not suspecting their own ways of sin which lead them thither. It is good to leave off learning, where God hath forborne teaching. It is safe to be ignorant of that which is hidden: we shall never be condemned for being ignorant of that, which we are not bound to know. Let us neither have tongue to ask, nor ear to listen, nor brain to examine, where God hath no will to speak. This well is deep, John iv. 11, and the Spirit hath not given us a bucket. Do not pry into what is forbidden, lest you lose what is permitted. "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power," Acts i. 7. Content we ourselves with Paul's knowledge, only "Jesus Christ, and him crucified," 1 Cor. ii. 2.

Yet it is a wonder to see, how many desperate wits have adventured on the discovery of that, which God hath secreted; and how many insensate hearts have given credit to such Merlin's oracles, and prophecies out of hollow vaults. There is a judgment belonging to them, whereat they have just cause to tremble. "God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth," 2 Thess. ii. 11, 12. If they will seek to know more than they should, they shall know more than they would; even the heat of that unquenchable fire, whereof wise men never desire to know more than by speculative meditation. In all ages there have been such drunken prophets. In the apostles' time there were such as would have fastened their dreams upon Paul, 2 Thess. ii. 2. In St. Augustine's time there were some that determined the end of the world four hundred years after Christ's ascension: so that the latter days have mocked their former dotage. Such have been their strange collections from divers mystical numbers, in Daniel, and the Revelation; and from the observation of sevens. From Adam to Enoch, in the succession of persons, and then Enoch was translated; from Enoch to Elias, in the succession of ages, and then was Elias taken up; therefore in the seventh thousand years (they infer) all bodies shall rise. Others gather no less from the proportion of the three states of the church: two thousand years nature; two thousand years the law; and two thousand years Christ. But they were deceived in their just computation; and he that could not keep number for the time past, we will never take his reckoning for the time to come. Again, there be some that acknowledge, that neither the day nor the hour can be known, because Christ expressly saith

so; therefore (for evasion) they attempt only to find out the year. But most absurdly; for if the last day be unknown, then the day before the last, and the week before that day, and the year which contains that week, and the age which contains that year. But, as St. Augustine saith, (*Civ. Dei*, lib. 18. cap. 53.) that one text in the first of the Acts, (*Acts i. 7.*) hath bred the gout in the fingers of all our Pythagorean count-easters. St. Bernard better approves a humble ignorance, that confesseth, but presumes not; than a brawling knowledge, that presumeth, but understands not. And Lactantius saith, that the vulgar are not seldom the wiser, because they are no wiser than they should be: light footing makes the better speed in so deep a sand.

Paul was rapt up to the third heaven, and heard unspeakable words: not a word of the last day. The angels know much, by the excellency of their nature, and nearness to the Deity: they know not that. John was the beloved disciple, he leaned on Christ's bosom, wrote a whole book of revelations: he revealed not that day to us, nor was it revealed to him. Solomon, by his miraculous wisdom, spake three thousand proverbs; not one that told us this: a thousand and five songs, yet he never sang of this, otherwise than in this harmony; There is an appointed time for all things, *Ecc. iii. 1.* or thus, "God shall bring every work into judgment," *Ecc. xii. 14.* Yea, for ever to frustrate and prevent all hope of man's attaining to this secret, neither man nor angels know that day, nor the Son himself, but the Father, *Mark xiii. 32.* Not because he could not, but because he would not know it. Let us not, saith Bernard, be impatient under that ignorance, which we share in common with the angels and with Christ himself. The coming of our Christ, is the kingdom of our Christ; and this "cometh not with observation," *Luke xvii. 20.* He was the expectation of nations; his first coming was long looked for, yet the day not precisely known. He promised to send the Holy Ghost; yet his apostles knew not the day when, but were commanded to abide at Jerusalem, till they were "endued with power from on high," *Luke xxiv. 49.* they must tarry the good hour. Much less is the term of his last coming notified to any son of man. Let all our care be to find Christ in our hearts, before we see him in the clouds. It was wittily said of Thales, who gazing on the stars fell into the water, that if he had looked into the water he might have seen the stars, but looking up to the stars he could not see the water. While we elevate our curious minds to find out that abstruse mystery, whereof there is no record but in God's own bosom, and thus have our eyes busied above, we cannot see the state of our conscience here below: let us look down to the book of our conscience, and there we shall read the necessity of Christ's coming to judgment. "For if our heart condemn us, God is greater," *1 John iii. 20.* He was a famous warrior, that if his own son asked him when he would remove his camp, would only answer, that he should have notice by the sound of the trumpet. God hath given us all a sufficient testimony of his future coming: "Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained," *Acts xvii. 31.* If his own dear children shall ask him further, he refers them to the sound of the last trumpet: They must wait till those days be fulfilled, *Rev. vi. 11;* this is all their answer.

Next, for the secure neglecters of this day. This is the main sin of the times. In the last days we live, and yet on the last day we do not meditate. The former are so impudent as to point out the par-

ticular day; but the most are so impudent as to point out no day at all: so the last day falls on them, while their first and last and all their sins are found in them. We have such scoffers as say, there is not an end; the pens of the scribes are false: that all God's threatenings are but the frightening tales of nurses, the last fire but an ignis-fatuus. Thus the Lord's forbearance hath been made but the fuel of their presumption. The former were too curious, these are too careless. First, to convince those, God hath hid the day of Jesus, as he hid the body of Moses; that they may fight among themselves with their own distractions. So that the poles are not farther asunder, than the opinions of these calculators. Other times have been expressed; as four hundred years, seventy-two weeks; but the determinations of this time are dull incantations to flesh and blood. The eye of neither eagle nor kite, man nor angel, can look into it: how can the narrow recesses of man's heart contain the ways of the Lord? Secondly, these other would have no end at all; or such a one as is far enough off. These we tell, it comes, and that as the Scripture ever speaks of it, with celerity. Yet a little while, and he that cometh will not tarry, *Heb. x. 7.* "Behold, I come quickly," *Rev. xxii. 12.* They that put far away the evil day, shall find it nearer than they were aware of. Let them fear, that lie folded in the bands of a long night, lest they never see day but the last day, and that be the beginning of their eternal night. "Every man hath his sword upon his thigh, because of fear in the night," *Cant. iii. 8.* Let our armour and spiritual furniture be ever ready, for fear in the night. Doubtless it is near, we even see it, hear it, handle it: behold, with clouds he cometh; his chariot is made ready.

Of these latter days one must be the last of all. That epistle which St. Paul so earnestly charged to be read unto all, *1 Thess. v. 27.* contained especial exhortation to provide ourselves against the last day. "The end of all things is at hand," *1 Pet. iv. 7:* in which words we see, first, an end; secondly, an end of all things; thirdly, an end of all things at hand: an extremity, a universality, and a vicinity. An end; this implies a beginning, proceeding, and declination. The world's eternity was a brainless dotage of some philosophy. An end there shall be, but what sort of an end? There is a consuming end; so the earth with her works shall be burnt up: and a consummating end; so the creatures shall be restored to their original beauty and integrity. A deficient end; "The end of all flesh is come," *Gen. vi. 13:* and a perfecting end; there shall be "new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness," *2 Pet. iii. 13.* A finishing end, that shall destroy all the vain works of men, and crown all righteous deeds. The ungodly shall find it a destructive end; spoiling their labours, ceasing their pleasures, but beginning their endless torments: they shall die and not die; as Moses' bush burned and wasted not. Death shall feed on them, as a vulture on carrion, and not be satisfied. How miserable is it to desire death, and not be able to die! This is a fearful end; the miserable beginning of that which shall never end. Their end is damnation, *Phil. iii. 19.* and that damnation is without end. The righteous have a perfective end; Behold the just, the end of that man is peace, *Psal. xxxvii. 37.*

There is one universal end, and last day to all; and this cannot be far off. If you ask for the precedent signs, they may be reduced to six, and called thus: a drum, a trumpet, a famine, a flood, a comet, and a new troop.

1. The drum beats up wars and massacres, plagues

and pestilences: and how do the prints of all these stick upon the breast of the world! This drum hath beaten too loud; abroad in war, at home in pestilence: the God of peace and mercy unbrace it, and make it quiet, to our comfort.

2. The trumpet is the preaching of the gospel. This hath not only been heard in Zion, long blown in the church of God; nor only set to the walls of Jericho and Babylon, Rome hath not been free from the sound of it; but it even hath reached the ears of paganism, and with the shrill noise proclaimed to them either peace or war, from Jesus Christ.

3. The famine is the general decay of all the fruits of goodness: the vine casts her grapes, the earth starves her trees, the corn is blasted, the olives are rotten: I mean all this in a spiritual sense. Religion loseth her honour, for want of good works; the children of piety are become abortive; there is much faith, and little faithfulness; abundance of love, and not a spark of charity. When we look for those holy fruits of the Spirit, love, faith, meekness, temperance, &c. Gal. v. 22, 23, alas, we must cry out, Famine, famine!

4. The flood is the mighty torrent and inundation of iniquity; which hath so overrun the face of the earth, that the Holy Ghost, that most sacred Dove, finds not a place where to set his foot, Gen. viii. 9. "In the last days perilous times shall come: for men shall be lovers of themselves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, true-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, traitors," &c. 2 Tim. iii. 1-4. Oh what a deluge is here! Good men are like the gleanings of the vintage, here and there a grape; far more precious than gold.

5. The comet is that prodigy of the Christian world, antichrist in the seat of Christ; whom the Jesuits direct us to seek in the tribe of Dan. And herein they are like those birds, that commonly draw us away from their nests, by their fluttering and noise, for the safety of their young. When they point us to Dan, they cry as the lapwings, Here 'tis, here 'tis; that we might not seek it where indeed it is, even at Rome. That antichrist is come, the horrid treasons, murders, massacres, that rage under his warrant, are too loud and demonstrative arguments.

6. The new troop, or band, that shall come into the church militant, are the elected Jews; whom God, after so long obduracy, shall call home to Jesus Christ. Some think, that their reparation shall begin with our ruin, as with their ruin began our conversion; that as few of the Jews believed when the Gentiles came in, so few of the Gentiles shall believe when the Jews return. Indeed the goodness of the Gentiles much falleth, and their state is like a vessel running at the tilt, at a low ebb. But why should we so understand that of Paul, "Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in?" Rom. xi. 25. Why should not rather the conversion of the Jews add riches to the fulness of the Gentiles?

From all this we may gather, that so deep are we fallen into the latter end of these last days, that, for aught we know, before we depart from this place we may look for the last fire to flash in our faces. We are they, "upon whom the ends of the world are come," 1 Cor. x. 11. Oh that as they are the end of ages, so they were also the end of iniquities; that we might see an end of these things, before we see an end of all things! The heavens wax old as a garment, Psal. cii. 26; it is even time for them to have a new suit. As this little world, man, so that great man, the world, hath his childhood in Adam, his youth in Abraham, his middle age in Solomon, his declining in the time of Christ; and now his old age and last

days in this decrepit proximity of death and expiration.

1. An old man decays in his senses: so the eyes of the world wax dim, like Isaac's, and cannot distinguish betwixt Jacob and Esau, between the righteous and unrighteous: hereby it acquitteth the guilty, and condemneth the innocent; both equal abominations to the Lord. His ears are thick of hearing, deaf to all holy counsels; the word of the gospel knocks at those doors, and finds none or very cold entertainment.

2. An old man decays in his members: so the world hath palsied hands, "the keepers of the house tremble," Eccl. xii.; fingers so gouty, that he cannot distribute the alms of charity. He hath weak and feeble knees, not able to stand under the weight of God's precepts; the very grasshopper is a burden; the lightest commandment held insupportable. His grinders fail, and cannot chew that heavenly food: his feet double under him, when he should walk in the way of godliness. His almond-tree flourisheth, a snow is upon his head: as our Saviour said of the fields, white to the harvest; yea, even dry for the fire. The pitcher is broken at the fountain, and the wheel at the cistern; he cannot draw the water of life, whether from the deeps or shallows. Only his tongue is live and nimble; you may hear him tumble out oaths as fast as words, though he be dumb in the praises of thankfulness. Now if we see a man, whose lights grow dim, his face furrowed with wrinkles; either white hairs, or instead of them baldness; inactive and bedrid limbs; we say, his living date is done. No less be these the last days of the superannuated world.

3. An old man is full of coughs and catarrhs, sensible of and subject to the least colds. What find we in the world, but salt rheums and malignant humours of hatred and envy; the choler of unbridled rage, the melancholy of self-love; symptoms of an unhappy dotage?

4. An old man is wayward and pettish, nothing can please him: the world is so full of morosity and frowardness, that it is neither well full nor fasting. Prosperity makes it dissolute; crosses, desperate; it is ever querulous, contented never.

5. Old age is crooked: so the world is grovelling; and hath changed natural erection to an unnatural minding of earthly things. Still the older the more covetous; the fewer days it hath to live, the more it provides for. "Their inward thought is, that their houses shall continue for ever; but they abide not, yea, even perish as the beasts, Psal. xlix. 11, 12. They victual themselves for a year, and their journey is done in an hour.

6. Old age is talkative and lying; two birds that commonly fly out of one nest: much speaking, vain speaking. The world promiseth wonders, content, and riches; but it performs vanities, discontent, and wretchedness; yet looks to be believed.

7. Old age is weary and lazy; like a traveller, that longs to be at his journey's end. The material things of the world hasten to their centre and last period; the whole creature groans to be at rest.

8. Old age is worn out, exhausted; the spirits are spent. The world is ready to say as Sarah, Shall I bear a child now I am old? It bears few of those lively fruits of piety, and charity, and fidelity, that it did in former times.

9. Old age is cold, because bloodless: an old man through the wasting of his blood grows cold; that nature requires helping by an accidental heat. The zeal of the world is so cold, the fire of the temple so spent to a spark, that for want of fuel and blowing, it is almost out. Much adventitious warmth must be put

to it, to keep life in it; as a young virgin was laid by the side of blood-spent David.

10. Old age is drowsy and prone unto sleep. The world hath laid itself down in the cradle of security, the devil sets his spirits to rock it asleep, and thus it is possessed with a quiet slumber.

Thus are we fallen into the depth of winter: the spring is past, the summer hath had her season, autumn hath spent her fruits, and now winter hath shaken down the very leaves, and left us nothing but naked, bare, and barren trees. The last month of the great year of the world is come upon us; we are deep in December: these last days be all St. Lucie's days, short, foul, and dirty. Cramps and convulsions stupify the nerves of the world, pale coldness sits on our faces, the pangs of death gnaw our heart-strings; the good angels that visit us, see nothing but signs of departure in all our carriages. Oh that, as dying men have commonly a little reviving before their ends, (as the wasted candle gives a bright glare at the going out,) which they call a lightening against death; so we could a little recover ourselves, and give forth some comfortable beam, some clear testimony of grace, before we go hence! So shall our last day be our best day; and as it puts an end to all the days and nights of measurable, miserable time, so it shall begin that day which neither admits of night nor time; even the eternal day, enlightened with the Sun of righteousness, and glorious presence of our blessed God.

It can be no great wonder, that such profane sinners should be found in the fog end of the world; which is like a false bottom when it comes to be unwound, worst at last. As Bellarmine called that age wherein ecclesiastical writers were so scant, *infelix seculum*, i. e. the unhappy age: much more unblest are these last days, where blessed deeds are so scarce; where the enemies of Christ dare show their heads, and fight against him. Therefore let me a little further parallel these last days of the world with the last days of a man.

11. An old man fetcheth his breath thick and short, especially when sickness adds to the decay of nature: so that death sits often like a churl at the door of his lips, and keeps in his words: or like a covetous executor, that grudgeth a man the disposing of his own goods. Oh how short be the fits of goodness! How small a space do good motions, the breathing of God's holy Spirit in us, tarry with us! They may bait at our doors, they keep no residence in our hearts. We have some transient ejaculations, which with a short-winded devotion we utter (or rather mutter) to God; but our lusts do so haunt us, and call us off from these holy thoughts, that we may complain with Job, they will not give us leave to swallow down our spittle, Job vii. 19.

12. In old age, especially when it surpriseth a foul and surfeited body, all the corrupt humours gather down to the feet: the heart, and those more noble parts, drive them back to the extremes; and because the feet are lowest, nature repels corruption thither; and not seldom it issueth there; or if not, it racks them with gout, dropsy, and such torments. These last days be the feet of the world, wherunto all the vicious customs of former ages are gathered; as the kennels of a city run to the common sewer. Ignorance was predominant in one age, idolatry in another, hypocrisy in a third, sacrilege, oppression, fraud in another; these mischiefs then had their times to reign single. Now, like so many land-floods from the mountains, they meet in one channel, and make a torrent of united wickedness, in these lower and latter days. Thus after the golden head, the shoulders of silver, the brassen ribs, and iron legs,

these last are the feet of clay, the basest and most rude material of all. Thus are we the grounds, the dregs, and lees of the vessel; the dust in the bottom of the mow; the dross and refuse of former ages, that lick up their vomit: decking ourselves with those iniquities as the ornaments of our pride, whereof our forefathers made a sick acknowledgment with remorse and shame.

13. Dying men are fumbling of the clothes, and plucking the coverings to them; as if they would prevent the hand of charity, and wind up their own almost breathless bodies. Men of the world, in these days so sick of avarice, scratch together all within the reach of their fingers. No fish must escape their draw-net, no water pass by their mill; as if, like Be-hemoth, they would drink up Jordan: and as the fleeing Jews swallowed their gold, for which they were ripped up by the Romans; so they seek to devour the world, as if their heirs should never find it but in their remains. We see men encroach upon liberties, hedge in monopolies, enclose commons, multiply barns and granaries, join houses, engross commodities; alas, they are dying souls, plucking up the blankets and coverlets about them; and giving up the ghost, as they had long before given up the Holy Ghost. "Thou fool," saith God, Luke xii. 20; they lived wise in their own conceits, they shall die apparent fools.

14. Dying men are troubled with fantasies; full of melancholy dreams, and solicitous imaginations. So these last days of the world are fraught with errors; a thousand peevish opinions crawl out like vermin from putrified brains: strange worms are bred in old dunghills. These pester the world, disquiet the peace of the church, and inveigle weak capacities. Do we wonder that these uncouth singularities transport multitudes? Alas, these are the last days, the brains of the world are cracked, it labours of extreme dotage; and among fools, the haberdasher's shop of trifles hath the most customers. This is the cause of hatching so many new devices, strange tenets and paradoxes, raising mutinies in religion: the world is brain-sick, fantastical, fanatical; setting up factious opinions, as fast as Solomon's wives did their groves; which I forbear the naming for fear of teaching. Men love any thing better than sobriety of judgment; which shows that the world hath but few minutes to live.

15. Lastly, an old man comes back again to a child: Once an old man, twice a child. The world is so old, that it goes upon crutches; as a child cannot go but by the hand of a nurse. The understanding and memory of it is so decayed, that it even ceaseth to know what in its childhood it began to learn. Such is the old age's infirmity, that it is come round to infancy. Not as it is with the material world, whose old age is blessed with an annual reparation; that when the winter hath deeded all, all are again restored by the cheerful spring. It is not so in the mystical world; but *senescens mundus est evanesces mundus*; i. e. the world growing old, is the world growing rapid and vanishing; a child indeed it is; as prattling as a child, as ignorant as a child, as feeble as a child, as wanton as a child; but far from being as innocent as a child. For levity and vanity, it is altogether childish. An infant is made to grow up to man; but for man to grow down again to infant, is unnaturally preposterous. The seminal principle is for the creature; the seed is made for the tree; the child, not to remain so, but to be a man. The oak doth not grow back to a young sprout, nor the ox to the calf; alas, that man should degenerate and ungraduate himself to a child! Seneca calls children's works *nugæ*, trilles, men's *negotia*, businesses:

if we shall set our minds on puerile toys, what is this but to exviate ourselves? For magistrates not to hear, but whom they list, and when they list; this is to play boys' tricks. When King Demetrius of Macedon answered a petitioner, a poor woman, that he had no leisure; she boldly replied, Why then give over to be king. We need not stick to tell an unhearing magistrate more; Give over to be a magistrate, yea, give over to be a man. If men long for toys, set their delights upon vanities, vex (as children cry) when they may not have their wills, spend their bodies before they get information to their souls, as children rub out their books before they have learned their lessons; worship puppets and painted images, as children play with dolls; what are all these, and the like, but playing of boys' tricks? Thus, "old men and children," Psal. cxlviii. 12; the psalmist puts them both on a form.

All these arguments prove the world to be exceeding old, and drawing on, even near the last gasp. "That which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away," Heb. viii. 13. Let us fall from it, before it fall upon us; and be but so wise as spiders, to forsake a rotten house; not by going out of the world, but by driving the world out of us. I have been prolix in this point, yet desire not to part from it without some considerable and applicable uses.

1. Though this be not the last day, it may be *thy* last day. The world cannot last long, yet thou mayst prevent the world. Strong bodies hold out many firs, yet at last yield to the necessity of nature. Weak constitutions are dissolved with a little sickness, as a child's paper-house is with a puff of wind. If our life be wrapped up with the world, it must needs be momentary. Heaven and earth are of a strenuous composition, compact together with more powerful sinews and ligaments; so that they have held up their heads through many passages and destructions of mortality; otherwise when the Son of God suffered it would have broke their hearts. Our bodies are made of elements, weak and fluid principles; and therefore sooner resolved to their first materials. Flowers have but their months, when oaks and cedars stand many years. Nothing but extreme and supernatural fire shall be the death of the world: water, air, earth, a thorn, a vapour, any thing is able to despatch us. If we be not bound up in the bundle of a better life, we are vain wretches.

2. Remember therefore, the end is near, thy end is nearer. Whether the end of this day shall not be the end of all thy days, thou hast no assurance. To-day hear his voice, Psal. xev. 7: be sure to repent one day before thy last day; and hereof thou canst not be sure, unless thou repentest this day. Let us think, if the Judge were now coming in the clouds, in what case we were to meet him. Perhaps we are wrapped up in a cloud too, a cloud of dark ignorance and blind security: let us know that this cloud will dissolve ours, and lay us open with all our sins to the view of men and angels. It is time to repent, and make even our reckoning, which we can no ways do, but by transferring all our reckonings and debts to Christ. As Alcibiades told Pericles, when he was troubled with studying how to give his accounts, that if he would be ruled by him, he should rather study how to give no account at all. The Lord graciously calls us to cast our burden upon him: Christ adviseth us to lay all our reckonings and debts upon his score; promising to discharge them to a penny with his treasure of merits; the only coin that is current in the exchequer of God's justice. If by faith we have borne them thither, and given up ourselves, body and soul, to him for security, we need not fear. The Judge will never condemn us for that debt, which himself

hath undertaken to pay. Lord, here is our hope and confidence: thou wilt not find those guilty, for whom thine own person suffered the penalty; nor punish the sins thou hast remitted; nor cast away the souls thou hast redeemed.

3. To others it shall be a black day; alas, what shall they do in the day of visitation; to whom will they flee for help, and where will they leave their glory, Isa. x. 3; when they shall peep out of the grave, and see the world on fire, and have lost all interest in the Judge? Why do men neglect the means of reconciliation? "Agree with thine adversary quickly," Matt. v. 25: if thy sin hath made God thine adversary, go quickly, delay no time to recover his friendship. Take thy incense quickly, saith Moses to Aaron, and make atonement for the people, Numb. xvi. 46. Quickly fall to thy prayers, put that incense in the censer of Jesus, entreat him to entreat God for thee, and to make a blessed atonement between you. As our own last day leaves us, the world's last day shall find us; we are presented above, as we went forth below. Oh then judge we ourselves, that we be not judged. Our passing-bell, and the archangel's trumpet, have both one voice; for God will reverse no particular judgment. If the former give a heavy and doleful knell for us here, that louder instrument shall keep the same note hereafter. But if the one sound comfort at our last hour in this world, the other shall sound joy at the last hour of the world.

4. If the world be ready to end, why do men covet, as if it were but now to begin? The world must perish, and dost thou seek the things of the world? Who would plant or build upon that ground, which is troubled with earthquakes, or sure suddenly to sink? God chargeth us first to seek the kingdom of heaven, and then earthly things shall find us, unsought, Matt. vi. 33. But foolish nature takes a false method: she first seeks the world; and if she light upon God by the way, it is more than she thought on, desired, cared for. How deservedly do they fail of both, that sought neither aright! Many had been great, if they had cared to be good; but because they would not what they ought, they are crossed in what they would. If Solomon had made riches his first suit, he might have been poor and foolish; but asking wisdom as the principal, wealth came in for interest: because he chose well, he received what he asked not. Such is the bounty and fidelity of God; to them that ask the best, he gives all. Earth shall wait upon them that attend upon Heaven. Happy is he that affords the best services of the world, but the less half of himself, while the greater and better part is better bestowed.

5. I do not wish men to abandon themselves to wilful beggary, because of the last day's proximity; or not to repair the house, because their time in it is so short. For worldly things, we may use them without loving them, and distinguish betwixt a Stoical dulness and a Christian contempt. There is difference between making the world a god and a slave. This latter is the respect it deserves, and they are fools that give it veneration. But rich men think, the only reason why preachers love not the world, is because the world loves not them: that she shows us only her heels, not her amiable face; that we have nothing but her refuse; her best jewels she keeps for her sweethearts. Yet a beggar may look upon a lordship; and we may see those heaps of gold, whereof never one piece shall be ours. We know what others dote on, and wonder at their madness; that they should fix their hearts on that which is not fixed itself, and build their happiness upon a rolling stone. I deny not, but God hath given some abundance of riches, and more grace; and to those

to whom he hath been so liberal, he will be more munificent, for he will give them also glory. While they look up to their future hopes, they esteem but meanly of their present fortunes, and count them scarce a taste of that full cup. Militant saints are sometimes (besides their inheritance above) granted fair possessions below; yet they value not this with the other. Here they command a little pittance of mould, great to us, little to the whole; there the immense heaven shall be theirs. Here they command as subjects, there they shall reign as kings. Here they are gracious among men, there they shall be glorious among the angels. Here, together with their honour and affluence, they want not crosses and envy; above there is nothing but noble peace and pleasant eternity. Here they have some short joys, there they are both perfect and everlasting. Here they are strangers, there at home. Here Satan tempts them, and men vex them; there saints and angels shall sing with them, and the glory of God shall satisfy them. In a word, they are only blessed here, for that they shall be blessed hereafter.

6. Thus take the world at its best, yet good men despise it. But for fear lest we should be fond of it, God presents it generally to his children in another shape; a miserable, troublesome, inconstant world, whose joys are but the crackling of thorns. While Naomi's husband and sons were alive, we find no motion of her retiring home to Judah; let her earthly stays be removed, she thinks presently of removing to her country, Ruth i. We cannot so heartily think of our home above, while we are furnished with these earthly contentments below. But when God strips us of them, straightway our mind is homewards. Besides, what assurance can there be of those things, whereof our going home may strip us? What man can say of the years to come, Thus will I be? Most justly do we condemn this uncertainty, and look up to those riches that cannot but endure, when heaven and earth are dissolved. Riches are a flood; *ut fluit, defluit*: i. e. as they flow, they flow away: this city cannot call the water of a flood, hers; nor those inhabitants, theirs: all may take enough to serve their own turns, the rest glide by, and wait upon nobody. When we are bidden to a great man's table, where the meat is served up in silver dishes, and the wine in bowls of gold, we may eat the viands, and drink the precious liquors; but if through simplicity we should offer to carry away the vessels, the porter would stay us at the gate, and tell us plainly, they are none of ours. The Divine bounty affords the use of riches, for the comfort and sustentation of our bodies; but when we rise up from his table, and think to bear away the riches themselves, death is a severe porter at the gate of life; he will examine our going out; we shall carry none of them with us. St. Augustine seems to borrow it from Democritus; (Quæst. Evang. l. 2. c. 35.) He that loves his soul, loves himself: he that loves his body, loves not himself, but something that is his own: he that loves his money, neither loves himself, nor that which is his, but another's: he that loves his pleasure, loves that which is neither himself, nor his own, nor his friend's, but his enemy's.

7. Lastly, seeing therefore that both these be the last days in general, and our last day may antedate them in particular; seeing either the house must be pulled down, or the tenant cast out; let us provide for ourselves betimes, as the wise steward did, Luke xvi. 4, some trusty friend. He was loth to be harbourless: though he had not justice enough to keep in at his master's house, yet he had providence enough to get another house in store. Make your unrighteous mammon a means to procure you everlasting habita-

tions, ver. 9. When Christ forewarned the Jews of the destruction of their Jerusalem, did he not implicitly advise them to shift for themselves in another country? Merchants that would soon be rich, take the old course, to buy cheap and sell dear; therefore they buy their commodities in the country that affords good profits, and vent them in other countries, which must take them on any price. We do not buy wines in England, to sell them in France; nor buy spices in France, to carry them to the Indies. Thither we traffic a commodity, where it is precious in regard of scarcity. I presume, we would all go to heaven: we are foolish merchants, if of all lands we would not trade in the land of Canaan; if we had rather treat with savages for gold and jewels, than exchange with the saints for glory and graces. But now what freight shall we carry thither? What wares and merchandise will be vendible and welcome in that kingdom? Shall we carry honour and dignity thither? There is abundance of that already; we may more truly say of that city, than was of Tyre, All her merchants are princes; yea, all her inhabitants are no less than kings. To traffic worldly glory to heaven, is to hold a candle to light the sun; that greater light doth not so swallow up the less, as the glory of God doth all honour of the creatures. They can add no glory to him, that have all their glory from him. What then? shall we carry rest, quiet, and peace with us? will that have any better vent or acceptance? No; for there is all peace, all rest, and quiet. It is the kingdom of peace: here we may have in some measure the peace of the king, there in a full measure we shall enjoy the King of peace. It is called the Lord's rest, Heb. iii. 11: we have no true rest but in him, no perfect rest till we come unto him. He hath made this earth wherein we live, militant, troublesome, barren of rest; it would be profitless for us to gather up the base dregs of a supine security, and offer to sell them in heaven. They have plenty of better peace, and we have none but from their store. They that arrive at that port with such a merchandise of carelessness, must back again; the citizens of heaven will not trade with them. What then say you to pleasures and joys? will not they pass current in that holy land? Not if they be brought from any foreign coast. Lord, "in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore," Psal. xvi. 11. There is fulness, perfection, and everlastingness of joy; ours are feeble, fickle, empty pleasures. Why should we pour water into the sea? why proffer our addition to fulness, our vanity to perfection, our shortness to eternity? Such a commodity will not be tolerable in that mart. Woe to them that laugh! for they shall weep, Luke vi. 25: that ware is for the shop of hell; there it shall be exchanged for sorrow; and the clapping of hands in irrision, for wringing of hands in endless lamentation. "Rejoice, O young man," Eccl. xi. 9: do; but thou shalt smart for it. The seed of carnal joy will not be good cheer in heaven; no fruit comes of it, but woe and torment. Well; yet I hope riches will pass for merchantable stuff; money is current all the world over: some things are not precious in some countries, nor other in other, but no country refuseth money. Yet this country will; alas, what should the beggarly dross of this perishing world do in that heavenly Havilah, where the gold is more precious than the gold of Ophir? Yea, what is the gold of Ophir to that city which is itself pure gold? Rev. xxi. 18. It is said of Solomon, that silver was not accounted of in his days; he made it as common as stones, 1 Kings x. 21, 27: how more infinite be the riches of the heavenly Solomon! Where there is no use of things, their valuation ceaseth. It was

a drop of water that the churl wished for in hell, not a bag of gold; not a lordship of many acres; he had too large an inheritance there before. Away with this trash; it hath no estimation in the Jerusalem above. There is an eternal Easter. What then shall we load ourselves withal, that may be acceptable? Yes, there be things whereof there is great scarcity in heaven; *carentia*, a wanting, I say; but there is no *indigentia*, indigence, there. We may see what they lack, by his description that discovered the land; There is no death, nor sorrow, nor crying, nor pain, Rev. xxi. 4; no tears, nor fears. Let us carry with us thither,

1. Humility, a lowly contempt of our own selves: there is none of that in heaven. There is abundance of honour, without pride; of glory, without envy or disestimation: for the saints love themselves, because God loves them. "God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble," 1 Pet. v. 5. They that bring a lofty conceit of themselves to that coast, shall be repelled. Humility is a commodity, for which God will exchange the crown of glory. Moses, David, Paul went thither with this traffic, I am unworthy; and Christ gave them for it the kingdom of heaven.

2. Poorness in spirit: there is none of that in heaven, this merchandise will pass. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven," Matt. v. 3. Not only shall be, but is already. This will pass, and we with it.

3. Hunger and thirst: there is none of that in heaven. "They are abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thine house," Psal. xxxvi. 8. They that are satiated with more than they can desire, be far from want. We need not therefore carry provision with us, but an appetite; an earnest desire to feed on those unspeakable comforts. "We groan within ourselves, waiting for the redemption of our bodies," Rom. viii. 23; mourning for our absence from Zion. This hunger will pass; and instead of it we shall have infinite satisfaction. We bring abstinence and devout fasting to heaven, we shall find affluence and royal feasting there.

4. Mourning, repentance, and tears: there is none of this in heaven. Never came sorrow over those joyful thresholds; never came godly sorrow to those thresholds, but it was entertained with joy. "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy," Psal. cxxvi. 5. As the barbarous traffic with some remoter pagans; they lay down salt, and take up gold: so we set down the burdens of our sorrows and the vessels of our tears before the Lord; and he likes this merchandise so well, that he gives us for them everlasting joys. "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted," Matt. v. 4: there is a blessed exchange.

5. Labour and work: there is none of that in heaven. It is an everlasting holiday with them; they rest, rejoice, and sing; no travail, no pains there. Therefore good works and Christian labours are good traffic. "Blessed are they that die in the Lord; for they rest from their labours, and their works follow them," Rev. xiv. 13. They dare not go without their freight: a merchant without his commodity hath but a sorry welcome. God will ask them that arrive there, Where are your works? His reward shall be according to our works, Rev. xxii. 12: if no good works on earth, look for no riches in heaven. Indeed that wealth is too precious to be bought with our works; nor doth God exchange it *propter opera*, for works, but dispose *secundum opera*, according to works. "Work out your salvation with fear and trembling," Phil. ii. 12: there is neither fear, nor trembling, nor working in heaven; but after our working, trembling, and fear, God will give us salva-

tion. Thou hast riches here, and here be objects that need thy riches, the poor; in heaven there is riches enough, but no poor. Therefore make over thy money to them in this world, that thou mayst receive it by bill of exchange in the world to come.

6. Patience in afflictions and troubles: there are none of these in heaven; neither trouble to try their patience, nor patience to overcome their trouble. The things to be bartered, are patience and conquest: patience is our commodity, conquest is Christ's. If we bring him our virtue of patience, he will give us in exchange his honour of conquest. He speaks of patience as of a triumph; "Here is the patience of the saints," Rev. xiv. 12. Through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of heaven, Acts xiv. 22. Our voyage is tribulation, our vessel is the church, pirates and tyrants are our enemies, rocks and sands our dangers; our tackling, sails, oars be patience, and glorious victory our reward.

7. Faith and hope: neither of them is in heaven; the beatifical vision and fruition hath quite annihilated them. This then is happy merchandise. Give me thy faith, saith God, and I will give thee my glory: let me not fail of thy hope, thou shalt be sure of my felicity. No traffic will pass without this. Divers say of moral men, If they go not to heaven, Lord, have mercy upon us: yet Christ saith, "Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees," you shall not come there, Matt. v. 20: yea, publicans and harlots shall get into heaven sooner, because the other believed not. Civil justice is not in itself evil, but good; but it is not good enough to save a man: it may be without faith, but faith cannot be without it. Goodly works, building alms-houses, enriching monasteries, feeding beggars, are the popish merchandise; this they carry to heaven in a presumptuous confidence, that God must needs requite them. So they come upon equal terms with him, ware for ware; if he give them heaven, they give him earth. But they shall find with the Pharisee, that for want of faith and humility, these wares will not pass with God; nor will he afford the kingdom of heaven upon such conditions. Moralities without true belief, are like the fair picture of a beautiful woman; pleasing to the eye, but there is no warmth in it; nor is it fit for society. But faith is the obedience of the soul, the soul of obedience. "He that believeth, shall be saved," Mark xvi. 16; to believe, that is our part and commodity; to save us, that is God's reward and mercy. Thus I have showed you a truly Royal Exchange, a blessed mart. If we be as good husbands for our souls as we are for our temporal estates, we have learned here how to make our markets. Let us never seek to load our vessels with honours, pleasures, or riches: there is no want of them in heaven; nor will God deal with them in a gracious commerce, that bring no better merchandise. But with humility, poverty, labour, hunger, repentance, patience, faith, and hope: these be the riches of grace, for which God will exchange his riches of glory. Such merchants make a blessed voyage; for they shall never depart from that joyful country, where they are so happily arrived and gloriously entertained.

"There shall come scoffers, walking after their own lusts," *Irridentes alios, aridentes sibi*. Laughing at others, laughing to themselves. The devil knows that the world cannot last long, and therefore bestirs him. He hath "great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time," Rev. xii. 12. He is grown more wrathful, we should therefore be more watchful. He is a malicious tenant, that perceiving his term almost expired, does what he can to ruin the house; a cruel tyrant, that daily suspecting the

loss of his usurped sovereignty makes havoc among his subjects, and like a worse Herod, falls apace to murder. Indeed his main spite is not at the body, but at the soul; for he knows if he can get the soul, the body must come after. To effect this, he deviseth all the ways he can, and puts in practice all that he deviseth. And to this purpose, sometimes he is a roaring devil, in lion-like tyrants; sometimes a flattering devil, in his spaniel-like parasites; sometimes a dissembling devil, in his fox-like hypocrites; and here a scornful devil, in his ape-like scoffers, that live as if they were neither beholden to God nor afraid of him, both out of his debt and danger. It is their least ill to do evil; they speak for it, joy in it, boast of it, enforce to it, mock them that dislike it; and so at once send a challenge to God, as if they meant to meet him in the plain field, and let him choose his weapon; they make love to destruction.

1. Here first we have to observe the contrariety of the dispositions of divers men. We heard of some in the first verse, that seek the Lord with a pure heart, and follow his word with their best endeavour of sincerity and sincerity of endeavour. Now we are fallen upon those, that with a foul and rancorous mind deride all goodness, and load religion with disgraces. Then we camped in Elim, a place of water and palm-trees; now we are come to a wilderness of briars and brambles. Then we lay in a sweet harbour of comfortable meditation; now we are put into the ocean of rocks, and pirates, and boisterous waves. There we found Zion, here we have Babylon; even a hell of malignant devils, for that communion of saints. Fire and water are not more contrary, than the just and unrighteous: they wonder, each at other; the graceless, that the just can be so strict; the just, that the graceless can be so dissolute: clay and iron will not weld together. Where is a good man laughed at, but where the profane finds indulgence? Why doth the world seek more to rich men than to wise men? The philosopher could answer, Because it is possible for them to be rich, never to be wise. Why are holy men depressed, and the irreligious honoured? Because men have a liking to be licentious; but to be holy, is none of their purpose. Nobody hates an Israelite, but an Egyptian or a Canaanite. Put fire to fire, or water to water, there is no commotion; but put water to fire, and then you have a thundering coil. When riotous men meet, there is shaking of hands; but the temperate cannot pass by without a scorn.

2. This is the reason why the good and virtuous be always opposed and exposed to the fury and malice of cruel men. It is indeed a wonderful thing, but not a new thing; it was so from the beginning. "As then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so is it now," Gal. iv. 29. No sooner was God worshipped and served, but hatred and spite fell to the portion and lot of religion. The first man that offered the better sacrifice, was slain: the acceptable sacrifice was the seminary of death. Who would think that brethren, and but two brethren, should not love each other? Dispersed love grows weak, and paucity of objects useth to unite affections. If but two brothers be left alive of many, they think that the love of all the rest should survive in them; that the beams of their affection should be so much the hotter, because they reflect mutually in a right line each upon other. Yet behold, there were but two brothers in a world, and one is a butcher of the other. Who can wonder at dissension among thousands of brethren, that sees so deadly opposition betwixt two, the first roots of brotherhood? Who can hope to live peaceably and

securely among so many Cains, when he sees one Cain the death of one Abel? It can be no otherwise; dissimilitude and distance of manners breeds alienation of affections. There is nothing doth so condemn the lives of the wicked, as the exemplary conversation of the godly; the fat kine make the lean seem more ill-favoured. A swarthy and hard-featured visage doth not love the company of clear beauties. Besides, it is the pleasure of God thus to try and honour his servants, and to produce their patience. What pictures could Apelles draw, if he wanted a table to work upon? What building could the architect rear, without timber, stones, and materials? Their scorn doth both prove and improve our patience. So that we have both a testimony of God's favour; If the world hate you, it is because ye are mine, saith Christ, John xv. 18, 19; and of our own integrity, for that must needs be good which evil persecutes. Their lewdness calls for our sorrow and more zealous obedience; that our God may have as faithful servants as he hath unfaithful enemies. As we see natural qualities increased with the resistance of their contraries, so must our grace with others' sins. We shall redeem something of God's dishonour by sin, if we shall thence grow holy. It hath been an old and happy danger to be godly: indifferent actions must be careful to avoid offence; but let us not care what man or devil be angry that we do good, or receive good. It is contrariety that makes Babylon wonder at Jerusalem, and Jerusalem at Babylon. We refuse the fair proffers of the world, that come upon sinful conditions; they laugh at us for fools: it will not prove so in the end. "All these will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me," Matt. iv. 9. Oh if a covetous worldling had been there, how ready had been his knees! How would he have caught the promise out of the devil's mouth, for fear lest he should have gone back from his word! Alexander, after the battle of Granicus, had very great offers made him by Darius: consulting with his captains about them, Parmenio said, Sure I would accept of these offers were I as Alexander: Alexander answered, So would I were I as Parmenio. The Christian may grow rich (not seldom) by remitting the rigour of his conscience: the worldling saith, Sure I would take it upon these terms, were I as that Christian; and the Christian saith, So would I were I as that worldling. Such contrary natures are appointed to contrary places, that differ as far as heaven and hell.

"Scoffers." The depth of sin is the chair of the scornful, Psal. i. 2; they are set down in the resolute contempt of all goodness. Of these there be two sorts and degrees; first, the despisers of them that be good, 2 Tim. iii. 3; then the despisers of goodness itself.

1. For the former; the saints of God have complained of them in all ages: David of his busy mockers; the abjects jeered him. Job was disclaimed if those children, whose fathers he would have scored to set with the dogs of his flock, Job xxx. 1. Joseph was nick-named a dreamer, Paul a babler. Christ himself a Samaritan; and with intent of disgrace, a carpenter. Libanius asked a Christian what his master the carpenter was a doing; whom he answered, He is making a coffin for thy master Julian. Lucian jested in contempt, that he had gotten nothing by his Christianity but a syllable to his name; of Lucius, Lucianus; but he was torn in pieces of dogs. Even the very boys of Bethel had learned to scoff at a prophet, 2 Kings ii. 23: who would have thought the rude terms of wagging children worthy of any thing but neglect? Elisha looks at them with severe brows, and, like the heir of him that called

down fire upon the two captains and their fifties, curseth them in the name of the Lord. Two she-bears are his executioners, two and forty of them are torn in pieces. O fearful example of the Divine justice! This was not the revenge of an angry prophet; it was the punishment of a righteous Judge. The spite of their idolatrous parents was seen in this vile behaviour of the children; they do but according to their instruction. Infancy is led altogether by imitation; it hath neither words nor actions, but what are infused by others: the good or bad language it hath, is but borrowed; and the shame or thank of either, is due to them that lent it. God and his seer looked through these children at their parents; if they misnurture their children to the contemptuous usage of a prophet, they shall be punished with the death of those children whom they taught no better manners. If we love our children, let not our indulgence give way to their despising of goodness; for then, either destruction shall snatch them away young, or there is hell provided for them when they die old. And if God would not endure those contumelies unrevenged in the mouths of boys, what vengeance is due to aged persecutors! Ishmael did but mock Isaac; yet Paul saith, he persecuted him, Gal. iv. 29. God calls the scorn of his servants by no better name than persecution. David thought it no disgrace to dance in the ephod: Michal does; she looks through her window, and seeing the attire and gestures of her devout husband, despiseth him in her heart. Nor can she conceal her contempt, but, like Saul's daughter, casts it proudly in his face; "How glorious was the king of Israel to-day; even like one of the vain fellows!" 2 Sam. vi. 20. David's heart did never swell so much at any reproach, as this of his wife: his love was for the time lost in his anger; and as a man impatient of no affront so much as in the way of his devotion, he returns her a bitter check. "It was before the Lord, who chose me before thy father, and before all his house." Had she not twitted her husband with the shame of his religious fervour, he had not upbraided her with the shameful rejection of her father. But seeing she will forget whose wife she was, she shall be put in mind whose daughter she was. Michal was barren, yet she hath too many children, that scorn the holy habit and exercises. There cannot be a greater argument of a foul soul, than the deriding of religious services. Worldly hearts can see nothing in those actions, but folly and madness; piety hath no relish, but distasteful, to their palates. But what was Michal's reward? Her scorn shall make her childless to the day of her death, ver. 23. Barrenness was held in those days none of the least judgments: she thought to lay a sudden disgrace upon David, a perpetual disgrace shall be her recompence. So doth the Lord revenge David's quarrel; that she shall not be held worthy to bear him a son, whom she unjustly contemned for showing himself a humble son of God. How just is God, to provide whips for the back of scorers! It is no marvel, if those that mock at goodness, be plagued with continual fruitlessness.

2. And this is that other and higher degree of wickedness, to scoff at religion itself. I have heard of some desperate patients, that have jeered at their physicians: but death is too mild a punishment for them, that scoff at all medicines. The wretched Gergesenes repelled Christ for fear; they are worse, that drive him away with scorn. If Christ will be ashamed of them when he comes to judge, that were ashamed of him when he came to suffer, how will he reject those with indignation, that rejected him with derision! You have set my counsel at nought; therefore I will laugh at your calamity, and mock when

your fear cometh, Prov. i. 25, 26. Themistocles, in his lower fortune, much desired the love of a young gentleman; but he scorned him. Soon after, when he grew to his greatness, the gentleman sought to him, but Themistocles answered, We are both grown wise, but too late. Now Christ offers them his gospel, and they scoff at it; at the last day they will sue for the benefit of that gospel, but they must not have it. If the prince grant a gracious pardon, and malefactors despise it, it were pity they should have the benefit of it. Never shall that mouth kiss the hand that hath mocked the majesty of the King of heaven.

The children of God must be content to receive taunts from their Father's enemies: we would hardly endure wounds, if we cannot brook words, for the cause of our Saviour. "When he was reviled, he reviled not again," 1 Pet. ii. 23; this was his patience for us. "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you," &c. Matt. v. 44; this should be our patience for him. It is enough to quiet us, that all the disgraces done to us, redound to him: He that despiseth you despiseth me. Saul, thou persecutest me. He that takes the cause from us to himself, will not resign the revenge from himself to us. I deny not, but there is sometimes a fair way of repairing unjust contumelies: and to be mealy-mouthed in the scorn of religion, is not so much the praise of patience, as the want of zeal. If all the aspersions of antichristian slanders could cheat us out of the integrity of our devotion, we were fearful cowards. Let them bellow with their mouths, and gore with their horns; yet neither the roaring of their bulls, nor the licking of their calves, must daunt or cool the fervour of our sincerity. The blind world in those former times, made it a capital crime, and loaded it with reproaches, for any man to call himself a Christian; yet the faithful did not give over the name. *Tantum mali, quia Christiani*: i. e. Evil, only because they were Christians: which Tertullian showed to be most unreasonable; for there is no crime in a mere name. This sect is every where spoken against, Acts xxviii. 22; like marks in the butt, at which every fool shot his bolt. Yet, as David said, "I will be more vile than thus, and base in mine own sight," this very abasement is heroic; and the only way to true glory, is not to be ashamed of our lowest humiliation unto God. Yea, the honour of such shall break forth in the midst of their contempt; and find a secret reverence, even where they have outward indignities. The hearts of men are not their own; he that made them, will overrule them, to honour those that honour their Maker; and if they do not, yet God will honour them, to their shame: as David's lowliness blessed his house, while Michal's scorn brought a curse upon herself. "When they arise, let them be ashamed; but let thy servant rejoice," Psal. cix. 28. God crowned that head with honour, which the boys of Bethel would needs cover with shame, and supply the want of hairs with reproaches.

Of the two, the derided ever speeds the better; for derision dasheth in a puddle, and the dirt lies about his own ears, while it lights short of innocence. The mocker would cast aspersions on his brother; but when he goes to bed, he finds them all on his own clothes. Every slander makes a deeper wound in the scandalizer's conscience, than on the other's credit; it is like a bullet riding on a string, wherewith while he seeks to strike another, it recoils and winds about his own loins. It is fit that the lavish tongue should always come by the worse; as the arrant scold is overcome by silence. "It may be that the Lord will look upon mine affliction, and requite me good for his cursing this day," 2 Sam. xvi. 12. Innocency needs not stand upon her own justifying, for God

hath undertaken to vindicate it. Ill tongues will be walking; neither need we repine at their insolence: we may well suffer their words, while God doth deliver us out of their hands. Livia wrote to Augustus Cæsar, concerning some ill words that had passed of them both; whereof she was over-sensitive; but Cæsar comforted her; Let it never trouble you, that men speak evil of us; for we have enough, that they cannot do evil to us. Indeed, above hell there is not a greater punishment, than to become a subject of scorn. Samson bare with more patience the boring out of his eyes, than the ludicrous scoffs of the Philistines. They made a feast to their gods; no musician would serve but Samson: he must now be their sport, that was once their terror. That he might want no sorrow, scorn is added to his misery. Every wit, every hand plays upon him: who is not ready to enst his bone and his jest at such a captive? So as doubtless he wished himself no less deaf than blind; and that his soul might have gone out with his eyes. Oppression is able to make a wise man

laid; and the greater the courage is, the more painful the insult. Alcibiades professed, that neither the proscription of his goods, nor his banishment, nor the wounds received in his body, were so grievous to him, as one scornful word of his enemy Ctesiphon. Good Queen Esther, in her prayers to God for her people, doth humbly deprecate this height of infelicity; O let them not laugh at our ruins. And David held it for a singular token of God's favour, that his enemy did not triumph over him, Psal. xli. 11. Yet what if they do traduce, is there none to justify? Philip of Macedon was wished to banish one that spake ill of him; but he answered, It is better that he speak where we are both known, than where we are both unknown. Lewd men may believe their misreports, the wise know their tongues to be no slanders.

They scoff at us, God laughs at them: "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision," Psal. ii. 4. Laugh? this seems a hard word at the first view: are the injuries of his saints, the cruelties of their enemies, the derision, the persecution of all that are round about us, no more but matter of laughter? Severe Cato thought, that laughter did not become the gravity of Roman consuls; that it is a diminution of states, as another told princes: and is it attributed to the Majesty of heaven? According to our capacities, the prophet describes God, as ourselves would be in a merry disposition, deriding vain attempts. He laughs, but it is in scorn; he scorns, but it is with vengeance. Pharaoh imagined, that by drowning the Israelite males, he had found a way to root their name from the earth; but when at the same time his own daughter, in his own court, gave princely education to Moses, their deliverer, did not God laugh? Julian rearing up the Jewish ceremonies, projected to supplant the new religion by the old; and therefore would be at the cost to build up the temple again: but when from under the foundation, as from the hill Vesuvius, flaming fire brake forth, and dissolved all his works, did not the Lord smile? The Philistines surprise the ark of God, and carry it away; thus far they are suffered to laugh and triumph. But when their idol Dagon fell down, to do it reverence; when themselves were so tormented with sickness, that they were fain to restore their pilfer with shame; did not God smile? When superstition and idolatry were readvanced in England by Queen Mary, how did the papists mock and scoff at true believers! yea, would they had only mocked us out of our credits, and not out of our lives. But when five years shall determine all that bloody persecution, did not God laugh at all their Bombers and butchers?

Short is the joy of the wicked. Is Dagon put up to his place again? God's smile shall take off his head and his hands, and leave him neither wit to guide nor power to subsist. How did our enemies swallow an invincible hope, to swallow us up with their invincible navy! But when the winds and seas, fire and water, fought against them, did not the Lord laugh them to scorn? *Fidet et ridet*, i. e. He sees and laughs. How did the engineers of antichrist applaud themselves in their sure design, and laugh in their hellish vault at our prepared ruin! But God did also laugh; and blessed be God, we may laugh too. As Cæsar said of Phraartes; he was *prius victus, quam visus*, conquered before he was seen; so that treason was knatched before it was fully hatched; undertaken, but overtaken: He that dwells in heaven, laughed it to scorn. We may not judge of God's works until the fifth act: the case deplorable and desperate in outward appearance, may with one smile from Heaven find a blessed issue. He permitted his temple to be sacked and rifled, the holy vessels to be profaned and caroused in; but did not God's smile make Belshazzar to tremble at the hand-writing on the wall? Oh, what are his frowns, if his smiles be so terrible! Let us never be too busy in washing off false aspersions; too earnest diligence puts a suspicion of guiltiness into the cause: it is enough to say with David, Lord, thou knowest mine innocence. When the boy, in the fable, got up into a dung-cart, to throw dirt at the moon; another (more charitable than wise) boy came running with a basin of water to wash the moon. It is more than needs: religion will look like herself, fair and beautiful, mangle all her imputations; and the righteousness of the saints shall break forth as the light at noon-day.

Here is the character of profane persons; *profane*, because they are as it were at a distance from the *fane* or temple, which is derived from the word *for*, *faris*, *fandi*, &c. to speak; it was the speaking-place; where God spake to man, by his precepts; and man spake to God, by his petitions. They are called profane, first, that are not entered into the church; whose unhappiness is to be without. Secondly, that are entered, but conform not themselves to the doctrine of godliness. It is good indeed to be within; for in our Father's house is bread enough. Out of the circle of the church, rains nothing but fire and brimstone. But here we must examine the manner of being within. Men may be within, as Ham was in the ark, as Judas in the college, or as ehall in the floor; in respect of their abode and residence, many are within, that in respect of their faith and obedience are without. It is all one to be without, and not to be holy within. Thirdly, that destroy holy things, spoil the church, and rob their own mother: as Pope Leo said, He could have no place in heaven, because he had sold it. We have too many of these sacrilegious scoffers, that either detain part, as Ananias; or take away all, as Belshazzar. Observe the offence and success of that wretched pair, Acts v. First, they did not take away, but keep back. Secondly, not that which was the church's before, but their own; to be disposed at their pleasure. Thirdly, this was not all, but a part of the price. Fourthly, yet the Scripture speaks of them, as it doth of Judas; Satan had filled their heart. Fifthly, and they are smitten with sudden death. How many smile in their hearts at the close conveyances of their sacrilegious frauds! God laughs at them as fast, for he sees that their day is coming.

Again, fourthly, they are profane, that disgrace holy things, by giving great places in the church to loose persons. This was Jeroboam's sin. God's clergy was select and honourable, branches of the

holy stem of Aaron; but Jerolam rakes priests out the kennel, 1 Kings xii. 31. Religion cannot want her sacred masters of divine ceremonies; and so must needs receive either much honour or blemish, by the quality of those that serve at her altars. They do but mock God, that thrust the blind and lame into his service. Men that have deformed bodies, are accounted fitter for hospitals than great employments. It is but a scoff, to fill Christ's grammar with such heteroclitics. No man is too good for the priesthood; the priesthood is too good for many men. Fifthly, they are profane, that condemn God's ministers, for they put a scoff upon God himself; as David could not but feel himself dishonoured in the abuse of his ambassadors. Woe be to those Ammonites! God hath messengers of wrath for them that despise the messengers of his love. The scorn and insolency done to us, is not buried with us; God will remember it in the day of vengeance. There be saws, and axes, and harrows of iron, yea, a brick-kiln of fire, for such scoffers, 2 Sam. xii. 31. God hath ranked priests next unto kings; he "hath made us kings and priests," Rev. i. 6. The king must have a priest to direct him, and the priest must have a king to protect him. Christ was both King and Priest: nor was this a political union, of both persons in one state; but a hypostatical union, of both offices in one person. So the priesthood hath ever been held a flower of the crown. What shall become of them, that can find no more pleasing subjects for all their scorn, than priests? Woe, woe to England for this sin, which hath so universally conspired in the contempt of the ministers of the gospel! Lastly, they are profane scoffers, that scandalize holy things; reproaching virtues, while they blanch vices; that call evil good, and put light for darkness, Isa. v. 20. Thus they call the humble man a hypocrite; the proud, a man of a brave spirit; the drunkard is a good fellow, while the sober man is no fellow of theirs at all. What is this, but to stamp God's image on the devil's dross, and to stamp the devil's image on God's silver? These be the scoffers, the profane sensualists of our times.

I conclude. We see the state of the world, in these contrary conditions of mankind: some seek the Lord, others mock them for their labour; some are fearful to sin, others scoff at all goodness; some are the friends of Christ, and they must look for all the rest to be their enemies. This world is a sea, and they that serve the Lord are in a ship of peace; but if we look up, we shall presently ken a man of war, and then we must be for war too. There be two ships under sail, a pirate and a merchant; we must prepare for a skirmish. The galley that hath our pinnace in chase, is the piracy of hell, the synagogue of Satan; her name is Persecution; a hot ship, and full of wildfire. In which, the devil is master, malice the master's mate, hypocrisy the boatswain, covetousness the purser, lust the swabber, fury the gunner, and sedition the trumpeter. Vices are the sails, the wisdom of the flesh the card, the mystery of iniquity the compass; atheists, scoffers, profane, all the rabble of hell, the mariners. She hath two tire of ordnance planted in her, heresy and irreligion; (she is either for a false god, or none); and these spit fire, smoke, shot, and sulphur, against all that worship the Lamb, or fight under the ensign of faith. The flag in her top, is infidelity; the motto, *Lucrum est pietas*; i. e. There is no God but gain. We may see her parallel in the prophet, Ezek. xxvii. 5, &c.: she hath her choice materials out of all kingdoms; especially, her ballast from Turkey, and her tackling from Rome. Antichrist is her steersman or pilot, and steers her course. Thus she goes swiftly, proudly, securely, scoffing and scoffing at all oppositions. But her

worst is, she hath no anchor; so when the storms of God's wrath arise, down she sinks to desperation, and perisheth.

The other vessel is that wherein we sail; the name of it is the Church: in which Christ is the Master, and he hath no mate; his cross is the mast, his sacraments the sails, the tackle patience, divine wisdom the card, God's word the compass: the soldiers are prophets, apostles, preachers; the mariners, angels; the freight, the souls of men, women, children; the foredeck, humility; the armour, innocency; the stern, charity; the anchor, hope; the flag in the top of her, faith, with this word written, *Premiatur, non opprimatur*, i. e. Being cast down, we perish not. These two meet and fight; the one invading, the other defending; the one striking, the other warding the blows; the one proudly insulting, the other patiently suffering. One would think that the patient ship should have the worst of it; and that after so many assaults, it must needs be at last sunk and overwhelmed. But Christ is in it; he hath the charge of it, and that charge he will make good. Though the elements were all on fire, the earth a dissolving, and heaven a falling, this vessel should not miscarry. It is a body, whereof he is the Head; a building, whereof he is the Foundation; the spouse of his love, the purchase of his blood. When the piracy of hell shall sink to hell, and all the workers of wickedness shall perish, he will bring this ark to the mountains of Armenia, the harbour of peace, the kingdom of glory, through the greatness of his merits and the goodness of his mercies, which shall never fail us.

"Walking after their own lusts." All this their scorn of religion is but to maintain their lusts: did not the gospel cross their sins, they would not cross the gospel. "To be carnally minded is death," Rom. viii. 6: this troubles them. Death is the end of sin, though not the end of a sinner. A wicked man sins not purposely that he might be damned, but damnation follows his wickedness. Not seldom do we seek for one thing, and find another; as Saul sought asses, and found a kingdom; as Absalom sought a kingdom, and found a gallows. The adulterer in his sin, seeks pleasure; the covetous, riches; but they find another thing, that is, death. The word of God sets down the wages of sin, and ties punishment to it as an inseparable effect to the cause. Because they cannot dissolve this knot, they fly upon the word itself; and through the sides of the law, wound the name of the Law-maker with reproach. As thieves, that would put out all the light, that in the dark they might more securely ransack the house. The conscience that is guilty of flagitious crimes, could wish the heavens blind; as knowing that they look upon unlawful things with sore eyes. Why have the pontificians, instead of clasps, hung padlocks upon the Bible, but that they might uncensured walk after their own lusts? why, but that their lusts might be laws, and those laws guide the lusts of the people? So the very sins of teachers become rules to their scholars. If Paul preacheth, Demetrius roars. Of all professions, the ministry is in this the unhappiest; because we fight against those sins, which men love better than their own souls. The covetous Pharisees derided Christ's sermon against covetousness, Luke xvi. 14. As a tyrant demolisheth all the forts in his dominions, that the right heir of the crown may find no refuge of defence, so his own will may have the full swing without means of resistance; profane libertines could wish that all preachers had caught an everlasting cold, that they might carry away those sins without reproof, which they have perpetrated without shame.

Every evil man hath lusts of his own; which he is as resolute to maintain, as a father to keep his own children. It is easy for men to dislike lusts not their own, to condemn another man's sins; but our own lusts be dear unto us. What wonder is it, if a dumb man be no swearer, a enunch no adulterer, a beggar no broker? Where is no assault, there can be no victory. "I am not as other men are," saith the Pharisee, "extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican," Luke xviii. 11. No extortioner; it may be so: what if he were so rich, that he need not, or so poor, that he could not oppress; or so base, that no man would trust him? What needs a rich man be a thief? Not unjust; it may be so too: his privateness might exempt him. How should he fail in doing justice, that never had an act of justice to do? No adulterer; it may be so: either his unchaste offers have been repelled, or his concupiscence hath wrought out itself another way. Not a publican; very true: for worse, he was a Pharisee. He durst not say, his conscience would not let him, that he was no sinner. There is variety of lusts; and that old experienced fisher of souls hath more baits than one. For a hypocrite to decline open randing, rambling, noctivagating, swaggering garments, and revels, it is no wonder; he hath another kind of lust. To make the end of all his religion the advancement of his own ends, and to cheat them as a saint that would defy him as a devil; this is the desire of his lust. He deals with his conscience as the untoward husband did with his wife; he speaks her fair and makes much of her abroad, but he cudgels her in private at home. The dissolute person thinks to justify himself: I am none of those that rail at church government; that will not suffer a spoonful of aqua-vitæ to be sold on the sabbath, though it should save a sick man's life; that will run two miles to a sermon: as if there was no other way to hell, but hypocrisy. He that never kept the sabbath himself, what cares he to keep others from breaking it? or, to go two miles to a sermon, that had rather go twenty another way?

So the riotous clears himself from avarice, that he doth not keep empty his stomach to fill his bushels. I had as lieve he had said nothing; he may have lusts no less foul. Yet of all extremes, covetousness and profuseness are lusts most compatible. Though it be true naturally, that like produces like; yet is it often otherwise politically. War is the parent of peace; and peace, through some degrees, begets war; yet what more opposed than peace and war? So prodigality begets avarice, and avarice begets prodigality; yet what so contrary as these two? As the sea drinks up all rivers, that it may feed all springs; or the liver sucks juice from the stomach, which it sends in blood into all the veins; so the great oppressor derives all from poor labourers, that he may indulgently lavish it among his flatterers; and he is careful to supply his own inordinate lusts, as Satan studies errands for his spirits. Whether doth the lust of ambition, arising from the conceit of a little inheritance, transport the gallants of our time? The thistle courts the cedar, 2 Kings xiv. 9, riches lust for honour; but there is a wild beast, or a tame beast, or worse than both, that treads down the thistle, the usurer. The sluggard quits himself from pragmatical meddling, the busy-body from lazy slugging; one drives up the hill of presumption, another down the hill of security; both these ways meet at hell-gates. One is an atheist, and believes no God; another is an idolater, and worships many gods: one will be of a new religion, another of no religion. No matter, thinks Satan, what way they follow, so long as they do him homage, and travel to his kingdom. Herod

could yield to reform many things; but not Herodias: that was his lust. Saul smote many Amalekites and much cattle; but he spared the king, and the fat beasts; that was his lust. We are all ready, like Abraham, to plead for our Ishmael: Take my country, I leave it; my wealth, I forsake it; but oh that Ishmael, my darling lust, might live in thy sight: Gold and silver, homage and fealty, will Abah afford Benhadad; but still there is something pleasant in his eyes, 1 Kings xx. 6; he is loth to part with that. The mariners will cast overboard their goods, their wares, their victuals, and freight, but they stick hard at Jonah; and yet nothing but Jonah can serve the turn. Other men's lusts we impartially censure; and pry, like Laban, into Jacob's stuff, for an idol we carry in our own bosoms. We have a projected knowledge, not a reflective; we see others, not ourselves; that is the reason we think best of ourselves, worst of others. But the good man looks to himself, not into another; and therefore thinks best of another, worst of himself. Let me kill my lust, do thou kill thine, every one mortify his own, and the Spirit of grace mortify them all.

Though there be several lusts in several men, and these quarrel and fight one against another, yet they all conspire against goodness. Edom and Ishmael, Moab and the Hagarenes, Gebal and Ammon, Amalek and the Philistines, the men of Tyre and Ashur, all had several gods, yet all conspire against the true God, Psal. lxxxiii. 5—8. Fleshly lusts fight against the soul, 1 Pet. ii. 11. One lust fights against another, both against the soul. They make one soul fight against another, and many souls fight against God. There was a conspiracy between the woods and the floods, 2 Esd. iv. 13: the ambitious lusts of honour are the woods, and they seek to enlarge their tyrannies and territories, and to bring all in subjection unto themselves. The covetous lusts of riches are the floods, and they project the amplifying of their dominions, as if they would reduce all to a popular equality, and endure no overlookers. On a sudden, fire consumes those lofty cedars, or the axe of destruction hews them up at the roots; and then where is their glory? The sands stop out the waves; plague, famine, and the sword make havoc among them; then where is their pride? Covetousness would have nature produce faster than she can; riot devours those fruits as fast as she yields them: the one would have all to keep, the other would keep nothing at all; the former gets, and spends not; the latter spends, and gets not; both these lusts proceed from corruption, both end in confusion. Wicked men, though they lust for divers things, can pack together: seldom doth a good motion find perfect accordance, but it is not unfrequent for a multitude to conspire in evil. In the tradition of Christ, the lust of the rulers was envy, Herod's was curiosity, Pilate's popularity, Judas's money; yet were they all confederate against Jesus. The herdmen run with news, the whole country comes in with clamour, Matt. viii. 33, 34. The multitude is a beast of many heads; every head hath a several mouth, and every mouth hath a several tongue, and every tongue a several accent; every head hath a several brain, and every brain thoughts of their own; every breast hath a several heart, and every heart hath its own lusts: so that it is hard to find a multitude without some division. But as many several ingredients in the vat make but one dye or colour upon the cloth; so all kinds of lust have but one kind of effect, to defile the soul, to dishonour God, to grieve the Spirit, and to cross the death of Jesus Christ.

All men have lusts, but all do not walk after them. We may as well find life in a man's body without a

soul, as a soul in that body without lust. Nor do I mean only natural lust, that was given by creation; but even sinful lust, that comes by corruption. For as we were conceived in sin, so we can of ourselves conceive nothing but sin. And this lust sticks a defilement upon our best works; not that in the regenerate it makes them wholly sinful, but it makes them defective. "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags," Isa. lxiv. 6. Not some, but all; not of reprobates, but our own; not iniquity, but righteousness; not as whole cloth, but rags; and those not clean, but filthy; and that the most sordid filthiness. And this lust, if it went no further, is enough to condemn us. But in Christ it shall not condemn us, because they that are in Christ condemn it in themselves. "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death," Rom. viii. 2. As sin could not condemn him, so nor shall it condemn those that are in him: for the same life is in us, that was in Christ; as the water is the same both in the fountain and rivers, and life the same both in the head and members. The least branch of this Vine is too high for Satan's reach. So happy is it to be ingrafted to Christ; where God is the planter, Christ the stock, believers the imps and scions, grace the sap, the word the knife or saw, the sacraments the ligatures.

Indeed still this serpent will hiss, often touch us, and fright us; but blessed be God, our fear is more than our hurt, for it cannot condemn us; the sting is out. Christ hath "condemned sin in the flesh," Rom. viii. 3; all sin; whatsoever had any consideration of sin: original, with the fruit of it, which is actual; and both these, with the effect, which is condemnation. He did cast lust out of his office, not without reproach; as a faulty magistrate is stripped of his place and honours with disgrace. Which is our special comfort, that our greatest enemy, that is, sin, is deprived of his power; as the execution of Haman was the consolation of Israel. Saul was afraid of Goliath; but when he saw him dead at the feet of David, his joy was now greater than before his fear. But still we fight, often are foiled, and always complain of our lusts: it must be so, for God will have it so. It is in us, but as a condemned person, reprimed for a time; and it only dies when the body dies with it. A man that hath received his death's wound, may sprawl and move for a while. When a fire is quenched, and the danger past, yet there will remain a smoke that troubles our eyes. Our lusts are like fire under fuel unkindled; temptations are the bellows or blasts of wind, that set them a flaming. In the graceless they presently take fire; in the faithful, though they burn not outright, yet they often make such a smother that we are not able to abide the room. To expect an utter riddance of this, is to antedate heaven; no mortal on earth hath that privilege. We can lust, and pollute ourselves; we cannot eradicate lust, or cleanse the souls thus polluted. Am I a God, that I should recover a man of his leprosy? 2 Kings v. 7. To bid a man clear his heart from all sin, is to impose upon him the peculiar work of omnipotent grace. You might as well bid him drink up the sea; as it is fabled of a prince, with whom a mighty neighbour-king used to pick quarrels, by making impossible demands; otherwise threatening war and ruin to him. Among the rest one was, that he charged him to drink up the sea; which a counsellor hearing, advised him to undertake it. The prince replied, How is it possible to be accomplished?

The sage answered, Let him first stop up all the rivers that run into the sea, (which are no part of the bargain,) and then you shall perform it. Much more impossible is it for ourselves to consume and dry up

all the ocean of sin in us, so long as lusts remain like rivers to feed it. For still sin breeds lusts, and lusts increase sin; as the sea sends forth springs that run into rivers, and those rivers return to the sea. It is comfort enough that they cannot condemn us; as the Canaanites were not quite destroyed; they lived for Israel's exercise, but they could never take away their Canaan. They often make us fight, and weep, and struggle; yea, and sometimes get us down; but still we rise again. For there is a holy spark in us, which all the deluge of lusts shall never be able to extinguish; as the finger of God is stronger than all the arms and armies of the world.

Lusts are like fire and water, good servants, cruel masters; tyrannous and deadly where they command. They are not without trouble that have them; but they are miserable that walk after them. "There is no condemnation to them that walk not after the flesh," Rom. viii. 1: not that have no flesh in them, but which walk not after it. Let us think seriously: God hath in the flesh of his own Son condemned all our lusts, of pride, avarice, uncleanness; and shall we justify that which he hath condemned? Hath Christ killed them, and shall we give them life? Did he come to demolish and abolish our Jericho, and shall we rebuild it, with a curse upon ourselves? Was he sent to "destroy the works of the devil," 1 John iii. 8, and shall we take Satan's part against him in the re-establishment of those works? Hath he defaced our dangerous way, ploughed it up, and sown it with thorns and brambles, that we might take no pleasure in it; and shall we make it a new way, and walk in it as in a garden? Some gross actual sins appear ugly; but how few be there that mind their lusts! "O Jerusalem, wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved. How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?" Jer. iv. 14. We that watch when we know our house beset with robbers, yet can sleep with this treacherous harlot in our bosoms. Do we slight a foul contemplation of uncleanness? The Holy Ghost cannot abide it: how must he loathe that heart wherein he finds such a guest! Shall the thought of envy, the desire of revenge, the purpose of fraud, tarry with us a whole night? What manner of men do we rise in the morning? How shall we pray God to bless our labours, when such pregnant lusts are in labour within us? Hath Satan sown his seed in our hearts, and do we call upon Christ to bless our harvest? O let us root out these lusts, or they will root us out of the land of the living. Alas, that our deadly enemies should be so dear to us, that to save them, we will lose ourselves! But we think them our friends, because they are our continual companions. Yet finding their perfidiousness, one would think we should no longer trust them. I remember what a duke of Florence, Cosmus, was wont to say of treacherous friends; We read that we ought to forgive our enemies, but we do not read that we ought to forgive our friends. It is neither good nor safe to forgive those friends, that with their flattery would undo our souls. It is our familiar friend, the man of our peace, Psal. xli. 9, that does us the mischief. Concupiscence is to a man, as the wench was to Peter, that made him deny his Master.

The multitude of these lusts makes them more pernicious. One hair doth not hang a man, many hairs twisted together will. Even lusts are able to serve him like Absalom, and halter him at the next bough. Many threads make a cord, cords make a cable, and cables hold huge vessels. If actual sin be a sword, every little lust is a sharp thorn; and what matters it, whether a man receive his death from a pistol, or great ordnance? Yea, oftentimes a wind that comes

in at a cranny or crevice, or some narrow passage, doth a man more hurt than an open storm. There can be no safety to the soul, without a resolute defiance of every lust: yield to one, and you invite many; relieve one, and all the rest will crowd in for alms. They that have once thrall'd themselves to a known lust, will make no other difference of sins, but their own loss or advantage. A liar will steal, a thief can kill, a cruel man dares be a traitor, a drunkard can falsify; wickedness once entertained, can put on any shape. Trust him in nothing, that makes not a conscience of every thing. The centinel that will pass a spy, dares betray the host. Samson might easily have considered so much in his harlot, if lust had not bewitched him: She that will sell her body to me, will sell me easily to others. As the Philistines knew where Samson's weakness lay, though not his strength; and therefore would entice his harlot by gifts, to entice him by her dalliance, to betray himself; knowing that she which would be filthy, would also be perfidious: so Satan, by feeling our pulse, observing our disposition, knows where our infirmity lies; and therefore corrupts our lust, to corrupt us. The fens of Lerna were never so dangerous, nor that monster Hydra to the inhabitants, as this queen-mother concupiscence is to the government within us. Out of the boughs of a tree are taken wedges to cleave it in pieces. *Intra nos est, quod contra nos est*: i. e. That is within us, which is against us: out of our own lusts Satan works engines to destroy us.

Yet we part from our lusts with sorrow; as a father mourns for the loss of his children. In Ezekiel's days there were women weeping for Tammuz; and that by the temple-gate, Ezek. viii. 14: women had learned to mourn for vanities. Tremellius thinks that this Tammuz was Osiris, the husband of Isis, the Egyptian goddess; and that these women were no other than the basest kind of sinners: as in Josiah's time there were "the houses of the Sodomites by the house of the Lord, where the women wove hangings for the grove," 2 Kings xxiii. 7. Hierome takes it to be Adonis; and that the Hebrews named the Adonis of the heathen, Tammuz. A damnable and desperate idolatry, and so much the more devilish as it came near the temple of God. But have we none that mourn for Adonis, their Tammuz. The exhausted adulterer, whose sin outlives his body, whose lust is full when his veins be empty, mourns; not for having offended God, but for not being able to offend him longer: he is one of Ezekiel's chief mourners for Adonis. The sick, intemperate surfeiter, that sees wine in the glass, but in his fever is forbid to drink it, mourns for Tammuz. The thief that is hindered by the palsy from pursuing his booty; the state-spent barrator, that cannot follow the law for want of money; they weep for Tammuz. One would think that in those days of light, such exorbitant lusts should keep within doors, and be ashamed to ramble abroad. But concupiscence is a damp that puts out the eye of knowledge; and we need no other testimony of her predominance, than the works she still produceth. "The works of the flesh are manifest," Gal. v. 19; too, too manifest: but if we see frogs above water, what store may we think there is in the mud, under water! If the face have so many apparent blemishes and sores, which all desire to hide, what abundance is there hidden under the garments! If so much be seen now, much more will appear at the last day, when the secrets of all hearts shall be opened.

A sensual life is so much below Christians, that it is below reasonable men; yea, below the brute beasts, and next to the very devils. One compares the sense

to the sun; for the sun seals up the globe of heaven, and opens the globe of earth: so the sense reveals earthly things, but obscures heavenly things. Or to the moon, which is then lightest to earth when she is darkest towards heaven. (Phil. Judæus.) Of all philosophers, the Epicures were most constant to their profession: never did Epicurean turn to any other sect, but divers of other sects did turn Epicureans. But there was an unhappy reason given for it by St. Augustine. It was the sensuality and licentiousness of that profession, which drew so many adherents: this tempted others to join with them; this kept them from joining with others; for so the flesh, to which they were so indulgent, should have lost by the bargain. It is easy for men to be led by their lust, as a guide they are used unto, and brought up under: beside familiarity, they find indulgence: so ready is every man to follow his own way. But the Spirit seems a hard master, and leads us a new walk; not through pleasant meadows, but through sharp tribulations; where we no sooner follow, but lust is cashiered, as Joab was put out of the generalship. This way may seem troublesome at the first setting out; but the farther we go, the easier we find it, and the journey's end is peace. While Samson followed this manuduction, his way was not more prosperous than victorious; heaps lay upon heaps before his conquering sword. But when he forsook that Guide, to walk after his own lusts, shame and misery were his success. We cannot more wonder at his strength, than at his weakness; for he did not so much overcome the men, as the women overcame him: his lusts blinded him first, ere the Philistines could do it. Would be else, after the effusion of so much of their blood, suffer his affections to carry him within their walls, as one that cared more for his pleasure than for his life? The Philistines are up in arms to kill him; he offers himself to their city, and dares expose his life to one of their harlots whom he had slaughtered. How happy had it been for him to betake himself to his stronger Rock than that of Etam; and by his austere devotion to seek protection of Him, of whom he had received strength! But in vain doth he nourish his hair, while he feeds these passions. He that might not drink wine, is drunk with the cup of fornications. His lust carries him from Azzah to the plain of Sorek, and there he finds a Delilah that shall pay him for all his former uncleanness.

So steep and slippery is the walk of lust, that if after one fall we have found where to stand, it is the praise, not of our footing, but of the hand of God. Man is a ship: if God be the Pilot, sitting at the helm, and steering the vessel, the voyage is safe and happy; but if concupiscence hold the stern, all runs to ruin. There are not more unruly mariners in a ship, than members in the body: let the soul look to all, that must answer for all. St. Paul prays for his Thessalonians, that their whole spirit, and soul, and body may be sanctified, 1 Thess. v. 23. By spirit, conceive the understanding; by soul, the will and affections; by the body, itself with all the members. Turn man into a bark; and then the steersman is reason, or rather religion and grace, the sails are the affections, the helm is the will. The sails are apt to take every wind, and to carry the ship as that drives them. If the pilot let all alone, sleep, revel, and never mind it; there will be sudden destruction. But let him sit at the stern, fix his eye on the compass, and guide his hand by his eye, and the vessel by his hand; thus he shall even cheat the wind, and as it were compel it to blow for him. Such is the power of grace, that it makes the object of temptation become the matter of humiliation; and we prove

the better even by that which would have made us worse. Or man is a coach, whereof understanding is the coachman, the will and affections are the horses, and conscience is the carriage. If the coachman want will or skill to drive heedily; or if he drive like Jehu, furiously, if he put the reins into the hand of lust; or if he do not know and use his cheeks and sidings, to turn in a narrow room; the horses will prove restive, the coach will fall, and sorely bruise the conscience. But though they be unruly, a good driver can help much: if they be too lusty, he will bate their feeding; if too high, take them down with assiduous labour; and make them tractable enough ere he have done with them: thus all the welfare, or ill-fare, lies in the coachman. We ourselves in a journey will not trust upon a drunken waterman or coachman: why then dare we entertain lust for our driver? Why should the tail lead the head? Why should conscience stoop to concupiscence? What can be the end of lust's walk, but irrecoverable ruin? Lord, do thou lead us, and give us grace to follow thee: thy ways be truth and righteousness, thy guidance is peace and faithfulness, and thy reward is mercy and blessedness.

VERSE 4.

*And saying, Where is the promise of his coming?
for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue
as they were from the beginning of the creation.*

RELIGION hath two extremes, both mortal enemies to her; superstition, and atheism. The former will worship God her own way; the other will acknowledge no God, to worship any way. It is hard to say, which of these is the worse; either to the owners, or to their neighbours, or to the Lord himself.

1. To the owners. Atheism leaves a man to sense, to philosophy, to natural piety, to laws, to reputation; all which are some kind of guides to moral virtue, though religion were not. But superstition dismounts all, and prescribes a law to itself; a form of worship, which if God will not accept, he shall have no obedience at all. So instead of a kingdom, it erecteth an absolute tyranny in the mind. From hence it comes, that no pagans have been worse to Christians, than papists; their superstition allowing that villany, which irreligion would not admit. We never read among the heathen so horrible and hideous a treason, as the powder-plot in England, attempted by them that profess the true God, but by a false worship. There is no Epicure of old, or present atheist, but would rather be what he is, than such a Christian. They would but break the bond of religious unity; these dissolve the combination of all human society. We pity the madmen of Munster, but we cannot but hate a religious conspirator. It is a great deal less mischief, that the want of all religion should deface men's understanding, than that any religion should spoil them of piety and charity; when reason shall only be retained as an engine or chariot-driver of malice, and most bloody cruelty. There is no such atheist, as a devout hypocrite, a pious impostor: there would be never a devil left in hell, rather than his bosom should want guests and supply.

2. To others. Atheism is commonly confined to a man's own breast, and does *intra orbem suum ferre*, rage within its own world; because it knows its own weakness to prevail against the universal tenet: but superstition is like a ball of snow, that greates

itself by rolling. Never any nation was wholly given over to atheism; some god they acknowledged, though they could not light on the true: but superstition hath been an epidemical plague, leaving none uninfected. Atheism did never disturb states, but contracted itself with civility, and subordinate obedience. But superstition hath always made uproars, and been the confusion of countries. Atheism hath taught men to be wary of themselves: they that expect no life after this, will make as much of this as they can; and therefore avoid quarrels that may trouble their peace, and enormities that may shorten their lives: therefore the times inclined to atheism, as in the days of Augustus Cæsar, were civil times. But superstition brings in a new *primum mobile*, that ravisheth all the spheres of government into disorder. As custom is the master of ceremony, so the master of superstition is the people. In both, wise men are fain to follow fools; and what the multitude authorizeth by practice, that the wits must make good by argument. So the people make customs, and those their princes must establish for laws. Tumults and divisions for religion, were evils unknown to the heathen; because they all served one devil, under divers names and forms. And for the petty quarrels among their puppet-gods; as Vulcan against Troy, and Apollo for Troy; these differences were soon taken up at a tavern, and reconciled over a cup of wine. But superstition is always in garboils, and the most deadly enmities. Both are such enemies to all states, that princes by their power, and churches by their decrees, should always join in the damning to hell such factions and their supports; and in all counsels concerning religion, the counsel of the apostle would be prefixed, "The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God," Jam. i. 20.

3. To God. Atheism would have no god; superstition, a mean god: the one would pluck him out of his throne, the other would share with him in his throne. The one does him treachery, the other contumely, both injury. The philosopher could tell there is a God, and that he is to be worshipped; but the true nature of God, and how to be worshipped, he could never demonstrate. Yet it is wonderful that they went not thus far, as to consider, that if there be only one God, and he to be worshipped, they did not examine the rules whereby he commands himself to be worshipped; seeing it is folly to acknowledge the king our sovereign, and to contemn his laws. What is this, but to reproach the Deity, when we know his precepts, yet refuse them, and follow our own fancies? It is, instead of subjects, to make ourselves fellows with him in his kingdom. And God will sooner pardon revolters, ("We have no portion in David," 2 Sam. xx. 1.) than rebels, that would take away the portion of David. Sheba flies off, and would have no king; Absalom flies on, and would be king himself. The atheist would have no room for God; the pope would have a room with God, yea, a room above God, 2 Thess. ii. 4. And while he makes the world believe he is the servant of Christ, he endeavours to make Christ his servant; subjecting God's royal and eternal laws to his own forged traditions.

Thus miserably assailed on both sides is poor (but pure) religion; on the one side with papists, that would scratch out her eyes; on the other side with atheists, that in their own hearts would cut her throat. With this monster we are now to encounter, which comes roaring with two blasphemies in his mouth:

A challenge, Where is the promise of his coming?
A defiance, All things continue as they were, &c.

But before I come to examine these particular arguments, something is requisite to be spoken of atheism in general. And here consider, the nature, the measure, the kinds, the causes, and the conviction of it.

1. The nature of it is this, that it foreteth a per-suasion in the heart of the nullity of Divine power, and leaves the whole world to be governed by fortune. In our Saviour's time there were Sadducees, that denied the resurrection. They could not but know that they should die; they would not believe that they should rise again, or give any account after death for that they had done during life. The school that is most charged with this infidel assertion, was that of Lucippus, and Epicurus; which taught, that four mutable elements, and one immutable fifth essence, duly and eternally placed, needed no God. Which opinion yet was not so unreasonable as that other; that an army of atoms, infinite small portions or seeds unplaced, should produce such an order and beauty, without a Divine marshal. Yet still some fire burst forth, like thunder, through all those conglomerated clouds: nor did Epicurus utterly deny all deity; but that the power which was, had not respect to the government of the world. Nor did he, as our atheists say, temporize in this, and dissemble for his credit's sake; as if he thought in his heart there was no God. For his words are more noble: It is not profane to deny the gods of the vulgar, but it is profane to apply to the gods the opinion of the vulgar, i. e. to think of them as they do. Though he had the confidence to deny the administration, he had not the power to deny the nature.

Indians and pagans are not without their particular gods, and they have several names for them; though they have no name for the true God. So the heathen had their Jupiter, Mars, Apollo; and would rather embrace many gods, than none at all: thus do the most barbarous savages convince atheists. These are they that call all Scripture into question; and if they entertain the morality, yet will not credit the history. If Genesis say, God made the world; they presently ask, Who made Genesis? If the apostles say, The world shall be dissolved; they demand, Who told them so? They are content, with Cornelius Tacitus, to acknowledge Moses a wise naturalist, well seen in the learning of Egypt; but that he had Divine assistance in the greatest of his miracles, this they deny. The water which he struck out of the rock (say they) was not by any supernatural work of God; but by watching to what part of the wilderness the wild asses repaired for drink. They hold with Albumasar, that his leading Israel over the Red Sea, was no more than observing the influence of the stars, and waning of the moon which withdraweth the tides. Because some have discredited the story of Susanna, Judith, and the like apocryphal books; therefore they serve all the rest alike, and parallel the whole Bible with the Jewish Talmud, and tax it for a fabulous legend. "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost," 2 Cor. iv. 3. They will not believe, that are ordained to perish.

2. The measure of it. Above other sins, it offers violence both to God and his image. To God; in that it would not only rob him of his glory, but the world of him, of the Maker. "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handy-work," Psal. xix. 1. But these contradicators deny him that honour; as if heaven were not his (but only natural) manufacture. He made all eyes, yet they would not leave him an eye to see withal. As if the Maker of all ears, of all tongues, of all hearts, should not have an ear to hear, or a heart to be sensible of such blasphemies. Not that he hath these mem-

bers or affections, but the virtue of these in an infinite perfection. They have their being, live, move in him; yet deny him life, motion, and being; as if he that made their hands had none himself. They establish reason as their god, and will not be persuaded there is any other God, unless he makes them privy to all those abstracted and unsearchable secrets. They ask when he had his beginning, that is without beginning, that gives beginning to all things. Or, how he governs: as if a king should give account to his subjects. They examine him straitly, where he was, what he did, before he created heaven and earth; and yet we never found a pitcher call its potter to a reckoning. They run through every circumstance of his providence; with, Why he did this; and, Why he did not that. Such ambitious cogitations be found in earthen bodies; even to ransack the King's private closet, and to peruse the records of heaven; which if they cannot attain, they will distort and deprave. That insatiate diver into the secrets of nature, who sought to conglob those three great bodies, heaven, earth, and the wide world of waters, Aristotle, so puzzled his thoughts about the beginning and bounds of Nilus, that in Nilus he drowned himself; and because he could not comprehend it, would needs be comprehended by it. If that soul, so metaphysically subtle, could not grasp a river, who shall fetch out the concealments of the infinite Godhead? The angels know not the day of judgment, much less other more secret circumstances: and will God conceal that from his sanctified attendants, which he reveals to sinners? We men do not tell our secrets to enemies, or strangers. They that are never so familiar with earthly states, must not think to be familiar with the state of heaven. Thus injurious are they to their Maker, and to themselves; striving to scrape out those engraven principles and divine characters, which God at first printed in his own image.

3. The kinds are two. First, the inward atheist; that, like the panther, hides his head in a hood of religion, when he seeks for a booty; that devours widows' houses, under pretence of long prayers. Church rites he supposeth not amiss to busy the people's heads with, and keep them from minding his proceedings. He cares not what god he entertains, but himself is the only god he heartily worships. He puts on a holy look, when he means to do mischief; and hath Scripture in his mouth, even while he is cutting his neighbour's throat. As the gospel is the power of God to salvation, to every one that believes it; so he makes the profession of it Satan's power of deceiving, to every one that believes him. Under the colour of suppressing popery, he will not leave the church a jot of her own patrimony. The door of his mouth is swept and garnished, and strewed with green rushes; but in his heart is a whole legion of devils, Matt. xii. The hypocrite certainly is a secret atheist; for if he did believe there was a God, he durst not be so bold as to deceive him to his face.

Next, the outward atheist, that professeth there is no God. The former are cunning, and swim with the tide; these have learned (like trouts) to swim always against the stream. They tell us of Egyptians, that can prove a continued succession of their kings for seventy thousand years; and impudently persist in it, that the late discovered Indians are able to show antiquities many thousand years older than Adam. So hellish are their falsehoods: yea, they say there is no hell at all, but in opinion; but Satan would give them all the world that they could prove it so. Devils? say they; alas, there are none: but the time shall come, they would give all the world there were

not. Julian called all Christians, Galileans; and in the hour of his death there appeared to him a devil, who (notwithstanding he cried out, *Vicisti, Galilee*, Thou hast conquered, O Galilean) would never give him over, till he had stripped his soul, and bore it with him to endless torments.

4. The causes follow; which are partly within them, and partly without them. Within them two.

First, ignorance. Because they cannot grossly feel God with their bodily fingers, or see him with their eyes, they confidently renounce him. "He that cometh to God, must believe," Heb. xi. 6. They do not come to God, but come against God; nor do they believe he is the rewarder of them that seek him; but rather, that they prosper best who despise him. Is a monarch no king, because he does not set his throne among his utmost subjects, and borderers of his kingdom? We are God's utmost subjects, the last (in a manner) that he hath brought to his obedience; shall we forget ourselves to be his subjects, because he is not as visibly conversant among us as among his angels? The soul governs the body; the body can neither see nor hear this soul: hath it therefore no soul? Yes: and as the body could not stir without the soul; so neither body nor soul could move without God. It is he that lets forth and calls in our breath, that shuts and opens our eyes, orders our hands, and guides our feet, as he pleaseth. Suppose our king should erect his throne in a foreign land: yet he is still our king, and his power undiminished. Indeed so did our fathers rebel, and forgot they had a king: so did the king's own brother rebel, and forgot that he had a brother; crowning himself king, when Richard Cœur de Lion was warring in the Holy Land. He that is every where, must needs be among us, though we see him not: divers princes have taken pleasure to walk disguised among their own subjects. How potent and patient is that God, who gives motion to those tongues that blaspheme him! We would not lend our enemy weapons to fight against us. A little philosophy inclineth man's mind to atheism; but depth in philosophy bringeth him about to religion. When men look upon second causes scattered, they are ready to rest in them; but when they behold them confederate and knit together, they fly to Providence and confess a Deity. Therefore David sets a fool's cap on the head of atheism, Psal. xiv. 1.

Secondly, pride. Prosperity doth so tympanize men's souls, and entrance them from themselves, that they forget they had a Maker. Who is God? saith Pharaoh: There is no God, saith Nebuchadnezzar: I am god, saith Alexander. But Nebuchadnezzar found there was a God: Pharaoh found what that God was: Alexander found himself to be none; and confessed that he knew himself mortal by two things, sleep and lust. These drunken favourites of the world run mad with a conceit of themselves; and have so far waded into the stream of blasphemies, and scorn of the Scriptures, that, finding this height of provocation to escape punishment, they conclude there is no God to punish, otherwise he would not put up such indignities. First, they have made themselves profane against God, and then pump their wits for reasons to prove there is no God. So the poet, though he brought it in with an *Ignoscite, fulso*, i. e. Pardon me, if deceived; and with some more nicety, as if it were a temptation only, and put upon him: *Solicitor nullus esse putare deos*; i. e. I'm tempted to believe that gods are none. The snake, which the kind husbandman took out of the cold, and cherished in his bosom, when she had recovered her lively heat, and grown lusty, singled out him ungratefully, to try her first sting upon. God hath redeemed poor frost-

bitten snakes, miserable sinners, from scarcity and want; and they no sooner have picked up their crumbs, but presently (as if they could now stand of themselves, and needed his help no more) they sting him with their blasphemies. And finding themselves as great as they can well be amongst men, grow to envy and extenuate their Maker. If Ziba be waxed great under Mephibosheth, he will give him a lift for all he hath; a promoted beggar hath not seldom renounced his own parents. It is not so easy for a poor man to be an atheist. But impetuous lust, if it must be controlled, had rather say, There is no God, than yield to a God that will not yield to them.

The causes without them are two. First, unlearned and rude teachers, that leap out of a library of catechisms into the loftiest pulpits; that usurp the chair of Paul, and were never brought up at the feet of Gamaliel. These by preaching nothing but faith, quite discredit all faith, in the atheists of our times. To plunge and blunder in the pulpit, to bungle up a discourse of two hours, to apply Scriptures without purpose, as if, like butchers, they would mend leather doublets with velvet shreds; to deliver full-stomached tautology for the evidence of the Spirit; to be all utterance, no materials, and so not to edify but tedify their hearers: this disgraceth the cause of Christ. The king's embassy is dishonoured, that is delivered by ignorants; nor can it be credited, when not two of them agree in one tale. How do they jeer at us, when they see congregations so thronged where such lumberers teach! As if their mouths were revered as the lips of the sibyls, who spake nothing but it was registered; and all their sentences were even oracles. For this, the Italians call us dull-headed *tiremontani*: for this, atheists traduce us; that as England hath tin and leaden mines, so it hath tin and leaden muses; that we have none left to confute images and blocks, but blocks and images. Though we could easily clear ourselves, and the whole ministry of our church, from these unjust imputations; yet let us know this, that these enemies are special men of wit: popery hath not won to itself so great wits as atheism: it is the superfluity of wit that makes atheists. These will not be beaten down with impertinent arguments; disordered hail-shot of Scriptures will never scare them; they must be convinced and beaten by their own weapons. Hast thou appealed to Cæsar? To Cæsar thou shalt go. Have they appealed to reason? Let us bring reason to them, that we may bring them to reason. We need not fear the want of weapons in that armoury, but our own ignorance and want of skill to use them. There is enough even in philosophy to convince atheism, and make them confess, We are foiled with our own weapons.

Next, the bad lives of the religious: when they see those that acknowledge God, do worse deeds than they that acknowledge no God, this confirms them in atheism. It was the calling of the apostles, and in some degree it is the office of all Christians, to be witnesses unto Christ, Acts i. 8, 22. John Baptist was more than a prophet, because he was a witness of Christ: that great and glorious name of martyr, is but a witness. Now to be witnesses of Christ, is to be like Christ; to conform ourselves to the doctrine and example of Christ. John Baptist was like him, he did as Christ did; he led a holy and religious life: so he was a witness. St. Stephen was proto-martyr, Christ's first witness; because he was the first that did as he did, that put on his colours, that drunk of his cup, that was baptized with his baptism, with his own blood: so he was a witness. All Christians witness for Christ with their mouths, but some witness against him with their lives. They have a form

of godliness, that is lip-testimony; but deny the power of it, 2 Tim. iii. 5; here is no life-testimony. Infamy is one of the highest punishments which the law of man inflicts: death ends all temporal sufferings, but this lies upon a malefactor even after death. Infamy is the worst penalty; and intestability (to be made intestable) is one of the deepest wounds of infamy: and then the worst degree of intestability is, not to be believed, not admitted for a witness of any other. He is intestable, that cannot make a testament or will, that cannot give his own goods; and he is intestable, that can receive nothing by the testament of another. He is intestable, in whose behalf no testimony may be accepted; but he is the most miserably intestable of all, the most detestably intestable, that discredits another man by speaking well of him, and makes him the more suspicious by his commendations. A Christian in profession, that is not a Christian in life, is in this last kind intestable; he discredits Christ by bearing witness of his name, and makes his name so much the less regarded by his witnessing.

From hence is the quarrel of all these atheists against religion; because it is barren of good works. When the orthodox and Arian bishops contended about the faith, Jovinian could say, Of your learning I cannot so well judge, or your subtle disputations; but I can observe which of you have the better behaviours. Lucius, reputed an Arian bishop, cleared himself to one Moses, and made confession of his faith. Tush, saith Moses, what teldest thou me of the faith of the ears? Let me have the faith of the hands: I will not take my instalment from hands full of aspersions, of bribery, blood, and injustice. This gives them occasion to blaspheme God, and to doubt whether all divinity be not mere policy, and the Scriptures a fable. This is the principal pretext of atheism, yea, the fountain. There was a woman much spoken of in some parts of this land, that lived in professed doubt of the Deity; even after illumination and repentance hardly comforted; who often protested, that the vicious and offensive life of a great learned man in the town where she dwelt, did occasion these dreadful doubts in her mind. This opens the mouth of wickedness; this is the hint of all their scorns and scoffs of religion. This made Linaere, reading the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters of St. Matthew's Gospel; and comparing those rules with Christian lives; to throw down the book, and burst forth into this protestation, Either this is not God's Gospel, or we are not Christians.

5. The conviction. Doth all the world acknowledge some god? do some nations entertain too many gods? and wilt not thou grant one God? Revolve thy memory, turn over the records of that diary: didst thou never pray? Yes, and obtained. Who heard thee, who granted that? Thou couldst not breathe, unless God did put the breath of life into thee; as unless the bellows did respire wind, they could not blow. Is there a spark of fire in thee, a soul? How came it there? How doth the compacture of thy body hang together? Why does it not fall asunder now, and why shall it dissolve hereafter? Is any of these dispositions in thine own hand? Who leads the sun out of his chamber, or brings the moon forth of her cloudy pavilion, but God? Why doth not the sea swallow up the earth, as well as over-peer it, but that there is a God that snaffles and curbs it? Hath the vast azured canopy nothing above it, whereunto it is perpendicularly knit? Why then do not all things wheel and swerve topsy-turvy? Why break not thunderbolts through the clouds instead of drops of rain? Why is not frost and snow incessantly up in arms against the

summer? Who hears the thunder and thinks not of God? Therefore we may observe, that God never wrought miracle to convince atheists. The Egyptians were persecutors, and they were convinced by miracles; the Baalites were idolaters, and they were convinced by miracles; the Jews were apostates, and they were convinced by miracles: to satisfy all these sinners, abominable enough, miracles were wrought by Moses, Elijah, and Christ; but none to convince atheists, because God's ordinary works convince them. So that, as Abraham answered Dives, that would have one sent from the dead to his brethren, They have Moses and the prophets; if they will not hear them, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead, Luke xvi. 31: these be their books: so Paul answers naturians, if they ask for miracles, By the things that are made, they may understand his eternal power and Godhead, Rom. i. 20: these are their books; fairly printed in large characters, that they may run and read them.

But the chief conviction is their own conscience; there stick those indelible letters never to be rascd out. Howsoever in pride of mind they would be different in paradoxism from all the world, and fancy philosophical probabilities of the Trinity's unexistence; yet in the inmost recourse of their conscience, they subscribe unto it. "The fool hath said in his heart," no fool ever thought in his heart: he would fain have it so, he cannot believe it so; it is an opinion which he suggests to his heart, not which his heart suggests to him. This makes him fearful to die, and to die fearfully: there could be no such terror of the one, or affrightment in the other, if he did not believe some kind of audit after both. If we should discourse over the ends of all atheists, we find their deaths drunken, violent, secluded from repentance, but not quitted nor quieted from agonies and extorted confessions of the Deity which they have denied. Their guilty souls assure them of a sin-bating God, even in the blackest darkness of their own contracted ignorance; like the sooty visage and shady fancies of the night, when they have shut all the windows, and drawn the curtains, to keep out the least glimpse of such a knowledge. It is not possible to pin forth conscience; it may for a while be shut up, it can never be shut out. God will either charge it, as Jehu did concerning the brethren of Ahaziah, "Take them alive," 2 Kings x. 14, and torment them in their mortal days; make them know there is a God: or, pursue them dead, as the papists have dealt with divers protestants; denying them both life and burial, the air to live in, or the earth to be buried in. So their conscience shall deny them life while alive, for the pangs of it shall take all comfort of life from the living; and death when dead, for this shall not die with them, but be their everlasting torture when they are dead. Only in hell there shall be no atheists; they no sooner enter that burning territory, but they shall eternally feel there is a God. O Lord, open our eyes, that we may see thy majesty; and soften our hearts, that we may feel thy mercy; and loosen our tongues, that we may confess thy glory; and direct our ways, that we may come to thy eternal felicity.

"Where is the promise of his coming?" This is their challenge. So light was the estimate which the heathen made of their idle and idol gods, and so poor the reputation, either for their majesty or bounty, that they feared not to bestow jests upon them, as upon their fellows. So it was familiar with them to tell of Jupiter's rapes and adulteries: nor was this only the matter of their stories, but the representation of their theatres, and played on their stages;

where appeared more crimes than deities. Tully writes the story of Timæus; that the self-same night that Alexander was born, the temple of Diana at Ephesus was on fire: and no marvel, for the mistress of it was a great way from home, as a midwife in Macedonia, attending the travail of Olympias. So they made themselves merry with their gods and goddesses, as men wont with tales in winter evenings. But still there was an impression in their conscience of an infinite Power, which they durst not play withal, but rather thought on with fear and reverence. Their fear might fancy gods that were not; but the God that was, and is, did work that fear in them. They wrong the interpretation of *Theos*, that say, Fear first made gods. Fear did not make God, but God made fear; I mean that fear which is awe and reverence, for the other fear was made by sin. But God is *Theos* rather, because the fear of him is engraven in every heart. And after all the wilful suppressions, this fear will invade the stoutest soul, and put a trembling into all his joints. A wicked man sins, and no mortal eye seeth him: why is he afraid? why ashamed? Certainly, there is in him a secret approbation of virtue, a condemnation of vice, and reluctance of conscience. Let him do what he can to smother it, this fire will break out. "While I was musing the fire burned; then spake I with my tongue," Psal. xxxix. 3. The flame of conscience will burst forth, and speak with a tongue of terror. Particulars.

The coming of God is mentioned: and this is divers; legal, evangelical, and judicial: all which, atheists deny. His legal coming was principally to the Jews, not excluding the Gentiles: his evangelical coming was principally to the Gentiles, not debarring the Jews: his judicial coming shall be to Jews and Gentiles, exempting none, but to judge all the world. In his first coming, he was a Commander; in his second, a Saviour; in his last, a Judge. His first, was to give the law; his next, to give the gospel; his third, shall be to require an account of both. The first, to the world; the next, into the world; the last, against the world. The first, imperious; the second, gracious; the last, glorious.

1. His coming to give the law, was majestic: he would have Israel see, that they had not to do with an impotent governor, that is fain to publish his laws without noise, in dead paper; which can more easily enjoin than punish, or decry than execute. Therefore, before he gave them the law, he shows them that he can command heaven, earth, fire, air, in revenge of the breach of that law. They see all the elements examples of that obedience, which they should yield to their Maker; and cannot but think it deadly, to displease such a Lawgiver, and violate such dreadful statutes. But these atheists deny this coming, they acknowledge no such laws: only they think human policy invented them, for the general safety; and that homicides, adulteries, thefts, and lies be restrained, it is only convenient for the state. The very Indians had a more reverend apprehension of the decalogue, when it was read to them; and considering every commandment, they professed there could be nothing devised more just and equal: as Æneas Sylvius said of the Christian law, That it was worthy to be received for the honesty of it, though it had never been confirmed by miracles. Woe unto those rebels, that will not allow the law a power to command them! they shall find it an unanswerable indictment to condemn them.

2. His coming to give the gospel, was humble. As in the creation, God made man like himself, by stamping in him the image of his own nature; so in the redemption, God made himself like man, by taking on him the infirmity of our nature. And

what God said by way of derision, concerning Adam, "Behold, the man is become as one of us," Gen. iii. 22; the same we speak by way of thankful exultation, concerning God, Behold, the Lord is become as one of us. His birth was ordinary, was mean, was meaner than ordinary. The Bread of life was born in Bethlehem, by interpretation, the house of bread; but so poor a house of bread, that there was scarce any bread in the house. He was made so far lower than the angels, that he was consorted with beasts. At this coming do the atheists scoff: they think that King Herod had little reason to be troubled at it, and was more feared than hurt; and that the wise men, who presented him gifts, were men none of the wisest. Alas, shall they begin their religion at a babe in a manger? And what was his wealth? When he was to pay tribute, he was fain to fish for money; he begged water to drink; a loaf and a fish was his best cheer; he complained the want of lodging, more than birds and foxes; he was weary, hungry, thirsty, sleepy, sorrowful. His own kindred went about to lay hands on him, thinking he had been out of his wits. He had no form nor comeliness, nor beauty to be desired; but was even despised and rejected of men, Isa. liii. 2, 3. Such was his esteem then; and it is no better now, with these atheists. What, is he their God, that was born of a woman? The earth is but a centre to the heavens, and man or woman but a point or centre to the earth: that a centre's centre, the point of a point, should contain him that contains all things, they deride, for vainly impossible. They consider not why he was thus; even because he came to be thus. He suffers enemies to wound him: why? he came to bleed; he lets sinners kill him: why? he came to be killed for sinners. "They crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame," Heb. vi. 6. But they now disgrace that blood, whereof hereafter they would give a thousand worlds for one drop.

3. His last coming, is to give judgment. The two former are past, this is to come: and how should they believe the future, that will not receive the former? But they that would not now accept him as a Saviour, shall not then escape him as an Avenger. Then shall they find another King, that used to cry, We have no king but Cæsar; and they shall see another God, that flattered their own impious souls with. We have no God but nature. Their We will not have this man reign over us, passeth now upon earth; but their We will not have this man judge us, shall do no good at the great assizes, Acts xvii. 31. Now they laugh at him, but then all the kindreds of the earth shall mourn before him, Rev. i. 7. They had power to condemn him, that had power to condemn them: at last he shall bring this power into act: and as they once said to him, Depart from us, thou despised; so he shall say to them, Depart from me, ye cursed. The Gadarenes, after the loss of their swine, besought him to depart out of their coasts, Matt. viii. 34. They should have argued, This man hath power over men, beasts, devils; it is good having him to our friend; his presence is our safety and protection. But they contrariwise infer, Thus powerful is he; it is good he were further off. What miserable and pernicious misconstructions do vain men make of God, of Divine attributes and actions! God is omnipotent, able to take infinite vengeance on sin: oh that he were not! If he be merciful, I may sin; if he be provident, I may be careless. I do evil, and he does not punish me with evil: therefore there is no God, no such matter as his coming. How witty sophisters natural men are, to deceive their own souls, to rob themselves of a God! O Christ, how worthy are they to want thee, that wish to be rid of thee! He hath just cause to be

weary of us, even while we sue to hold him. But when once our wretched unthankfulness grows weary of him, who can pity us, to be punished with his departure? How righteous will it be for him one day to regeat upon these scorners, Depart from me, ye wicked! I did come, and ye would not receive me; I threatened to come again, and ye would not believe me; now I am come again, and ye shall not escape me.

The necessity of both the comings of Christ would be laid to the conscience of these despisers. For the former:

1. The conscience of every man doth testify to him that there is a rule; which if he follows, he does well, and is at peace; if he transgress, he finds trouble and secret reprehension, with a dread of punishment. Now there is no man but feels himself a sinner, and is condemned in his own soul. Against whom hath he sinned? for *nullius timor nullus*, i. e. where there is fear, there is some one to fear: this must needs be against that Power which gave that law. Say he denies the law written, he cannot but expunge the law engraven. There is no law made without a penalty upon the breach: this penalty can be no other than proportionable to the breach: the breach of the law must be measured according to the power of the Lawgiver: the Lawgiver can be no less than infinite; and no less infinite must be the punishment. Divers of men's laws impose death temporal; what other than eternal death can satisfy God? We cannot imagine that God will forgive sin without satisfaction to his justice; not that he cannot, through a defect of power; but that he will not, through the perfection of his justice. This is a chain of so infallible dependence, that it admits of no disjunction.

What then, is there no remedy? Yes, if we can get one to suffer for us, and to make full payment of our debts, we shall be acquitted. Who should that be? Men or angels cannot answer for their own sins, but they must needs, if they sin, perish. He that can suffer for them, must be man; he that can escape from those sufferings, and recover his life, must be God. Such was the necessity of Christ's first coming. The law hath a double righteousness, Rom. viii. 3; for so Beza reads *δικαιωσις, jus legis*, the right of the law. One of obedience: this the law doth rightly challenge, and it hath not its right if it have not obedience. The other is a right to condemn for disobedience; for it is right they that do evil should suffer evil. If Adam had fulfilled the law, he should have been saved by it; he lost fulfil it in hell, in regard of the curse, but they cannot be saved by it. We must all fulfil it, either in the precept or in the penalty. The precepts must be kept, that there may be place for the promises. If the precepts be not fulfilled, the curse must be endured. The curse calls for our blood, and without blood there is no remission, Heb. ix. 22. We can do neither of these by ourselves: where then is our safety? We have done both these by our Surety. What then shall become of those that deny the coming of this Surety? Such was the wonderful wisdom of God, to execute his justice upon Christ, that he might exercise his mercy towards us. Without infinite satisfaction, his justice could not be appeased; without infinite mercy, we could not be saved. One deep culleth another; the deep of his justice, for the deep of Christ's satisfaction; the deep of our misery, for the deep of his mercy. If he had showed mercy without satisfaction, where had been his justice? If he had only laid his justice upon us, where had been his mercy? Both these must concur: mercy and truth must meet together, that righteousness and peace might kiss each other, Psal. lxxxv. 10.

This is the true way: now, cunning atheist, find out a new way. To grant mercy, and deny justice; this were injurious to God: to grant justice, and deny mercy; this were injurious to thyself. There is no way then left, but for the coming of Christ to help thee; let not the benefit of that coming fall beside thee. Here let us look with thankful admiration upon that which they load with derision. Christ suffered for us; not only for our sakes, but in our stead: we should have been beaten, crucified, cursed; he represented our persons, was in our room. Oh infinite love! Many desire to represent kings, and wear those royal honours in their embassages; but few desire to represent the persons and bear the shame of base, condemned wretches. There is no suing for this; yet Christ undertook it: the King of all the world represented the persons of the poorest beggars in the world. The law requires her right, and her right she hath; Christ hath fulfilled it for us, and we have fulfilled it in Christ. It may threaten us with our continual failings; but there is a *non obstante*, by the goodness of our Surety. If the forfeit or mulct be paid for the breach of a penal statute, the law can go no further. Yea, he that hath Christ, though he have not kept the law, hath the righteousness of the law. Christ hath endured the sharpest of God's judgments, which he deserved not; that we might taste the sweetest of God's mercies, which we deserved not. All this happiness the infidel loseth; for *Excludit eventum, qui non credit adventum*; i. e. He excludeth the event (issue) who does not believe the advent.

But here the atheist comes in again with a new quarrel: What need our repentance or obedience, when Christ hath sorrowed, suffered, obeyed, done all for us? When Augustine justified free-will against the Manichees, the ignorant would take him for a Pelagian; when he denied free-will to the Pelagians, they would take him for a Manichee: he was neither, but disputed against both the extremes; the one utterly denying it, the other too highly extolling it. So let us not be mistaken in the diameter: when we teach that we must sorrow for our sins, this denies not Christ's suffering for those sins. When we say, Christ bore our sorrows, this exempts not us from our just grief for our sins. Because he went the way of thorns, must ours be strewed with roses? Because he came to fulfil the law for us, shall we never mind any obedience to that law after his coming? This was the argument of the Gnostics: He that died that we should not die, looks he for a requital? our tears for his tears? our blood for his? He does not demand a requital, saith Tertullian; but thou owest the more for this very reason, that he does not demand it. "The borrower is servant to the lender," Prov. xxii. 7; and the receiver to the giver. Hath he done so much for us, and shall we deny him any thing that he requires, though it were our lives? But what is it he would have us to do? He hath borne the punishment of our sins, he would therefore have us cease to sin. He endured baseness for us, therefore let us repent of our pride: this he would have. His mouth was buffeted for us, let us hate all blasphemy and evil speeches: this he would have. He hungered and thirsted for us; shall we surfeit upon strong drink and luxuries? this he would not have. His side was pierced for our sins; shall we thrust the same spear into the same wound again? this he would not have, and let us never do it.

The necessity of his last coming follows upon this: for shall he give the world both law and gospel, and call us to account for neither? Shall he let his vineyard and husbandmen, and never require rent? The law and commandments were the acts of his justice,

and they are transgressed. The gospel and promises are the acts of his mercy, and they are abused. Shall he put up all these indignities, and suffer his creatures to finish their licentious races with impunity? Why do men die? Because the elements decay with age. Is this all? Nay, but why are men afraid to die? Is it only because nature abhors dissolution, and they would not cease to be? Is this all? We cannot believe it: we know they feel more than this; even a guilty fear of some succeeding recompence; whereof because their foul souls can have no good expectation, they tremble at the suspicion of evil. This is the presage and prelude of hell approaching; that they often cry out on their death-beds, They are lost, when yet the sentence is not come; and, The devil, the devil, in their frantic and distracted imaginations, before he can seize on their souls in their dissolutions. So, Spira-like, they depart desolate and desperate in and into hellish horrors. Thus the epicures that denied God at the tap-house, preach him at the gallows; and confess that in sobriety of spirit, which they oppugned in wantonness. They that would not find out the Lord in his mercies while they live, shall be sure to be found out by him in his judgments when they are dead. There is a pale horse, and his rider's name is Death, and Hell follows him, Rev. vi. 8. That pale horse, Death, shall deliver them over to the black horse, Satan; and the black horse shall carry them to the red horse, the flame-coloured Hell.

"Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die," say the atheists, Isa. xxii. 13: but when they come to die, they still have stomach to meat and drink: their meat and drink, is to do their own lusts; as Christ's was, to do his Father's will. Their daily sustenance they devour without thanks, not without sin: but shall the guest take his fare and lodging, and depart without paying the demand? Will the host entertain strangers in his inn, and suffer them to pay nothing? Eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die? One would think it should be, Fast and pray, for to-morrow we shall die. Eat and drink to die? Men eat and drink to live. Eat, drink, and die? Would they be taken away with a full stomach, as we kill beasts when they have most flesh? Eat and drink to-day, and not die till to-morrow? Who gave them assurance for so long? Why not to-day? why not presently, before they can put either meat or drink into their mouths? The wise man considers he hath no morrow, therefore looks to himself while it is called to-day. Eat, drink, and die; well, yield this the common condition of all; yet to do and suffer all this in a supine and desperate carelessness, as it were to spite destiny, this makes up the blasphemy. Die, and there an end? As there is no need of meat and drink after death, so is there no reckoning to be made for that they have taken? O fools! will nature take her due, and shall not judgment exact his tribute? Death is the way of all flesh; the way, it is not the end of all flesh. Very much flesh hath no end but damnation, and that damnation hath no end at all. As it is with a man that eats and drinks day by day in great quantity, and yet can neither digest nor egest it, he must needs expect death for physic; so he that clogs his soul with the continual surfeits of sin, and can neither digest them in his conscience nor egest them by repentance, cannot avoid the judgment, which shall destroy both sin and soul together. The statutes of righteousness they have wholly broken, the remedies of unrighteousness they have not taken; what can be their end, but destruction?

The soul dies not with the body; it must therefore go somewhat whither when it leaves the body. If the soul

in particular come to judgment, why should not the general judgment come to all? I am loth to mingle philosophical conceits with divine cordials, as water with wine, lest my persuasions should be diluted; but that I am here to deal with atheists. All philosophy (the brutish school of the Epicure excepted) did acknowledge the soul of man to be no vapour. Not only the learned Grecians and civilized Romans, but even the rudest Scythians and unlettered savages, the many languages and sundry dialects in the world, this hath ever been the common voice of them all, That souls die not with their bodies. If they die not, extinctively, what becomes of them? Shall the virtuous and vicious soul speed both alike? Whither go they, good and bad all to one place? If a beast could argue, he would abhor such a tenet. That there is difference of men, no atheist ever denied; they never thought a murderer to be so good a man as a preserver of life. They distinguish between a charitable reliever of the poor and a bloody oppressor of them, betwixt him that speaks truth and the liar, between the chaste man and an adulterer; and say, This is a bad man, that is a good one. Yet looking upon the outward condition of these, too often the vicious flourisheth with riches and honour, while the good man goes away with poverty and contempt. What then? shall the souls of both these fare thus hereafter too? Shall the noble rioter retain his honour, and the industrious labourer remain still a beggar? What sense ever concluded so? If then the soul have a being, it must needs change the condition of being; there cannot but be a reward for the just and a retribution for the unrighteous. It is not possible for the most corrupted heart to think, that a soul shall be honoured for villany, and for honesty be contemned.

Why are good men hated? why afflicted? Why go they mourning all the day, eating the bread of sorrow, and mingling their drink with tears? Why doth not the current of honour and opulency run by their doors? Why are they not the treasure of princes, the jewels of kingdoms, the favourites of all men? What should be denied them whom God loves? Be it answered, The time is not yet. Pleasure, and joy, and peace, are coming to them, but only with the coming of Christ. Shall man say to God in the midst of his distresses, Lord, is this thy justice? He will answer, O man, is this thy faith? Thus argue these atheists, If God be so wise and just in governing the world, and bear such love to his own, why doth he suffer them to be so triumphed over? Either he would deliver them and cannot, or he can and will not, or he neither will nor can, or both. If he would and cannot, then is he impotent, and hath not the power of a God. If he can and will not, then he is envious, and wants the love of a God. If he neither can nor will, then is he so far from being a God, that he comes short of a man. If he both will and can, why is it not done? We answer, that he both can, and will, and doth deliver his chosen. He can at all times, he will at some times, he doth at the best and fittest times, most seasonable for his own glory and our blessedness. And then they that have denied and defied God in their bravery, shall be cast down to endless calamity; when those despised and distressed souls, that humbly acknowledged him on earth, shall be acknowledged and glorified by him in heaven.

They speak of a promise of his coming; but when comes he? where is this promise? He said that he would come quickly, Rev. xxii. 12; yet it is fifteen hundred years ago, and he is not come. He spake of clouds, and angels, and a throne: we see none of all these things. The clouds fly up and down with the

wind, and are as they were at first; angels we see none; nor any thrones, but those wherein the monarchs of the earth seat themselves. He promised that the dead shall rise; we never spake with any body that rose from the dead, to confirm us in such an expectation. He promised that the heavens and earth shall be on fire; yet the earth is as steady, and the heavens as fair and clear, as when he spake it. That the sun should be darkened, and the moon turned to blood; yet they both give their alternate light, and distinguish day and night with unfailling vicissitude. He said that the trumpet should sound, and waken all flesh; our sleeps are not yet broken with any such terrible summons. That the stars should fall; yet still they keep their stations, motions, and orbs. That he will come in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God; recompensing tribulation to them that trouble his children, and rest to them that are troubled, 2 Thess. i. 6—8; yet we are lusty and strong; and as we have followed our fathers, so we leave our inheritances to our succeeding posterities. And for those that are troubled, troubled they may be still, for any help that we see drop down from the heavens to their comfort. He hath promised to judge quick and dead, yet neither is done; and if the living escape, what will the dead fear, that are insensible? When then is the promise of his coming? Sure all is but the vain fear of some, and the foolish, ungrounded hope of others; for there is no such matter as any future life; men die as beasts, with as full cessation of being: there is neither Judge, nor doom, nor hell, nor heaven; all are but the inventions of policy, to limit the world to a civil carriage. These be the horrible blasphemies of presumptuous spirits, and ill-flattered souls, ordained to perish in their own security.

But, why do they call it a promise? Not in respect of themselves: alas, they cannot apprehend it without terror, and a palsy in their joints. But they reflect this promise upon the good, who look for a deliverance and reward in that day. For if in this life only we had hope in Christ, we were of all men most miserable, 1 Cor. xv. 19. To us it is a day of promise, to them a day of commination: to us the end of sorrows, unto them the beginning. Then we look that God should both wipe away all tears from our eyes, and set their eyes a running with tears for ever. The object of our hope, and of their fear, is the day of universal retribution. All "shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation," John v. 29. Woe to them when they desire the day of the Lord! to what end is it for them? the day of the Lord to them is darkness, and not light, Amos v. 18. They say, "Let him hasten his work, that we may see it," &c. Isa. v. 19. But they shall find it a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of desolation and darkness, Zeph. i. 15; Joel ii. 11. It is a day they will have small joy in. If horror, and amazement, and pangs of conscience, and despair, and vengeance, and rejection from God, and condemning to hell, can bring them any comfort, that shall be their portion.

God's first coming to give the law, and his last coming to require the law, have a near similitude. There was lightning darted in their eyes, thunder roaring in their ears, the trumpet drowning the thunder-claps, the voice of God louder than the trumpet; clouds enwrapping, smoke ascending, fire flaming, the mount trembling, Moses quaking, a terror in the heavens, an uproar in the elements, paleness and death in the face of Israel: how wonderful, how dreadful was this appearance! He delivers his law in the light of fire, from out of the smoke; to

teach them, that he could find out their closest sins. They see fire above them, to represent the fire that should be below them, that they might learn what is due to their sins. That they might know God could waken their security, the thunder and louder voice of God speaks through their ears to their hearts. That they might see what their hearts should do, the earth quakes under them. To assure them that there is no shifting of their appearance, the angel calls them together. O royal law, O mighty Lawgiver, who can offend thee without terror? Now if his first coming was so terrible, what shall be his last? If the law was thus given, how shall it be required? If such were the proclamation of God's statutes, what shall the sessions be? What heart of adamant doth not tremble at the resemblance? The trumpet of the angel called unto the one; the voice of the archangel, the trumpet of God, shall summon us to the other. In that, Mount Sinai only was on a flame; here, all the world shall burn with fire. In both, there are clouds, lightning, thunders, trumpets, fire; only in this latter, the stream of fire shall be more potent, patent, violent, dissolving the heavens, and melting away the elements, with a noise. Think, atheist, what pleasure thou shalt find in his coming. If God did on such a manner forbid sin, what is the vengeance he will inflict upon sinners! If he were so terrible a Lawgiver, what a Judge shall he appear! If the delivery of the law was little less than death, what death shall be the reward of the transgressors of it! It was given in a fire fearful enough, but shall be required in a fire more fearful. The fire wherein it was delivered was but terrifying, the fire wherein it shall be required is consuming.

To us then, if we be true believers, belongs this promise of his coming. Christ's first coming was the expectation of nations, this next is the expectation of Christians. "Look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh," Luke xxi. 28. Our eyes are still dropping in this valley of tears; but we look for the gracious beams of that Sun of mercy that shall dry them up. No Jew did ever more earnestly wish for the jubilee; no servant so desireth the end of his years; no stranger so longs to be at home; no overlaid soul so groaneth for ease; no soldier so heartily contendeth to have his wars determined with conquest; as the saints expect the promise of this coming of Jesus Christ. It is the strength of their hopes, the sweet object of their faith, in the midst of all sorrows; the comfort of their hearts, the heart of their comforts, the encouragement of their wearied spirits, the life of their encouraged souls, the continual period and shutting up of their prayers: Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Amen.

"For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." This is their sentence or argument. We may think it strange, that the apostle should spend any time or pains in the confuting of atheists; whom shame, fear, and a thousand witnesses, like gnawing worms within their breasts, have ever from the beginning, and shall to the end of the world, force unto an acknowledgment of the Deity: and that it were more fit, arguments should be drawn out of the scabbards of magistrates, that might without reply choke the breath of such execrable impiety; than for reason to dispute that which heaven, earth, angels, men, and devils, all ages, all languages of the world have confessed: and that such inglorious and infamous questions should be left to the tribunal of the highest Judge, if there be no throne upon earth that will determine them; for certainly they are the children of hell by as proper right as Satan himself. And what am I, that, like Uzah, I should stretch

out my hand to underprop the ark, or offer to uphold the high throne of the Godhead? Princes will not let those stand in their presence, with whom they are displeased; and alas, my sins are ever before me; I am a man of polluted lips. Yet because there is a generation of men, that have commanded their tongues (for they shall never command their hearts) to speak a blasphemous lie; men monstrously misshapen in the powers of the soul, and transformed from the use of reason; that labour to root up those rational maxims and principles, which the hand of nature hath planted in them; and they are cursed that help not the Lord against his enemies, Judg. v. 23, that do not arm their pens and tongues against his atheistical contradictees; I must proceed, according to my theme, not only to retort their assaults, but to fling new darts in their faces. Yea, I could wish, that those great wits, which spend their time in bandying unnecessary questions, would let fly upon this monster, which is the root that nourisheth all the branches of security, and dig up that from the bottom. Let their pains at the court, and the cross, be employed in weeding up those diabolical opinions and remnants; which yet stick even in such gardens, as have borne a long time the name of Christians; and tell them, that God hath ordained long since their impious and blasphemous spirits to immortal malediction.

I confess, that the champions of God have need of the various and universal weapons of learning, for the conviction of these outlaws. You will say, the Scripture is sufficient (it is so) to build up the man of God. But what shall we do against one that denies the first principles? Urge atheists with the verdict of the Scriptures, you may as well bring them the History of Herodotus, or the Narrations of Lucian. Tell them of heaven, and hell, and a judge; they count it as a tale of Cocyus and Phlegethon, and such fabulous inventions of licentious poets. Therefore, skirmishing with atheists, we must belave ourselves as if we were converting heathens. The confession of philosophers, the consent of histories, must be observed; they will not be convinced but with their own authors. There is no knowledge, but it is of God; and we dishonour divinity, if we take away her handmaids; as a queen that is allowed no servants. Logie, rhetoric, philosophy, history, poetry, are her waiting-maids; the virgins that follow her, Psal. xlv. 14, and as it were help to make her ready, in her choice ornaments. When Christ said, You must forsake all, and follow me; he did not mean that we should forsake all arts, and follow him. Luke was a physician, Paul a learned Pharisee; neither of these knowledges did them hurt in performing their ministry. Paul alleged verses out of heathen poets; it was but by their own poets to convince heathens. The atheists with nothing but known reasons will be refuted: they admit of no reasons, but those that come within the compass of their five senses. When they hear one talking affectedly, coldly, or absurdly in the pulpit, alleging that he speaks from the mouth of God, they reproach mouth, matter, and all. Indeed we should not lumber up Scripture, but lay it deliberately and methodically, like pearl and gold-lace on a rich garment. If there be any that care not how they speak it, so they have it to speak, they dishonour it. Out it flies from them, east and west, though they lose it in the misapplication; all is nothing, for more they have of it than they well know what to do withal. It should be used as the first ground, to build; and the last seal, to confirm. When it is trivially, and without necessity, called unto witness, it is a kind of taking the name of God in vain. We must gather fruit, not leaves; proof, not

phrases only, out of the Bible. It is the corner-stone, both the foundation and closing up of the building. In war we use the weapons and engines of all nations; so no less do we employ all arts against the sins of all nations. Scripture must be reserved as the last volley, to get the victory. It is the great ordinance, which must play upon our enemies in the end and chief hazard of the fight. All wise orators keep their weightiest arguments to the conclusion; otherwise, like that people whom they call hot-shots, they will give a brave onset, but quail presently. Against these Porphyrian deriders, let us use all our art: let priests pronounce them, and princes proclaim them, the uncleanest lepers that ever lived: not only to be excluded the host, and to have their habitation alone; but to be exiled the land, and exterminated nature itself, which they so unnaturally strive to annihilate; for they call earthly princes' kingdoms in question, while into question they call the kingdom of God.

"For since the fathers fell asleep," &c. Let us now hear their argument; what they can say against Him, that hath said that against them which shall stick by them for ever. There is, they pretend, the same state and course of things now, that was at the first; no alteration, no innovation. "The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be: and there is no new thing under the sun," Eccl. i. 9. Day and night, winter and summer, seeding and harvest, have their wonted vicissitude; therefore they have stood from all eternity, and to all eternity they shall stand: they had no beginning, they shall have no end; there is an everlasting perpetuity of all things. If we take their argument in pieces, we find three links of this confused chain. First, a constancy or continuance. Secondly, the largeness of this dreamed bidding, or immutableness, All things. Thirdly, the longevity or space of duration, From the beginning. First, we will examine the strength, or rather weakness, of these circumstances asunder, and then dissolve them all together.

1. For the continuance. Constancy is indeed the glory of all goodness, the crown of virtues. It is the incommunicable honour and peculiar of God; "I the Lord change not," Mal. iii. 6; in that Father of lights there is no variability, nor shadow of turning, Jam. i. 17. Angels and saints in heaven have an unchangeable estate; but they are in their own nature mutable, and are only preserved by Him that changeth not. He hath shown "to the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel," Heb. vi. 17. The not changing of the heirs depends upon the immutability of their Father; whose decrees, promises, acts, are all immutable. But now, hath God given such a privilege to the world? Who ever found it so constant a friend? Who ever trusted it, and was not deceived by it? But they say, Suppose that an eternal Power made the world; if the cause be eternal, eternal also must be the effect. How senseless is this reason! For if we say, The world had no beginning, because the Maker had none; we may as well say, The house must needs be as ancient as the carpenter. And to allege, That the world shall have no ending, because God hath none; we may as well say, The bread shall last as long as the baker. So senseless is the reason, That because God is everlasting, therefore he made an everlasting world. If they suppose the world without a Maker, as a house without a builder, that foundationless opinion shall anon be refuted.

2. The latitude, or extent: All things continue in their first state. This is manifestly false; for there is a sensible decay, even a visible declination, of all things. The alacrity and vigour of the creature is

wonderfully abated; the earth is dull and barren, in requiting the husbandman's labour; our springs and summers are like the children of women after fifty. The world took a fall in his cradle, as Mephibosheth from his nurse; and hath pined away ever since. The stature of man is exceedingly lessened, and yet more shortened is his life; we have neither an equal portion of days nor proportion of bodies with our forefathers. Now that whole cannot be perpetual whose parts be alterable: if a hand or leg be taken from a body, it remains not integral, much less immortal.

3. For the longevity. There be three words that come out of their mouths, and give the lie to themselves; the creation, and beginning, and sleep of the fathers. First, they confess a creation: and well are they convinced so to do. For can there be a world without an author, or efficient cause? How absurd were these imaginations, that either the world should make itself, as if a house could build itself; or, that something in the world made the world, that is, some one part of it made the whole: as if the finger of a body, and that before it was a finger, did make the whole body! Something therefore more excellent and noble than the world did make the world, and this could be nothing but God himself. Secondly, they confess a beginning: why then should they deny an end? Is not that Power able to dissolve the world, that gave it being? Shall it be harder for the architect to pull down the house than it was to build it? Could not fire destroy that temple in a day, that was six and thirty years in setting up? But say others, If there was a beginning, and that in time, what business had God before the beginning? *Perfectissima causa non est otiosa*; i. e. The most perfect cause is not otiose or inactive. This is a gross conception of God. "The Father hath not left me alone," saith our Saviour, John viii. 29. Shall Christ not be alone, in respect of his Divine conjunction with the Father; and shall it not be alike with the Father, in regard of the Son; with the Holy Ghost, in respect of both; with each of them, in respect of other? That inseparable unity of the Trinity denieth to every Person a possibility of being alone; and that unsearchable mystery of the fruition of his own glory, is far above the society of creatures, saints or angels. Thirdly, they confess the sleep of the fathers; therefore they cannot deny their waking. They say not, they are dead; as if that were a full cessation: but, they sleep; to show their hope of resurrection. Thus are they convinced with their own words, that would deny (and shall never be able to do it heartily) the mortality of the world's condition. They see no change: what change would they see? Before the deluge, stones did not dance, nor trees fly about the air; houses did not stand with their foundations upwards, nor the sun drop from heaven; and yet a flood of water drowned the world.

Thus much in particular; now let us generally clear the argument. Natural fancies are like glass, bright, but brittle: Christian religion is like gold; rub it, beat it, melt it, it will endure the test, the touch, the hammer, and still shine more orient.

1. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." This is affirmed by Moses, and denied by Machiavel; the first the secretary of God, the other a secretary to the state of Florence; the one taught God to the world, the other filled the world with Satan: this not of two hundred years' standing, the other of above three thousand. To which of these should we in reason give the most credit? Moses hath ever been famous, Machiavel ever infamous. All ages have revered Moses; Machiavel hath only been affectedly read by a few self-condemned reprobates. Juvenal sung of the honour of Moses:

—*Romanas soliti contemnere leges,
Judaicum ediscunt, ac servant, ac mutant jus,
Tradidit arcano quodcumque volumine Moses.*

Accustomed to contemn the laws of Rome,
They learn by heart, they fear and keep the code
Of Jewish laws, whate'er their Moses taught,
And in his mystic volume handed down.

Eight heathens, two renowned Jews, bear witness to him, in their volumes. From his exemplar, the pagans patterned out their services to their idol gods. His books have been preserved through so many generations, and brought to us, not by our friends, but by our very enemies, the Jews, that detest us. How can we with equity, with any equality, compare these together? Alas for our times, that there should be any such as Cyprian writes of: (Ser. de Laps.) They will not believe God against men, that believe men against God.

We have a cloud of witnesses to second Moses, "Thou hast made heaven," &c. Neh. ix. 6. "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made," &c. Psal. xxxiii. 6. Be it wet or dry, be it passable or be it navigable, be it above or below, this Maker did create it, this Creator doth preserve it, and this Preserver will change it. Look into their philosophers and poets, Hesiod, Ovid; how did they borrow their chaos from the writings of Moses! Macrobius confesseth, that beyond Ninus he reads of no notable thing written; and therefore concludes, that both the world had a beginning, and was of small antiquity. No less have they spoken of the world's ending. Ovid says it shall be burned; and that this is the dissolution of it, appointed by destiny; though he fondly applies it to a Phaeton-fire. So Lucan, of the bodies left unrited at the battle of Pharsalia;

*His Caesar populos si nunc non userit, ignis
Uret cum terris ———
Communis mundo superest rogos.*

If for these Caesar raise no funeral pyre,
They with the world shall share one final fire.

An end presupposeth a beginning, a marring implies a making. We cannot deny the known beginning of many things. Polydore Virgil hath written a whole tract de inventore rerum, i. e. of the inventors of things. To Zeno, Socrates, Aristotle, we are beholden for the use of logic: we know when they lived. Aristotle was schoolmaster to Alexander, Plato to Aristotle, Socrates to Plato, some four hundred years before Christ; Zeno was a little beyond them. The eclipses of the moon were prodigiously fearful to the Grecians and Romans; the knowledge of them was made familiar since. The year was reduced to the orderly course of the sun by Julius Caesar. Of what antiquity are kingdoms; when Nimrod mentioned by Moses, Gen. x. 8, and Ninus by the heathen, (both which are thought to be one,) is held to be the first king? Josephus observes that the word *ropeé*, law, was never used by Homer: laws were not known; men only were ruled by the commandment of princes. Baelus, say the ethnics, (we know Noah was the man,) first found out the use of wine. Ceres was canonized for a goddess, for teaching them the use of corn. As we now have these things in some perfection, so not long since they were rude, and not long before that nothing. Therefore it is false, that all things are the same from the beginning. Yea, if they were not upheld by the Maker's providence, they would soon of themselves come to an end.

The concord of things in discord; the standing fast of the earth under us, the running round of the heaven above us, the due function of the offices of all creatures, like so many soldiers that make good their

places; shows there is a general that governs them. A well-ordered city declares, there is a prince that rules it, though he go not abroad to be seen. The agreement of the members, that the eyes do not wrangle with the ears, nor the hands mutiny against the feet, is a clear demonstration that the body is disposed by a soul within. A father asks, Who sees thy soul? Since therefore thy body only is seen, why art thou not buried? He should be buried that is dead, he is dead that hath no soul, and he hath no soul (by their reason) if it cannot be seen. We know we have a soul by our motion; and why do we not know the world hath a soul by its harmony and disposition? Could the heavens move round without a mover? Will the grindstone whirl about of itself without a turner.

Let me shut up all with this one unanswerable argument, against the atheistical spirits that plead the continuance of all things from the creation without change. How comes it to pass that Christ is worshipped of all nations; his church and religion so universally spread? Is not this a change? Was it so from the beginning? Did those famous monarchies of the Chaldeans, Persians, Grecians, Romans, acknowledge Christ before he came into the world? He came not until the fulness of time; and before that fulness he was only believed on in Israel, though he was called the Expectation of nations. The Gentiles were ignorant of him; and when he came indeed, both Jews and Gentiles for the time refused him. Now some souls in all people, kingdoms, and languages adhere to him as their only Saviour. Is not this a change? What foundation could seem weaker to flesh and blood, than that confidence should be put in a condemned and crucified man? What doctrine could be more repugnant to corrupt nature, than that he taught; for a man to deny himself, to take up his cross, Matt. xvi. 24, to love his enemies, to embrace persecution for godliness? 2 Tim. iii. 12. If honour, pleasure, wealth had been promised, these might have allured many followers; but when tribulation, sorrow, martyrdom be the conditions of his service, what but a Divine power could send us after him upon these terms? Nor have blocks and fools, illiterate Turks and Saracens, or gross and stupid idolaters, been only won to him; but philosophers and the rarest scholars, men full of all good knowledge. Even these have put their trust in One that was shamefully crucified; and have died for him, who was before dead, and laid in a grave. Nor did this only hold for a while; but sixteen hundred years; and shall to the consummation of all things. All the subtlety of Machiavel shall never understand this, nor all the powers of the devil shall ever withstand this. Only divinity tells us in one word, "This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes," Psal. cxviii. 23.

Advertisements. 1. Atheism is the main disease of the soul; not only pestilent to the person in whom it is harboured, but to the whole land where it is permitted. This hath ever been seen and acknowledged by the policy of all nations, that a Deity is to be worshipped. The Athenians had an altar "to the unknown God," Acts xvii. 23; an unknown God, but yet a God. Cicero thus pleads for the state of Rome: What is it that hath made us so famous? *Non numero Hispanos, nec robore Gallos, nec calliditate Pannos, nec artibus Græcos, nec nativo sensu Italos ipsos et Latinos.* What then? *Sed pietate et religione omnis gentes supercavimus.* We have not excelled the Spaniards in number, nor the Gauls in strength, nor the Carthaginians in cunning, nor the Greeks in the arts, nor the Italians themselves and the Latins in native intellect. What then? he adds—But we have

excelled all nations in religion and piety. If these common impressions and notions sealed up in every mind of man: that remnant of integrity surviving the fall, sparkles of fire raked up under the ashes; if nature within, and the creature without; God's visible works, and our invisible consents; the inward motion of the one, and the outward motion of the other; if all these lights be extinguished in the chambers of their hearts, and they do wilfully impose on their consciences a burden which they cannot bear, the denial of Deity: let such condemned spirits ripe and be rotten to perdition: let them now be distracted with insufferable horrors; and at last, let them rise from the sides of the pit, manure their stout contradictions, at the judgment of the great day, to receive a deeper potion of vengeance. Ill shall their scoffs prosper with them; when they think they have won the greatest prize and praise to their wits in putting down God, then God shall arise in judgment; and cast them down to hell. At the day of their death with conviction, and at the last day with confusion, he shall show them his terrible frowns, and teach them both that he is and what he is. All their virulent and miscreant positions shall perish with them in unquenchable flames; those everlasting arguments of that justice which they have blasphemed. They have esteemed the law of God no better than the device of man; and thought it as cheap an offence to contemn the Divine Majesty, as human authority: and to deny the rights of the Godhead, (which they vainly imagine is but imagined,) as their fealty and allegiance to earthly princes. But vengeance shall make them wise, whom sin hath made and left foolish.

2. We do not forbear to waken them from their supine and careless opinions, wherewith they enchain their own souls and infect others. We write against them, we preach against them, we proclaim threatenings, and threaten punishments, and blow the trumpets of God's severe indignation more than seven times about the walls of this Jericho: that their ruin and downfall is at hand. We let them know that "God ruleth in Jacob, and unto the ends of the earth," Psal. lxx. 13. Let them put far away the evil day, which is never the farther off, yea, so much the nearer them for their adjourning; and because the skies do not fall, nor the last fire flash in their proud faces, believe no coming at all. But it shall come soon enough to their cost; and they shall find with woe, that the Lamb they rejected shall judge them, the God they denied shall condemn them, and those malignant spirits whom they never feared shall torment them, and that for ever. They that would not believe a God, shall find a devil. "My lord delayeth his coming," Matt. xxiv. 48; thus cries the worst servant in the house; (yet it is something that he grants he will come at last;) therefore he falls to beating his fellows, to eat and drink with the drunken. These follow their pleasures, dance, sing, sport, revel; and, Where is the promise of his coming at all? Thus let them live in their sins, according to the leading and lusting of their own corrupted hearts: but they shall find a stop in the course of the world; and the plummet of nature being down, she shall stand like a motionless clock: the sun shall stay his race, and the moon no more repair her decaying shine: their delights shall end their parts, the stage being taken down, and all these actors turned into hell. Then shall they confess that his coming was promised, and is performed; and the things that continued so long as from the creation, are now quite altered by the dissolution, as if they had never been. But when the bottomless pit hath shut her mouth upon them, this acknowledgment shall be too late, not for God's glory, but for their own ease; the door of

mercy being shut against them, despair and torture seizing on them, and those blasphemous tongues that contradicted their Maker, not allowed one drop of water to cool them.

3. The punishment of atheists should be severe and exemplary; as the highest indignity that can be done to God, is to deny his essence. The poor leper in Israel was forced to go with his clothes rent, his head bare, his lips covered; and to cry where he passed, I am unclean. Till better remedy were found for so opprobrious and contagious a disease, I would all atheists had a rent upon their clothes, a writing on their breasts, and a brand on their foreheads; that all beholders might say, An atheist, an atheist. Protagoras, because he begun his book with a doubt, I cannot say concerning the gods, either that they exist, or that they do not, was banished out of Athens, and his books solemnly burnt to ashes. The same Athenians committed Anaxagoras to prison, and but for Pericles had put him to death, for but writing a book of the moon's eclipses, after that they had received her for a goddess. Do we find such jealousy over their feigned gods in very Athenians, and shall the disparagement of the honour of the one true and ever-living God be tolerable among Christians? Certainly every creature is too good for him that denies the Creator; nor can they be further separated from heaven, or pitched deeper into hell, than they deserve, that would believe neither. Yea, they do mistrust both, whatsoever they pretend; and Tully spake of Metrodorus an atheist in his time: Nor have I ever seen any man, who was more afraid of those things, which he said were not to be feared. They that make a mock of hell, affirm the fact to me, and to you, but not to themselves. Their mouths tell us so, their hearts do not tell their mouths so. No hell! if they had as many provinces as Ahasuerus had, they would give a hundred and six and twenty of them, to be sure of it.

4. We read of serpents that will never be charmed, whether with policy or melody. Sure the consciences of evil men are such serpents, (and therefore their wounds are called stings of conscience,) which can be overruled by no arguments or temptations of Satan, to let go the sense of a Godhead. You may sooner get a conscience to believe all the fables in the Popish Legend, or Turkish Alcoran, than that this universal frame is created by a mind. This is the first vengeance, that no guilty man is acquitted, while he himself is the judge. It is not a more sweet friend to the innocent, than to the guilty a terrible foe: a man had better have all the world against him, than his own conscience. What ailed Judas? His Master was safe enough in the clutches of his enemies, the scribes and Pharisees were on his side, the king was not displeased at him, no law threatened any proceeding against him; his bones were full of marrow, his purse full of money; what should hinder his heart from being full of jollity? Alas, his conscience pursues him, from chamber to chamber, from bed to board, from society to solitariness: this dog still follows him, and never gives him over, till he casts away himself on his own gallows. If, says Ambrose, you do not see the Judge, do you not see yourself? Do you not fear the witness of your own heart?

Indeed, custom of sin stupifies conscience; and while a man continues alike in his wickedness, he thinks the world also continues alike in her steadfastness; he dreams of no beginning or end, whether of that or of himself. His conscience sleeps like a tame beast within, and he rages like a wild beast abroad. But at last they will change conditions; he shall be the tame beast, and his conscience the wild, that will prey upon him for ever. Man shall die, but his con-

science cannot; it shall appear with him, when he is summoned to appear before the Judge; and he shall cry out as Ahab, "Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?" 1 Kings xxi. 20. As the seal makes an impression on the wax, discernible to the eye; so the memory of every sin is engraven, as with the point of a diamond, on the conscience, not to be blotted out, but by the blood of Jesus Christ. Thy conscience may lose thee, thou canst never lose thy conscience. It may be darkened over, because it is not God; it cannot be extinguished, because it is from God. So Tertullian. This still troubles them with the solicitous representations of God's anger; this stops their pillows with knives and thorns; this puts bitterness into all their banquets; this so disquieteth their Godless hearts, that they know not whether their body be more weary of their soul, or their soul of their body. These might dwell peaceably together, while both did reverence their Maker. But when that Jezebel, atheism, for the safer maintenance of her whoredoms and witchcrafts, hath renounced this belief and service; conscience comes like Jehu, driving furiously, with, What peace? No peace to the wicked. Then runs the epicure to his pleasures, carousing cups of Bacchus, sporting with the waiting-women of Venus; Pan and Apollo must cheer him with their minstrelsies; and what is all this? He was none of the wisest, that being wearied, and lying down to rest by the way, when his head was somewhat too low, took the pitcher that lay by him, and put it under instead of a pillow; but feeling it too hard, he bethought himself, and stopped it with feathers, thinking then it would be wondrous easy. So vain and comfortless are all worldly joys, when they are used to mitigate the pangs of conscience: so miserable is the estate of these reprobates; they are not quiet while they live, and they shall never be quiet when they are dead. But for us, that know and profess the one and only God for ever to be blessed, let us fear him (without fear) as his adopted sons, and obey him (without hypocrisy) as his faithful servants: so at the great day of his coming to judge the ends of the earth, we shall receive a happy reward, even the inheritance of his own Son Jesus Christ.

VERSE 5.

For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water.

DIVERS ways did the philosophers attain to the knowledge of God. Socrates, by the contemplation of his providence; that he had given man the light to guide him, the night for his rest, the fire to warm him, the fruits to nourish him. And when Euthydemus objected, that these were common to the beasts; Socrates replied, that man had understanding, memory, speech, knowledge, to make use of all these, yea, and of the beasts themselves. Aristotle gathers it from the traditionary report of all mankind. (Metaph. 12. cap. 6.) Galen, from the excellency of the world's fabric, did collect the power, wisdom, and goodness of the Maker. That he could so form and beautify all things, is a proof of his wisdom; that he brings to pass all his intendments, is the argument of his power; that he suffers us to enjoy these creatures, is the demonstration of his goodness. The Platonists observed it by way of comparison, and degrees of ascension: for they held spiritual things to be better

than corporal; then they preferred things that had life before those that had none; and of things that had life, them that had sense and motion; and of these, the most perfect were endued with reason; and of rational things, they preferred intellectual spirits, as angels; and among these, there was one most perfect, who is *totus actus*, i. e. only in act, void of all passive quality, which is God. For other spirits do partly consist in act, and partly in possibility that they may not be; but it is impossible that God should not be. First, they were persuaded, that God was not a body; then consequently they held him to be a Spirit; and yet they sought him not among the mutable spirits; therefore he must be an immutable and infinite Essence.

Indeed they came short of saving knowledge. Plato acknowledgeth one God Creator of all things, yet he alloweth sacrifice to idols. Socrates would swear by a goat, in contempt of those idols; yet in the end, he caused a cock to be sacrificed to Æsculapius. Hermes Trismegistus, who was called the Egyptian Moses, and delivered many truths, yet spake absurdly and impiously, that images are as it were the bodies of the gods; as St. Augustine reports him. (Civ. Dei, lib. 8. c. 23.) Seneca inveighed against their idols, whom they worshipped in the form of beasts and fishes: They call those deities which should be accounted monsters; if they had life to meet us, they would scare us: yet after all this, he resolved on their worship, in his book of Superstition, which is perished. (De Superstit. cited by Aug. Civit. lib. 6. c. 10.) So Augustine saith of him, *Colabat quod reprehendebat, agebat quod arguebat*; i. e. He did fall to worship those gods which he had contemned.

But God hath made that plain to us, which they with much labour could not find; inasmuch that the children of Christians know more than the philosophers of pagans; and in the very principles of their catechism, and articles of their creed, are taught to believe in one God, the Maker of heaven and earth: for "by the word of God the heavens were of old," &c. We have heard the blasphemous assertion of these atheists; the apostle's confutation of them follows; and this is the force of his argument: The world had a beginning, therefore it shall have an ending; a Genesis begun it, an Exodus shall determine it; by the word of God it was created, by the same word it shall be dissolved. It is an easier thing to pull down, than to build up; he that could do the one, must needs be able for the other. Yea, that his power and ability to do it might be manifest, he hath once already destroyed it by a deluge. Why should it be harder for him to melt it by fire, than it was to drown it with water?

The former proposition is set down in this verse; which appears to me like unto a school, wherein we have St. Peter the divine schoolmaster: and he doth two things. First, he puts away and sets aside certain arrant dunces, that will never learn so much as the first rudiments; They willingly are ignorant. Secondly, he repeats an old lesson, as familiar to Christians as the A B C is to scholars. The lesson is the creation, the building of this great house the world: wherein we have, first, the main material parts of the house, heaven, earth, and sea: secondly, the disposition of these parts; heaven first, then earth and sea; and the near conjunction of these two latter; the earth embraced by the water, standing in the water, and appearing out of the water: thirdly, and lastly, the instrument, by which all these were made, and made thus, By the word of God.

"This they willingly are ignorant of." He begins with the dunces, those stubborn and unruly block-heads; insensious, nescious, conscious, wilful ignor-

ants. It is one thing, to wish to know what ought to be hidden, another, to wish to be ignorant of what ought to be known. The former is a saucy ambition of forbidden knowledge; the other, a headstrong preclusion of commanded knowledge. The school doth thus distinguish of ignorance; of *right*, or of *deed*. Ignorance of right is twofold; vincible, or invincible. This latter is when a man does all he can to know, and yet remains ignorant of many requisite things. The want of this knowledge, through the mercy of God, shall not cast a man away, because he did not cast away knowledge. Vincible is twofold. First, not aimed at, or purposed, but withal not fought against to overcome; when a man hath not a resolute will to be ignorant, but yet he does not fight against ignorance, nor exercise a sufficient endeavour to know: and this is sinful. Secondly, aimed at, or purposed. Affected ignorance is that, which refuseth to be instructed in good, that it might more uncontrollably prosecute evil. Ignorance of fact is also double. First, when men would know, and cannot. Secondly, when they can know, and will not. There is an ignorance of pure negation, and an ignorance of evil disposition. The former of these is properly a nescience of things we are not bound to know; the other a privative ignorance of things we ought to know. There is a simple ignorance and a sinful ignorance: a conceded ignorance, which thinks it knows what it knows not; and a contracted ignorance, which desires to unlearn the good it knows. As there be three degrees of knowledge: first, of nature, whereby man excels the beast. Secondly, of understanding, whereby the learned excel the unlearned, the wise the foolish. Thirdly, of grace, whereby the Christian excels the subtlest philosophers or politicians. So there be three degrees of ignorance: first, natural, which is the effect of original sin. Secondly, adventitious, which is accompanied with actual sin. Thirdly, habitual, which is the depth of all sin. So the beast, naturian, and Christian, are three degrees of comparison. But to let go other distinctions, we have this in the text. First, an ignorance against the will. Secondly, and a contracted, contented ignorance. The one is the cause of sin, of the other sin is the cause. Simple ignorance may excuse from a part, mere nescience from the whole, but wilful blindness neither from the whole, nor from a part, but is damnable.

1. No ignorance can excuse, but that only which has no means of learning. The heathen had but the book of nature to read God in, yet the apostle says plainly, "They are without excuse," Rom. i. 20. "To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin," Jam. iv. 17. Indeed nature is not sufficient of itself, without grace: it is like blind Samson without his guide; without whose direction he could not find the pillars of the house, the principles of faith. Or, as Baruch without Deborah; except the prophetess went along with him, he would not venture upon Sissera. Judg. iv. 8. Woe be to nature if she goes alone! for she will fall at every step, and who shall help her up? Laetantius delivers Socrates' own report of himself, for all the world's opinion of his wisdom; that he knew nothing but one thing, and that was, that he knew nothing. So that renowned orator Cicero: *Utinam tam facile vera possum invenire quam falsum convincere*; i. e. I would I could as easily light on the truth, as I can refute falsehood. What a catalogue of privileges accrued to Paul! Phil. iii. 5, 6. First, his seal of the covenant, circumcised; and that not like a proselyte, in his age, but the eighth day. Secondly, his kindred and descent; not from Esau, that lost the inheritance, but from Israel. Thirdly, his tribe; such as never fell to idolatry, but

continued in the service of God; of the tribe of Benjamin. Fourthly, his antiquity in that line; not inferior to the ancientest, but able to derive his pedigree from the first root of the Hebrews; an Hebrew of the Hebrews. Fifthly, besides those personal advantages; of profession, a Pharisee; of emulation, zealous; of conversation, blameless. Yet till a clearer light shined on his face, on his heart, and he was at once dismounted from his horse and his confidence in the flesh, he was far from the true knowledge; for which knowledge he now counted all things loss and dung.

Of Joseph it was the testimony of a king, The Spirit of God is in him, Gen. xli. 34. Of Daniel it was the testimony of a queen, The spirit and wisdom of the gods is found in him, Dan. v. 11. Concerning all natural knowledge, this is the triumph of the Christian; God hath made foolish the wisdom of this world, 1 Cor. i. 20. This was the thankful acknowledgment of Christ himself, Father, thou hast hid these things from the wise, and revealed them to babes, Matt. xi. 25. Wise, and yet foolish; men of understanding, that understand nothing. There are many and mighty nations at this day, their soil happy, their air sweetly disposed, most provident to forecast, most ingenious to invent, most able and active to perform, that have not received the God of Christians; whom till they do receive, they remain ignorant wretches. The empire of Turkey, that hammer of the world and rod of Christendom; able to say, as the psalmist speaks, Gilead is mine, Manassah is mine; Moab is my washpot; over Edom will I cast out my shoe, Psal. lx. 7, 8: Asia is mine, Africa is mine, over Europe have I cast my shoe; a warlike, politic, magnificent nation; yet they rather credit the enchantments of a sorcerer, than the glorious gospel of our Saviour, who shed his blood for the world's redemption. They are cut from the same rock, tempered of the same mould, have their heads upwards toward heaven; reasonable, capable, judicious souls, as well as we: what want they then? The sweet and saving knowledge of the crucified Jesus, that happy Star in the east, that should lead them to God. This, Herod and his princes, the Turk and his bashaws, never saw. But, blessed are our eyes, for they see; and our ears, for they hear, Matt. xiii. 16; I will not say, what prophets and righteous men, but what empires and kingdoms, not small cantons and corners, but whole quarters of the world, never attained unto; and shall one day wish to redeem with both their eyes the sight of our inestimable riches.

2. Ignorance is the foundation of evil; nor would men so desperately venture upon sin, if they truly saw and knew the dismal consequence. It is some imaginary or apparent good the transgressor seeks; punishment is a thing which against his will he finds; or, by which he is found, and overtaken. For, good is the object of all desire, evil is the object of fear. But because men know not the wages of evil, therefore they do it; and because they would securely do it, therefore they refuse to know it. Ignorance is unbecoming any man, intolerable in a clergyman. We shall seldom find, that crafty politicians will either be confuted or converted by dolts. Knowledge comes not at a jump: he that will ascend, must from the low valleys creep up higher and higher; and by the stairs of philosophy, climb up into the mountain of theology. God does not now miraculously inspire fishermen; as it is true, without his blessing no means is prevalent; so without means no blessing is warranted. The early blossoms are often frost-bitten, and die abortive and fruitless. The poet could censure it for old men's dotage, that would have their young men *ilico a pueris fieri senes*, i. e.

become old men immediately from being boys. When the devil would have Christ of stones to make bread, he would in no wise consent; and will he consent now, of blocks and stones to make distributors of bread, of the bread of life? A wise and good father will not give his children stones instead of bread: what shall we say of those spiritual fathers, brainless heretics, that will give to men's souls bread made of stones? If a man have enough to do to get his own bread with the sweat of his brows; what pains will it cost him, to provide bread for himself and his whole family, a great congregation! In the ark were the tables of the law, Aaron's rod, and the pot of manna: the endowments of a good minister are, instruction in his mouth, correction in his hand, and in his heart compassion.

The Levite had no temporal maintenance of his own, but what he had from the people; the people had no spiritual maintenance of their own, but what they received by the priest and Levite. If their lips do not preserve knowledge, it were better to stop up their ovens of utterance. Nor should their knowledge only be limited to the Scriptures, but fetch in all those helps that may serve for illustration of the Scriptures; as Christ himself drew comparisons from natural things, and taught men from vines and fig-trees, from sparrows and lilies. Religion through us may receive infamy, and the gospel discredit, while we make a scruple of sweetening our tunes to catch souls. Men are men, and with those things must be moved wherewith men are wont to be moved. The hooks must be pleasantly baited that they bite at. They that hang forth naked hooks, without a bait, may entangle them in the weeds, enwrap themselves in contentions; but catch no fish, win never a soul. You will say, Paul desired to know nothing but Christ, and the Scripture can make us wise enough to salvation. This is true, but then it must be wisely applied: all arts are used to this purpose; and the scope and centre whither we reduce them is but this, Christ is all in all. No orator was ever more pleasingly persuasive, than humble St. Augustine; none more learned; yet he taught nothing but Christ. Why should not we listen to St. Augustine, as well as Augustine himself did to St. Ambrose? Why not reverence Cyprian, as he did Tertullian; of whom he said every day, He must teach me a lesson? How shall we shake off ignorance, but by learning? How can we learn without reading? Books have their necessary use. He was a famous prince, that stunk not to call himself in this sense, necromancer; because he did ask counsel of the dead, meaning books. Shall we appeal from the living to the dead? from ourselves, as living children, to St. Augustine, Hierome, and those dead fathers? yea, let me say, from the dead to the living; from cholerick emulation, and contention of wit, the dead works of the living, to divine books, the living labours of the dead; from the present fancies of unmortified men, to the libraries of those holy writers, whose passions are buried with their bodies?

God delighteth to be magnified in all his creatures, especially in the excellentest of his creatures: arts are among those excellencies; not one of them but descended from his throne. Our apostle speaks here of the heavens, earth, waters: and the prophet chargeth us to praise God in all these, Psal. cxlviii.; and that materially, metaphysically. Into the majesty of sun and moon we see; the bright stars, their motion and influence, we know; the heaven of heavens, and waters above the heavens, in part, though not at large, we comprehend: in all these, let us praise their Maker. Let not the knowledge of Scripture become men's champion, to scold against all

other knowledge; for such cannot escape St. Peter's censure, of being wilfully ignorant. If we refuse to know any thing but Scripture, we shall not know the Scripture itself as we ought. It is indeed the chief power of God to salvation, and cursed is all learning that does not tend to and attend upon that. But generals in a pitched field will not thrust forth their chief power first; by little and little they will train their enemy out of order with light assaults. Stars have their stations, and motions, and honours allotted them in the firmament, though they come short of the sun and moon. Human writers may reprove vices, and condemn these atheists, though their main sentence be given by the word of God. It is an easy matter to praise God in that, wherein he hath placed the especial state-house of his praises. He that out of the barest and barrenest parts of his Lord's dominion, shall accumulate and levy to his treasury a great tribute, though short of that he hath out of his richest provinces, shall he not do him remunerable service? They are malevolent spirits, that exclude any art or author, Roman or Athenian, any creeping worm, or contemptible creature, from bearing witness to God. It is fit other men should know many things, but a preacher should be ignorant of nothing that may be useful to the glory of his Maker. How should these atheists be converted from their wilful ignorance by teachers that are wilfully ignorant? Let light come into the house at the doors and windows; but God forbid that the tapers of the sanctuary, and the lamps, should burn dim. If they did, sure these days of ours would afford many snuffers. We are moving hills; our site and motion is in the view of all; there is no passenger but observes the mountain. "He reads like a clerk" is not enough to make a priest; more is required. I never wonder to see men dissolute, where their teacher is ignorant; no more, than that men should stumble in the dark: where prophecy fails, the people perisheth.

3. Atheism, profaneness, and all impiety issues from the root of secure and contented ignorance. They that are wilfully blind, are desperately wicked: a bad man and a fool, are but two several attributes of one and the same man. First, there is no knowledge of God in the land; thereupon follows a privation of goodness, (no truth, no mercy,) and upon that, a position of all ungodliness, until blood toucheth blood, Hos. iv. 1, 2. Lewdness follows blindness: when the eyes of the Jews were darkened, Rom. xi. 8, all mischiefs throng in upon them. When sinners have given up themselves to darkness, God gives them up to the prince of darkness; and he works upon their corrupt nature, to precipitate them into all wickedness: as if they, setting themselves on the top of a hill, and purposing to run down, he stood at their back, to thrust them headlong. They may have some skill in the contriving of atrocious acts; as bats and owls see best in the night. Deal with them about the world, they have shrewd and subtle wits; but speak of religion, and they count it a strange language: as moles within the ground are quick, and dig apace, but above ground can make little shift for themselves. It is just with God, that they who might understand, and would not, should be upon the point of perishing, and understand it not.

He that hath the talent of illumination, and buries it in the dark earth of ignorance, is worthy to lose it: if he have the understanding of a man, and yet will be as ignorant as a beast, God will make a beast of him; as he did of a great monarch, Nebuchadnezzar. Reprove some swearers, and they will swear the more, to spite you; which were not possible, if they were not wilfully ignorant, and did not (what in them lies) give themselves over to Satan. Christ wept over

Jerusalem: what was the cause? "If thou hadst known," Luke xix. 42: they were wilfully blind. This cost him a deep groan; and he that never cried Oh, for all his own bitter passions, vents it with a sigh, for their blindness. Even good things become snares to such; as a blind money-monger may stumble at his own bags. "Wisdom is good with an inheritance," Eccl. vii. 11; but an inheritance without wisdom is a snare, and temptation to lewdness. We pity and relieve him that is born blind, or loseth his sight by misfortune; but he deserves no pity that plucks out his own eyes to move compassion to his beggary. Doubtless, that God who is so rich in mercy, hath compassion in store for those blind hearts, that would know, and cannot; but what hope is left for the wilfully ignorant, that may know, and will not? Therefore I cannot but conceive, that the papists in Rome shall find a more favourable doom than the recusants of England: those would know the truth, if they might be suffered; these will not know it, though they be invited: therefore we call these, not the other, recusants; that is, wilful ignorants.

4. No less judgment belongs to them that reject knowledge, than to them that deny obedience. He that will not cast an eye upon the king's published proclamation, is never the less subject to the penalty for his transgression. So far is he from cloaking his errors with ignorance, that he binds two sins together, and receives a double vengeance. Greater means require greater knowledge; greater knowledge, greater obedience, or it will procure greater punishments. The eye is excused for not seeing, the ear for not hearing, what they ought; but if the will forbids them to do these functions, and turns them off from such necessary objects, no pretence shall excuse the will. All those dire plagues that fell upon the head of Jerusalem; the demolishing of her glorious temple, the razing of her foundations, the dashing of her infants against the stones, her channels streaming with blood, the ravishing of her virgins, the slaughter of so many hundred thousands; they may all thank this one clause of a sentence, for giving them birth and breath, Thou wouldest not. Neither destruction nor damnation had befallen her, but for this, Thou wouldest not. Christ offered her peace and forgiveness, if she would know him; but she would not. He proffered to ease all her burden, if she would cast it on him; but she would not. She needed but ask, and have; but knock, and it should be opened; but she would not. A world of evil, the evil of the world, yea, the evil of the world to come, she had escaped; the blessings of heaven, a heaven of blessings, she had obtained; all but for this wilful ignorance, Thou wouldest not.

Let us all be warned by her ruins. If England esteem knowledge cheap and base, which Solomon preferred to gold and jewels; and refuse to know the good, that she may securely do the evil; she shall soon match Jerusalem in accursedness. She shall see nothing but frowning wrath in the clouds, but lightning and thunder in the mouth of the four winds; the heaven (instead of stars) shall be made an artillery-house of hailstones; no planet shall revolve any thing but vastation; earthquakes shall dissolve her joints, and all her buildings shall but quash the owner with their falls, affording them unasked tombs and sepulchres; the damps of the earth shall breed nothing but plagues, the clouds shall drop down leanness on her fields, the sea shall break in upon her with inundations; she shall be privileged from no judgments, when she once wilfully rejects knowledge. How just is it with God to remove their candlestick, that have put out their own candle! to remove the ark from them, that remove themselves from the ark!

But the Lord evermore forbid, that our barrenness of knowledge, in this abundance of means, should beget an *Ichabod*; whose name may be a trumpet to the world of our shame; The gospel is gone from England, "The glory is departed from Israel," 1 Sam. iv. 22.

5. Yet in this plenty of means, I should take it for granted that we have plenty of knowledge. But not to hold you in admiration of your own happiness at the gaze, and to leave your understandings without reflection of themselves upon themselves, know this for certain, all excuse is taken away, where the commandment is not unknown. Even sins of ignorance stand in need of mercy, 1 Tim. i. 13; but what cloak is long enough to cover sins against knowledge? It is no marvel to see the wilderness lie waste and desert; but if a ground well husbanded and manured yield not profit, it deserveth cursing. "After ye have known God, how turn ye again to beggarly elements?" Gal. iv. 9. Yea, worse than beggarly elements, even vagrant enormities, to the incurring of a sorer bondage. If ye have learned Christ, "put off the old conversation," Eph. iv. 22; with this new lesson, take out a new life. The end is the perfection of other things; but the end of a relapsed Christian is worse than his beginning. Many shall say, Lord, Lord, Matt. vii. 22: many, for it is the ease of a multitude. We have done wonderful works in thy name, we have known thee: but all their knowledge of Christ shall not gain his knowledge of them; We know thee, but I know not you. Adam had excellent knowledge, yet he must dress the garden: the angels have more excellent knowledge, yet they are ministering spirits. Though we know much, yet sloth may emaculate our strength; and idleness (that can make nothing else) can make us effeminate souls. God does not give us knowledge as a man gives a book to a library, there to be chained; where sometimes more skill is required to extract and pick learning out of it, than the book hath learning in it. Knowledge must have vent: ministers vent their knowledge by the exercise of their ministry; Christians vent their knowledge by the exercise of their charity.

6. Knowledge is like meat, memory the stomach, sins are malignant humours, the natural heat is charity. If we perceive where knowledge abounds humours to superabound, we judge quickly, It is for want of charity to digest it. Some desire knowledge for their private satisfaction, that they may know; others for ostentation, that they may be known, to be known famous by it. But we may say of them both, as Tully did of the philosophers, The lives of the philosophers is miserably contrary to their doctrines. Even the devils know God; let curious heads dispute whether Satan knew Christ to be God; in this we may believe himself, though in nothing else; he knew what he believed, he believed what he confessed; "Jesus, thou Son of the most high God," Mark v. 7. Where be those infidels, that either hold doubtfully, or ignorantly misknow, or blasphemously deny, what the very devils have professed? yet were even they never the better for it: so little can a bare speculation avail us in these cases of divinity. Thus far hath that devil attained; to no ease, to no comfort. Knowledge alone doth but puff up, it is our love that edifies, 1 Cor. viii. 1. If there be not a persuasion of our sure interest in this Jesus, a power to apply his merits and obedience, we are no whit the safer, nor yet the better; only we are so much the wiser, to understand who shall condemn us. Knowledge in a man of great wit, as money to a man of great wealth, may make him proud, but do him no good, without charitable humility. The swelling side, which we

call the convexity of any body, receives nothing but blows: the receptacle of good things is the concavity. Pride is the convexity, and "God resisteth the proud:" humility is the concavity, and he "giveth grace to the humble," Jam. iv. 6.

7. If knowing made up happiness, England were a happy nation, these times as happy as ever any; but if doing be required, great is the infelicity of both. There is a drowsy of knowledge, but a consumption of the vital parts of a Christian, holiness and obedience. We need not Christ to work miracles upon our heads, by casting out deaf and dumb spirits; but upon our dead hearts, dried arms, and withered hands, so stupified to the actions of zeal and charity. Christ is said to know no sin, because he did no sin: in that sense, and in effect, they know no good that do no good; and no man rightly knows more than he practiseth. So many as profess themselves to know, and not address themselves to do, shall be censured for wilful ignorants. A carpenter is known by erecting frames, a smith by making iron instruments, and a Christian by good works: what is it to be cunning in problems and paradoxes, in niceties and criticisms? I may say, as Cato did of superfluous, useless trifles, They are dear at a farthing that are good for nothing.

Illumination is easy, sanctification is the laborious work: to cross our affections, to subjugate our wills, and to mortify our darling lusts, this is the task, this the difficulty. But men are willingly ignorant of this; we do not sin because we know not, but because we will not know. May we not use the apostle's ordinary inprecation and exprobration, 1 Cor. vi. and ix., "Know ye not," that such things are wicked? "Know ye not," that for these things comes the anger of God? Is any so simple, that he knows not the ten commandments, and sum of the gospel? It were less unhappy for sinners if they had that plea, We knew not this. No, their eyes are open, and with open eyes they run into the gulf of destruction. The wickedness of our times proceeds not from weak, but from wilful ignorance. Let us not be so ignorant, as to think that nothing shall condemn us but ignorance; as if God would come in flaming fire, only to render vengeance upon poor pagans, savages, and Indians, and not meddle with clear-eyed, though foul-hearted Christians. They write, that the inhabitants under the torrid zone are more troubled with damps than those under the frigid. It were miserable, if the bright sun of knowledge among us, through our inward coldness, should be answered with the damps and suffocations of all piety and justice. Let us labour for knowledge, that we may see the way of goodness; let us walk in the way of goodness, that we never repent of our knowledge; both together shall be crowned with blessedness.

"By the word of God the heavens were of old," &c. We are rid of the dunces, and now come to consider the lesson which they easily might and would not learn. It is the creation of so noble and wonderful a machine, the world: whereof the beauteous face is heaven; the two eyes, the sun and moon; the burning lamps are the stars; the fire, a nurse or active cherisher of things; the air, a glass, representing the beauty; the sea, a great fish-pond; the plains and champaign fields, the floors; the hills and mountains, the pillars; gnats and elephants, insects and monsters, the curiosities. Whereof Augustine thus: If we inquire who made these things; It is God: if we inquire how; He spake, Let it be done, and it was done: if why; Because he is good; for there is not a more excellent author or maker than God, nor a more efficacious means than his word. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," Gen. i. 1. The beginning of the world is from him that is the

Beginning of all things: whereunto the name of the Author is first set as a seal, God; and under the names of the two extremities and borders, all the rest is comprised. He did give both matter and form; he is not only the deviser of shapes and features, but the Maker of nature itself. "I fear the Lord, the God of heaven," saith Jonah to his heathen mariners, "who hath made the sea and the dry land," Jonah i. 9. First, a God in essence and being; your gods are but in supposition. Secondly, the God of heaven; yours are not gods of the poorest hamlets in the earth. Thirdly, which hath made the sea and the dry land, as a little monument of his infinite art and power; yours are not able to make the garments of their own backs. They that worship an embroidered puppet, methinks should rather worship the embroiderer that made it.

This is the apostle's argument against these infidels: He that made the heavens, can he not fold them up again like a book, and roll them together like a skin of parchment? He that hath made the sea, and causeth it to boil like a pot of ointment, cannot he dry it up again from the channel? He that made the dry land, cannot he overflow it with a deluge, or rock it to and fro upon the foundations, till it reel like drunkards, or burn it with flames? Yes, he can clothe the sun and moon with sackcloth; put out the nocturnal candles, the stars; fill the ocean with mountains, and make nature beside herself, like an image of madness. Our apostle here keeps the order of nature, placing first the heavens, then earth and sea; as the principal parts, whereof the whole consisteth. For heaven is in nature and position above the sea, the sea above the earth: heaven as the roof of that beautiful house wherein man was placed; earth and water as the two floors and foundations to it. The chief materials are,

Heaven first; that is the head or roof of this goodly fabrick; a work befitting his hand who is the omnipotent Lord. Praise the Lord, ye heavens of heavens; for he commanded, and ye were created, Psal. cxlviii. 4, 5. The prophet adds to the mention of heavens, the word created; which he does not to the other creatures in that Psalm. And that, first, to convince that impious dotage of these atheists, dreaming of an eternity of the heavens; not so, they were created. Secondly, to confound the superstitious worship which idolaters give unto them: no creature is to be worshipped, but they are creatures. The poets feigned Cœlum to be the most ancient of the gods; and that he begot Saturn, who disabled him that he might have no rival. That this Saturn had many children, but he devoured them as soon as they were born: only Jupiter escaped, who deposed his own father, thrust him into hell, and usurped his kingdom; and with the same falchion disabled his father Saturn, wherewith he had disabled his father Cœlum; which being cast into the sea, out sprung Venus. The moral of which monstrous fable might be this: that corrupt nature brought forth such rebels under heaven, that made war against heaven, and ambitiously attempted a building, to emulate the firmament. Upon which followed confusion, treason, usurpation, and parricide; the son betrayed the father, who was again betrayed by his son: luxury and riot filled the earth; and watrish lusts did spring out, instead of heavenly desires. But we know that Cœlum is no god, but the work of God; the precious vault, that walls in this our inferior world.

Our apostle speaks of heavens, plurally: we know there be three heavens, one above another; the lowest above us, and the highest below our Head, Christ.

1. The first, and next us, is the airy heaven;

wherein the wanton fowls sport themselves, overlooking with scorn the highest turrets; the larks singing carols to the praise of their Maker, as rejoicing that they can mount nearer to that heaven for the time, than the men for whom it was provided. There hang the pregnant clouds, longing to be delivered of their fruitful burdens; from whose vast wombs sometimes break forth fires and dreadful thunders: thin vapours, like some steel-glasses, wherein the sun looks, and shows his face in the variety of those colours he hath not. Sometimes they fill the lap of the earth with white, hardened pearls, rattling among her leaves, and like pearls embroidering her garment; and when they are sent by the angry hand of their Maker, they can destroy her fruits and flocks, yea, even kill Egyptian enemies. Other times they turn her superficies into a crust, and bake it with congealing cold: "The waters are hid as with a stone, and the face of the deep is frozen," Job xxxviii. 30. Other-whiles they send down snow, like wool, to keep warm her young fruits in their cradles. This arrays the earth in a robe of innocency, as if she would both emulate and imitate heaven itself, and be clothed in white; or, rather doth emblemize a hypocrite, that hides all his foul sloughs and dunghills with an upper face of purity. There are bred those potentful comets and exhalations, out of which fantastical heads pick fanatical meanings; but indeed they are characters of such a language, as no nation of the earth understands; neither Parthians, nor Medes, nor Elamites, nor Cretes, nor Arabians; only we know they speak the wonderful works of God, Acts ii. 9-11. There range the subtle winds, driving the clouds as a shepherd doth his flocks, passing away like strangers; we know not whence they come, nor whither they go. This is that heaven which is the lungs of the world; in which we breathe, and without which we could not breathe: it is (as it were) empty in itself, yet suffers emptiness in nothing else.

2. The next is the starry heaven, stuck full of sublime and conspicuous lights. Whereof some be planets, called wandering; not because they keep not their right ways, but because a course is assigned them different from that of the firmamental stars. They have their epicycles or little orbs, and are carried irregularly by a rapid motion, yet so as still they hold on their proper race: as a fly on the axletree of a chariot-wheel may creep on her own way, yet be whirled about the contrary according to that violent motion. There be those twinkling luminaries, as it were virgins with torches, waiting on their mistress the queen of the night. These have their secret virtues, and wonderful influences; the guides of mariners on the seas, that teach them to steer their courses; the shepherds' calendar, the astronomers' wonder, but the confusion of judicial astrologers; for God made them to distinguish times, not to calculate nativities, or tell future events. The heaven itself is a union of bodies; and therefore as one army dependeth upon one general, one state upon one prince, all numbers upon unity, so all stars communicate in one virtue. As God is the *Principium* of all things in the world, yet no part of them; so the heavens communicate with all particular effects, not by giving forms, but by extent of virtue.

There is the sun, that glorious eye of the world; that sees all, and gives us light to see withal. That treasury of light, into which body the former dispersed illumination was united. That unwearied giant, which every day runs his course, and takes no time to sleep; a watchman to prevent mischiefs, a discoverer of the black deeds of darkness, an enemy to thieves and murderers, the friend of innocency, the expected comforter of sorrows, that brings joy in

the morning; the bridegroom, the husband of the earth, which provides heat and sustenance for herself and all the children that hang on her breasts. There is the moon, a weaker light for a less necessary use. God made the night for rest, darkness is the cradle of sleep; yet because some occasions are driven to trespass upon that time of quiet, and to borrow of the night, God hath allowed that also a goodly torch to guide it. The mistress of the sea, the ruler of those relapses and refluxes, ebbs and tides: a secret worker upon bodily humours, whose virtue is not greater in her light than in her influence. This is the sidereal heaven, a spacious and magnificent canopy, where stars are set like precious stones, almost every one of them larger than the whole earth. If we were in that heaven with these eyes, the whole earth were equally enlightened, would seem as little to us there, as now a small star in the firmament appears to us here.

3. The uppermost heaven excels all; and is no less glorious above the visible, than the visible is above the earth. If this be so admirable which we see that are sinners, what is that which they possess that are saints and angels! If mortal eyes be so ravished with the vision of this, how are they blessed with the fruition of that! Even that heaven was created: He that made all the heavens, could not have one coeternal with himself. It is a gross question, and besecming these scoffers, to ask where He dwelt before. What heaven can contain him that is infinite? All things dwell in him, even the heaven of heavens: the Maker is not comprehended in the house, but the house in the Maker. He fills all things, nothing can fill him. Though he be said to dwell in heaven, yet he made not that house only for himself; but in a far more excellent measure he there reveals his glory: that is his throne, as the earth is his footstool. The power of an earthly king extends through all his dominions; yet there his majesty appears more glorious where he keeps his state and court, 1 Kings x. 8. His common subjects do not partake this in the same measure with his ordinary servants. If the gallery of this world be so beautified, with a steady foundation, a movable roof, a canopy so bespangled with stars, more precious than sparkling diamonds; the walls furnished with curious hangings, wherein be such numberless numbers of (not painted, but) living creatures, which delight us (we know not whether more) with their forms and varieties; how inconceivably delectable is the bed-chamber, the heaven prepared for eternal rest!

If we should go round about this inferior Zion; tell her towers, and mark well her bulwarks, Psal. xlviii. 12, 13; yet we find in every place that antique mower riding circuit with his impartial scythe, that old Saturn the devourer of his own children; for time produced them, and time cuts them off. We find sin leading the dismal dance, and death marching after with his blood-reeking sword: we find the stench of iniquity to have corrupted the air, cursed the earth, subjected the elements and heavens to a fiery mutation: we find troubles, and alterations, and dreadful conflicts; combustion in the elementary heavens, earthquakes rumbling in the bowels of the centre, the roarings and inundations of water, as it were tottering the foundations and pillars of the world: all symptoms of death, and prognostics of its dissolution. But to this third and supreme heaven sin never reached, time was never admitted, death could never ascend: millions ascend thither by death, death itself hath nothing to do there. Sin is swallowed up in mercy, death in victory, time in eternity. There can be no sorrow, where is fulness of joy; no room for

troubles, where is the fulness of peace; no fear, where the walls are impregnable, no thief can break through and steal. Sin hath made a woeful end of man, death shall make an end of sin, time shall make an end of death, eternity shall make an end of time, but there can be no end of eternity: that is the privilege of heaven. As this heaven is the highest of God's works in place, so it seems to have been the first in time: sure it was made before hell. For the Judge calling his saints to heaven, calls it a "kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world," Matt. xxv. 34. But sending away his enemies to hell, he calls it a place "prepared for the devil and his angels," ver. 41; as if it had not been made till the angels fell. So it pleased God to provide a place for the exercise of his mercy, before he framed another for the execution of his justice.

Thus we have considered these three heavens, or three stages of heaven. The lowest is for fowls, for vapours, for meteors; the next for stars; the third for saints and angels. The first is God's outward court, open for all; the second is the body of his covered temple, wherein those lamps of heaven are continually burning; the third is that holy of holies, whither our High Priest of the New Testament is entered; yea, and hath rent the veil, to make way for all his faithful children to follow him. In this lowest is tumult and vanity; in the second is rest and immutability; in the highest is blessedness and glory. The first we feel, the second we see, the third we believe. In the two lower is no felicity, neither the fowls nor the stars are happy. Happiness only belongs to the third heaven, where the blessed Trinity enjoyeth himself, and the glorified spirits enjoy him. "Praise the Lord, ye heavens of heavens," Psal. cxlviii. 4: the prophet seems to call them all heavens of heavens. The ethereal heaven is heaven under heaven; the empyreal heaven is heaven above heaven; the sidereal heaven is heaven between the heavens. The lowest is heaven, in which we move; the next, under which we move; the highest, to which we move: we were made in the first, made under the second, made for the highest. In the first we breathe with our mouths and nostrils; towards the second we bear up our heads; to the third we lift up our hearts. The lowest we feel with our senses, the next we look upon with our eyes, the highest is the object of our hopes. This nearest to us we use, aspire and respire it; the next we behold with wonder; but in the third we lay up our treasure. We move in this lower, the higher moves over us, the rest of our motion is expected in the heaven of joy.

This is a heaven of mortality, the upper of immutability, the uppermost of blessed eternity. The soul is not long in making her progress through the lowest heaven: it is very much if she be seventy years about it. But being once dissolved, she despatcheth all her way through the next heaven in a minute: if she meet the great body of the sun, she does not wait for her passage till he be gone by; but pierceeth all orbs and spheres, and is at once at and through the firmament. But when she is got into the highest heavens, there she stays and dwells, as in her proper home: this she hath long desired, this she then possesseth. This lowest heaven is but our pilgrimage while we live, the starry heaven our thoroughfare when we die, the glorious heaven our abiding city where we shall live for ever. Oh the glory of that mansion, that mansion of glory! Blessed are they for whom thou, O Lord, hast prepared it: blessed they whom thou hast prepared for it. "Lord, I am not worthy thou shouldst come under my roof," Matt. viii. 8; that thou shouldst enter into

my house of mortality; much less am I worthy to enter into thy house of glory. Thus I have dwelt long on this fair roof of the world, the highest and best piece of the creation: who would not wish to dwell for ever in heaven? It is good being here, say they, that saw but a glimpse of it. I shall make amends with brevity upon the rest: though the earth be vast, and the sea immense, and the work of many lives to survey; yet our discourse may compass the one, and sail through the other, in a short time.

The earth: that fruitful mother, whose husband is heaven; by whose kindly embraces, innumerable good things are brought forth for the use of man. The poets called her Cybele, the great mother, the wife of Titan (the sun). In a word, God made it, for fashion, round; for situation, steadfast; for matter, solid; rich, for use.

1. For the form, it is globular, a round ball hung in the midst of the world, about which the copious orbs are continually running. This circular proportion of it is evident by the shadow it makes in the moon, when it is interposed betwixt her and the sun. Nor can the great mountains or deep valleys disfigure it; no more than the sticking of some small pins upon a great ball, would take away from it all respect of rotundity. In this position, it is both fittest to be enlightened by the sun, and to all parts of it heaven is of the same distance.

2. The situation is steady; for we explode those fond opinions of Copernicus, that the earth only moves, and the heavens stand still.* Democritus, without discourse or argument, confuted that vain tenet, that bodies are not moved, by walking up and down. God "laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed for ever," Psal. civ. 5. "One generation passeth, and another cometh; but the earth abideth for ever," Eccl. i. 4. It is the centre of the world, yea, even the receptacle of all the dregs of nature; the heavens purge themselves, by their restless motion; and the standing earth embosoms the corruption.

3. The matter is solid and gravid; therefore apt for buildings and burdens. What mighty pyramids, huge colosses, castles, and cities, have been set on her strenuous back! Yet she hath not fainted under the weight. There is no load that makes her groan, but our intolerable sins; these make her heart-sick; and for these she vomits us out of her stomach, yet again receives us into her inner bowels. Like weak legs that are not able to bear a distempered head, our iniquities make her reel under us, with unnatural earthquakes.

4. For use, she is rich, bearing fruits and metals: delicate is the fruit of her lips, and wondrous the fruit of her womb. Her face yields us variety of herbs, flowers, trees, leaves, seeds, fruits, beasts, worms; some growing out of her, some moving on her, all nourished by her. If we dig into her inwards, we find metals, mines, quarries; that white and red earth, whose beauty hath bewitched so many thousand souls. She patiently suffers the share, spade, mattock, that tear her up, for that which God hath buried in her. Like the pelican, with her own blood she feeds her children; and because the fruits she bears cannot content them, she gives them her secret riches. The Maker's wisdom laid them up low, closely, basely; that he might prevent both our greediness of searching for them, and foolishness of overvaluing them. I know, the earth is the lees and sediments of nature, the dross of the world; as all corruption sinks down to the feet; rude, sandy, muddy; yet it hath three privileges of honour.

(1.) It is the habitation of the militant church of God, and bears them whom he esteems as his most precious jewels. The wicked indeed are *telluris inutiles pondus*, i. e. a useless burden to the earth; but the other are her ornaments: all the gold and rich stones within her, are not worth one poor saint, that daily walks upon her. This is one of her honours.

(2.) It is the repository of the bodies of the elect, when they are dead; the great church-yard of the catholic church. The graves are their chambers, and they make their bed in the dust; and there take an unmolested sleep, till the restitution of all things. This is another honour for her; she keeps those bodies, which are the members of the Son of God.

(3.) It is the matter whereof those bodies were made: "The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground," Gen. ii. 7. They that shall one day outshine the sun in heaven, were yet made of the earth. Let curious heads subtly dispute the composition of elements in our bodies; which might be a second matter, that God had prepared out of the dust; but we inquire only of the Scripture, and there find expressly, not that God made this body of air, or fire; not of the same matter with the moon, sun, or stars, much less of the nature of heaven, or angels; but of the dust of the earth. Of this was Adam made; Eve, of Adam; Seth, of them both; and so the successive generations to Abraham, to David, to the Virgin Mary, to Jesus Christ. For God sent his Son made of a woman, who was made of dust. Mary was of Heli; Heli, of Matthat; Matthat, of Melehi; and so up to Adam; and then, down to the dust. Here then is the greatest honour of this poor element, the body of the Son of God was made of it; even that body which is set in the high places, worshipped of men and angels: made of the earth, laid in the earth, raised from the earth to the glory of heaven.

The sea: a fluid element, always running, and often roaring, foaming, and swelling, as if it would swallow up the whole earth; irresistible by the power of man, yet ruled like a child by the power of God. His gulfs have devoured, and his rocks split, the mightiest and hugest vessels that ever swam on the waters. Foolish Xerxes, the Persian king, because it had broke down a bridge which he made over Hellespont, caused three hundred stripes to be given it for revenge, and to teach it better manners. Alas, how doth it mock all opposition; shall I say, of fleets and navies? why, a little tempest will soon make an end of them; but even of kingdoms and large territories, when the great Manager of the world gives it the reins! Yet can he turn it with a twine thread, and with his least nod check the proudest billows. He hath filled it, not with more creatures than wonders; whose hugeness of quantity, strangeness of shapes, variety of fashions, and incomparableness of number, may well fill our hearts with admiration. This is a fair field for a running head, where he may run himself out of breath, and his humour out of him; he that comes home from the sea no better Christian than he went out, though he bring home never so vendible a commodity and so rich a prize, hath lost his voyage. If all the wonders and terrors which seafaring men see in the deep, work not an awful dread of the Power that made it and them; if they be but like the way of their vessels, leaving no print or track in their hearts; they are but pirates to their own souls.

Post thou change thy climate, and not thy mind? Art thou devout in a storm, and id stormy in a calm? Many mariners on land imitate the rage of the seas, and roar here as fast as those do there. It is one of

* Till such the author then exploded that opinion, it is now est blished with infallible certainty. The researches of Sir

Isaac Newton and other eminent men leave no reasonable doubt of its unquestionable correctness.—MAYNIN

those elements which is said to have no mercy. Passage, and expedition, and success, may be bought on land; no bribes can procure these at sea. It is the desire of gain that makes men walk upon the water with wooden stilts, and venture through so frequent and mortal dangers. But it hath been a saying, *Armatis divum nullus pudor*; i. e. Soldiers and scamen scarce fear God himself. The sea is become their proper element, the region where their art lies; and they do so often fight with waves and winds, living neither among the living nor among the dead, offering up their souls to every flaw of wind and billow of water, that they live as if death and they were at a composition. But alas, the spices, and silks, and strange commodities we have from foreign countries, are the price of men's lives, even the blood of our children: as David called the water of Bethlehem blood, because it was brought with the hazard of men's lives from the army of Philistines. But I purpose no long voyage by sea, but rather a short cut over the main ocean, and here I cast anchor.

For conclusion; wherefore did God create all these things, but for his own glory? At once therefore, to shame these atheists that deny it, and to instruct us Christians that believe it, let me go up again by the same steps that I came down, and sing the praises of God as I pass. To begin where I left.

1. At the sea. "They that go down to the sea in ships, see the works of the Lord in the deep." Psal. cxvii. 23, 24. What follows? "Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!" ver. 31. It is not the tallness of our ships, nor their swiftness, manning, nor munition, that can secure them from that boisterous element; but our Maker's providence. We give them the names of beasts, the lion, the bear; of men, the Castor and Pollux; of angels and archangels: but still let us remember, they are wooden beasts, wooden angels; and woe to him that shall say to a piece of wood, Thou art my maker! They have good fortune and good speed written on their backs; they are not sure of it in their success. We read of the noblest navy that ever furrowed the seas; masts of cedar, and hatches of ivory, with embroidered sails; yet the east wind broke it in the midst of the seas, Ezek. xxvii. 26. What then should we do? Let us fear the Lord, and both rocks and sands shall fear us; all winds shall blow us profit; shipwrecks shall avoid the channel where our way lies; prosperous gales shall land our vessels in the desired havens, and mercy shall take our souls into the harbour of peace. A ship under sail is a noble and goodly sight, but it is a better sight to see her moored in the haven. No matter what becomes of this frail bark of our flesh, so we may save the passenger. God hath confined this monstrous creature by a natural miracle; to him let us give the honour. The sea sends out springs through the veins of the earth, they by degrees gather into rivers, and then empty themselves again into the lap of their mother. All blessings come from God as the fountain; let them return in blessings and praises to our Father.

2. The earth. Millions of wonders doth the very face of this parent afford us: what beast, what worm, what herb, tree, flower, or pile of grass is there, wherein we may not read infiniteness of power and skill; wherein we may not see the footsteps of a Deity? Other sinners are condemned by many things, the atheist is condemned by all things. The wine shall testify against the drunkard, images against the idolater, the stone of the wall and beam out of the timber against the oppressor, the chamber and the bed shall accuse the adulterer; but every fish in the sea, every beast, herb, stone in the earth, every star

in heaven, besides the grand jury of his conscience, shall bear witness against the profane unbeliever. It is round, that we might praise the perfection; it is sound, that we might praise the wisdom; it is steadfast, that we might praise the constancy; it is rich, that we might praise the bounty, of Him that created it. All the fecundity and corruption is from ourselves and our sins; all the goodness, from the fountain of all goodness, our Maker.

3. The heavens. These are nearest his glory, as in situation, so in excellency. The higher we go, still the more perfection: each element is superior to another, not more in place, than in dignity; that our hearts might dwell in none of these degrees, but by them climb up to the top of all felicity. Praise the Lord, ye heavens, Psal. cxlviii. 4: the heavens cannot praise God, they are insensible creatures; yet they do it in their kind: they obey his word, therein they praise him; they still accomplish their enjoined tasks, therein they praise him: there is no thankfulness like obedience. But they are the matter and occasion of our praising him; they were made for us, that we might praise him in them, for them, for ourselves. As when we see a magnificent house, or a goodly ship, we do not only commend them, but much more the builders. Every thing in heaven is a beam of some attribute in God. The large capacity of it, is a beam of his incomprehensible infiniteness; the clear beauty of it, a beam of his spotless purity; the unwearied motion of it, a beam of his eternity; the pellucid transparency of it, a beam of his invisibility; the powerful influences of it, a beam of his omnipotency; the long unchanged continuance of it, a beam of his immortality; the concordance and harmony of it, a beam of his peace and tranquillity; the innumerable virtues and benefits of it, a beam of his bounty; the whole admirable fabric, a beam of his wisdom; the sun and light of it, a beam of his glory; for he gives that light to it, which it gives to us. As Augustine said of Lazarus, As many mouths as sores, crying for pity; so, so many stars, so many tongues proclaiming God's glory. As John the Baptist was not only the voice of a crier, but every thing in him was the voice of a crier. His raiment of camel's hair was a voice, crying for mortification; his girdle about his loins was a voice, crying for continence and chastity; his meat, being locusts and wild honey, was a voice, crying for temperance and sobriety; his preaching place, the wilderness, where ambition doth not use to grow, was a voice, crying for zeal and humility. So there is nothing in heaven, nothing on earth, nothing in the sea, nothing in all the world, but is the voice of one crying, preaching the Lord's glory. This is the consent and harmony of all creatures, and in that let us join with them; Blessing, and honour, and praise, thanks and obedience, be rendered from us all to our Maker for ever, Rev. v. 13.

"By the word of God." This is the instrument of the creation; wherein we have divers things to observe.

1. It was the wicked error of Servetus, that the word was not from the beginning; which he would gather from this, that heaven and earth were made before God is said to speak. Then God said, Gen. i. 3; not before. But we have an evident testimony, that the word was in the beginning, and the world was made by it, John i. 1, 3; and seeing the light was made by the word, the word must needs be before the light: the cause ever goes before the effect. Another heresy of Servetus was to think that speaking was a new quality in God; whereas indeed it is no quality at all, but signifies only his will and decree: He spake, and they were made: his will is his word, and his word is his deed. Our tongue, hand, and heart, are three several things; and not seldom

one differs from the other; that the hand does not what the tongue speaks; and neither tongue speaks, nor hand does, what the heart thinks. But all these are one in God, who is simply one, and infinite. It is true, that Christ is the Word of the Father, and by that Word he made the world; but this is not the word here meant. He spake; that word is not meant of Christ. He is the eternal Word, this was spoke in time. He was the preached Word, this the spoken word; yea, not so much, but only simply the good pleasure of God. That which for us, is to say it, is in him, to will it. He needed no helps, no instruments; what could be added to the Infinite? what is not present to the Eternal? His fiat was enough; this could do more than the angels could make, for it did make the angels.

His word is not less effectual now; as his fiat made all, so his *ruat* can dissolve all. "Lord, speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed," Matt. viii. 8; the centurion confessed his word almighty, as himself was the Almighty Word of his Father. I will not trouble thee with an unnecessary journey, my house is not worthy to give thee entertainment; the heaven of heavens is too little for that honour; thy word can do it; send but that speedy messenger, let me have a fiat from thy powerful lips, and my servant shall be whole. None but a Divine power is unlimited; neither hath faith any other bounds than God himself. There needs no more to remove mountains or devils, but a word. Say but the word, O Saviour, and our sins shall be remitted, our hearts shall be renewed, our souls shall be healed, our bodies shall be raised from the dust; both bodies and souls shall be glorified in heaven. That ruler had a good reason of his steady confidence; though himself were under the command of another, yet he had some under his command, with whom his word was prevalent, even extending to absent performances, ver. 9. Well therefore might he argue, that a free and unbounded power might give infallible commands; and that the most obstinate disease of nature must needs yield to the beck of the God of nature.

2. "He commanded, and they were created," Psal. cxlviii. 5. They obey his word, whether ordinary, or extraordinary. Ordinary is of two sorts. First, his creating word; when at first he made them all with his word. So they obeyed, that they were such as he commanded them to be. Secondly, his preserving word; for they run still the same course that he bade them, and swerve not from it. The sun and moon keep their due motions, day and night their vicissitudes, summer and winter observe their seasons, the orbs turn, the earth fructifies, the sea ebbs and flows; all the wheels of this great universal clock move, as he did set them a-going. His extraordinary word is obeyed two ways. First, in not doing their nature, when He bids them forbear; as the sun to stand still in Gibeon, and the moon in the valley of Ajalon, as if they had been sent to wait upon Joshua. The nature of fire, is to burn; yet it shall not hurt God's three servants. The heaven becomes brass, and the earth iron, Dent. xxviii. 23; the one forbears to send down showers and influence, the other to send forth fruits and sustenance; albeit these are their natural functions, and they are ordained to do the world such services, yet God inhibits them, and they are obedient. Rivers are made to run, and springs to send forth streams; yet "he turneth rivers into a wilderness, and the water-springs into dry ground," Psal. ciii. 33; when he pleaseth to drain them, there is not a drop of water left to make a sparrow drink. Secondly, in doing against nature, at his command; as for it to swim, 2 Kings vi. 6. Whether the metal were stripped of the natural weight, by the

same power that gave it being; or whether, retaining the wonted poise, it was raised up by some spiritual operation; we inquire not; only we find it swimming like cork upon the stream of Jordan, and moving toward the hand that lost it. Elisha causeth the wood, which was light, and knew not how to sink, to fetch up the iron, which was heavy, and naturally incapable of supermatation.

Thus willing is every creature to put off the properties of nature at the command of the God of nature. It is no less easy for him, when our hard and heavy hearts are sunk down into the mud of this world, to fetch them up again by his mighty word, and cause them to float on the streams of life, and again to see the face of heaven. The Red Sea and Jordan shall be divided for the passage of Israel. For waters to stand still, were but to suspend the course of nature; but Jordan was driven back, saith the psalmist; it fled at the word of God, and took a course against nature. Joshua's sun stood still; that was not to do his natural office; Hezekiah's sun went back; that was to do against his natural office. Thus did they at first, thus do they still obey all words of their Maker.

3. All these were made for man, yet man comes short of them all in thankfulness and obedience to this word. The earth was made for his floor; the sea, for his pond; heaven, for his canopy; the sun and moon, for his torches; all creatures, his vassals. Whatsoever walketh upon the earth, swimmeth in the water, flieth in the air, shineth in heaven, was either made to the use of man, or to the use of that which serveth man. If man do not eat flies, yet he eateth the birds that live by those flies; if he eats not grass, he eats the beasts that feed on that grass; and the beasts that were not made for eating, were yet made for using. He came naked out of the earth; yet he was no sooner enlivened, but he was so rich, that all things were his. How is he bound to praise God above the rest, for whom all the rest were ordained? First, they were made with a word, there was but a "Let there be" to the light; but he was made with many words. Secondly, they suddenly; he, with consultation of the whole Trinity, and a kind of deliberation; "Let us make man." Thirdly, they by the word; he (as it were) by the hand; God made man of the dust, and breathed into him the breath of life, Gen. ii. 7. Fourthly, they were made for man; man himself, for God; and God gave man the dominion over all, Gen. i. 26. Besides the excellence and pre-eminence of his body, wherein appear the lineaments of majesty; the noble endowments of his soul; for he was created to the image of God, in a conformity of the creature to the Creator: so that he is (as it were) a created god, as God is an uncreated Spirit. *Animata imago Dei*, as Lactantius calls him; i. e. An animated image of God. Though he be but a man before God, yet he is a god in the world; the Egyptians gave man for a terrestrial god.

Yet let not this sublime conceit transport him above himself, which hath placed him above other creatures; for though he be a god on earth, yet he is but a god of earth, an earthen god. That which they fancy of the phoenix, that being bred of ashes, it doth burn to ashes, is true of man; being made of earth, he must yield to earth. God hath given us a soul, to inform us; senses, to inform our soul; faculties, to furnish that soul; understanding, the great surveyor of the secrets of nature and grace; fantasy and invention, the master of the works; memory, the great keeper, or master of the rolls, to the soul; a power that can make amends for the speed of time, in causing him to leave behind him those things, which else he would so carry away, as if they had not been:

will, which is the lord paramount in the state of the soul, the commander of our actions, the elector of our resolutions; judgment, which is the great counsellor of the will; affections, which are the servants of them both. A body, fit to execute the charge of the soul: so wondrously disposed, that every part hath best opportunity to its own functions: so qualified with health, arising from the proportion of humours, that, like a watch kept in good tune, it goes right, and is fit both to serve the soul and maintain itself.

Thus if we look inward, we find our Creator's mercies; if we look upward, his mercy reacheth unto the heavens; if downward, the earth is full of his goodness, and so is the broad sea. If we look about us, what is it that he hath not given us? Air, to breathe us; fire, to warm us; water, to cool and cleanse us; clothes, to cover us; food, to nourish us; fruits, to refresh us, yea, delicacies, to please us; beasts, to serve us; angels, to attend us; heaven, to receive us; and, which is above all, his own Son, to redeem us. Whithersoever we turn our eyes, we cannot look beside his bounty.

4. What a world of respects be here, above all respects to the rest of the world, to tie our obedience to the word of our God! Blasphemous infidel, cannot that word which established the earth, keep thy faith from tottering in the knowledge of thy Maker? Cannot that word, which made all those wonders in the sea, work this one wonder, to persuade thy heart of his being? Cannot that word, which stretched out the heavens, rack thy conscience, to acknowledge that infinite power? St. Paul says, that the heathen, by this great book in folio, the heavens laid open, did read there was a God, Rom. i. 20: and shall these atheists, even because of those heavens, deny there is a God? Shall men be perverted by that, by which they were convinced? In one word, I will tell you their end: Heaven they see, but they shall never come at it; hell they do not see, but they shall be cast into it.

To ourselves, that are believers, what a prodigy is this; that heaven, earth, and sea, all elements, all creatures, should obey this word of God; and only man, for whom they were all made, should rebel against it! Yet let us consider, how have we transgressed all the words of our Maker.

(1.) The sacramental word, the covenant given at the creation, in Paradise. This, man kept not a day. Eve believed the word of the serpent; Adam, the word of Eve; both, before the word of God. It was a wilful breach in them, a wilful breach to us and them; for it hath indisposed us to keep any word of our God ever since.

(2.) The natural word, the law engraven. How soon was this law broken; when a man murdered a man; a brother, the son of his own father!

(3.) The legal word, the law written. Israel received it in fire and thunder, they quaked and fainted at the sight: stay but a month or five weeks, and they cry, Make us gods, we know not what is become of this Moses. O mad people, so soon to forget so dreadful a law and lawgiver! Their hearts ceased to tremble with the earthquake; and in the very sight of Sinai they call for other gods. Even before they had the law they broke the law; while Moses was gone up for the tables, they foully transgressed. How incessantly do we all break this word! All our actions, words, thoughts, are but so many rebellions.

(4.) The evangelical word, the charter of the covenant betwixt God and our souls; whereby he promiseth to save us, if we will believe on him. Yet this word we turn into wantonness; as if a man should head his labour with his pardon.

(5.) The spiritual word, the motions of the Holy

Ghost. How many thousands of these prove still-born and abortive, through our negligence, or be overlaid with our vanities! We use them, as Julius Caesar did the paper that concerned his own life; and the other petitions he read, only that he put in his pocket, and never looked on. We owe a reckoning for all those holy motions, which the great Advocate of heaven hath made at the bar of our conscience.

(6.) The preserving word, the word of his providence. A word that can either sustain us without bread, Matt. iv. 4, as it did Moses and Elias; or with a miraculous bread, as it did Israel with manna; or send ordinary means after a miraculous manner, as food to the prophet by the ravens; or multiply ordinary means miraculously, as the meal and oil to the Sareptan widow: all things are sustained by this Almighty word. Indeed we live by food, but not by any virtue that is in it, without God. Without the concurrence of his providence, bread would rather choke than nourish us. If he withdraw his word from his creatures, in their greatest abundance we perish. What so necessary dependence hath the blessing upon the creature, if our prayers do not hold them together? Why then do we set our eyes on the means, and not look up to the hand that gives the blessing? The ravens and lions trust upon this word, and are fed; shall we distrust it? "Are ye not much better than they?" Matt. vi. 26. Better? no, we are worse; for they dare take God's word for their provision, and we dare not trust him. As we may not neglect the means, so we must not neglect the procurement of a blessing upon the means, nor be unthankful to him that gives the blessing.

5. It is time to conclude this point: if men, of all creatures, be most beholden to the word of God, why should men, of all creatures, be most resisting against that word? The centurion's servants were dutiful to him; he can but say, Do this, and it is done, Matt. viii. 9: and he was kind to them; these mutual respects blessed each other; cheerful and diligent service in the one, calls for a due and favourable care in the other. We are set as that ruler was, with a command over the creature, and a subjection to the Creator: do the creatures disobey our command? we have rebelled against the word of God. They that neglect to please, cannot complain to be neglected. Oh that we could be such servants to our heavenly Master, as we would have our servants be to us! Alas, every command of his says, Do this, and we do it not. Every of his inhibitions says, Do not that, and we do it. He says, Depart from the world, and we run to it. He says, Come to me, and we run from him. Woe and alas, this is not service, but enmity. How can we look for favour, while we return rebellion? The earth is obedient, why doth it bear us? the sea is obedient, why doth it not swallow us? the heavens are obedient, why do they cover us? the sun is obedient, why doth he enlighten us? all creatures are obedient to the word of their Maker, why should they benefit us, that are disobedient rebels? It is a gracious Master whom we serve; there can be no duty of ours that he sees not, that he acknowledges not, that he crowns not: we could not but be happy, if we could be officious. Oh that the word which made heaven and earth, could lift up our hearts from earth our dirty thoroughfare to heaven our blessed home, bought for us with the dear blood of Jesus Christ!

"The earth standing out of the water and in the water." This is the disposition of these two parts, earth and sea; where we have divers observations.

1. The waters did at first cover and overwhelm the face of the earth, and were removed with a He said. "Let the waters under the heaven be gathered

together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so," Gen. i. 9. The manner of this collection of the waters hath puzzled many. First, Eusebius thinks that they were dried up by the heat of the sun, and that the northern part of the earth appeared first; others, that it was done with a mighty wind, as after the deluge: but the sun was not yet made; neither sun nor wind could do this in so short a time; nothing but the Lord's *fiat*. Secondly, some think that the earth was plain without mountains, to give the waters a more speedy passage; and that this present inequality was caused by the flood. But in the deluge, "the mountains were covered," Gen. vii. 20; therefore the mountains were before the flood. And with the creation of the earth we find the mention of mountains, Prov. viii. 25; therefore from the beginning were hills and mountains. Thirdly, to say the waters ran to the antipodes, is an ignorant fancy; for those parts be habitable as well as ours, and not under water. Fourthly, Paulus Burgensis hath a strange device; that the earth makes one globe, and the sea another, and each hath its proper centre. Indeed the earth is called a sphere or circle, Isa. xl. 22; but experience shows, that the earth without the sea does not make one round globe. We think this might be done three ways. First, the water being at first a light and thin vapour, might be coagulated and thickened; as we see the sea-water is of a grosser substance than the fresh; and therefore contained in a less room. Secondly, the clouds and region of the air being made the same day, a greater part of the water might be extenuated and evaporated into them, as we find daily a conversion of mists and clouds into water. Thirdly, the earth being vaster and deeper than the circumference of the water that compassed it, might receive the water into the concavities and hollow places, ordained for it as receptacles. To decide all controversy, read Psal. civ. 7, 8. God made a low foundation for the waters in the earth: they were stragglers before, he provided them a lodging.

2. The earth is founded in the waters, but not founded on the waters. Of another opinion was Thales among the philosophers, and Chrysostom among the Christians: they conceived a strange kind of building; that whereas men desire to lay their foundation upon rocks, the Lord should lay this upon the waters. Two places of Scripture are urged for it: first this text; but the error lies in the mistranslation: *êl' êmarog*, not *by* the water, but *in* the water, more properly; as Noah is said to be saved, *êl' êmarog*, not *by* the water, but *in* the water, 1 Pet. iii. 20. The earth may well be said to be in the water; because the whole continent being less in compass than the ocean, seemeth to be but as a great island in the sea. The other words are plain: it consists, not of the water, but out of the water; not as though it was made of the water, but because it was made to appear out from the water, which before covered it. The other place is from the psalm, "He hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods," Psal. xxiv. 2. Augustine refers this to the islands, brows of hills, and promontories, that hang over the sea. Euthymius, to the secret passages of water, that run within the earth. But the evident truth is fetched from the Hebrew word, *gnal*; which signifies *super*, above: not *upon* the waters, but *above* the waters: not upon them, as on a foundation: but above them, as with a supereminence and exaltation. That the earth hath not her foundation upon the waters, it is clear. First, by experience; for we perceive it to be the heaviest element, and so to have the situation lowest.

Secondly, by Scripture: "He hangeth the earth upon nothing," Job xxvi. 7; therefore not upon the waters. Thirdly, by reason: the earth is immovable; God "laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed for ever," Psal. civ. 5. The waters are fluid and running: a thing that is movable cannot be the foundation of that which is immovable. It consists in the water and out of the water; neither of the water, nor by the water.

3. The earth and sea are two loving companions, like husband and wife; one of them embraceth the other with his moist arms, sending forth springs into her (naturally) dry veins, and both together produce abundance of fruits. The sun doth a kindly office; and finding the sea surcharged with waters, and the earth wanting in divers places, draws up the moisture of the one into clouds, and resolves it again upon the other in welcome showers. So sweetly hath the Divine Providence disposed; that by mingling moist things with dry, both should be apt for generation, by a third quality of kindly heat. The earth and sea are like a pair of great millstones to fence the world: the earth is the nether millstone, so fixed that it stirs not; the sea is the upper millstone, that runs round about it continually: the effect of both is bread for the use of man. By the confession of all, the natural place of the waters is above the earth: this at first they enjoyed, and a second time recovered, when the Lord loosed their bands and banks, and gave them their voluntary and primitive passage. God covered the earth "with the deep, as with a garment," Psal. civ. 6. As a garment, in the proper use of it, is above the body that wears it; such a vesture would it still be to the earth, if the Maker's word did not restrain it: not unlike the shirt that was made for the murdering of Agamemnon, where the head had no issue out. If the Lord should set open the windows above and the sluices below, they would every hour of our life overrun us with a new deluge. Let any atheist in the world, out of all his stock of reason (and reason is all the stock he hath, for faith and he are sworn enemies) give one reason, why the waters being a lighter and larger element, should not swim over the face of the earth, and drown all the inhabitants. Let them pump their wits, drench Plato, Aristotle, and Machiavel, to the least and last drop of arguments; and what is failing in their own fancy, let them make up with the philosophy of hell; they shall never do it. Only the child of a Christian, out of the principles of his catechism, can make it plain: and, as my text saith, The word of the Lord hath done it, and the name of the Lord be ever blessed for it.

Moral uses. 1. When David looked into that little world, himself, he confesseth, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made," Psal. cxxxix. 14: when we look into that great man, the world, we have good cause to acknowledge that it is fearfully and wonderfully made too; therefore it would be wonderful folly in us, not to fear the Maker of both. I have set the sand for a bound of the sea, by a perpetual decree, &c.: therefore, "Fear ye not me?" saith the Lord: will ye not tremble at my presence?" Jer. v. 22. Sand is not fit, one would think, to bind an unruly beast, they call it labour in vain, proverbially, a rope of sand; yet is this cordage and ligature to shackle that roaring monster: the sand shall bind it. God raiseth up the waves, and he quiets the angry billows. Do they swell? His breath hath stirred them: his command raiseth the stormy wind, Psal. cvii. 25. Do they flinch, and return like cowards? His frown hath checked them, Matt. viii. 26: they saw him, and fled away: Jordan was driven back, Psal. cxiv. 3.

2. Where can sinful man be secure? Where can

the atheist set his foot, but it is either on God's earth or his water? The earth is steady, but our footing on it is not steady: how many have stumbled even upon plain ground! When we walk upon it, we do but tread upon a ball hanging in the air, and floating on the water.

*Cum te pendenti videas insistere terræ,
Nonne vel hinc clare conspicias esse Deum?*

When on the hanging earth you seem to stand,
See you not clearly hence th' Almighty hand?

The dangers of the sea have ever been manifold and manifest; unless to some hardened pirates, that, like desperate sophisters, have learned to dispute with tempests; and put themselves aboard a man of war, as if they were going to make merry with Satan. The report of the behaviour of some mariners on the sea, would even astonish the hearers on land; that they reckon those prodigious wonders no better than their play-fellows; that they strive to outscold the elements, and roar as fast with oaths and curses, as the other do with storms and billows: as if all their anchor of hope were the hope of their anchor, and they trusted to their helm, rather than to heaven: that their conscience should be like their keel; till that splits, they never think of repentance; and if then, yet that repentance lasts but to the next land, and whatsoever hath passed betwixt God and them, they forget. It is a curse threatened to the ungodly, that they should fear where no fear is; but not to fear where is just cause of fear, environed with dangers, this is a curse they willfully bring on themselves.

3. Not that I approve an over-timorousness, the effect of unbelief; as if God could not preserve us on the waters, whither our necessary occasions have called us. Some philosophers, if they heard of any that would make a short cut of their journey by the advantage of the water, when it would have been many miles about by land, would call them fools when they came home; but that was not the censure of wise men. I remember a witty saying; when a man related how that his father, grandfather, and great grandfather, all died at sea; another replied, If I were as you, I would never come at sea. The other asked him where his father, grandfather, and progenitors died: he answered, In their beds; then saith he, If I were as you, I would never come in bed. He that keeps the sea from overrunning the earth, can keep us from miscarrying by sea. We have known some escape drowning in a shipwreck on the main ocean; and others that have been drowned in the very kennel. The sea hath no power to hurt, where the Lord will preserve; and when he gives way, a very drop can do it. Where should the wicked be safe? How many have escaped rocks and sands, storms and pirates, and other hopeless perils on sea, and yet have lost their lives on some tree of justice by land!

4. Suppose we come not within the danger of the outward waters; God hath water enough to drown us within our own bodies. He can command a full sea of distempered and redundant humours to take our breath from us. Why may we not, like Heraclius the emperor, die of dropics? We little think how much we are beholden to the goodness of God, that we live a minute. Though those exterior elements let us alone, we have elements within us, whereof we are composed and framed; heat and cold, drought and moisture, in our bodies, able enough to destroy those bodies wherein they are bred and fed. Let those brethren of one house fall out, those foundations of our nature be at variance within us; if they will destroy our corporeal city, as the seditious

captains did Jerusalem. Melancholy imaginations, like the dark grave, have buried some alive; the pestilent flames of fevers have burnt up the inwards of others. Some that have escaped the contagious air of the plague, have yet been poisoned with the fumes and vapours arising from their own vicious stomachs. Others, after many tedious voyages by sea, have drowned themselves in the cups of a tavern; ingurgitating (as themselves call it) an ocean of drink; dying, like Anacreon, with a grape in their throat; or choked with waters between their own skin and bones. Thus there be inundations by land, chamber-tempests, storms of the cellar: floods of drink overtake one another, bottle after bottle; one deep calls another; a deep insatiate stomach, for a deep measure of wine; and then the winds rise, storms begin, the waves work; and the clients of Bacchus become either the votaries of Venus, or the assassins of Mars; swimming in blood no less than in drink; as if all the vessels were drawn to the lees, and they must now broach one another's bodies. These are the wrecks and miscarriages that follow excess: and as he said of old, *Non plures gladio, quam cecidere gula*. Not more have fallen by the sword, than by the throat; so Neptune does not destroy more, than Bacchus in the city, and boiled Ceres in the country. He does moderately, that mingles them together. But the merry companion could say, If water had been good to drink with wine, God himself would put it into the grape: any excuse, how profane soever, serves to help intemperance. Such be their shifts to maintain riot, that hate all ways to sobriety, and mock all moderation out of countenance. Thus as if they would prevent God, and save him a labour, that he need not unwind the raging and swallowing waters; they do it to his hand, and drown their own hearts and spirits by taking in a voluntary deluge; till a ship does not more reel and stagger upon the water, than their heads upon the wine. So great be our sins both by sea and land, that it is the only infinite mercy of our God, that in every place we perish not.

VERSE 6.

Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished.

WE read in common histories, of many great floods that have been in the world: none but this did overflow the world: they were all far short of this, both in extent and continuance. That great inundation of Nilus, under Prometheus, endured but a month's space: that under Ogyges, in Achaia, two months: another under Deucalion, in Thessalia, three months. They mention a fourth inundation, of the isle Pharos, therefore called Pharonica, under the Egyptian Proteus. But none came near this flood, either for universality of place, or duration of time; covering the tops of the highest mountains, and lasting twelve months and ten days. This general deluge, as I had just occasion, I somewhat largely surveyed in the former chapter, ver. 5; where some critics might say, there was a flood upon a flood; a flood of discourse upon the flood of water: my present brevity in that argument shall make amends. Shortly, consider with me,

1. A malefactor, The world that then was.
2. An executioner, The water overwhelmed it.
3. The convenience of this execution; because the earth consisted in the water; it was not far-fetched, but ready at hand, Whereby.

4. The event of all; which was, perishing.

1. The malefactor, the world: which is taken either locally, for this whole visible engine; "The world was made by him," John i. 10: or materially, for the things of the world; "The world is crucified unto me," Gal. vi. 14: or formally, for the vicious and miserable condition of it, the vanity and villany; "The world lieth in wickedness," 1 John v. 19: or principally, by a metonymy, for the most excellent part of the world, man. Locally, a piece of it perished; the earth: materially, a great deal of it perished; all the riches and commodities of the earth: principally considered, all perished but eight persons: formally, there was nothing left. Only God's quarrel to the world, was for the men of the world; and his quarrel to the men of the world, was for the sins of those men. The world itself was, in this, like the sea; and sins, like the winds: the sea would be calm and quiet, if the winds did not trouble it; if iniquities, like storms, had not put the course of nature into an uproar, the world had not perished. First, it was foul with wickedness; therefore God saw it high time to wash it with a deluge. Secondly, iniquity had so sized itself into the centre of it, and dyed it in grain, that it must soak under the water a whole year. Thirdly, sin did cleave so fast to the sides of it, that a little water was not sufficient: but as a cloth that is thoroughly polluted must be thoroughly scoured, and pass through many larders: so it would not off from the world, till the world itself was washed to nothing. Fourthly, no part of it was free, but this contagion had universally overspread it; therefore no part must be spared, but the water must universally overflow it. Fifthly, it was grown hot with the fever of burning lusts, the inflammations of concupiscence; therefore the flood came, not as a julp only to qualify and cure the intemperate heat; but as a vehement shower to drench the luxuriant parts. Sixthly, it was dry, all the moisture of grace and sap of charity, the radical humour that maintains the life of religion, was quite scorched with the drought of malice: it must be moistened, not with gentle dews, (they could do no good, the malady was too desperate,) but with an inundation of water. Seventhly, it was grown unruly, transgressing all the limits and boundaries that the Maker had set it; therefore he also julls up the stakes of the sea, and lets it in like a wild beast among them. Eighthly, men were proud and haughty, and had lifted up themselves above their own pitch and measure; therefore God opens the windows of heaven, and pours down streams upon them, to lay them low enough. Ninthly, they had trusted to the world, more than to God; therefore he now puts them to their shifts: let them try how their god can deliver them. The waters drive them from their houses up to the mountains, from thence to the highest trees, and still pursues them. Meat they had none, but only drink enough: they might swallow of that as much as they could, which was sent to swallow them. Tenthly, they had rioted upon the creatures of God, without thanks to the Owner: they did eat and drink, Luke xvii. 27, not for necessity, or pleasure, but intemperance; therefore all is taken from them but water, and of that they have too much; or the fish, which if they could take, they have not a spark of fire wherewith to dress. Eleventhly, the world was secure, men had given themselves up to carelessness: they did eat and drink, it may be not to surfeit and drunkenness: they married, and gave in marriage. Christ does not mention their adulteries, homicides, and such actual turpitudes; but their supine neglect and slumber: not that they were free from the other crimes, but that this was enough to destroy them.

If then the world's security in lawful things made it so fit for the deluge of water; how doth now the universality of unlawful things, horrible sins, make it fully ready for the last fire!

2. The executioner is water: this is an excellent servant to us, so God made it; but an ill master, so our sins make it. I will not instance to you the manifold benefits of water, our necessary use makes them familiar: yet is this the instrument of their confusion, which to others is an advantage of much accommodation. Nothing is so sovereign, which being abused by sin, may not, of a blessing, become a curse. The very manna that came down from heaven may be corrupted with faithlessness; as that foolish Israelite proved, which would be sparing the charges of God, and in a covetous diffidence lay up that for his breakfast, which he should have spent at supper. The next morning it putrified: the manna was from above, the worms and stench from his distrust. Christ himself, the greatest blessing that ever was, as he is the rising of some, so the falling of others, Luke ii. 34: to believers a corner-stone, whereto to build their faiths; to unbelievers a mill-stone, that shall grind or quash their souls. Immortality, the greatest blessedness of the saints, is the greatest misery of the damned. The instrument is water.

(1.) God hath variety of weapons to punish rebels; he destroyeth Korah and his confederates by the earth, the Egyptians by the sea, the Canaanites by the sword, Israelites by the plague, Sodomites by the fire, here the whole world with water. God hath a whole quiver of arrows, a magazine of artillery and judgments. Three are especially named for his arrows. First, famine, an evil and destroying arrow, Ezek. v. 16; Psal. xxxviii. 2. Next, the pestilence, a deadly shaft, headed with poison; death's chief pursuivant. First, it flies swift as an arrow: it flew such a pace through the coasts of Israel, that it slew seventy thousand in three days. Secondly, a roving arrow, that can reach a mark far off: "He that is afar off shall die of the pestilence," Ezek. vi. 12: no man can outrun it. Thirdly, walking in darkness; it flies silently, without making any noise: a terror by night, Psal. xci. 5, 6; it steals upon men suddenly, assaults them by night, and surpriseth them in their most secret chambers. This arrow when it flew, consumed our lives here and there, before us, behind us, spared none: only to his chosen, God did dip it in the blood of his own Son, to take away the venom of it; so though it wounded their bodies, their souls it did not touch. The last arrow is inundation; the fury whereof we have lately felt; when the earth like a pregnant mother was come to the birth, and wanted strength to be delivered. Our fair fields, that in the spring sang and laughed, now mourn upon the ground that bare them; and the husbandman sighed to see his hopes untimely buried, like abortive fruit in the womb that bred them. Her nurse did overlay her; and those clouds which brought up her children, did again stifle them. All that foul weather in our fields abroad, proceeds from the foulness of our hearts within.

(2.) The deluge may well be compared to an arrow: not only because after the flood God is said to hang up his bow, in token of his reconciliation to the world; when he had shot his arrow, he hung up his bow: but as famine is his earthly arrow, making the wounded look like earth, pale and wan; and pestilence is his airy arrow, an infectious vapour, poisoning as it goes; and war his fiery arrow, where the brandishing of swords give fiery sparkles, ordnance sends out fiery streams, and cities are set on a flame; so inundation is his watery arrow: wherby at other times he destroys parts and pieces of the earth, at

this time, all the world. First, an arrow flies no whither but to the place it is sent, the mark whereat it is shot. Here he pours down, not there, Amos iv. 7: in this place the sea shall break forth, while it is chained up in another. To lay immoderate rain to the charge of the stars, and eruptions of the ocean to the weakness of dams; this is but to gnaw the arrow, as the dog bites the stone, without minding the shooter. Secondly, an arrow after the loose makes speed to the mark: as Hercules told Nessus, when he ran away with his Deianira, that though he could not come at him, he would send after him; *Vulnere, non pedibus, te consequar*, I will overtake thee with a wound, not with my feet: and he made it good too; he cast an arrow through his loins. God did no sooner open the doors and channels, but the water begins to overrun the earth. Thirdly, an arrow pierceeth deeply, and wounds deadly, especially when it is shot from the hand of the mighty, Psal. cxxvii. 4; much more from the hand of the Almighty: "The arrows of the Almighty are within me," was the complaint of Job, chap. vi. 4. No target, no corselet, nor armour of proof, can repel them: no barricados can keep out the waters, no banks nor fortifications resist them, no towers nor cedars overtop them. An impartial arrow: the old were not superannuated, infants not under years, it swept away all. It was *exterminum*, or *dæmonium meridianum*: i. e. exterminating, or a noontide demon; as Hierome reads the psalm, Psal. xc. 6: an utter rooting out. Fourthly, an arrow, if it be levelled with a just aim, never misseth the mark: God wanted neither aim nor mark, while he had the whole world to shoot at. Thus the bow itself was the Divine justice; the arrow, the waters, the instrument of that justice; the loosing of the arrow from the bow, the effusion of clouds and seas, the execution of that instrument: the mark it flew at, was the sinful world; it was headed with their wickedness, and the feathers it went withal was their sins. It is iniquity that the Lord lets drive at; if men had not offended him, they should never have been offended by him.

(3.) All God's judgments may be called his shafts, and he hath a mighty quiver full of them. The dexterity of some men in shooting hath been notable. Two were brought before Alexander, famous for their activity in several kinds. The one could cast millet seed through the eye of a needle without missing: but the king, rather wondering at his vanity than admiring any excellency, gave him for reward a bushel of the seed to hold him play, and to keep his hand in ure. The other was an archer, so skilful, that he could shoot his arrow through a finger-ring, without failing. (Quintil. lib. 2. cap. 21.) We read of seven hundred left-handed Benjamites, that could sling stones at a hair's breadth and not miss, Judg. xx. 16; which is more wondrous. It is reported of Domitian, that he could shoot an arrow between the fingers of a man's hand afar off, and do him no harm. But the hand of God is more cunning, and his shaft flies more steadily: like Jonathan's bow, whereof David sung in his funeral elegy, that never returned empty from the blood of the slain, 2 Sam. i. 22. We know not with what arrow he will shoot us, therefore "prepare to meet thy God, O Israel," Amos iv. 12. There is no running from God; let us never prepare our heels to run from him, but our hearts to meet him. There is a way to meet with God, yea, and to overcome him: this is not by scouring of armours, raising forces, and fortifying garrisons; but by humiliation, repentance, prayers, and tears. If we will conquer Heaven, it must be by yielding; not by standing out, but by falling down. As the only way to avoid him is to

run to him; so the surest means to escape his blows, is by throwing ourselves at his footstool. We have leave to resist the Divine judgments by our prayers, with favour and success; as wool meets iron.

Indeed humble confessions, and devout penance, cannot always avert temporal judgments: no child would be whipped, if he might escape for crying. Doubtless, David had spent those three dismal days in the saddest contrition, yet still God's angel in that short compass of time destroyed seventy thousand. Historians have commended the Persian bowmen for the most excellent archers; yet in the battle betwixt Scipio and Antiochus they were wonderfully foiled. But how came it to pass? A shower of rain falling in time of the conflict, so slacked their bows, and wetted their arrows, that they could not offend the enemy. (Flor. lib. 2. cap. 8.) The way for us to slack God's bow, and to dull his arrows, is by showers of tears falling from our repentant eyes. And as our tears must slacken his bow, so our prayers must get out his arrows when they stick in our flanks. Pliny saith, that dittany, being drunk, extracts the darts. Prayer is that true dittany, that shall either prevent God's arrows, or keep them from ranking in our sides. Above all, let us furnish our souls with faith; this shall not only quench the fiery darts of Satan, but even the burning arrows of God. Let us lay hold upon that blood, which when God sees, either he will not smite us, or not smite us unto death. Rahab's token of safety for herself and her family, was a red cord tied in the window: this was the instrument of the spies' deliverance, this shall be a sign of hers. Red; this is the saving colour: it is not without aptness and significancy, that they set the red cross upon the doors of visited and infected houses, together with "Lord, have mercy on us;" for if that red cross be thoroughly fixed on our hearts, the Lord will have mercy on us. The destroying angel sees the door-posts of the Israelites sprinkled with red, and passes them over. The warriors of Israel see the window of Rahab dyed with red, and they save both her and her house from the common destruction. If our souls have this tincture of the precious blood of our Saviour upon the walls or windows, we are safe. Under this red flag let us shroud ourselves, and the justice of God, in the great day of his wrath, will spare us.

3. The conveniency of the execution follows: the water was not far to fetch: either with danger, as David's water from the well of Bethlehem, through an army of Philistines; or with labour, as Jacob's water from a deep well in the bowels of the earth; but near at hand, ready. And if it had been as far as the centre of the earth, the semidiameter or space from that point to the circumference, which is judged by the most expert to be three thousand five hundred miles: or as far as to the starry firmament; as some have fondly imagined waters above those heavens, to cool them; because the psalmist speaks of waters above the heavens, Psal. cxlviii. 4; where-as those heavens are only the airy regions: yet God could soon have brought it, either up from the one, or down from the other. But the proximity of the instrument is advantageous enough to the destroyer's hand; for the earth that is to be drowned, consists in the water that is to drown it. Methinks this is an emblem to us of our threefold estate, either as we are mortal men, or militant Christians, or miserable sinners. It is considerable in all these respects.

(1.) As we are mortal men. Our bodies are earth, which consist of humours, as it were in the waters; and while health continues, they have the predominance over those humours, as the earth is out of the waters; but when the humours get the mastery, then

follow sickness and mortality. When God had made this earth of nothing, it was but a small matter to make other things of the earth, and as little to bring the earth back again to nothing. Nothing can be nearer nothing than this earth, and yet how little of this earth is the greatest man! Princes are but noble pieces of earth, politicians but subtle pieces of earth. Man thinks he treads upon earth, that all of it is under his feet; and the brain that thinks so, is but earth; his highest region, the flesh that covers that brain, is but earth; and even the top of that, that wherein so many Absaloms take so much pride, is but a bush growing upon that turf of earth. How little of the world is the earth! how little of the earth is man! And yet that is all which man hath, or is. How little of a man is the heart! And yet it is all by which he is. And this heart is so hot of itself, that if it had not the lungs as fans to blow wind upon it, and kindly moisture to cool it, it would soon perish with its own heat; and yet when that moisture grows too redundant, it again drowns the heart. It is not only subject to foreign infections conveyed by others, and intestine poisons bred in ourselves by pestilential sicknesses; but even to an unnatural flux or abundance of watery humours, that choke it: as moderate water makes the mill go merrily; but too much water will not suffer it to go at all. Our bodies in the world are but pieces of earth on the water; if the winds, and floods, and rain conspire against us, down we fall, as that house whose foundation was in the sand, Matt. vii. 27.

(2.) This may be an emblem of our militant condition: as the earth consists out of the water and in the water, so we consist out of sin and in sin. Our beginning is like the world's beginning; there water covered the face of the earth, and corruption overwhelmed us. The sin of our first parents drowned us; and we were born soaking under that corruption, as the mass of the earth under that inundation. The deep was upon the face of the earth, and darkness upon the face of the deep, Gen. i. 2. Corruption was upon us, and ignorance upon corruption, and pravity upon ignorance, and God's wrath upon all. But as, after this congestion, God formed the world; so after this confusion, he hath reformed us. There he recovered the earth from the superinundation of waters, here he hath restored us from the dominion of wickedness. "Let the waters under the heaven be gathered unto one place, and let the dry land appear," Gen. i. 9: so to us, let the deluge of sins vanish, and the constancy of grace show itself: there, it was so; here, God grant it may be so. We are both redeemed from the depths; the earth by the word of his mouth, we by the blood of his heart. There his word served the turn; here his blood was but sufficient. Out we are lifted from the water; but not so high as if the water could never more reach us; for we still consist in the water, as out of the water; in the flesh, as out of the flesh. Our head is above sin, as the land is above the sea; but still sin runs like a girdle about our loins, as the sea begirts the earth. So to be removed from the water, as never to be touched by it, is the prerogative of the firmament, not of the earth. So to be delivered from sin, as never more to be defiled with it, is the privilege of the triumphant, not of the militant soul. When God had sequestered the earth from the regiment and tyranny of water, yet being insufferably provoked, he readmitted the water to the first kingdom. The man that presumes he is redeemed from the power of sin, may so offend his Redeemer by sin, that the suppressed waves may return to their first home, as the evil spirit did, with seven worse, to the house out of which he was cast, Matt. xii. 45. "Thou hast made my mountain strong;" but "thou didst hide thy face,

and I was troubled," Psal. xxx. 7: the waters return, sins prevail, and he begins to know himself.

But God hath made us (though earth) living, moving, rational, holy earth: we resist those waters that are, as Job's wife was to him, counsellors of evil: we fight against sin, and not seldom are foiled; but our end shall be glorious victory. Though all enemies be not vanquished, yet the Christian soldier shall be crowned. Yea, God hath delivered some of his elect from sin, by sin; one extraordinary act of disobedience hath (through his grace of repentance) so broken their hearts, that it hath withal broke the neck of sin in those hearts: as he delivered David from Saul, by Saul; and Noah from the water, by the water; so, many converts, from the power of sin, by the remorse of sin. The Spartans were deadly enemies to Rome; and as they were far from wishing them any good, so it grieved them to hear of any light mischance befallen them; as that fire had burnt one of their forts, or that a part of their walls was fallen down by casualty; because then they knew they would build up those ruined places stronger than they were before; or if that waters had invaded and broke in upon them, they would fortify those dams and breaches far beyond their former strength. Satan wisheth us all nothing but confusion; that sin, like another deluge, might overflow the whole world, and sweep it all to his kingdom. But when the assaults of sin fail of destroying us, and we thereby take occasion to fortify our garrisons, to redouble our guard and armour, this more vexeth him than the other gave him hope. Sin winds about us, as the serpent about Eve, or as the sea compasseth the earth, watching where it might conveniently get in; here it kisseth the banks with flattering waves, there it swelleth against it with roaring billows: whether by insinuation, or shameless intrusion, Satan cares not so he may have entrance. We are fearfully set in the midst of that raging clement; sin is without us, yea, within us: when we offer to go abroad, sin lies at the door, Gen. iv. 7: if we open the casement, it is ready to creep in at the window. When we walk abroad, sin is a slough before us; keeping home, and reflecting our eyes inward, we find it a puddle within us. Sins are not unlike the frogs of Egypt; no bed, no board could be free from them: their daintiest ladies could not keep them out of their bosoms; neither could the Egyptians sooner open their mouths, than they were ready to creep into their throats. There be some places of the land that want water; there is no man without abundance of sins. It is the Lord alone, that lifts up our heads above the waters; it is his grace, that keeps sin from having a dominion over us. The poets feigned of Venus, that she was begot of heaven, born of the sea, and entertained on earth. We may invert it a little, and have a description of man's soul: It is housed in earth, apparelled with sea, but inspired from heaven; set in the body, defiled with sin, but made by God, and redeemed by Jesus Christ.

(3.) As we are miserable sinners, subject to innumerable calamities. Miseries, in the Scripture, are often called by the name of waters; "In the floods of great waters," Psal. xxxii. 6: "The waters are come in unto my soul," Psal. lxxix. 1. Sorrows compass our whole life, as the earth is environed with the sea. Yea, as the sea is vaster than the earth, so our happiness is exceeded by our infelicity. Few and evil have been my days, says that patriarch, Gen. xlvii. 9: he speaks not a word of any good days. "Man is of few days, and full of trouble," Job xiv. 1: so full of troubles, as if there was no room for any comforts to crowd in. We say, that the world is made of sea and land, as though they were equal

parts; but we know, there is more sea in the western than in the eastern hemisphere. We say, that the firmament is full of stars, as though it were equally full; but we know, there are more stars under the northern than under the southern pole. We say, the elements of man are misery and happiness, as though he had an equal proportion of both; and that the days of man are vicissitudinarily, as though he had as many good days as ill, and as though we lived under a perpetual equinoctial, night and day equal, good and ill fortune in the same measure; but if we put our happiness into one balance, and our miseries into another, we shall find a mighty difference, this last far outweighing the former. We drink misery, we do but taste of happiness; we mow misery, we do but glean happiness; we journey in misery, we do but walk in happiness. Yea, which is more, our misery is positive and dogmatical, our happiness is but disputable and problematical. All men call misery by the name of misery; but happiness changeth the name, according to the man that either thinks himself, or is thought by others, to have it. There is scarce any happiness, that hath not in it so much of false and base money, as that the alloy is more than the metal. And what other touchstone have we of our gold, but comparison? whether we be as happy as others, or as ourselves at other times? All our felicity is but like an island floating in the sea; it is now in such a point, in another to-morrow, and the next day may be quite overflooded. Troubles break in upon us from the world, as waters from the channels: God sends down some from above, as waters from the clouds; and still there be on all sides the waves. "All that will live godly in Christ, shall suffer persecution," 2 Tim. iii. 12. Paul, Christ's attorney, pleads our afflictions with a *must* or *shall*; and lest some should look for a dispensation, he backs it with an *all*: "Many are the afflictions of the righteous; but the Lord delivereth him out of them all," Psal. xxxiv. 19. Let us take a pair of oars, go down to the water, and there see him deliver Jonah: though the waves require him of the ship, and the fish require him of the waves, yet the Lord requires him of the fish. The members swim, but the Head is above the waters. "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world," John xvi. 33.

For conclusion. When the waters of the deluge had done their errand, and the world was perished, they return. And, as if God had repented himself, he promiseth no more to destroy it with water, Gen. ix. 11. His word was enough; yet withal he gives a sign, which may speak the truth of his promises to the very eyes of men. "I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth," ver. 13. Thus he doth still in the blessed sacraments, which are as real words to the soul.

1. I am not of their mind, that think there was no rainbow before the flood: we may as well say, there was no bread or wine before the sacrament. But now after the flood, God made the bow the sign of his covenant, as he makes bread and wine the signs of the sacrament: both of them were before, but neither of them were signs before.

2. Nor am I of theirs, that think there shall be no rainbow forty years before the destruction of the world by fire; because (say they) the air shall be rarified and prepared, by a continual dryness, for that combustion. But if there be no rainbow, then no rain; if no rain, then no fruits; if no fruits, a grievous famine; if general famine, then general sorrow. But it shall be a merry world when Christ comes; as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, and making marriages, Matt.

xxiv. 38, little suspecting the proximity of judgment. There shall be plenty of fruits, and the fruits of plenty, which commonly are pleasure and wantonness.

3. Nor do I stand upon the various colours of it, out of which they pick mystical significations: as that the blue and the red, the watery and fiery colours, should betoken the baptism of Christ, by fire and water: or, the two great judgments of the world; the one past, which was by water; the other to come, which is by fire. These applications be rather pretty than pithy, and savour more of wit than of solid judgment.

4. Thus far indeed we may go, (not with Rupertus, to make it wholly mystical,) as, together with the sign of a temporal benefit, to conceive a type also of God's everlasting mercy in Christ. "There was a rainbow round about the throne," Rev. iv. 3; as if God could look no way upon his church, but through the rainbow, his blessed covenant made with us in his own Son; whereby it comes to pass, that all those lightnings, and thunders, and terrors, proceeding out of the throne of his justice, ver. 5, are allayed by the rainbow. And as after the flood God said, I will look upon the bow in the cloud, and remember my covenant; so though our iniquities provoke him, he will look upon the rainbow, his covenant of grace, and spare us in Jesus Christ. The Jews, when they see the bow, go forth and confess their sins, not daring to look upon it with their eyes. We hate superstition, but I would we could mend our devotion, and read in that character the mercy of our God. This he saith, I will remember: alas, he cannot forget it; but he would have us to remember him by it.

5. In a word, that heavenly bow is the pledge of our safety, which even naturally signifies the end of a shower: all the signs of God's institution, are natural and significant. I do not yet call it altogether a natural sign, though it agree with the thing it signifies: as the water in baptism washing the body, hath some resemblance of the spiritual cleansing of the soul. The rainbow, as it is ordinarily a sign of fair weather, or of no long rain: (some say, in the morning it betokeneth showers, in the evening fair weather: Aristotle and Pliny write, that it is found wholesome to the plants and herbs where it lighteth, giving them a more fragrant and delicious smell;) so is it a convenient sign to portend a privilege from inundation.

6. Lastly, if we observe all circumstances in it, they are arguments of mercy. First, it is a bow indeed, but a bow without an arrow: and what can a bow do without a shaft? Secondly, it is a bow, and full bent, but without a string: and who fears a bow, though it be joined with an arrow, if it have no string? Thirdly, it is a bow; but, besides that it hath neither string nor arrow, it is placed (as it were) the wrong way, the bend or arch is turned from us. He that shooteth arrows, holds the back of the bow from him; but of this bow both the ends are downwards, and the back toward heaven; the wrong side is always upwards: as if we shot at God, and not God at us; as if we were ready to send up arrows of rebellion against him, rather than he to send down arrows of vengeance upon us. Yet let us not be too confident; though God hath hung up that bow, he hath divers others; he hath a bow of fire, as well as of water; and we do not read that he hath hung up all them. "He hath bent his bow, and made it ready," Psal. vii. 12: with another bow shall the Lord shoot at the wicked. And if he have laid aside his bow, yet he hath not hung up his arrow: "He sent out his arrows, and scattered them; he shot out lightnings, and discomfited them," Psal. xviii. 14: these were terrible shafts. *Arcus habet vulneris*

indictum, non vulneris effectum, saith Ambrose; i. e. The bow makes a show of hurting, but it is the arrow that wounds. Happy are we, if we have a place in the ark: so shall God's judgments be to us like a string without a bow, or a bow without a string, or both without an arrow; or, if they all concur, yet his gracious arm will forbear to shoot; or, if he do shoot, it shall be but a fatherly shaft; the ark shall protect us from his vengeance, and whether we live or die, we shall be safe in the bosom of Jesus Christ.

"Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished." Thus far doctrinally; now to some general observations, partly historical, partly moral, altogether useful.

1. The cause of this universal judgment, was universal iniquity; the earth was first overflowed with sin, and then overflowed with water. As a sick man, in his burning fever, pants within himself, and by groaning testifies his pangs to others, throws off the clothes, and tosseth from side to side in the bed, seeking mitigation of his pains; yet, whether he does or does not, his sickness remains; and changing of places doth not change his weakness, till the cause be examined, and removed. The mariners in that fearful storm, Jonah 1., being sick of God's anger, as of a violent fever, panting with fears, and groaning with prayers, and casting overboard their wares, as distempered, impatient patients hurl off their clothes; remove from action to action, tremble, pray, unlade, strike sails, fall to oars; but all in vain: the vessel was sick, and had taken a surfeit, when she took in a fugitive prophet; all the loss of their goods cannot expiate the cause of this tempest; there is a morsel that lies undigested in the stomach; throw out Jonah, and all is quiet. The world was sick, heart-sick, as full of pestilential humours as inhabitants, and could recover no health, till God had given her such a deluge, that shall vomit out her offensive disease. We find atheists that say, He that doth evil, prospers, Mal. ii. 17; such as our apostle mentions: but nature itself, which lies closer to a man than the marrow to his bones, cannot but inform him, that the mother and original of all woe, is wickedness. He that is notoriously wicked, and thinks that in this he pleases the gods, by this very thing is chiefly wicked, because he makes them either foolish or unjust, saith a heathen. If his soul will not teach him, yet let him read God in his very body. He hath a mouth, and with that commandeth; let him there read the sovereignty of God. He hath eyes, and with them he seeth; let him there read the knowledge of God. He hath ears, and with them he heareth; let him there read how God observes and minds all things. He hath feet, and with those he walketh; let that show him the ubiquity of God. He hath hands, and with them he worketh, and striketh, and revengeth his injuries; let him not deny God so much as God hath given him. The Lord hath a hand too; and when he pleaseth to strike, a heavy one. "Thy hand presseth me sore," Psal. xxxviii. 2. Not the hand of Egypt, or Ashur; then were it hand for hand, a duel of some equality: hand to hand; here forces and stratagems might achieve the victory: but Thy hand. The weight of a man's blow is but weak, according to the force and pulse of his arm: as the princes of Midian answered Gideon, when he bade his son try the dint of his sword upon them; "Rise thou, and fall upon us; for as the man is, so is his strength," Judg. viii. 21. But, "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of God," Heb. x. 31. As Homer called the hands of Jupiter, *χίρτε ἀπείρου*, hands whose praise could not be sufficiently spoken; which some read *χίρτε ἀπύρου*, hands inaccessible, irresistible for strength; all the gods in heaven could not ward a

blow of Jupiter's hand. This hand never strikes but for sin; and where sin is mighty his blow is heavy.

General wickedness is like a dreadful eclipse of the sun; the darkness is seen presently, the effects follow after; not more slow than sure. If we feel his blows, let us look back to the cause, our sins. Man suffers for his sins, Lam. iii. 39. David may complain of his malicious enemies, They persecute me without a cause, Psal. exix. 86: no man could ever challenge God of this; he is provoked every day. Woe were us, if he should strike as often as he is provoked! We are ready to wrap up ourselves in the universal bundle of sinners; and neither think these times worse than the former, nor our forefathers better than ourselves. To confute this opinion, God hath written new scriptures to us, bloody characters in our own flesh. Why did he put a drawn sword into the hand of his angel, till it became drunk with our gore? Why did he kill us up by thousands every week? Was it without a cause? Shall we call his justice into question, with, Why hast thou smitten us without a cause? No; he found cause too great in us, to send the pestilence; he found no cause, but in his own mercy, to remove it.

2. General sins will bring general plagues; if upon a whole world, much more upon a particular nation. Rebellious wickedness makes men outlaws, depriving them of God's protection, and subjecting them to tyrants, whose very mercies are cruelties. "Who gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to the robbers? did not the Lord, he against whom we have sinned?" Isa. xlii. 24. "God resisteth the proud," 1 Pet. v. 5; his forces are against them, directed in battle-array: the wrong was his wrong, the enemies are his enemies, the quarrel shall be his quarrel. Pride and riot, in human policy, may bring a kingdom to desolation; because they are contrary to Providence. But the reason in divinity is, because they are contrary to repentance; and God punisheth for impenitency, not for impurity. "Go to my place in Shiloh, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of my people," Jer. vii. 12. Go to the old world, and see what he hath done to it: his justice then is his justice now; and if our sins may compare with theirs, what is our privilege?

We hear no noise of war; the most dangerous war comes without a noise. The Turk hath bid himself welcome, where he was sometimes as little looked for. We think ourselves a mighty nation; whose bulwark is the sea, whose confederate neighbours round about are our centinels; yet forget not Nahum's question to Nineveh, "Art thou better than populous No, whose rampart was the sea?" Nah. iii. 8. We have lived in long peace, without interruption; though the year eighty-eight should be blotted out of all records of time. And though peace be better than war, as Cræsus said; because in peace, sons bury their fathers; but in war, fathers bury their sons: yet we suffer the mischiefs of long peace; and our estate is not the better, but through security much the worse. Pride is grown up with our glory, like the ivy with the oak, to the height.

For our sins, God hath sent a bloody arrow among us: (pardon my digression; yea, you need not, the application is fit enough:) if we did not perish, every mother's son and daughter, by the pestilence, as this old world did by the deluge, it was not because we were less wicked, but because God hath been more merciful. If they had betaken themselves in time to that happy ward, repentance, and first made the earth flow with their tears, it had not been overflowed with waters. If we had smitten our own breasts with the sorrow of penitential contrition, God had not smitten those breasts with the spots of

a visitation. He hath not yet done with us; he feels our sins warm still under his rod, and therefore finds it not time to give us over.

O let us bethink ourselves: universal judgments call for universal repentance; the land mourns, and shall any inhabitants of the land be merry? Some do not feel, in their particular, the sharp wounds of that angry and hungry sword; can they be members of Christ, and not feel it through the sides of their brethren? No part of the body can be ill affected, and the whole at ease. Others' afflictions must move our affections: as Queen Elizabeth to the afflicted States, in the words of the poet, *Non ignara mali, miseris succurrere disco*; i. e. Distress'd myself, I succour those distress'd. Besides, who are they that mourned for the abominations of the time? Ezek. ix. 4. Not they that committed the abominations; alas, their cheeks were dimpled with laughter. They whose crying sins had pierced the heavens, and brought down these plagues, will not cry for themselves; therefore God requires us to cry for them. We must weep with them that weep; yea, weep for them that will not weep. Their excessive pride, impudent profaneness, beastly drunkenness, insatiate covetousness, desperate sacrilege, dreadful blasphemy, unclean luxury, have provoked God's wrath; and we must mourn for them, that will not mourn for themselves. "Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel," Amos iv. 12. Although he be offended with the whole land, yet there be some that he will own for his; he is still thy God, O Israel. If these do not stand in the breach, we all perish.

There is a time to rejoice, and a time to mourn; the best actions are not always seasonable, much less the indifferent. He that evermore takes liberty to do what he may, shall offend no less than he that sometimes takes liberty to do what he may not. David persuades Uriah home: but what was his answer? The ark and Israel are in tents, my lord Joab and the army encamped in the field; and shall I go home, to be merry with my wife? 2 Sam. xi. 11. The ark of God is fittest to lead our times; as that is either distressed or prosperous, we should frame our mirth or mourning. "Is it a time for you to dwell in ceiled houses, and this house lie waste?" Hag. i. 4: this is the ground of God's just quarrel. "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning," Psal. cxxxvii. 5: such is the heart of the saints. As every man is a limb of the community, so must he be affected with the estate of the universal body, whether healthful or languishing. As it did aggravate David's sin, that while the ark and Israel were in distress, he could find time to loose the reins to wanton desires and actions; so did it magnify the religious zeal of Uriah, that he abandons allowed comforts, till he see the ark and Israel victorious. Common dangers or calamities must (like the rapt motions) carry our hearts contrary to the way of our private occasions. When God was offended, Moses and all Israel grieved, the princes hanged, the people plagued; yet an Israelite dares bring a harlot of Midian to his tent, Numb. xxv. 6. This at any time had been abominable, at that time most execrable. Were they all weeping; and must he even then, in the face of all, run to uncleanliness? Was that a time to dally with harlots? They both bought it dear. Shall men follow their pleasures, laugh, and sing, and be merry, while God is killing up their brethren by many thousands every week? Is this a time to receive money, and vineyards, and garments? saith the prophet to his servant, 2 Kings v. 26. Is this a time to drink, and carouse, and feast, and play; when so many hearts are bleeding, and all good eyes weeping? (Ann. 1625.) They have des-

perate souls, that can rejoice and be merry, when the God of heaven and earth shows himself so angry.

Before the deluge there were but eight persons, yea, scarce so many, to oppose the wickedness of a whole world; how could it but perish? If the whole nation apostatize to lewdness, and there be none to stop the course, how should it look to stand one hour? In Sodom "old and young, all the people from every quarter," given over to villany, Gen. xix. 4: none to resist, but Lot. The whole city came out to send away Christ, Matt. viii. 34; not a Gadarene is found, that either dehorted his fellows, or opposed the motion. It is a sign of people given up to judgment, when no man makes head against the projects of wickedness. Generality of assent is no warrant for any act; common error carries away many, who inquire not into the reason of aught, but the practice. The way to hell is a beaten road, through the many feet that walk it: when vice groweth into fashion, singularity is a virtue. If we had not some to strive against the stream of general wickedness, though this paucity prevail not, and to weep because they prevail not, we should cease to be a church; and ceasing to be a church, we could not long be a people.

There is great need of mourning, need of great mourning; for heavy judgments will not be turned away without deep sorrows. As a late doctor of the Jews seriously expostulates in a relenting letter to one of his fellow rabbins, what might be the cause of this so long and desperate a ruin of their Israel; and comparing their former captivities with their former sins, argues, that this continuing punishment must needs be sent for some sin so much greater than idolatry, oppression, or sabbath-profaning, by how much this judgment is more grievous than all the rest; which his fear tells him (and he may believe it) can be no other but the refusal and murder of the true Messiah, the Son of God. We have had many plagues in this land, and the hand of God hath been often heavy upon us for our sins; but as this great pestilence exceeds all the former pestilences, so certainly the sin that brought it exceeds all our former sins; which our fear justly tells us, and we may believe it, is the contempt of the gospel of Jesus Christ; for a greater effect could not proceed but from a greater cause. As our sin therefore is more mighty, so our repentance must be more hearty, or we cannot expect the removal of this calamity. Indeed our prayers can never be so loud as our sins. In itself, one sin is able to drown many prayers; but, for our comfort, in Christ, one prayer shall drown many sins. O then let us pray and repent, repent and pray, join with them both abstinence, and with them three patience, and with all faith and obedience, and amendment of life; and the Lord our God shall deliver us.

3. The vicissitude of God's mercy and justice in their actions is observable. First, mercy, as it doth always, begins, giving them a hundred and twenty years' warning before their drowning. Such is his special mercy to foretell us of ensuing mischiefs. He does not owe us so much; he might take us unprovided. Then he strikes indeed, when he strikes and says nothing. The anger is so much the more, as it is less notified. In the hewing of wood, the blow is not heard, till the edge of the axe be seen to have struck. When God is not heard before he be felt, it is a fearful sign of displeasure. Among men, the still and silent revenges be ever most dangerous. But sure the Lord will do nothing, but he revealeth it to his servants the prophets, Amos iii. 7. Thus he consulted Moses, and threatened ere he punished: Take incense quickly, and make an atonement, for

the plague is begun, Num. xvi. 46. Wrath is gone out from the Lord; Moses is quick-sighted, and sees it at the first setting forth: as they which are well acquainted with men, know that by their looks and gestures, which strangers understand but by their actions; or as finer tempers are more sensible of the changes of the weather. The faithful are familiar with God, and can desery his judgments afar off. If another had seen a cloud of a hand-breadth from Carmel, he could not have told Ahab that he should be wet, 1 Kings xviii. 44. Holy men, out of their acquaintance with their Master's proceedings, can foresee punishments. "A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on and are punished," Prov. xxii. 3. We men will not reveal our secret purposes to enemies or strangers. All the favour of the wicked is to feel the judgment, before they espy it. But shall I hide from Abraham the thing that I mean to do, saith the Lord? Gen. xviii. 17. Yea, for Abraham's sake, it shall not be concealed from Lot. Noah shall be told of the deluge, to foretell the people. David saw the angel that smote the people, 2 Sam. xxiv. 17: common eyes saw the marks and tokens of the plague; his clearer and advanced sight hath spied the angel, shaking his sword over Jerusalem, and hovering over Mount Zion.

Thus doth his mercy call upon sinners, "Prepare to meet thy God," Amos iv. 12. Oh admirable favour, when God's anger is marching forth against us, that his mercy should step before to tell us, Prepare to meet your God! Before he strikes, he sends his prophets to us, as heralds with the conditions of peace, if they may be accepted. That great General gives us fair quarter; yea, so unwilling is he to spill our blood, that our penitent yielding shall save us; and therefore he adviseth us to be in a readiness to meet him. If this mercy of our God should not sometimes withhold, often forewarn, always abridge his judgments, what room were there for us out of hell? But "he delighteth in mercy," Micah vi. 18. His mercy being abused, gives place to his justice, by which the world perished. And then again his mercy succeeds, and the waters bated: as he dealt with us; he heard our unworthy prayers, and the plague decreased: so soon was he weary of punishing, who is never weary of blessing. David prostrates himself at the avenger, and lays his life ready for the fatal stroke of justice; the posture of a humbled and anguished soul. This the eye of Justice took notice of; "It is enough: stay now thine hand," 2 Sam. xxiv. 16. How just and easy had it been for God to have made the shutting of that evening red with blood! But so little pleasure doth the Father of all mercies take in the death of sinners, that his goodness repents him of the slaughter, and calls for that sacrifice wherewith he will be appeased. It was his own pity that inhibited the destroyer: ere David could see the angel, he had restrained him; It is enough, hold thy hand.

4. At his command, the heavens did shut up their windows, and the sea her channels, and it began to be fair weather; yet may not the ark rest suddenly. If we did not stay some while under God's hand, we should not know how sweet his mercy is, and how great our thankfulness should be. This was done by degrees.

(1.) A wind came, and the waters assuaged, Gen. viii. 1: not by way of exhalation from the earth, for it was then covered with water; but as it came from an extraordinary cause, so it had an extraordinary effect. Two properties the Scripture ascribeth to the wind. First, to force the waters, as in the division of the Red Sea. Secondly, to purge the air,

disperse the clouds, and dry up moisture. "The north wind driveth away rain," Prov. xxv. 23. Otherwise the waters are not usually lessened, but rather increased, by the winds, as saith Theodoret.

(2.) Noah opens the window of the ark, and looks out: God doth not reveal all things to his best servants. He that told Noah sixscore years before, what day he should go into the ark, does not foretell him, when he is entered, what day he should come out. Therefore he sends out his intelligencers, the raven and the dove; which by help of their wings, might easily desery farther than his sight, in that vaporous air. The raven of quick scent, of gross feed, of tough constitution. Not that he was sent away for his intemperancy; or that this was the raven which afterward fed Elijah: these be the ridiculous fables of the Hebrews: but that fowl was the fittest for discovery. Yet the likeliest things do not always succeed; for neither will the raven venture far into that solitary world for fear of want, nor come into the ark for hope of liberty; but went and came, to and fro, hovering about in uncertainties, Gen. viii. 7. Carnal minds are ready to fly out of the ark of God's church, and to embrace this present world; and had rather choose to feed upon the unsavoury rubbish of sensual pleasures, than to be restrained within the strict lists of Christian obedience. Then he sends forth the dove, a fowl both swift and simple: she, like a true citizen of the ark, returns with faithful notice, first, of the continuance of the waters, by her restlessness, and then of their abatement, by her olive leaf. None can stray out of the ark into the world, but they must receive some aspersion; as Josephus thinks, she returned with foul and dirty feet. The dove is an emblem of those messengers, who with innocency in their lives, bring the glad tidings of peace and salvation in their mouths.

(3.) Noah believes, and rejoiceth at the news; yet still he waits seven days more. It is not good to devour the favours of God too greedily; but so to take them in, that we may digest them. Some would have been impatient of this delay, and so hungry of the open air, after so long a closeness, that upon the first notice they would have voided the ark. But wise Noah will stay seven days ere he open, and almost two months ere he forsake the ark; and not then, unless he command him to depart who laide him enter, Gen. viii. 16. He stays for his *Nunc dimittis*. There is no action good without faith, no faith without a word. We are then holy and happy, when in all things we neglect the counsels of flesh and blood, and depend upon the commission of our Maker, says Ambrose.

(4.) He builds an altar, and offers sacrifice. Ambrose observes, that God did not particularly command this, lest, like one covetous, he should demand a reward for his favour; but certainly he did it not without Divine directions. He builds as soon as he is forth; but not a house for himself, but an altar to the Lord: true faith will ever teach us to prefer God to ourselves. And though he desires mercy before sacrifice, yet he will have sacrifice as well as mercy. Of these few creatures that were left, God must have some; it was a privilege to them, that they were saved from the water to be offered up unto God in fire. Happy men which find that favour, to be reserved from the common destruction, that they may be sacrificed to their Maker and Redeemer. Noah blessed God for the preservation of all the creatures, both clean and unclean; but he offered only of the clean: our best things are not too dear for the Lord, whose both they and ourselves are.

(5.) The great judgments of God have gone off with sacrifice: the plague in David's time, by the

burnt-offerings in the threshing-floor of Araunah. Aaron with his incense, "stood between the dead and the living, and the plague was stayed," Num. xvi. 48. Had he thrust himself in with empty hands, he had not prevailed; but his censer was his protection. When the fire of God's anger is kindled, our censers must smoke with fire from the altar. Every man must pray for the removal of vengeance; much more they whom God hath deputed to mediate for the people. Every man's mouth is his own, but they are the mouth of all. "Let the priests weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach," Joel ii. 17. When the world hath poured out all its contempt upon us, we are they that must reconcile men to God, and without us they perish.

(6.) Lastly, this little fire of Noah, through the virtue of his faith, purgeth the world; and reacheth up to those heavens from which the waters fell, and procures a glorious rainbow to appear therein for his security. Which as it is a monument of God's justice, to remember us of those sins for which the world perished; so is it a covenant of his mercy made with man and beast, bound with an oath, "I have sworn that the waters should no more go over the earth," Isa. liv. 9, and not depending upon any condition of man's obedience. The Lord smelled a savour of rest, Gen. viii. 21. All the sins of the old world were not so unsavoury to God, as this smoke was pleasant. If it had not been made in faith, it had been a stinking sacrifice, like Cain's; now there is no perfume comparable to it. It differs from all sensible savours; for there may be satiety in the most pleasant odours, but God is never wearied with the sweet savour of the prayers of his saints.

He that was before annoyed with the ill savour of sin, smells now a sweet odour of rest. Behold here a new and second rest, and there was a third following that, and there shall be a fourth to conclude and perfect all. First, when God had done making the world, then he rested. Secondly, when he had done destroying the world, again he rested. Thirdly, when he had done redeeming the world, in the grave he rested. Fourthly, when he shall have done preserving the world, he will rest for ever. The first and the third have a resemblance, and the second with the last. God, when he had made the world, rested the seventh day. Christ, when he had redeemed the world, rested that seventh day: He kept his sabbath in the sepulchre, says Austin. So when he had destroyed the world with water, he smelt a savour of rest; and that rest from that destruction was to last during the measure of time. When he shall have dissolved it by fire, that rest shall be for ever. Even while we do not rest or cease from sin, he doth cease from a public revenge: so doth his infinite goodness swallow up our wickedness. The remainder of my observations on this argument are two moral allusions, how this present state of the world may be compared with that.

1. Calamities are presented to us in the name of waters, and deep waters, and seas of waters. But must we then look to be drowned? Are they boundless, are they bottomless? No, that is not the dialect of God's language; who hath provided a remedy against the deepest water, and that by water; against the inundation of sin, by the immersion of baptism, water against water; and the foulness contracted by the torrent of natural corruption, is washed away by the sacramental font of regeneration. The first creatures in the world to whom God gave life, were in the waters; "Let the waters bring forth," Gen. i. 20: and the only creatures (excepting those in the ark) to whom God preserved life, were in the waters;

the fishes. At the first, that which had no life, brought forth that which had life; the waters produced the fishes at the command of God, 2 Esd. vi. 48. Therefore though our afflictions be a sea, they are not irremediable: God can give us life in a deluge of waters; and deliver us, as he did Jonah, out of the depth of the sea. Indeed our miseries are great, if we consider only ourselves. So Genesareth, which was but a lake, and the waters not salt, yet is called a sea: they that dwell there, thought a lake a sea. The Mediterranean was called the great sea: they that saw no other, thought a little sea the greatest. We that know not the afflictions of others, call our own the heaviest; every small current is a torrent, every brook a river, every river a sea. But that is truly a great water, which overflows the channel; and that is really a great affliction, which is above our strength. But the Lord is our strength; and what inundation of sorrows can get above those banks? "The rain descended, the floods came, the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock," Matt. vii. 25. What a coil is here, as if heaven, earth, and sea had conspired against one poor cottage! Take them all, not severally, but with their united forces; yet this foundation stands. "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" Rom. viii. 35. What voluminous waves be here, for number, and power, and terror! Yet they shall not separate the ark from Christ, not a soul from the ark, not a body from the soul, not a hair from the body. The mountains shake with the swelling of the sea, Psal. xli. 3: secular mountains, men strong in power; spiritual mountains, men strong in grace; are shaken with afflictions. They shall be shaken, but not shaken off, says one. Affliction is a sea too deep for us; what is our refuge? God's ark, that draws four cubits above the waters, when they were fifteen cubits above the mountains. God "layeth up the depth in storehouses," Psal. xxxiii. 7: even his corrections are of his treasure, and he will not waste his treasure; when they have done their service to humble us, he will call them in again. All our water shall run into Jordan, and his Israelites passed over Jordan dry-foot, Josh. iii. 17. All our sorrows shall run into the red sea, the sea of Christ's blood; and as that Red Sea did not hurt an Israelite, so this red sea shall never drown a believer. Thus putting to sea may be a change of life, not of condition. When St. Paul mentioned his perils, he is briefer in reckoning up those by water, than the other by land. He was a day and night in the deep, and did thrice suffer shipwreck; so much by sea. But by land his dangers were innumerable; once stoned, thrice scourged, five times beaten with rods, often imprisoned, and almost killed, 2 Cor. xi. 24—26. Even on land we have our risings and falls, calms and cross gales; forewinds but seldom. Yea sometimes, which is worse than any wind that can come, we have no wind at all. But pleasure and security deadening our course by a calm, do us more mischief than adversity's cross gale. Indeed there is some difference: more perish on the sea by storms than by calms; more perish on the land by calms than by storms: for afflictions, like tempests, make us look to our tacking, patience, and to our anchor, hope, and to our helm, faith, and to our earl, the word of God, and to our Captain, Christ; whereas security, like a calm, makes us forget both our danger and Deliverer.

2. As troubles are compared to waters, so are pleasures: "Stolen waters are sweet," Prov. ix. 17. So we distinguish of our lusts; calling them, earthly

riches, airy honours, watery pleasures. Covetousness is a desire of earth, ambition of air, wantonness of water, it is the waterish humour of the soul. To pump a ship, and to shrive a voluptuous heart, would be an alike noisome exercise. He throws away all his estate upon the riot of his lust; as if a mariner should throw all his freight into the sea: now a harlot and the sea are too insatiate devourers. Satan is the grand pirate upon the ocean of wickedness. A pirate is one plague above those of nature, to make the sea more terrible, more dangerous. He is called the merchant's book, wherein he may reckon up his losses: a perpetual foe to noble traffic; the earthquake of the exchange; not only robbing men of their goods, but even of themselves, and making them slaves: a desperate thief, that steals though he be in a prison; and looks every day, by fight or tempest, for execution. The devil is yet worse; for he does not only make slaves of those he taketh, more grievous than the Turkish galleys; and damage them whom he cannot take, tempting even the best Christians to foul sins; but labours also to sink all to the abyss, even the bottomless depth of hell. Only this pirate kills more by his flag of truce, cunning flattery, than by his thundering ordnance, and defiance of enmity. He would be lord of the sea, as well as prince of the air, and god of this world; and promiseth all those that sail under his colours, a happy voyage. But when Bion was showed in a port city, in the temple of Neptune, divers pictures of such as had in tempests made their vows to Neptune, and so were saved from shipwreck; and was asked, Whether he did not now acknowledge the power of Neptune and the gods? Yes, saith he; these be the shadows of them that after their vows were delivered, but where are they painted that have been drowned after their vows? Worldlings may prosper for a time under this Neptune, but what is the end of the voyage? where is the harbour? Alas, there is no haven for such, but hell. No wind can be that man's friend, that hath no haven: and yet it is better to have no haven at all, than eternal destruction for a haven. Lord, rather cross us with storms, yea, bless us with crosses, than suffer us to steer such a course, to so unhappy a point. Let our enemies be what they will, so thou be our Friend and Pilot, O Jesus Christ!

VERSE 7.

But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

SATAN persuades atheists that this world is eternal; that there is no other heaven but what they see; and because they see not hell, that there is none at all. Through this imagination, they only labour about the present, and cast off all hope or fear of the future. If they can make good to themselves their condition (and they think it good if it be pleasant) in this life, for the next, it is no article of their creed, no creed of their heart. Therefore they live like beasts, because they think they shall die like beasts, without any answer for aught they have either acted or left undone. But the justice of God teacheth, that there shall be a day of reckoning, when all the world shall be summoned to one universal audit, and receive a reward according to their works. To prove this, the apostle argues conveniently and compar-

tively: God made the world by his word, therefore by his word he can destroy it: and that we may be sure of his power, he hath given us an example or proof, for he hath destroyed it once already; and that we should not doubt of his will, he hath said he will do it. *Qui potuit creare, non poterit cremare?* He who could create, shall he not be able to burn? His word does all: by his word he created it, by his word he drowned it, by his word he restored it, by his word he preserveth it, and by his word he will burn it.

"But the heavens and the earth, which are now." &c. Here, first, we must look upon the world in the present state, wherein it is preserved: and, secondly, then the future condition, to which it is reserved. In the former are two considerations. First, the composition, The heavens and earth that are now. Secondly, the reposition, Are kept in store by the word. In the future state, which is the destruction of the world, we have, first, the manner, By fire. Secondly, the time, At the day of judgment. To begin with that axletree whereon the world moves.

"The word of God." This is indeed the will of God. As his *fiat*, let it be done, gave the world being, so his *maneat*, let it remain, gives it continuance and abiding. For as when he said, Let there be light and a firmament; what ears had the light or firmament, or any other creature, to hear his word, if he had pronounced it? The words of the temple were, Command these stones to be made bread, Matt. iv. 3; but what capacity had there been in stones to hear his saying? God spake to the fish, Jonah ii. 10: what intelligence had the fish to answer him? But as speech is interpreter of man's heart, signifying his secret purposes; so the Lord hath some way (which is easy for him to do, not for us to conceive) whereby he imparteth to insensible creatures what his pleasure is. Speech is not of God's nature, but an action of his will; and he that goes without feet, seeth without eyes, reacheth without hands, so also speaketh without a tongue.

Observe we here, what a divinity there is in the word of God; how imperious to command, how omnipotent to prevail. One *fiat* is enough to make that which never was before, or to shape that which otherwise had lain in everlasting infirmity; to establish nature where it is not, or to change nature where it is; to create angels, men, birds, beasts, fishes; to store heaven, earth, and the deep with innumerable armies of creatures, and to make them bow their knees to their Maker, and render unlimited obedience to all his decrees. The believing centurion, in a suit that dearly affected him, desires not the travel of his feet, nor any receipt of physic, to heal his servant; no, not so much as the imposition of his hand, which some had requested; nor coming under the roof of his house; but only a word from his lips: "Speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed," Matt. viii. 8. Man neither liveth by bread, nor recovereth by physic, but by the word of God's providence, Matt. iv. 4. "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean," Matt. viii. 2: Thy will is thy work, says Origen. "I will; be thou clean;" as if with the breath of his mouth he had spoken to the leprosy, Be gone; as he afterward spake to the devils, Come out; and they went as if a whirlwind had driven them. He rebuked the winds and the seas, with far more authority than Peter did Ananias, and with the like success; for he smote the breath from the winds, and the motion from the sea. They not only hear him, but hear him with effect: they go, and run, and stand still, like dutiful servants at his bidding, and live and die at his command.

God hath one voice that is of a sensible sound indeed, smiting the ears and hearts both of men and beasts with astonishment. It maketh the cedars and breaketh the cedars, Psal. xxix. 5, formeth and quencheth the flames of fire, planteth and supplanteth forests, absolveth and dissolveth the world at his pleasure. O ye obsequious heavens and earth, how do you convince rebellious man! "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth," Isa. i. 2: and, "Hear, O mountains, the Lord's controversy," Micah vi. 2. The sun stands still, the earth cleaves and opens her jaws, rivers run back, lions forbear their prey, all at the word of God, and yet man refuseth to obey it. There be some indeed that will give it the hearing: as a man sees a remote object by his optic instrument, yet it is not his; so many come to church, as if they meant to learn the way and know the will of God, and so they leave it. Our fathers were more devout than we; for they did what they heard, though it were but the device of man: we hear and do not, though it be the word of God. They had base metals, but good manners; we have base manners with our good metals. They had their coin of brass, and men of gold; we have coin of gold, and men of brass, or lead, or if there be a coarser metal. The abundant waters of the sanctuary have bred two diseases, curiosity and satiety. We are full of honey, and will not hear much; and what does not humour us, we will not hear at all. Indeed schismatical teachers have always the most busy swarms of hearers; so they make the people idiots, that the people may make them idols; and we truly say of them, as of idols, He makes them who worships them. But it is not fit that we should leave the word of God and listen to fables; as the apostle said, It is not reason we should leave preaching and serve tables, Acts vi. 2. Let us keep the word, for the word doth keep us; yea, as it keeps heaven and earth in store, so it keeps us on earth, in store for heaven, that we may be eternally blessed.

This is not only a creating, but a preserving word; such a one as reserves heaven and earth in store, as if it laid them up in a treasury, till the great Emperor of the world, who is his own Lord Treasurer, calls them forth to further use. The Peripatetics housed the Divine providence above the moon; allowing it no descent beneath that circle, to attend inferior businesses. The epicures, by the relation of Eliphaz, say no less: "How doth God know? can he judge through the dark cloud? He walketh in the circuit of heaven," Job xxii. 13, 14. Averroes, the Spanish physician, thinks that the Divine understanding would be degraded, if it should mind these lower things. But the glass is not deformed because it represents deformities; nor is the sun defiled by reflecting upon dunghills, nor the Divine providence vilified by ordering the most contemptible things. His creation is their mother, his providence their nurse; the one brings them forth, the other brings them up; the one set up the frame of heaven and earth, the other keeps it in reparation. That he is the God of the mountains, not of the valleys, was a Syrian dream; that he looketh to the greater, and scorneth the smaller, employments, is a blasphemous assertion. No, his providence extends to the feeding of ravens, to the falling of sparrows, numbering of hairs, and casting of lots. Saul is appointed to the kingdom of Israel by God, and anointed by the prophet; yet still he must be designed by lot: was not this to leave a certainty, and put it to hazard? No, for of all the tribes Benjamin is taken; of all the families of Benjamin, Matri; of all the kindreds of Matri, the house of Kish; of all the nouse of Kish, Saul is chosen to be king, 1 Sam. x.

21. Saul had hidden himself; yet he could not hope that this subducing should disappoint the purpose of God. He that designed his name among the thousands of Israel (he might well think) could easily find out his person in a tent, and bring him forth to honour.

As the same word of God that made the angels, made also the little worms; so the same word again that preserves the stars in heaven, preserves also the very dust of the earth. The moving of all those glorious orbs is no more to him, than the setting of a fly upon her wings. The whole world is but a ball in his hand, which he turns about at his pleasure; and when he will, he can throw it into the fire. He keeps them in store: without his providence they could not subsist, nor stand a day; but fall like an infant, when the nurse puts it from her bosom. Indeed he does treasure them up, but for the fire; as the wicked do treasure up wrath against the day of wrath, Rom. ii. 5. But till that appointed day, he does conserve them in their pristine state: and though our intolerable sins would soon ruin the world, yet for the elect's sake the time is prolonged, and for the elect's sake the days shall be shortened. As a monarch sustains even a city of rebels for a time, which otherwise would perish; but at last sets it on fire. Well yet, to that day it is laid up as a treasure: now if God be so provident over heaven and earth, what is his respectfulness of man for whom he made them! He that is so rich in goodness, and in the communication of that goodness, as to feed the birds and clothe the lilies, will he neglect us and ours? Matt. vi. 30. We and our children are the household of God; and will not that great Master and Father of the whole family in heaven and earth provide for us? "If a man provide not for his own, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel," 1 Tim. v. 8. We are certainly more precious than fowls or flowers, yet the Lord cares for them. Will the householder take care to water the herbs of his garden, or to fodder his cattle, and suffer his men and maids to famish through hunger and thirst? or will he provide for his men and maids, and let his own children starve? I know there is a double difference, between his keeping of heaven and earth, and his provision for us.

1. They are insensible things, and obey only by natural instinct; as we move a stone, which otherwise would lie still. We have life, sense, reason, and natural abilities, to work together with his providence. Therefore he enjoins us means, and would not that the works of his wisdom should be idle, Wisd. xiv. 5. He can save without means, but he hath told no man that he will: he hath told every man that (ordinarily) he will not. When the centurion believed the master of the ship more than St. Paul, Acts xxvii. 11, they were all exposed to a great danger: that was a preferring of the means before the Author of the means. But as it is little short of atheism, to use God only for a shift, and at second-hand, when our own powers fail; so it is no less than sluggishness to thrust all our business wholly upon him; as if we were masters, and might sit idle, while he, like a servant, must do all our works for us. We must not look to be fed as the young ravens, without sowing; nor to be clothed as the lilies, without spinning. God works upon the clouds, and we must work upon the clouds, or expect no fruits.

2. They are stored up for destruction; God hath set us apart for salvation. Indeed the heavens and earth shall pass through a refining by fire to their original purity; and we must pass through death, our changing, to the perfect glory. Now, he that is the Keeper of these, is much more the Preserver of

man. When we were enclosed in the womb, he took care that we should not be stilled in darkness, nor born an abortive and untimely fruit: he planted love in our parents' hearts to provide for us, milk in our mothers' breasts to nourish us, strength in their arms to bear us, and vigilancy in their eyes to watch us. He gave them ears willing to hear our cries, compassionate hearts to pity our wants, providence to lay up portions for us. He made this great house for man; heaven for his parlour, the air for his hall, the earth for his kitchen, furnished with all necessary viands; and the sea for a cistern to serve it with water, not without fire for a chimney, and the sun for a window. Thus was man, as one expresseth it, furnished before he was born, seeing God blessed him before he had made him. For if God had given him life before he provided him living, he had entered upon want; and this stood not with the riches of his Maker. If he had given him life and living, without comfort and happiness in them, he had fallen upon misery, and that did not become his Creator's mercy. Therefore in those six days did he make a magazine of provision for him, that should last to the end of the world. And for this purpose he useth these creatures; as it were commanding them, not begging of them. He employeth these instruments, not through indigence, but indulgence. The very hairs of our heads are all numbered, Matt. x. 30; the least things that concern man. Things that be numbered, are therefore numbered, that none of them should be lost. He says not, They shall be numbered; but, They are, long ago; not some of them, but all; not covered, but numbered; not the days of our life, but the hairs of our head: if a hair do grow on our head, it is the gift of God; or if a hair fall from our head, it is the will of God. Now he that numbers our hairs, what account doth he make of our souls? They were anxious about their lives, Christ secures them to their very hairs. Thus hath he stored up heaven and earth, but their end is to be burned: he hath treasured up us for a better heaven, wherein we shall be blessed.

To borrow an application from the metaphor, which is *θησαυροποιεῖν*, treasured up, or reserved: the apostle speaks of a treasury; let us all be treasurers; not of gold, or jewels, or riches; these shall perish with the world, because they be laid up in the world, and belong to the world. Death, like a severe porter, shall examine all men at the gate, as they go out of the world, and not suffer them to carry one penny along with them: nothing they brought in, and they shall carry out nothing. The Spaniards never so narrowly examined the poor Moors, when they drove them out of their kingdom. Nabal, of his three thousand sheep which he sheared in Carmel, could not bear one lock of wool with him to the grave: nor the rich man, out of his enlarged barns, one straw toward the making up of his pallet, Luke xii. 20; nor the other churl, out of all his cellars and fountains, one drop of water to cool his tongue; nor Cræsus, out of his abundant treasury, one broken fragment of coin, not an end of gold or silver. Wealth is but like unto words; by imposition, not natural: for commodities are but as they are commonly valued; and in the next life they bear no value at all. The space of human life, how short soever, is the utmost extent of the use of worldly riches. As all principalities have their limits, and kings are but chiefs in their own dominions; so money, the world's queen, (I mean, that world's whereof the devil is king), extends her regiment but to the brim of the grave, and is not current one step further. Or if it had any validity afterward, yet it might not be suffered to pass: men may beguile the law, that forbids them to carry coin

out of the kingdom, but God will admit none with coin into his kingdom. Well then, there is another treasure, which we may carry with us, and be welcome: of this death cannot hinder us, and with this angels shall receive us. Good works are a treasure, and they do follow us. Good prayers are a treasure, and they go before us. Good faith and hope are a treasure, and they go with us. Works follow; Blessed are they that die in the Lord, for their works follow them, Rev. xiv. 13. Prayers precede; "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," Acts vii. 59: "Thy prayers are come up for a memorial before God," Acts x. 4. Faith does accompany; "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise," Luke xxiii. 43. The graces of God are called talents; if we improve them to his use, we make them our treasure. If a traveller bear treasure in bullion, or in a wedge of gold, and have none coined into current monies, his treasure will not defray his charges as he goes. All our knowledge, and whatsoever ability, is God's gift; and that gift is treasure in the nature of it: but it is not current money in the use of it, except we get nearer and nearer to heaven, our home, by it. Good works are the improvement of grace, and that is the treasure which will pass current in heaven; for God will reward us according to our works. "Our conversation is in heaven," Phil. iii. 20: it is there already, to entertain us when we come. "Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven," Matt. vi. 20: this is a treasure, which, when the earth is on fire, shall not be burnt with it; for that fire shall but consume the elements, but this is above the sun and stars, in the repository of blessedness, the gracious hand of Jesus Christ.

"But the heavens and the earth, which are now," &c. Weak philosophers easily become wicked atheists: if the Scripture do not in all circumstances jump with their Plato and Aristotle, they will believe Aristotle and Plato against the Scriptures. It is the madness of vain man, by his own line to measure the works of God; as if a blind man should not believe there is a sun, because he cannot see it. Out of this black and tectrical vault, Satan breathes forth those pestilent damps, quarrels and wranglings against the Divine truth. As, How could the world be destroyed with water? Grant that the earth was overwhelmed, yet what is this to the world? (the heavens remained still untouched. Yet even their own philosophy might teach them to distinguish of the heavens. There is an airy heaven, as well as the starry; and so far this deluge might well extend. For the earth, it was not only at the first covered with water, but with water it is still cemented. And the air doth challenge the name of heaven: so God is said to cover heaven with clouds, Psal. cxlviii. 8, and to thunder out of heaven, Psal. cxviii. 13: and the cataracts of heaven were opened, when the clouds poured down, whilst the winged inhabitants of the air, and mortal dwellers upon the earth, (saving those in the ark,) perished; what, can they say, became of the world?

Some would have the water a kind of *principium*, from which other things were derived; and observe it from the very etymology of it: *aqua*, i. e. *a qua*, from which are all things. People and multitudes are called by the name of waters, Rev. xvii. 15. The *primum mobile*, which they call the crystalline heaven, appears, either as if water were congealed into crystal; or, through the diaphanous transparency of it, did represent water as clear as crystal. The blessedness of heaven is called, a "pure river of water of life, clear as crystal," Rev. xxii. 1. Such is the excellency of water, and necessary concurrence to all elementary things; yet was this God's instrument to destroy the world. What force is there then

in nature, to cherish and conserve the world, when the seed and matter of its own destruction is wrapped up in it? That which cannot stand by its own power, must be upheld by another's; and must it not then needs fall, when the supporter lets go his manutenance? Now what perpetuity, O atheist, canst thou find in that whole, whose parts are so flexible?

1. "The heavens and the earth." The earth is indeed a muddy, sordid, and feculent place, the receptacle of all corruption; well may that perish. But the heavens are pure, bright, ceruleous, sublime, and refulgent; why should so glorious and magnificent a machine suffer? The earth is but the nurse of our mortal bodies while they live, and their grave when we die; when there is no more use of her office in that ministration, let her be dissolved. But heaven is full of beauty and solace; and though we shall dwell far above these airy or starry regions, yet it cannot but be some delight to look down upon these inferior objects, and to see that become now our pavement which was once our ceiling. Though the presence-chamber of the king is most statly and sumptuous, yet his courtiers disdain not to look into the public hall. Why then should the heavens, so rich and illustrious a creature, be exposed to this last fire?

Yes, for whatsoever was created for man, was infected by the sin of man; and it is necessary, that this conflagration should reach as far as did the former corruption. The heavens, sun, moon, and stars, though they did not fall under so deep a curse as the earth, yet were all blemished with man's fall. Even these must also be purged; and the means by which God will reduce them to their original integrity, is by fire. It is not, then, pity that this goodly frame should be dissolved; whether we respect the Maker, the creatures, or men for whom they were created. For God; he was dishonoured in their contamination, therefore it is fit he should be honoured in their repurgation. That infinite Majesty, who is pureness itself, will not suffer the least out-room belonging to his palace or universal court, to remain uncleansed. For themselves, this loss shall redound to their gain; for there shall not be an abolition, but a restitution of them: nothing shall they lose, but what they may well spare: that substance and perfection which they received from their Creator shall abide; only the defects and blemishes which they had from us shall be done away. We intend not the perishing of our ore, when we refine the gold from the dross. In respect of men, they may well vanish; for the good have a better place, and the wicked deserve a worse. These latter are but rebels, and therefore must be laid up in prison, or the place of execution; the other are God's loyal subjects, and shall dwell with him in peace for ever.

The use. Seeing that sin had so contagious an extent, as to reach unto the very heavens, well should the remorse of it reach unto the bottom of our hearts. Whither can we turn our eyes, and not read the characters of our own transgressions? If we look downwards, we read them in the barren and cursed earth; every thistle may sting us, and every thorn be a prick to our consciences, Gen. iii. 18: *Præsentemque refert tibi qualibet herba reatum*; i. e. And every herb proclaims thy present guilt. If we look upwards, there we find a depraved soul, a mortified body: every error and distemper in either of them, may well represent unto us the force of this fatal infection. If we look outwards, the creatures groan under the burden of our vanity, they labour to shake off the yoke of servitude; and tell us to our faces, we are their bloody and cruel masters. If we look upwards, the sun blusheth at our impiety, the moon

looks pale with fear of our imminent vengeance, the air is troubled with our murmurings and blasphemies. They are sacrilegious fools, that offer to read men's destinies in the stars; but they are ignorant and careless souls, that do not read their own iniquities in the stars. That were a strange pestilence, which could send the infection to a remote country, over the seas; but there is no plague so malignant as sin, that could disperse the contagion through the vast air, make it pierce through the clouds, and stick pestilential spots upon the very heavens. The heavens do not more send down their kindly influence to the earth, than the earth doth send up her unthankful corruption to the heavens. The son hath just cause to lament his father's treason, when he looks upon the ruins of that goodly manor, wherein he dwelt, and whereof he is disinherited. Let us cast our eyes which way we will, we cannot but behold the loathsome marks of our sins. Well may we say with David, "My sin is ever before me," Psal. li. 3: that leaf of the book was always open. We may give it a kind of ubiquity or infiniteness, as that royal prophet ascribes to God: Whither shall we fly from the presence of sin? Psal. cxxxix. 7. If we should compass the earth, in every nook and corner of it we find sin: not our fields and houses, our beds and boards, scarce our temples, are without sin. In our walks, sin meets us: if we dig, we turn up sin. When we view the desolate footsteps of war, we say, The enemy hath been here: no less may we say of every foot of ground we tread upon, Here hath been sin. If we fly on the wings of the morning to the uttermost seas, we descry sins in greater multitudes, than either fishes in the main, or sands on the shore. In the day we see clouds of sins, in the darkness we stumble upon sin. If we could ascend up into heaven, there we behold the dear Son of God that died for our sin: could we look into hell, there be millions tormented for sin. Sin hath possessed our reins, and covered us in our mothers' wombs. There is not a point of the compass to which we can turn our faces, but our sin is ever before us. Shall the hypocrite hide his sins, as Rachel sat upon her father's idols? Alas, heaven and earth shall discover them, in their contracted stains. But what should we do to cleanse them from this pollution? The heavens are high; what instruments of man can reach them?

Yes, we have two helps, whereby we may do somewhat towards the purging of the heavens. Both the breath of our faithful prayers, and the dew of our penitent tears, hath a cleansing quality. Elias opened heaven by his prayer, and by his prayer David purged the same heaven from that infection: the prayers of the saints are sweet odours and incense, perfuming heaven and earth. Let them rise up like pillars of smoke and mountains of myrrh; till they pass through the clouds, the airy regions, the sun and stars, and present themselves before the gracious throne of Jesus Christ. The sighs of a broken heart are like pleasant fumigations from the hills of spices. Our tears have no less virtue; and against the force, the course of nature, they rise upwards, and besprinkle heaven itself. Mary stooped down when she wept, Luke vii. 38, because Heaven was then upon earth: the drops of our contrition mount aloft, because Earth is now in heaven; even Christ, whose body was made of earth, in the glory of his Father. This happy moisture, if it cannot purify the heavens, yet can wash our souls; so that heaven will not disdain to receive us. Our tears are the sea, a good conscience the vessel, faith the wind, charity the sails, and good works the oars, whereby we sail unto blessedness. The Israelites went about by the dry

wilderness, yet they must cross Jordan before they enter into Canaan: certainly, our shortest cut to heaven is by water; I mean, by our tears. Yet still so far is the sickness of the world, taken by our sin, beyond any physic that we can minister to it, that nothing but the extreme fire shall be able to purge it.

2. "The heavens and the earth." Why not the water also? Shall that escape only in this universal confusion? Shall the water be too hard for the fire? Or shall that flame only work upon the earth with her fruits, upon the heaven with his elements, and not upon the sea with his floods? Yes, the fire shall make inroads even on the water. As when the angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates, "the water thereof was dried up," Rev. xvi. 12; or, as the fire that came down from heaven, at Elijah's sacrifice, "licked up the water that was in the trench," 1 Kings xviii. 38: so this supernatural fire shall consume the vast ocean; and his deep bottom shall be but the great hearth of a chimney for this general combustion. The apostle mentions not the water, as being comprehended under the terms of heaven and earth; and this burning shall be more conspicuous in the air and earth, than in the water.

The use. Seeing the earth shall be dissolved, why do we seek so greedily to cram our desires with it? Worldlings think that "their houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling-places to all generations," and therefore "call their lands after their own names," Psal. xlix. 11. They do but think so: alas, when the earth perisheth, what will become of their habitations? Both Peter talk of tabernacles on Mount Tabor, the glory whereof was scarce to last an hour? A weak old man leaning upon his weaker staff, does not trust his whole weight upon it, lest it mock his vain confidence with a fall. Miserable is that soul's condition that rests upon this world's support. When we would disperse a swarm of bees, we throw up dust amongst them: all the imaginations of politic worldlings are scattered abroad and extinct with a handful of dust: the grave shall afford them earth enough. Isocrates compared Athens to a fair courtesan, with whose beauty every man was taken: they would all know her as a mistress, but not one of them would accept her for his wife: they would fain enjoy her beauty, but not be clogged with her levity. Every man thought himself too good to be her husband; to be her paramour, none was good enough. Wherein he taxed the inconstancy of that famous city; which having lifted men up to the highest pitch of honour, would instantly hurl them down again to the depth of ignominy. (Ælian. Apoph. l. 12.) Such a harlot is the world: we are caught with her painted fairness, and long to embrace her; but we know her false-heartedness, and count him a fool that marries her. Do we see a covetous earth-worm, denying cherishment to the poor, to his family, to his own bowels, to his own soul? there is a fool married to a harlot. Do we see another swoln with the dropsy of ambition, doting more on popular honour than on virtue and goodness? there is a fool married to a harlot. Agrippa came into the judgment-seat with great pomp, Acts xxv. 23; the Greek is, with great fantasy: all the pomp of the earth is but a mere fancy. A philosopher said, that Athens was a pleasant city to travel through, but not safe to dwell in. We may make some use of this world in our journey or pilgrimage; but if we purpose to inhabit here, death and fire will say No to that. We shall at last think of this world, as that harbinger answered a nobleman complaining that he was lodged in so homely a room: You will take pleasure in it when you are out of it: the remembrance of those trouble-

some vanities shall not a little add to the felicity of our peace in heaven. Socrates was wont to observe, that the argument of tragedies was the death of tyrants and bloody princes; and that none of the poets ever presented a hog to be slaughtered on the stage: common persons are not noted, but the fall of princes is the mockery of all mortal glory. Lysimachus noting what power Lamia had with Demetrius king of Macedon, and that by her instigation he did many unjust and cruel acts; said, That it was the first time that ever he knew a harlot play in a tragedy. But as a harlot is the tragedy of the world, so the world itself is a harlot in all the tragedies of the sons of men. "The goods of the unjust shall vanish with a noise, like a great thunder in rain," Ecclus. xl. 13. The air is troubled, lightnings fly about, the thunders rend the clouds; and now every man leaves the field, and seeks for shelter: but when the storm is over, what remains of all this terror, but a little dirt composed of earth and rain, which men tread under their feet? Great and rich men make such a noise in the world: what with the bravery of their followers, the acclamation of their flatterers, the adherence of their confederates, and the imperiousness of their humours, they keep such a thundering, as if they would confound nature itself: tarry but a little, and death comes down upon them in a shower; then all this noise is hushed, and their glory turned into dirt. O then "lay not up treasures for yourselves upon earth," Matt. vi. 19. You may lay up for your children, that is providence; you may lay up for the poor, that is charity; but lay not up for yourselves, for that is a vain confidence. Why should we love a sluttish and vanishing earth, that have an eternal heaven prepared for us by Jesus Christ?

3. "The heavens and the earth." Why not the highest heaven? why not hell also? No, for the sin of man never reached so high as heaven. The angels indeed fell there, and fell from thence; but man's sin extended not so far. The court and throne of God is pure, and needs no purging. And for hell, there is fire enough already; a tormenting flame, never to be put out with any inundation of tears. Both these places are to remain for everlasting, without any change. This fire shall only work upon mortality and corruption; upon heaven and earth, with all things contained in them, saving only those which God hath redeemed with the blood of his own Son.

The use. Seeing this world shall pass away, but hell abides for ever, it is a mad providence, of all places, not to take heed of that. Could our misery last so long as our life, and our life so long as the world, yet all were terminable in time: but what shall put an end to eternity? The longest life must die: the stag falls, the raven vanisheth, the oak withers; and could a man reach to the years of Methuselah, yet he must yield to the necessity of nature; yea, nature itself is subject to a final change; time shall abolish all, and this last fire shall abolish time: but hell is an ever-dying life, an ever-living death. If there might be any end of those torments, though after so many millions of years, as there are drops in the sea, or dusts upon earth, or as there have been moments of time since time began, it would be some comfort to the lost; but eternity is intolerable, infinite eternity breaks their hearts. Indeed, eternity is the very hell of hell. If those punishments were no greater than the stinging of ants, yet eternity is enough to make them intolerable. The present sense of their pain is grievous, but the endlessness of it is their desperation; to think that after so infinite a space, they shall be as far from either end or case, as they were the first day of their

beginning! There is no calamity in this life, but either reason, or time, or hope of end may qualify it; but all comfort is excluded, where the suffering can never be concluded. What shall we call it? Life? why then does it kill? Death? why then does it not kill? There is neither life nor death, but hath some good in it; for in life there is some ease, and in death an end; but hell hath neither end nor ease. Of death it hath the torment, without any end; of life it hath the continuance, without any ease. All that is good, whether in life or death, God hath taken away; the residue he hath mixed together, and thereof composed that fearful cup of vengeance. Yet alas, many men so live as if they were never to die, and so die as if they were never to live again. O sinner, thy life is short, the world is not long, but hell is eternal; of whose torments there is no cessation, and from which there is no redemption. Thou canst not have a Redeemer in hell; one thou mayst have upon earth: make him thine own while thou livest, that thou mayst escape that dismal place when thou diest.

Again, seeing these lower heavens must vanish, but there is a heaven of eternal joy, unto which corruption never could, never shall extend, why do we not unite all our powers to the attainment of it? who would build upon a quagmire, that might build upon marble or crystal? or place his hopes in a region destined to fire, that might have an inheritance above the danger of mutability? If the joys of this world were durable, yet are they not perfectly pleasant; if they could be truly pleasant, yet they cannot be durable still; duration is the accomplishment, whether of pleasure or pain. The perpetuity of that heavenly crown is the crown of assurance. The infiniteness of that glory were not enough to make us happy, without the everlastingness; for the more sweet it is to be enjoyed, the more grievous it would be to be determined. The very thought of ending would abate the comfort of possessing. But eternity does not add more continuance than contentment to this happiness. What can we find in this life, but wanting and wishing; from whence arise those two tortures of the mind, hope and fear? We rejoice in health; an ague shakes us: in honour; an affront crosseth us: in riches; a night robs us: in friends; a trifle bereaves us: in peace; a rumour disquiets us: in the sun; a cloud debars us: in the favour of princes; a frown dejects us: in long life; and death a thousand ways disappoints us. O vain soul, to fix upon that, which is subject to man, which is subject to death, which is subject to time, which is subject to the last fire! The earth is harrowed with war, countries overflowed with water, cities demolished with fire, the sea enrag'd with storms, the clouds hurried with winds, the air troubled with thunders: none of all these come near heaven. There is no noise, but the songs of saints and angels, but the shouts of praises; nothing but tranquillity and eternal comfort within those blessed doors. There, O Christ, establish us in thy rest for ever.

4. "The heavens and the earth, which are now." Now; why, are they not the same that they were before? Is there another heaven, another earth, than those that God made at the first? No new creation hath abrogated the old: I do not think there was a mountain lost upon earth, much less a star in heaven, by the deluge. The orbs keep their courses, the stars their motions, the sun knows his rising, and the moon her going down: "They continue this day according to thine ordinances; for all are thy servants," Psal. exix. 91. The earth retains her steadfastness, because thou hast established it, ver. 90: "One generation passeth, and another cometh; but the earth abideth

for ever," Eccl. i. 4. When God promised the seasonable vicissitude of cold and heat, winter and summer, seed-time and harvest, day and night, after the flood, Gen. viii. 22; this was no new thing; but only that he had ordained from the beginning, and which had been suspended during that great inundation. Why then doth the apostle seem to make a difference between the former heaven and earth, and the present? I answer, that he does not ascribe to the world another being, but another condition; nor does he intend to oppose substances, (there being an identity,) but the several states of the same substances. The world then perished by water, now it shall be dissolved with fire: here is no opposition between world and world, but between destruction and destruction.

The conclusion we may gather from it, is this; The world is not eternal, because it hath suffered, and is still subjected to ruin. All creatures are of their own nature prone to decay; whatsoever was made of nothing, may be reduced unto nothing. Not the souls of men, not the angels of heaven, are exempted; they all move upon the same poles, they bend to the same centre. And if they were not made immortal by preservation, their nature could not keep them from sinking to annihilation. Only that is eccentric, which was never made: that light, which is the very emanation of the light of God, in which the saints shall dwell; that garment, with which they shall be apparelled; that glory, which we can imagine, but not demonstrate: only that bends not to this centre, ruin. That which was not made of nothing, is not in possibility of annihilation. All other things are concentric; there is one common centre to them all, decay and ruin. The heavens contain the earth, the earth contains cities, cities contain men: this is nature's nest of boxes; and they are flexible to fate, made to be changed, and there is a time appointed for their permutation.

The use. Seeing the world goes round, and all things it contains follow that circular and changeable condition, why are we enamoured of it? It is but like a bullet shot from a piece of ordnance, that runs and danceth on the ground; which when the ignorant soldier thinks to take up with his hands, destroys him. The best of it is but vanity; the worst, vexation. The very pleasures of it are as a smoky fire in cold weather, whereof the smoke is more noisome than the heat is comfortable. If he that built thy house should come again after divers years, and, upon a review of it, assure thee that it will suddenly fall, wouldst thou not depart from it to save thine own life? Behold, he that made the world, and is best able to survey the present state of his own workmanship, forewarns us of the imminent ruin; are we so stupid, that for love of these forbidden vanities, we will suffer it to fall upon our heads? He loves gold dearly, that will run into a room on fire to fetch it out. What is there in the world, whose centre is not decay? Take the pride of it, which is greatness, the pre-eminence of man over men; what can be wanting to a prince, which the earth may afford? The continuance of all pleasures, of all riches, waits upon the hand of sovereignty. Yet alas, what stability is there in earthly greatness? Dionysius the Second was lord of four hundred ships, had an army of a hundred thousand foot, and nine thousand horse, besides the richest magazine of any prince in the world; yet he lived to see himself dethroned, his sons cruelly butchered, his daughters first ravished and then massacred, all his allies one way or another destroyed. (Ælian. Var. Hist.) How mighty was the honour of Haman in the Persian court! What could not he do with the king, with the state? When the sun shines upon the dial, every passenger

will be looking at it. There needs no command of reverence, where the king is pleased to countenance. All knees will bow alone even to forbidden idols of honour; how much more where royal authority enjoins obeisance! Yet is this lofty man advanced fifty foot higher, and (which aggravates the vexation) is hanged on his own gallows. One hour hath changed the face of the Persian court; and he, to whom all knees bowed in the morning, as more than a man, now hangs up like despised carrion, for a prey to the ravens. Mordecai, that was in the morning destined to the gallows, before night rules over princes; and Haman, that in the morning ruled over princes, is a spectacle of shame on the gallows. Oh the vanity of worldly honour, that mistress of fools and madmen! Haman was not the first that fell from such a height, nor is the last. Many a one hath sped no otherwise; to borrow the (not common) words of an English poet:

"Having done what he can
To work himself into a glorious man;
All's but an exhalation to best eyes;
The matter spent, and then the fool's fire dies."

A gallant goes to some public duel or tournament, accompanied with music, many friends, and encouragements; but when he is beaten and wounded by the adversary champion, home he returns solitary and forsaken, in shame and silence. When the May-pole is first set up, there is dancing, and shouting, and rejoicing about it: after a while, boys defile it; and when it is blown down with the wind, they cast it into the fire, and burn it. The world goes round, and all things in it follow the same motion. At first it was in the hands of plain-dealing labourers and husbandmen: then was it seized on by tyrants and men of might: from them it was devolved into the estate of princes: soldiers and warriors then invaded it, and it was usurped by emperors: indulgent emperors resigned it into the fingers of churchmen, the popes challenge it: now the greater part of it is fallen into the clutches of lawyers; and who shall get it from them again, is yet uncertain: but round it must go, this is certain. The sun doth not more duly run his course, than do all things under the sun. The conditions of men are but as the spokes of a wheel; which sometimes turns up prince, and sometimes peasant; now wise man, and then fool; to-day rich man, to-morrow beggar. Still it goes round, and changeth, and we change with it; until that universal change of all things shall determine it, in the great day of Jesus Christ.

"Are kept in store;" literally, are treasured up. The word of God is a kind of treasury, out of which he bringeth all his works. "He bringeth the wind out of his treasures," Psal. cxxxv. 7; Jer. x. 13. "He layeth up the depth in storehouses," Psal. cxxiii. 7. "The Lord shall open to thee his good treasure, the heaven to give thee rain," Deut. xxviii. 12. "Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow? or seen the treasure of the hail?" Job xxxviii. 22. "Through his commandment the treasures are opened, and clouds fly forth as fowls," Eccles. xliii. 14. The winds, the clouds, snow, hail, rain, lightning, and thunder; all pass under the name of his treasure. Even his very judgments are his treasure: St. Paul calls his patience and goodness, his riches; and those punishments wherewith he scourgeth the wicked, his treasure; for they treasure up wrath unto themselves, Rom. ii. 5. And although his riches be greater than his treasure, and he delighteth in mercy more than in vengeance; yet properly a man's treasure is the best part of his riches. If men despise his riches, he will open his treasury; for he that is

rich in mercy is not poor in justice, both being infinite in that infinite Essence. Men commit sins by pieces, like broken fragments of coin: God gathers all these together, lays them up in store, and seals them up among his treasures, Deut. xxxii. 34. *Malæ quæ fecit homo, servat et Deus, deprecanda in tempore suo*, The evils which man does, God lays up for him, to be brought forth in his own time, says Augustine. The mercy of God makes us rich with his blessings, and we (after a sort) make the justice of God rich with our sins.

The use. Seeing that for the sins of men the heavens are treasured up unto fire, and even those sins be also a kind of treasure, enriching God with fit matter for the execution of his justice, let us all break them off by a seasonable repentance. Many men make a cursed treasure: as the apostle chargeth rich worldlings, that they hoard up wrath with their wealth, and pain in the midst of their coin, Jam. v. 3. This last fire shall melt their coin, and consume their wealth; but their sin and their pain remains treasured up for ever. Why should a man desire to be rich in woes, or to abound with torments? No man ever counted dirt a treasure. Is there any mire so filthy as sin? Are we so foolish, to make much of that which procures destruction? We think sin a pleasure, and sorrow a troublesome copesmate: indeed sorrow is no good fellow, no boon companion, therefore few desire to meddle with it. But at the last, we shall find our sins the greatest troubles, vexing our souls, and gnawing our consciences; but our tears and sorrows are such a treasure laid up in the storehouse of mercy, that we shall be infinitely rich in comfort and glory.

"Reserved unto fire." The various questions concerning this conflagration of the world, wherewith the schoolmen have troubled their own heads, but not satisfied others, I omit as impertinent and unprofitable. Only concerning the power of fire something would be said. Even natural fire works as long as the matter lasts: but this fire shall be of another nature, even of a nature (if I may so speak) above nature. Do they say, the heavens are not exustible? How then be spirits and souls, made of a purer nature, subject to torment in the fire of hell? The prophet saith, Tophet is prepared of old, Isa. xxx. 33: the Judge of men and angels saith, "Go, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels," Matt. xxv. 41. If with fear, and without curiosity, we may look upon those flames, why may we not attribute a spiritual nature to that more than natural fire? Though spirits have nothing material in their nature, which that infernal fire should work upon; yet such is the powerful judgment of that Almighty Arbitrer of the world, justly willing their torment, that he can make spirits most sensible of those fiery tortures; and such is the submission of their created nature, that they may be immediately wrought upon by those appointed pains. The spirits of living men are incorporeal, yet how great a sorrow may they conceive to be imprisoned in a loathed and painful body! And may not then mere or separated spirits of angels or men be held as easily in those dirclur flames, and be tormented with the insufferable horror which ariseth from the place, whereto they are everlastingly confined? We may distinguish of fire, as it is itself, a bodily creature, and as it is an instrument of God's justice: so working, not by any material virtue or power of its own; but by a certain height of supernatural efficacy, to which it is exalted by the omnipotence of that supreme and righteous Judge. If then God hath from eternity created a fire of another nature, proportionable even to spiritual essences; what should hinder

but that the pure quintessential matter of the sky, and the elements themselves, in the end of the world, may be dissolved by fire? Yea, of so different a nature shall the last fire be, from that which it consumeth, that the element of fire itself shall be dissolved by fire.

All miraculous creatures are better than ordinary natural ones. The water that Christ turned into wine, was the best wine: the same bounty that expressed itself in the quantity of the wine, shows itself no less in the excellence: nothing can fall from that Divine hand not exquisite. It was fit that the miraculous effects of Christ, which came from his immediate hand, should be more perfect than the natural. The fire that came down from heaven upon Sodom had more in it than nature. How strange was the fire that consumed Elijah's sacrifice! Many hands are employed for the making of a large trench round about the altar, and the prophet causes it to be filled with those precious remainders of water, which the people would have grudged to their own mouths. But as those that pour down a pailful into a dry pump, they part with this little in hope of fetching more. The altar, the trench, is full: a barrelful is poured out for each of the tribes, that every tribe might be afterwards replenished. Elijah prays, and instantly the fire of the Lord falls from heaven, and consumes the burnt sacrifice, the wood, the stones, the dust, and licks up the water that was in the trench. With what terror must Israel needs see this fire rolling down out of the sky, and alighting with such fury so near their heads; heads no less fit for this flame, than was the sacrifice. They might well have thought, how easily might this fire have dilated itself, and consumed our bodies, as well as the wood and stones; and have licked up our blood, as well as that water! I know not whether they had the grace to acknowledge the mercy of God, they could do no less than confess his power, "The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God," 1 Kings xviii. 39. Cannot the same power provide another fire, to make a whole burnt sacrifice of the world? Far be it from us to doubt it, when he hath said he will do it.

Seeing the whole world is but a great house, and the end of it is to be burned, happy are they that have provided themselves of another not subject to fire. Wherefore is it called a kingdom that cannot be shaken; an eternal house; an immortal mansion; into which no thieves can break through; but to show that this fire cannot come at it, that it is far above the reach of ruin? The joys of heaven should lose one privilege, which they have above the pleasures of earth, if they could be mutable. If men find such fair contentments in this their prison, what will the liberty of God's own royal court afford us! If in this stormy time of tears we meet with such comforts, what may we expect in that everlasting sunshine! If this corruptible world, set up for a short time, as some tent or cottage, be so gorgeous, that many desire no other heaven; what estimation should we make of that eternal palace, prepared before all worlds, for the greatest manifestation of his glory! This world of ours, which holdeth a middle state between heaven and hell, and (in some sort) partiaipateth of both; doth not so far surpass hell in beauty, as it is excelled by that imperial court of heaven, contrived by his own wisdom, as agreeable to the state of Almighty God. There, there let us lay up our hearts; that when this whole world is on a flame, our inheritance may be safe, and ourselves established in it for ever.

"Reserved unto fire." Here is offered to our observation, the great difference betwixt the former

destruction of the world and this latter; that by water, this by fire.

1. The heavens then had their dropsy, and drowned the world; now they shall have their fever, and burn the world. It seems the world was then too hot, and therefore was water sent to cool it; now it shall be too cold, and this fire shall come to inflame it. Indeed, before the flood, men were given to inordinate and unnatural lusts; to fury and wrath, which is a chafing or fuming sin; and to uncleanness, which the apostle calls a burning; these sins were fitly punished with an inundation of water. Toward the latter end of the world, charity shall wax cold, piety be nipped with a frost, and faith almost starved to death; and the world thus benumbed, shall be set on fire. Or shall we rather say, this judgment of fire shall be proportionable to the present state of sin? As many heats contracted in the body are a preparation to the fever; so pride, ambition, drunkenness, concupiscence, envy, malice, and such intemperate heats in the soul, do justly provoke and call for a dissolution of the world by fire.

2. Of the flood, the world had a foreknowledge one hundred and twenty years before it came; whereby men might lay hold on the opportunity of repentance. Herenupon some made provision against it, and were saved. But this last fire shall break out in an instant, and consume all. Noah knew when the flood would come, and by God's direction furnished himself of a sufficient refuge. But this day of fire is known to no man, to no angel. The dog-star hath a pestilent breath, an infectious exhalation; yet because we know when it will rise, we clothe ourselves, we diet ourselves, and we shadow ourselves, to a sufficient prevention: but comets and blazing stars, whose significations or effects no man can interrupt or frustrate, no man foresaw. No almanac tells us when a blazing star will break out, because the matter is carried up in secret: no astrologer tells us when the effects will be accomplished, for that is a secret of a higher sphere than the other. Some prognosticators have guessed at the time of thunder and lightning, and been deceived; but which of them could foretell, that in such a year such a city should be burned, or such a country overflowed? The last day shall suddenly break in like a thief, and entrap like a snare; like some unexpected thunder-clap, awaking men from their quiet sleeps. If a man should suddenly start from his slumber, and see his house on fire about him, his friends bewailing, but not being able to help him; it were cause of strange amazement. Death is but a sleep in the bed of the grave: in how terrible a plight must the wicked man rise, when he shall be enclosed within those comfortless extremities! He shall have on the one side his sins accusing him, on the other side justice threatening him: above, an angry Judge condemning him; beneath, hell open, and the boiling furnace ready to devour him: before, those merciless fiends haling him; behind, the saints and some of his nearest friends not only forsaking him, but rejoicing and praising God for justice in his damnation: within, his conscience tearing him; without, the powers of heaven shaken and dissolved, the elements melting, the whole world flaming, and all lost souls crying and cursing round about him. O intolerable indignation of the Almighty, which he shall neither have power to resist, nor patience to endure, nor place to avoid!

3. The deluge did but invade a piece of the world; it did no harm to the heavens, from whence it fell; it did not put out those lights, it did not quench those heats: but this last fire shall burn the furnace itself, and annihilate those heavens that breathe it

out. If Noah's dove found no place for her foot by reason of the water, what room will be left for the sinner in the midst of this universal fire? If the just shall scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly appear? 1 Pet. iv. 18. To go forward, it will be intolerable; impossible to go back; to turn aside, unavailable. So extreme will be the astonishment, made up of sorrow, shame, and fear, that the guilty sinner will be desirous, if it were possible, even to hide himself in hell, rather than stand his trial; like some desperate malefactor, that had rather go to the gallows in private, than be brought to the public sessions.

4. The deluge came upon the world by degrees; this fire shall come on a sudden. God was then forty days a raining upon the earth, before the flood did bear up the ark; so that still men shifted places, according to their best conveniences; from the valleys up to the higher grounds, from thence to the loftiest mountains, and again there, to the towers and tallest cedars; death and destruction following after them in a slow march. Beside that fear and hunger did in many of them save the flood a labour, they had time to take breath, the happy space of repentance; and though the waters would not be entreated to spare their bodies, yet that other deluge of their own tears might eternally save their souls. But this destruction by fire is altogether sudden; it shall not begin with one piece of the world, and so proceed on to another, as material fire does in an earthly building, but consume all at once. Therefore He that best knows it, because he will do it, compares it to lightning, which quickly flies from east to west; and that chosen vessel says, it shall be done "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," 1 Cor. xv. 52. Those are the greatest mischiefs, which are least discerned: the most insensible in their ways, come to be most sensible in their ends. In the societies of men, states and commonwealths, twenty rebellious drums make not so dangerous a noise, as a few whisperers and secret plotters in corners. The cannon doth not so much hurt against a wall, as a mine under the wall; nor a thousand enemies that threaten, so much as a few that take an oath to say nothing. It is the concealment of the last day, that will be terrible to those men one day, that have not prepared themselves every day. It was a noble answer of a mean favourite to his prince, who had threatened one day to come and see what cheer he kept in his house, and understanding afterwards how bountiful and expensive he was at all times since, far above his state and revenues, reproved him for a prodigal waster of his fortunes; but he humbly replied, Your Highness promised to eat with me one day, and because I did not know which day, I made the better provision for you every day. We are sure there is a day when our Lord will come: therefore to trim up our houses, our consciences; to furnish our souls with the best viands, faith, charity, and repentance; is not to our loss, but gain. He will not tax us of lavishness; but rather having supped with us in grace, take us home to his kingdom, to sup with him in everlasting glory, Rev. iii. 20.

But if this fire be so universal, how then shall the righteous escape? can they avoid so supernatural a flame? Yes: how were those three mortal servants of God delivered in the midst of that fiery furnace? Were the hairs of their head singed? or was the smell of fire upon their garments? Their persecutors were destroyed with the very breathing of that oven; themselves were not hurt with the flame. What was the reason? There was a fourth among them, and his form was like the Son of God, Dan. iii. 25. So when the whole world shall be turned into a

burning furnace, the godly have One among them, that will secure their preservation; even their blessed Redeemer, the almighty Son of God. If he could keep mortal men from the power of natural fire, he can as easily from the force of this supernatural fire save his immortal saints. I deny not, but that even the saints and angels may be touched with the terror and astonishment of this dreadful day; not for any danger which they can fear towards themselves, but at the greatness of the Lord's indignation: as a harmless child will be afraid at the fury of his father, though it be against his bondsman; or as a tempestuous sea will strike some astonishment even into him that standeth safe on the shore. If the heavens and earth lie before his presence, well may the sons of men be abashed. When Gideon went against the Midianites, instead of whetting swords, sharpening spears, and fitting of armour, he only gave order for empty pitchers, and lights, and trumpets. The cracking of those pitchers shall break in pieces that Midianitish clay; the kindling of those lamps shall extinguish the light of Midian; those trumpets sound no other than a soul-knell to all the host of Midian. There shall need nothing but noise and light, to confound that innumerable army. Now if the pitchers, and brands, and trumpets of Gideon, did so daunt and dismay the proud troops of Midian and Amalek; who (can we think) shall be able to stand before the last terror; when the trumpet of the archangel shall sound, and the heavens shall pass away with a noise, and the elements shall be on a flame about our ears?

Seeing the world shall be determined in fire, let us look in time to our own preservation. No denial, no defence, will serve at that day, either to countenance or to cover our sins: it will be in vain to offer, whether excuse or entreaty; no place remains for the one, no pity for the other. Nothing will be granted which shall then be required, because nothing was performed which was before commanded. When a man's house is on fire, he does not so much look to his lumber, but labours to preserve his treasure and jewels, his deeds and evidences. This great house of the world will shortly be on fire: it will be our vain folly to seek the saving of any temporal things, for they shall not escape this combustion; but let us save the jewels, our dear souls; the evidence, our faith in the covenant of God, made unto us in Jesus Christ. Let not him that is on the housetop come down to take any thing out of it, Matt. xxiv. 17; there is nothing in it worth his care. No, let him make sure his jewel, and his charter in the blood of his Redeemer: if that be safe, then perish the world. Let Christ be ours, and our souls his, and though the world be on a light flame, we shall not perish.

"Reserved unto fire." The law of God was given in fire, and in fire it shall be required. That they might see what was due to their sins, they beheld the fire above, representing the fire that should be below them. We may all tremble at the resemblance. The trumpet of the angel called only Israel to the one; the voice of an archangel, the trumpet of God, shall summon all the world to the other. There Mount Sinai was only on a flame; here the whole world shall burn. There was fire, smoke, thunder, and lightning; here a fiery stream issuing from the Lord shall melt the elements, and dissolve the heavens. If such were the proclamation of God's statutes, what shall the sessions be? What shall become of the breakers of so fiery a law? Only the fire wherein it was delivered was but terrifying; but the fire wherein it shall be required is consuming. Therefore will the supreme Judge hold his assizes in fire: nor is only the law thus required, but even the

gospel. He will come in flaming fire, taking vengeance, not only on those that know not God and his law, but even on those that obey not the gospel of Christ, 2 Thess. i. 8.

To recover us from our wilful fall, he came down from heaven, was born in poverty, and lived in pain, and died with intolerable torment and scorn. Witness the wounds he endured, witness the earth that trembled, witness the heavens that drew in their light, when his death was in action. Where is our thankfulness, where our obedience? How have we answered his holy inspirations? How have we used the means and opportunities, which were presented us for our salvation? What desire had we of those works of mercy which he commanded? Where appeared in us that charity which he commanded? Is this the account we make of his sufferings? Is this our estimation of his more than precious blood? Rebellion against God's mercy is so much worse than disobedience to his justice, as his mercy sweetens all his works, as his mercy redeemed us when we were forfeited to his justice. Even this ingratitude shall be required in fire, and the Lord will judge it in that universal burning. When Joseph said to his brethren, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt, they could not answer him, for they were astonished at his presence, Gen. xlv. 3. When Christ shall show that blessed head which was crowned with thorns, those sacred hands which were pierced with nails, that holy side which was thrust through with a spear, and say, Behold, I am Jesus your Brother, whom your sins once sold into the hands of Pilate, and have ever since daily crucified by your unthankful relapses, and repetitions of the same iniquities; they must needs be speechless. O then let us follow the counsel of him, that would be our Advocate, before he will be our Judge; and enter into judgment against ourselves, that when we shall appear in that great audit, he may find us beforehand judged, and for ever forced to condemn us.

"Against the day of judgment." We find four advents of Christ. 1. When the Word took flesh. 2. When he began to execute his office. 3. When we lie on our death-bed, then he comes to comfort us: the God of life comes in the hour of death. 4. At the resurrection; when our old mother shall be delivered of her last burden, when a fever shall calcine the corrupt body of this world. There is the judgment of discrimination, which is done here; "For judgment I am come into this world," John ix. 39: and there is the judgment of retribution hereafter; "God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ," Rom. ii. 16. There is a judgment of election, before the world began; and there is a judgment of reward, when the world is done. Concerning this last and great day of judgment, I desire briefly to touch upon these particulars: the certainty, the uncertainty, the integrity, the impartiality, the fatality to the wicked, the consolation to the just.

1. The certainty of it: "Heaven and earth shall pass away," but not that word of God which hath decreed this judgment, Luke xxi. 33. Of this infallible expectation we have frequent warning: "The sun shall be darkened, the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven," Matt. xxiv. 29. Great eclipses have been terrible to poor mortals, and the darkness at our Saviour's passion was the wonder of the world; if it were such at his suffering, what shall it be at his glorious appearing. When the master of the family dieth, the house is troubled, the servants lament, and put on mourning garments: when man, the tenant of the world, is near his end, and coming to answer for his rent, his old friends and servants, the sun, moon, and stars,

clothe themselves in black, and become his mourners. (Chrysost. Hom. 49. in Matt.) Nor do these only wait upon this great funeral; but the earth shall tremble, and the seas roar, when men's hearts shall fail them, Luke xxi. 25, 26. Vexement earthquakes, and the inundations of mighty waters, have been terrible; how much more when the vast ocean shall rage, and the massy globe of the earth totter!

How odourate be those hearts, whom this consideration does not terrify! Physicians, in dangerous diseases, give a special regard to the seventh day, which they call critical; and observe what strength nature hath to repel it, and thereby judge of the patient. We all labour of the spiritual sickness, sin; and the day of judgment is truly a critical day; if the remembrance of that cannot discover some hope of reformation in us, we are not like to escape. We are busily intent in our observations upon climacterical years for particular persons, and periodical years for the life of states and kingdoms; but we consider not our own critical day, and what assurance we have of the everlasting kingdom. We exercise our curiosity in marking, that Adam, the eldest of the eldest world, died in his climacterical year; and Shem, the eldest son of the next world, in his; and Abraham, the father of the faithful, in his; and the blessed Virgin Mary, the garden where the root of faith grew, in hers. But they whose climacteries we observe, did spend their observation upon other critical days; the expectation of the Messias, the end of their lives, the preparation for death. The Pharisees pretended that if they had been in their fathers' days they would not have been partakers of the blood of the prophets, Matt. xxiii. 30; and shall we, who live in the days, not of the prophets, but of the Son, kill those prophets again, and again crucify that Son, for all those evident indications that are afforded us? Shall we study, and seek, and find out such critical days, as are fittest to forsake Christ in? Now religion is in a neutrality in the world, and this is my day, the day of liberty: now I may make new friends, by changing my old religion, and this is my day, the day of advancement. This is a fearful crisis or indication of spiritual death. Physicians speak of their critical days, that the first is *index*, the informer, the next *juxta*, the judge. So we have two main critical days, our life, and our death: the former is indicatory, the latter judicatory; that declares what we are, this concludes what we shall be: the one is for consultation, the other for sentence. There may be some hope of convalescence in the first; but if we amend not before the second, we must perish. In the first we have leave and time to judge ourselves; otherwise, the Lord will judge us in the next.

Yea, we have many critical days, to prepare us for that great day of determination; and them we may distinguish, like natural days, into seven. First, the day of trouble and affliction, which is therefore called the day of visitation; because in trouble the Lord, our good Physician, doth visit us. Men think that God is removed from them when they suffer calamity; as the Israelites do but want water, and presently cry, "Is the Lord among us, or not?" Exod. xvii. 7. As if God could not be with them, and they thirst. Either he must humour carnal minds, or be distrustful. If they prosper, though it be with wickedness, then God is with them; if they be crossed in their own designs, straight, Is God with us? It was the way to put God from them, to distrust and murmur. If he had not been with them, they had not lived; if he had been in them, they had not murmured. We can think him absent in our want, and cannot see him absent in our sin; yet wickedness, not affliction, argues him gone. Yea, he is then most present when

he most chastises. We measure not the visitations of great persons by their apparel, by their equipage, by the solemnity of their coming; but by their very coming. If the Lord come unto us, though it be in sickness, though in calamity, it is our critical day; and if we make him welcome, and entertain him with patience, it is an argument he would not lose us, that by any means seeks us. Secondly, penitent sorrow for our sins is a right critical day; when the conscience is molested with the pains of a bleeding remorse. This day hath an evening and a morning; a sad guiltiness in the soul, but a cheerful rising of the sun. The evenings and mornings made days in the creation, but there is no mention of nights: our sorrows for our sins are evenings, but they determine not in night: there is joy in the morning; a day of solace: when the spirit broken and dejected in itself, is acquitted and comforted by Christ. Thirdly, this remorse sends us to a third critical day, to a devout hearing of the word, and faithful receiving of our Saviour, in his institution of the sacrament; conforming our life to those sacred rules, and walking worthy of so inestimable an honour. Fourthly, thus having walked with God three days, we are prepared for the storms of the fourth, the day of our dissolution and transmigration from hence. Sins, sorrows, and troubles have so imbibited our life, that there is no bitterness in the remembrance of death, Ecclus. xli. 1. Sickness hath disabled us to receive meat, and made it our fasting day, our eve, to this great festival of our translation. Fifthly, this day of death shall deliver us over to the fifth, the day of our resurrection; for how long soever that day be in the grave, there is no day between that and the resurrection. Then shall all men be reapparelled with their own bodies; and they that have made good use of their former days, shall be superinvested with glory. Only the ungodly shall be condemned to their old clothes, their sinful bodies; and have no addition, but of immortality to torment. Sixthly, this day thus reinvesting our soul in our body, and our body in the body of Christ, shall present us both body and soul to our sixth day, the day of judgment: which is truly, and in a literal sense, the critical, the decretory day; rewarding the wicked according to their demerits; and having passed upon the faithful the judgment of approbation, they shall also be assistant in that session, and judge the world of evil men and angels. Seventhly, after this, we shall be possessed of our seventh day, that everlasting sabbath, in the rest, the joy, the sight, and the glory of the blessed Trinity; where we shall live, without reckoning any more days, for ever.

2. The uncertainty of this day bespeaks our preparedness. When the disciples asked Christ concerning the sign of his coming, Luke xxi. 7; he answers them with a *how*, not with a *when*: he describes the manner, but conceals the time: such signs shall go before, he does not determine the day when the judgment shall come after. Only he cautions them, with a "Take heed, lest that day come upon you unawares: for as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the earth," ver. 34, 35. The bird little thinks of the snare of the fowler, nor the beast of the hunter; this fearless rangeth through the woods, the other merrily cuts the air; both follow their unsuspected liberty, both are lost in unprevented ruin. Against public enemies we fortify our coasts, against private thieves we bar our doors, and shall we not against the irremediable fatality of this day prepare our souls? It is favour enough that the Lord hath given us warning: the day is sudden, the warning is not sudden: the old world had the precaution of six-score years, and that (we cannot deny)

was long enough; but we have had the prediction of Christ and his apostles, of above fifteen hundred years' standing; besides the daily sound of those evangelical trumpets, that tell us of that archangelical trumpet in their pulpits. When we hear the thunder, in a dark night on our beds, we fear the lightning. Our Saviour's gospel, premonishing of this day, is like thunder: if it cannot wake us from our sins, the judgment shall come upon us like lightning, to our utter destruction. But I will thank the Lord for giving me warning, Psal. xvi. 7. The thunder first breaks the cloud, and makes way for the lightning, yet the lightning first invades our sense. All sermons, upon this argument of the last day, are thunder-claps; yet such is the security of the world, that the sons of thunder cannot waken them, till the Father of lightning consume them. Thou hast given a sign to them that fear thee, that they may flee from the face of the bow, saith that royal prophet. The huntsman doth not threaten the deer, or terrify him; but watches him at a stand, and shoots him. But God speaks before he shoots; takes the bow in his hand and shows it us, before he puts in the arrow to wound us. St. Gregory hath a meditation, which by way of similitude doth lively express this point. Mariners have made their voyage, and are returning home; when on a sudden the winds rise, and the seas begin to be troubled: first they are set upon with lighter waves, then with fiercer billows; then little balls of fire are seen rolling on the face of the waters: now they labour with all their powers, and unlade the vessels of those precious merchandise, for which they made their unhappy voyage. But still the inexorable rage of the sea ceaseth not, till it hath swallowed the ship: some sink with it, and others by help of a little bark get to shore. We are all put into the vessel of mortality; and all those signs preceding the day of judgment, are so many successive waves prognosticating this universal shipwreck; and now worldlings would throw overboard their unbest traffic; the covetous despatch his riches, the voluptuous his pleasures, the ambitious his honours; they have ventured all their life for those sins, and now they would be rid of that venture with all their hearts. The main storm comes, the earth trembles, the ocean roars, the elements melt, the heavens dissolve, the huge fabric of the whole world perisheth. Those that have put all their fortunes and estate in that one uncertain vessel, must perish with it: but the children of grace have a little pinnacle, the church of Christ; and this carries them safe through the fire, as Noah's ark bore him through the water, and lands them in heaven, where they are welcomed home with songs of triumph.

We are all God's creatures, and he hath an indefeasible right in every man: yea, we are his factors, and he hath sent us into this world, as into a strange country, to traffic for him. "Be ye doers of the word," Jam. i. 22, not actors; for that is but to play religion, like hypocrites. Actors do but represent things done, and personate other men: but we are factors; and the commodities we are trusted withal, are first heavenly graces, and then a competency of temporal things. The trade we drive is our good works, and all we can return to our Master's profit is but his praise and glory: the whole benefit of the voyage redounds to ourselves; not He, but we may be the better for it. At last that great Merchant calls us home, to this universal audit, when every factor must bring in his accounts. They that have advantaged their Lord and traded to his honour, shall be honoured by him for ever; but those slothful servants, that have trifled with his talent, or mispent it, shall be cast into that prison of unthrifths and beg-

gars, which is full of all wants, but the want of torments. The wise merchant, that ponders his future reckoning, will carefully look to four houses under his charge; his warehouse, his work-house, his clock-house, and his closet or counting-house. 1. Our warehouse is our heart, wherein lie all those precious commodities deposited to us from heaven; our knowledge, with all our graces, and spiritual abilities: if lusts and malicious thoughts break in like thieves, and rob us of those celestial wares, we are undone. 2. Our work-house is, as it were, the shop of our good actions, wherein, by way of holy commerce, we retail those dear commodities of our Master, to his faithful use: if we have learning, we instruct the ignorant; if we have riches, we comfort the poor; if authority, we protect the innocent: whatsoever grace we have in the warehouse of our heart, we bring it forth into the work-house of our life, and do good with it. 3. Our clock-house is to be regarded too: whether we consider it in relation to our speech, and discourse, for the tongue is the clock of the soul; if the clock go false, if our talk be ungracious, lying, swearing, or profane, we are factors for hell, rather than for heaven: men may know by the clock-house, what stuff is in the warehouse; "for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh," Matt. xii. 34. Or we may consider this clock in respect of our time: the good husband still minds how the day goes with him; and therefore so follows his business, that he may have done before night. They are injurious sextons to their own souls, that set the clock back; that make it stand at two in the afternoon when it is six in the evening, even near the sunset of their ends, that they might more securely follow their pleasures. No, let the clock go right, think of the time, meditate on the uncertainty of thy life, the certainty of thy reckoning; and work out thy salvation in time, that thou mayst rest when time shall be no more. All men are called to repentance: do you hear some answer, Yes, to-morrow, Lord; or next week, Lord; or next year, Lord? sure their clock does not go right. God hath another clock; and it may be twelve by his when it is scarce five by theirs: he summons them by death, when they think they have many years to live. 4. The last is our counting-house, and that is our conscience; where we find written all our receipts, and all our layings-out. No false reckoning can be found in this book; it will speak the truth to a penny. Tradesmen's books may lie, stewards' books may err; there is no error in this. In respect of our receipts, we cannot with that unjust steward set down fifty for a hundred, Luke xvi. 6; nor can we, in regard of our layings-out, set down a hundred for fifty. This book is written by another hand than ours, even the Lord's; and certainly the Lord can read his own hand. There have been some that could stupify the voice of their conscience; never any could obliterate the writing of their conscience: they could stop the sound of it, as it is a trumpet; they could not scrape out the characters of it, as it is a book. Happy are we, if we can get the blood of Christ, to wash out our debts, and the merits of Christ, to stand for our accountants: only this reckoning shall pass in the day of judgment; for as our conscience leaves us here, so the Almighty Judge will find us hereafter.

To conclude: the weakest memory here present, may easily think on these four houses; and if we keep them well, we shall prove happy Christians. But the day of judgment, thou sayest, is far enough off. It is more than thou, or any man, or any angel, knows. Yet grant it far off to the world, it may be near to thee. The day of judgment is remote, *thy* day of judgment is at hand: and as thou goest out in

particular, so thou shalt be found in the general. Thy passing-bell and the archangel's trumpet have both one sound to thee. In the same condition that thy soul leaves thy body, shall thy body be found of thy soul. Thou canst not pass from thy death-bed a sinner, and appear at the great assizes a saint. Both in thy private sessions, and the universal assizes, thou shalt be sure of the same Judge, the same jury, the same witnesses, the same verdict. How certain thou art to die, thou knowest; how soon to die, thou knowest not. Measure not thy life with the longest; that were to piece it out with flattery: thou canst name no living man, not the sickest, which thou art sure shall die before thee. Daily we follow the dead to their graves, and in those graves we bury the remembrance of our own death with them. Here drops an old man, and there a child; here an aged matron, there a young virgin: with mourning eyes we attend them to their funerals, yet before we lay the rosemary out of our hands, the thought of death hath vanished from our hearts. When a hog lies bound under the knife to be killed, he makes a hideous cry above any other creature: hereupon the other swine come running in, and they grunt, and whine, and keep a fearful noise; but as soon as the dying beast hath ceased, they also are silent, and return to the filthy mire as carelessly as if no harm had been done. When we lose a neighbour, a friend, a brother, we weep, and howl, and lament, as if, with Rachel, we could never be comforted; but the body once interred, and the funeral ceremonies ended, if we do not stay to inquire for some legacies, we run back with all possible haste to our former sins and turpitudes, as if there had been no such matter. Alas, that the farthest end of all our thoughts should be the thought of our ends! Death is but our apprehension, like the taking of a malefactor; but it sends us to the session, and that either to forgiveness or execution. O then, let us repent in life, that we may find comfort in death, and be acquitted at the day of judgment by Jesus Christ.

3. The integrity of the Judge, and of his judgment, comes next to be considered. There is no name of God so often mentioned in the Scripture, as that of a Judge; no action so often, as that of judgment. Many names of God be sweeter, none frequenter. Even where the Lord is glorious with all his titles of mercy, still there comes in one title of his judgment: where he is slow to anger, even there he does not acquit the guilty, Exod. xxxiv. 7; Nah. i. 3. The first coming of Christ was in weakness, because he was then to be judged; his second shall be in power, because he is now to judge. Then, like a feeble, unweaponed David against that mighty giant of hell, that Goliath, Satan; now, like an armed and angry David against wicked and unthankful Nabals. In vain have I kept his flocks safe in the wilderness, that will not give a little bread to my hungry followers. Have I been so bountiful to the rich churls of the world, and do they deny a small relief to my poor members? Then he came like a soft dew upon the grass, now he shall come like thunder in the clouds. Then he came unto his own, and they knew him not; now all eyes shall see him, and all tongues confess him. Then he came in private, from the womb of his mother; now he shall come in public, from the throne of his Father. Then, with a few apostles; now, with thousands of angels. Then, with a star in the east; now, with the heavens on fire. Then, as a lamb; now, as a lion. Then, to save the lost; now, to condemn the lost. Then, as a subject to Caesar; now, the King of kings. Then, O man, he came as thine; now, he shall come as his own, and appear himself. Then

He, poor Man, stood before Pilate, to receive his sentence; now Pilate and Herod, and all the potentates of the earth, must stand before him, and undergo his dreadful doom. Then he had a reed for his sceptre, and thorns for his crown; now he shall break the nations with a sceptre of iron, and his throne shall be like a flaming fire, Dan. vii. 9. At his birth, only Jerusalem was troubled; and at his death, some tender-hearted women wept; but at his coming to judgment, all the kindreds of the earth shall mourn before him, Rev. i. 7.

It is Christ then that shall be our Judge: He to whose contumely did tend all our misdeeds: he, whose majesty we have dishonoured, whose mercy we have despised, whose glory we have abused, and whose goodness we have abused: he, whose presence we have profaned, and whose patience we have misinterpreted, either for ignorance or allowance of evil. But we shall find neither of both in this impartial Judge. There are six principal refuges of the guilty before the judgment-seats of mortal men; if either the judge may be deceived through ignorance, or made partial with favour, or overcome with power, or melted with pity, or corrupted with money, or persuaded with oratory; but all these forts of confidence fail before this tribunal.

(1.) This Judge cannot err through ignorance, for all things are naked and open to his eyes, with whom we have to do, Heb. iv. 13. He knoweth our goings-out and our comings-in: "The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity," Psal. xciv. 11. There is nothing so quick as thought, nothing so free as thought, nothing so secret as thought, (the devil cannot know our thoughts, but by conjecture or inference,) nothing so boundless as thought; nature hath set no limits to the thoughts of the soul. Yet, thou, O Lord, understandest our thoughts long before. To know them when they have being, is much; but to know them before they were, is only God's peculiar. Man himself does not know to-day what he shall think to-morrow; God knows it, and knew it from all eternity. He understood what thoughts the soul would create, before he had created the soul. Adam would fain have hidden himself from God, when he found him naked in the cool of the day: such a desire is in every guilty sinner to hide himself from Christ, when he comes to judgment in the evening of the world; but it is not possible. The wicked shall call to the mountains, Fall on us, and to the rocks, Cover us, Rev. vi. 16; but to what purpose? Alas, in the presence of the God of Jacob, the mountains skip like rams, and the little hills like young sheep, Psal. cxiv. Yea, at that day there shall be neither rocks nor mountains left to hide them. As it is intolerable to abide his presence, so it is impossible to avoid it. He saw Nathanael under the fig-tree, John i. 48, and Elijah in the cave, 1 Kings xix. 9. He sees the thief in his darkest night, and the adulterer when all the doors and windows are shut. He saw Faux, without the help of his dark lantern, when he laboured in that black vault under the parliament-house. He sees all the plots of the Jesuits against his church: they delude all princes, but the Prince of heaven, and he sees their villany. He sees them that are in hell, who see nothing, not themselves. He knows our most secret sins; to repeat those we do not remember, to reveal also those we would hide, and to convince us of those we would deny.

(2.) This Judge cannot be forestalled with favour, for he is no respecter of persons. The poorest beggar shall find as good audience in this court of justice, as the greatest monarch in the world. Christ will judge most justly, even those that have judged

most unjustly. Pilate shall find justice from Christ; Christ found none from Pilate. Take him, saith he to the malicious Jews, I find no fault in him. No fault in him, O Pilate! and yet dost thou condemn him? Where was the fault then? Surely in thee, O Pilate. He will not deal so with thee; thou shalt have justice.

(3.) He cannot be overborne with power; for all power is given him both in heaven and earth, Matt. xxviii. 18. With many judges on earth, a lord's message or a lady's letter may do much; and let the poor man's complaint be never so honest, if it trench upon great ones, it must not be heard. Favour is the mistress, toward which all the bows of authority run bias. Such magistrates are like spaniels, which ever hunt that way their master looks. But those unrighteous judges, that have been led by favour below, shall find least favour above. It will be a poor excuse for an act of injustice, Such a lord commanded me: him for persuading, and thee for yielding, the Lord of heaven shall condemn you both. Now men deal with our sermons as they do with our tithes; when we preach judgment, they sue out a prohibition from a higher court, or a protection from the Chancery, their mercy-seat, or a commission for composition; but whither will they appeal from this court, the great Star-chamber of heaven?

(4.) He cannot be moved with pity. There was a time, when upon the condition of repentance he proffered pardon; but the time of mercy is past, this is the day of justice. Time was, when he poured forth his precious blood to expiate their sin; but now there remains no more sacrifice for sin. Time was, he wept over Jerusalem in compassion; now let Jerusalem weep out her eyes, there is nothing but indignation. His meekness shall be turned into wrath; and he that before wept for the misery of sinners, will now laugh at their destruction, Prov. i. 26. The lawyer, while he is an advocate, pleads his client's cause, though it be not good; but being made a judge, he sentenceth the cause, without respect to the client. Christ is now our Advocate, and he pleads our cause, and mediates for our very sins; but at the last day his office is to judge, and he will give a most righteous sentence.

(5.) He will not be corrupted with bribes; yea, those that have been so corrupted, he will condemn. The wealthiest miser must come before him naked and empty-handed. In his infancy the wise men presented him gold, and they are wise men that in this world bring him such offerings. With thy gold and riches feed the hungry, and clothe the naked, while thou livest; else at the day of judgment it will not be taken. What wealth shall any man have left, when the whole world is on fire? Only what the hand of charity hath given Christ here, he will abundantly repay there: and as we use, upon the walls of hospitals and almshouses, to write up the names of the benefactors: so those beneficent souls, that have comforted the needy members of Christ on earth, shall find their names written in heaven. Other rich churls shall undergo the doom of Magus, themselves and their money must perish together.

(6.) He cannot be persuaded with arguments. Tullius is weak, and Tertullus a fool, to think that eloquence shall carry it there. Let not the greatest clerks, who have led wicked lives, hope that at this assizes their book shall save them. They may be condemned for the former abuse of their eloquence, but here their very tongues shall be put to silence. Even now, divinity will not be awed by logic, nor will God be imprisoned in a predicament; much less above. I speak not this to dispraise learning; it is the gift of God, and useful to his glory. Moses a

priest, Psal. xcix. 6, or (if that be doubtful, yet sure) a prophet, Deut. xxxiv. 10, was "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians," Acts vii. 22. The scornfuls of learning are like worms in libraries; busy about it, but with an intent to destroy it. There be many arts in the world, but there is one worth them all; a holy life, the effect of a true faith in Jesus Christ. St. Paul was a great scholar, yet it was only his having learned Christ that saved him. All arguments are lost but this; Lord, I bring thee thine own righteousness, by imputation made mine; by this, I beseech thee save me: this argument will prevail.

We see the integrity of the Judge: the conscience of the sinner shall be compelled to accuse, and the devil suffered to urge, but no advocate allowed to plead his cause. The angels shall not, the saints may not, Christ will not, and himself cannot. Not the angels, for they are witnesses to his wickedness: not the saints, for it is their office to judge the world: not Christ, for he despised his grace when it was offered: not the sinner himself, for he shall obtain no audience. Oh the desperate extremities, which will then beset the ungodly! If they offer to speak, their sins stand up against them; if they hold their peace, they find nothing to comfort them. Every moment of our time is one step toward this judgment; and yet we are so far from compassion of ourselves, that even going to our trial, we cease not to multiply crimes against him, that must give sentence upon us. With what countenance can sinners be able to look upon that glorious Majesty? It will be at that time a greater pain for them to stand before God, than to be in hell. The severe acts of a judge being discoursed, and his impartial censures, a hearer wittily and honestly replied, I mean never to trouble him. It cannot be so with us; our sins are so heinous and numerous, that we must come before him: there is only one way to help us, which is now by an appeal. To whom? Even to himself; let us appeal from Christ to Christ; from him as an angry Judge to him as a gracious Saviour. How cheap an account do most men now make of Christ! No more than cunning gallants do of a prodigal heir; even to riot upon his score, and to lavish out sins on the riches of his satisfaction. But let them know, that though the death of Christ have fully satisfied for all our sins, and borne the extremity of whatsoever either the law of God could lay against us, or the wrath of God could lay upon us; yet hath it left no liberty to build our sins upon his death, but rather to bury our sins in his death. We may not crucify him again by our sins, who for our sins hath already been crucified, Heb. vi. 6. For as in the creation, the disobedience of the creature caused the Creator to hate the work of his own hands, Gen. i. 6; so in the reconciliation, the peace that was made between God and man, did not stretch so far as to conclude of peace between God and sin. But he that was content in Christ to be reconciled to his enemies, is yet at enmity with their sins; and though he forgive great sins in Christ, yet doth he punish little sins in Christians. Yea, though the blood of Jesus do continually cry unto God for us, Heb. xii. 24, yet doth it not so possess his ears, that he can hear no cry against us. Still where is the due estimation of Christ? Atheists deny him, papists dishonour him, pagans persecute him, worldlings oppress him, hypocrites dissemble him, time-servers make use of him, politicians pretend him, swearers blaspheme him, millions profess him, few rightly esteeming him, few indeed honour him. The price of Christ seems to go down; the covetous will sell him for a farm, the adulterer for a kiss, the drunkard for a pint of wine.

for a pot of ale; the fraudulent tradesman for a penny; the swearer will sell him for nothing, and take no money for him. This is the difference between God's judgment and man's; God valued man at more than his own blood, man valued that blood but at thirty pieces of silver. But the day will come, when one gracious word from the mouth of Christ, one pleasing look of his countenance, shall be far more precious than all the world. Then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn before him. Unbelievers shall mourn, because they would not accept that glorious way of salvation. The voluptuous shall mourn, that they have bought transient pleasures with everlasting torments. The covetous shall mourn, that they have more accounted of a cross of coin, than of the saving cross of Christ. The proud shall mourn, that they have despised the humility of the gospel. Blasphemers shall lament, that they have sworn away the price of their redemption. The unclean shall mourn, because they rather chose to be the limbs of a harlot, than members of the Son of God. All sinners shall mourn, and especially, because the time of all fruitful mourning is for ever past. The world now rejoiceth, but let us mourn; that when the whole world is set on mourning, we may then rejoice without end.

4. The impartiality of the proceeding falls next into our consideration. Such is the perfection of God's justice, who is ever constant to his own ways, that he doth still proceed by the book; openly, intelligibly, manifestly. When the Ancient of days shall sit upon his white throne, the books shall be opened.

(1.) The first book is the book of life; never shut to God, but never thoroughly open to us. Whosoever is found written in this book, shall not perish, Rev. xxi. 27. We cannot unclasp this book, yet we may know something in it that concerns ourselves. There is a safe collection or gradation, *a posteriori*. I deprecate all sin, I repent heartily of that is done, I abhor to commit it, I earnestly pray against it, I strive with all my powers to avoid it, I thirst for more grace, I am ready to all good works, I rest wholly and only on my Saviour's merits, therefore I rightly believe; I believe, therefore am justified; I am justified, therefore called; I am called, therefore elected; I am elected, therefore shall be glorified, Rom. viii. 30. We cannot, we may not conclude the contrary: but, I am a sinner, therefore God hath from everlasting rejected me; therefore he hath made me to be damned: this is an unwarrantable, yea, a desperate collection. I believe in Christ, and endeavour to live like a Christian, therefore I am chosen; this is a safe and sound inference; and thus far God hath given our humility leave to look into this book of life.

(2.) The second is the book of nature; wherein, though obscurely and in shadows, God hath expressed his own image, and written his own law with indelible characters. They that have sinned without the law written, shall be judged by the law engraven, Rom. ii. 12. Though this law be much defaced in their hearts by the custom of sin, yet it shall no more help them, than a thief is to be excused, because he hath torn the eighth commandment, "Thou shalt not steal," out of the decalogue.

(3.) The third is the book of the Scriptures, consisting of the law and the gospel; the one commanding, the other enabling; the one condemning, the other presenting a remedy: those two Testaments, wherein all that God wrote in the Old, he hath lighted up as a candle to read it by in the New. No exception can lie against this book; for the law of God is holy. Rom. vii. 12. and all his commandments are

pure, Psal. xix. 8. These are for number few, for understanding plain, for equity approved, and only profitable to whom they are given. Sure there had not been such state in the promulgation of this law, if God had not intended it for eternity. Every circumstance of the delivery, representing the fearful execution of it at the last, may well deter us from the transgression. First, how could they think of having any other gods, that had such proofs of this? Secondly, how durst they make any resemblance of Him, whom they could not see, and might therefore perceive to be infinite? Thirdly, how durst they profane his name, whom so dreadful a majesty waited upon? Fourthly, how could they stand with him for a day, whom they see to be the Maker and Determiner of days? Fifthly, why should they disobey his deputies, whom they saw so able to revenge? Sixthly, how durst they kill a man, that heard him forbid it, who can kill both body and soul? Seventhly, how durst they entertain the flames of lust, that saw such fires of vengeance? Eighthly, how durst they steal, that saw by such terrible demonstrations, whose both heaven and earth was to dispose of at his pleasure? Ninthly, or speak falsely, that heard the God of truth speak in so fearful a tone? Tenthly, or covet others' goods, that saw how weak and uncertain right they had to their own? We men, that fear the breach of human laws for some small nimblets of forfeiture; how should we fear to transgress thy law, O Lord, that canst cast both body and soul into hell!

(4.) There is another book annexed to this; a codicil, a schedule: the book of just and useful laws, established by them, to whom God hath committed his people; the laws of that church, and laws of that state, wherein we have our station. The breaches and wilful contempts of this book, will be strictly examined, and hardly answered, in this audit.

(5.) The fifth is the manual, the pocket-book, the bosom-book of our conscience. The other books will manifest what we should have done; this, what we have done. We cannot except against it, because it hath always been in our own keeping; and nothing shall be written in it, but what is subscribed by our proper hand. It hath three offices: first, to give in testimony of something acted or omitted. Secondly, to examine whether the action or omission were lawful or unwarrantable. Thirdly, to give judgment according to that evidence. It can both bind and loose; it binds a man faster than the Philistines bound Samson, and looseth him sooner than the angel loosed Peter. It is a private law within man: when law and chancery too have done with him, (and that not seldom is long before it hath done with him,) then conscience takes him in hand. It is a true looking-glass, that represents all blemishes, without favour or flattery. It is below God, but above man, a vice-god; and deals with us here, as God will do hereafter. There is a bill framed out of the law, it is high treason against our high Sovereign's crown and dignity: our works are the evidence, and conscience is the witness, which will not be bribed to give a false testimony. If the main course of our life be gracious, and our conscience will speak for our works, that they proceed from a sound faith and honest heart; we are then quit by proclamation, for nobody comes in against us: the world may not, our sins shall not, our conscience must not, the angels dare not, God will not, the devil cannot, for he is the father of lies, and his word will not be taken. But if otherwise, all these will be against us: there need no suborners to fetch in witnesses; they come unsent for, and cannot be kept back; they will speak the truth, and all the truth. As intelligencers were

statesmen mingle themselves with all companies, but use their best art to keep themselves concealed; so the conscience is God's informer, a spy in the soul, mixing herself with all our thoughts and actions: it is indeed the reflection of the soul upon itself. Though we know not what this conscience is, yet this conscience knows what we are. As Pilate asked Christ, What is truth? John xviii. 38, when the Truth stood before him; so many ask what is conscience? when indeed conscience is within them.

Origen calls it the pedagogue of the soul; that teaches all, and keeps all under the rod, in a perpetual pupilage. It is like an Italian comedian, that can play all parts himself: it is plaintiff, defendant, witness, judge, executioner, and punishment. The soul may say to the conscience, as Mercury did to Battas, *Et me mihi perfide prodixi*? i. e. Dost thou betray me to myself? Yes, *me mihi prodixi*, thou dost betray me to myself. The conscience will accuse the conscience; she brings in evidence, produces the law, proves the forfeit, urges the penalty, gives the sentence, begins the punishment. It is a volume that no Jesuit can corrupt: no expurgatory index can strike a letter out of it: the only book of all our library that goes along with us into the world to come. Look in that book, thou sinner, beforehand: find there, the title, sin; the dedication, to the prince of sin; the several chapters, so many several sins; yea, every letter a character of sin. As Averroes killed Avicen by anointing his book with poison; so Satan labours to envenom this book of our conscience, that we may uncomfortably perish. The Grecians are said to have a hill so high above the force of the winds, that if a man had drawn his name in characters upon the ashes of the sacrifices, he might come the next year and find the same letters unblown away. If any sinful heart be so securely placed, that Satan may now read in the sluttish dust the sins that were written there long ago, if no thunder hath cleared the air about him, no wind scattered those guilty characters, if all be hushed in rest and silence about the borders; like the country of the Sybarites, where not so much as a cock, the remembrancer of St. Peter, is left alive to trouble them; it is in a desperate case. But the conscience that sleeps now, shall be awakened then; the book now clasped, shall be then opened. If ever sleep were the image of death, it is this. Rather, O Lord, let thy winds rage, and thy seas roar, than we thus be suffered to sleep with Jonah. It is fearful, when God will not so much as favour us with a frown, nor bless us with his anger. Cleopatra, that had not a mind to feel her death, poisoned herself with asps, that she might die sleeping. Riot in sin is like the poison of asps, so stupefying the desperate conscience, that until the day of judgment this fatal book is not opened.

It is Satan's method, first to make men so senseless, as not to feel their sins at all; and then so desperate, that they feel them too much. In the first fit, men live as if there was no hell; in the last, they die as if there was no heaven. There be some diseases called, the shame of physicians: is this lethargy the shame of divines? No, there is a way to cure it. Let sinners lay to their hearts all the curses on Mount Ebal, the terrors of the law, the sting of death, the darkness of the grave, the horror of this judgment, with some glimpse of hell. O wretched man, do but dream of them sometimes: talk to God, though it be in thy sleep; down with thy knees, though thy heart be still; up with thy hands, though thy soul be down; let but out an ejaculation, a piece, a shred of a prayer, though it be no longer than the publican's, Lord, be merciful to me a sinner.

(6.) There is another book, wherein the registry of

our transgressions is written; the infinite and universal knowledge of God: this is his particular book of all our particular sins. These records will present unto us all our offences, done from our birth to our burial; and lay those things to our charge, which now we either remember not, or regard not; which we esteem either lawful, or tolerable; and we shall be compelled to answer too many things, whereof now we would scorn to be questioned. He that writes our members in his book, Psal. cxxxix. 16, hath also in that book written the sins of those members. The concupiscence of our eyes, the violence of our hands, the intemperance of our throats, the virulence of our tongues, the forwardness of our feet to evil, together with the unseemly behaviour of our whole body, shall be rigorously examined. Nor is this indictment made up only of actual trespasses; but even the very blanks are crimes, and the not doing of good shall be punished with the suffering of evil. If our feet have not frequented God's walks, in his holy courts; if our tongues have not vociferated our Maker's praises; if our eyes have not pitied the poor, if our hands have not ministered to their necessities; even these omissions are damnable. Such is the sincerity of Christian religion, that it not only imposeth upon us pure innocence, but profitable honesty. Here, not only action, but the intermission, the suspension of action; both our speech and our silence; as well the vacancy of thinking well, as the positive thought of evil; not only cursed fruits, but the barrenness of good; shall be questioned. Not only for making wealth an instrument of cruelty, but for not making it an instrument of mercy, there is a Go, ye cursed. If a magistrate do not support the just cause, though he never took bribe, he shall be condemned. The father shall be accountant for the education of his children, the master for the discipline over his servants, the prince for the government of his subjects. Oh the great charge of that high calling! Every king is a brief of his land, and he hath a pattern of the ordering of it always about him. The honour he gives his magistrates, is but a charge, and so is that which God gives him; and as he requires an account, so he must give. Happy is it for him, when true religion and sincere integrity shall be made the eye of wisdom in his counsel, the ear of justice in his deputies, the hand of valour in his nobles, the tongue of persuasion in his preachers, the head of government in himself, and the heart of obedience in his people. Private men shall not only be judged as men, but as subjects: they that will not obey, are neither good subjects, nor good men. To obey well, is as great a thing as to govern, and more men's duties: they that think not so, know not the Christian's part, which is to suffer. Public rulers shall not only be judged as men, but as magistrates. Not only our images, but our offices shall never return to nothing. The image of God itself may be burned, it cannot be consumed. The image of a lawyer, of a judge, of a commander, may burn, but can never burn out.

Nor be only our gross sins recorded in this book, but even our loose speeches: of every idle word we must give an account in the day of judgment, Matt. xii. 36. Yea, our very thoughts shall not escape; He will judge the secrets of our hearts, Rom. ii. 16; Eccl. xii. 14. If the private sins of the most innocent soul here should be revealed to this whole congregation, it would put us to the blush: how terrible will it be then, to have them opened before the eyes of all the world, both of men and angels! We write that in the forgetful dust, which God writes in everlasting marble. David pressed far upon the Lord's pardon, in that petition, "Cleanse thou me from se-

cret faults," Psal. xix. 12. Can any sin be secret? for a great part of our sins, though we conceive them in the dark, on our beds, yet we do them in the light, Micah ii. 1. And there are many sins which we glory in doing, and would not do if nobody should know them. St. Augustine confesseth of himself, that in his wilder times he was ashamed of his shamefacedness, and the tenderness of his conscience; and that he often belied himself with sins which he never did, lest he should be unacceptable to his sinful companions. But if we would conceal them, can we? God knows not only the sins we have committed, but even those we would have committed if we could. Lord, thou hast forgiven me those sins which I have done, and those sins which only by thy grace I have not done, saith St. Augustine. They were done in our inclination to them, and even that inclination needs God's mercy, and that mercy he calls a pardon. These are truly most secret sins, because they were never done; and because no other man, nor we ourselves, but only God, knows: how many and how great sins we have escaped by his preventing grace, which without that we had multiplied against him! We have abundance of sins out of the compass of our knowledge: we can accuse ourselves of original sin; yet, do we know what original sin is? We know not enough of it to satisfy others, we know enough to condemn ourselves, to solicit the mercy of God. Our youth hath been full of sins, and we have forgotten what those sins were. We remember them not so well as to name them all; nor are we sure to live hours enough to name them all; for we did them faster then than we can speak them now, when every thing that we did conduced to some sin. Yet we know them so well, as to know that nothing, but the mercy of our heavenly Father, is so infinite as they. We have sins of thought, word, and deed; sins of omission and of action; sins against God, against our neighbour, and against ourselves; sins against the Father's commandments, against the Son's prayer, and against the Holy Ghost's office; sins against our own creed, against the laws of that church and state wherein we live; sins unrepented, and sins relapsed into after repentance; sins of ignorance, and sins against the testimony of our conscience. If this arithmetic cannot reach home to the number of our sins, we know what will. O Lord, pardon us all those sins which thy Son Christ Jesus suffered for, who suffered for the sins of all the world.

If one man have so many sins, how infinite a heap do the sins of all men amount unto! and how immense must that book be, where all those sins are engrossed! We may say of our evil deeds, what the evangelist speaks of the holy acts of Christ, that if they were all written, the world itself could not contain the books, John xxi. 25. Yet so capacious is this book of God's omniscience, that every transgression, from the highest blasphemy to the least infirmity, is not omitted. *Quid in Babylone tutum, si in Jerusalem tale scrutinium?* What, exclaims Bernard, is safe in Babylon, if there is such searching in Jerusalem? What shall the shrub of the desert do, when the cedar of Paradise shall be shaken? If they do this in the green tree, what will they do in the dry? Luke xxiii. 31. The lambs may well be afraid, when the lions tremble. It shall not be a summary, confused, or indigested examination; but exact and particular, as it were by the book. The adulterer shall not only be charged with that filthy act, but with all the circumstances preceding, preparing, conducing, and attending on that uncleanness: Thus he plotted, thus he persuaded, and thus he acted; as if all were now done over again in presentation.

Where then be those little sins, which sinners now rather make a matter of sport, than the occasion of repentance? Alas, there are no sins small, but comparatively: Christ died for all sins, and the least sin might be a thorn in his head, or lash on his side. Many little boys at the market-cross, make as great a noise as the crier. Even our little sins have no little cry in the ears of the Divine justice; but they are rather now like little children, which by the day of judgment will be grown up to strong men, and with confusion challenge us to our faces.

(7.) The last book is that with the seven seals, which only the Lamb that was slain was found worthy to open, Rev. v. 9. This is the book wherein lies all our comfort: containing the promulgation of their pardon and righteousness, that are washed in the blood of the Lamb. If we be tried by the book of nature, we shall be cast; for we have done unnatural deeds: nature is de-raised, corrupted; and who shall bring life out of corruption? The first man that God made was saved; Adam was a saint. The first man that was begotten of man was damned; Cain was a reprobate. Such difference there is betwixt God's workmanship and ours, betwixt nature created and nature corrupted. If we be tried by the law written, O wretched men that we are, who shall deliver us? Rom. vii. 24. Even the very thought of that law, which condemns our very thoughts, is for the present a burning in the hand, in the private session of our conscience, before we come to hold up that hand at the bar of eternal justice. If we must stand to the book of God's knowledge, and be judged by those everlasting rolls, we are so far from being acquitted, that we have not done one justifiable action all our days. Our transgressions are sealed up in a bag, Job xiv. 17; but if we thrust our hand into that bag, there is not one good work to be found: every line of this book is a sin, every leaf an age of sin; there is not a tittle of any thing but sin. Only when God doth blot all our sins out of his remembrance, he doth (as it were) throw this book into the fire. As Cæsar after the defeat of Pompey, having in his custody a casket, wherein he found letters written with his enemies' own hands, sufficient evidence to condemn them; he burnt them all, and forgave them; that no monument might remain for a future grudge: so doth Christ cancel and annihilate all the records of the sins of his chosen, that there might be no quarrel against them in heaven. If we should appeal to the book of our conscience, we are condemned before we come to the trial: there sits a little judge within, that tells us plainly what we must trust to: it is as if a malefactor should labour to purge himself before the judge, with the evidence of his crime sticking apparently in his bosom.

Well yet, though we cannot be saved by our book, by our own conscience; nor by the other books, the registry of our iniquities; yet there be two books of comfort for us, and by them we desire to be tried. The first is the book of life, God's eternal decree for our election; that sacred and immutable record, out of which never was any name rased. The other is the book of the Lamb, and the shedding of his blood upon our souls. This book is not of a dark print, hard to read; but a fair, large manuscript; the leaves of it pure, untainted flesh; the letters, blood; the pens that wrote it, thorns and scourges; the clasps, nails; the binding, wood; the name of it, Jesus of Nazareth; the contents of it, mercy and eternal salvation. If my conscience be at peace with me, I am not condemned yet; if this book be afforded me, I shall not be condemned at all. O Lord, we humbly confess, that there is no vein in us, which is not full of the blood of thy Son, whom we

have crucified, and crucified again, by multiplying many, and often repeating the same sins: that there is no artery in us, which hath not the spirit of error, the spirit of lust, the spirit of giddiness in it, 1 Tim. iv. 1; Isa. xix. 14: that there is no bone in us, which is not hardened with the custom of sin, and nourished with the marrow of sin: that there be no sinews, no ligaments, which do not tie and chain sin and sin together: that our fantasy is in labour with the study, invention, and imagination of sin: that our memory is tenacious of nothing so much as sin; that with delight it revolveth the remembrance of sin: that all these sins are upon record, in those books which thou hast ordained for that purpose. Yet, O gracious Father, there is a book which abrogates all these: and as the sanctuary had the end in the temple, and the temple in Christ; so all these books have their end in the book of the Lamb, if thou please to write our names there. There, O merciful God, write them; in that book of satisfaction to thee, and of redemption to us: and write the assurance of it in the present book of our conscience, the copy of that blessed original; that when the day of judgment shall come, and all books are opened, nothing may be found in ours, but the righteousness of thy dear Son, and our sweet Saviour, Jesus.

5. The fatality and horror of this dreadful day to the wicked, is beyond all mortal imagination; when at the sound of the trumpet hell shall shake, all graves shall open, and yield up their prisoners. Though all this shall be done at once, yet our understanding cannot conceive it but through divers passages.

(1.) The suddenness of the summons shall amaze them. Adonijah was justling himself into the not yet vacant throne of his father David, 1 Kings i.; he feasts his friends, he jeers his opposites, he boasts the prosperity of his design. On a sudden, the trumpet sounds out King Solomon's coronation, and this braving troop is dispersed; and if you ask for their new prince, he hangs upon the horns of the altar. The ungodly will be banqueting and solacing their sensual souls at the last day; but the arch-angel's trump resounding the Almighty Solomon's coronation, will put them to desperate shifts; and so much the more desperate, as they have no sanctuary whereunto they may flee for refuge.

(2.) The amazement at the resurrection will be terrible; when the body shall be forced to rise, though it would lie still; and the soul be compelled to lie still in the body, though it would rise. Both their salutations shall be nothing but curses: the soul shall curse the body, that for the pleasure of that earthen dunghill she hath lost inestimable joys; and the body shall curse the soul, that for the gratifying of such sensual desires they must both suffer intolerable pains. Thus shall they meet together, not as companions, but as enemies; not as mutual helpers, but as reciprocal tormentors; not the body as the house of a tenant, but as the prison of a malefactor. The prisoner had rather lie still in his comfortless dungeon, than be brought forth into the open air, to receive his sentence of condemnation. There is horror enough in the grave, yet is it a paradise to hell.

(3.) The very assembly shall daunt them; for this judgment shall be before the whole court of heaven: in the presence of all the angels, of all the saints, like so many stars before the glorious sun, the sinner shall be brought forth naked, deformed, leprous, monstrous. Then the proud harlot, that so admired her own beauty, and did set one hour's fruition of it at a thousand crowns, shall appear more

foul than any gipsy, in respect of those whom for gipsies she once despised.

(4.) Satan's accusation shall distract them, because they know not what to answer. Thus will he plead; O just Judge! I never did this sinful man the least good turn, I never endured the least pain for his sake; yet still he bore a nimble ear to my directions, and a willing heart to execute all my devices: how perfectly is he transformed into mine image! He knew me for his vowed enemy, yet he served me; thee for his Maker, Saviour, and best Friend, yet he rebelled against thee. For him, thou hast done much good, and suffered much evil; thou hast opened the treasures of heaven to bless him, yea, opened thine own side, and shed that precious blood to save him; yet he hath turned all that grace into wantonness, all that mercy into contempt. Nor is Satan the sole accuser of the ungodly; but all the sins they have done shall be so many devils against them. Yea more, all the creatures, which they have either not used to good, or abused to evil, are bound over to this sessions, to join in their indictments against them.

(5.) The very goodness of the Judge shall make to the further aggravation of their wretchedness. When he shall ask their perverse consciences, what they ever saw in him worthy of contempt? what want, either of perfection in himself, or of liberality towards them, did they ever find? What though I became poor? it was to make you rich. What though they stripped me naked? it was to clothe you with my garments. What though I died? it was to give you life. Would you despise my humility, who only therefore admitted it, to bring you to glory? Just cause shall they have to mourn before him, who have so ungratefully sinned against him. The covetous churl shall mourn before that Judge, who despised all worldly riches. The proud shall mourn before him, that was both the Teacher and Example of humility. The ambitious aspirer to greatness shall mourn before him, that refused it when it was offered him. The drunkard shall mourn before him, who, to expiate his intemperance, had a draught of gall and vinegar. The malicious and revengeful shall mourn before him, who did put up both contumelies and blows with patience. Whatsoever the Judge hath suffered in himself, he will commiserate in others; but what he hath ever detested to do, he will not forbear to punish. He will say to such as have been patiently miserable; You have been hungry, so was I; you have been persecuted, so was I; you have been scandalized, so was I; you have been killed, so was I. But to the rest; You have been uncharitable, so was not I; you have been proud, so was not I; you have been rebellious, covetous, luxurious, profane, intemperate; such I never was myself, when I was a mortal man, such I will not pardon now I am an immortal Judge. Most men are now rather afraid of miseries than of sins; yet miseries, not sins, shall find pity at the day of judgment.

(6.) The horror of the sentence shall confound them; "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire," Matt. xxv. 41. Few words, but full of bitterness. "Depart from me," those are the words of separation; "ye cursed," the words of malediction; "into everlasting fire," the words of desolation; "prepared for the devil and his angels," the words of doleful exemplification. Depart from thee, O Christ? why thou art all sweetness, all joy, all peace, all blessedness, All in all; therefore to depart from thee is the universal loss of all. Thou art the greatest good, therefore to be deprived of thee is the greatest evil. This sentence is intolerable and irre-

vocable. First, intolerable: if Belshazzar was so confounded at a temporal doom, which reached but to the loss of his life and kingdom, Dan. v. 6; what is it to lose eternal life, and the kingdom of heaven! When Christ was to be judged, he said but, "I am he," and his apprehenders were stricken down with the word, John xviii. 6: how shall they be able to stand before him when he comes to judge, and shall say, I am he; he, whom you have contemned, abused, persecuted, crucified, by your obstinate rebellious? How will they look then? Lo, these are the men that neither regarded the Lord's promises nor trembled at his judgments, and now they are confounded at his sentence. Secondly, it is irrevocable: here can be no appeal, for there is no higher court, John v. 27. And whither should they go to complain? To God, whose Spirit they have grieved? to the angels, whose ministry they have abused? to the saints, whose righteous souls they have vexed? Alas, there is no umpire when God and man are at odds, Job ix. 33. There can be no writ of error to reverse the judgment: but as Isaac said of Jacob, I have blessed him, and he shall be blessed; so will the Lord conclude upon the reprobates, I have cursed them, and they shall be cursed. This is a time of punishment, not of pardon. When we persuade men to work out their salvation, by mortifying their sensual lusts, by abridging their voluptuous appetites, by a peremptory and resolute denying of themselves, that so they may enter into heaven by the strait gate; they answer us with our Master's flinching followers, "This is a hard saying," John vi. 60: but did they consider that final sentence upon the neglect of this, "Go, ye cursed, into everlasting fire," they would find that that were a hard saying indeed. "To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts," Heb. iii. 7, 8; otherwise at that day your hearts shall melt at the voice you would not hear: for they shall tremble at the voice of his condemnation, that have shut their ears at the voice of his exhortation.

The uses. 1. This convinceth all unbelief, all hesitation concerning the certainty of this day of judgment. The devils believe and tremble: are there any Christians that come short of the faith of devils? They object to Christ, "Art thou come to torment us before our time?" Matt. viii. 29. There is no time wherein those evil spirits are not tormented; there is a time when they expect to be tormented yet more. They knew that the last assizes are the prefixed term of their full execution; and this they also then understood not to be yet come. Though they knew not when the day of judgment should be, (a point conceded from the glorious angels of heaven,) yet they knew when it should not be; and therefore can say, before the time. Even the very lost spirits confess, and fearfully attend, a set day of universal sessions. They believe less than devils, that either doubt of or deny that day of judgment and final retribution.

2. This teacheth all men to be afraid of this day. When a king comes in state, and with royal equipage, into a city of his kingdom, there to solemnize his nuptials, or to be feasted by his subjects, he salutes some, he graceth others, he looks and speaks cheerfully to all; but when he comes against a city of outlaws, that have shaken off the yoke of allegiance, and fortified themselves within the walls of rebellion, then fury sparkles from his eyes, death and destruction flameth from his sword. The first coming of Christ was to take a bride, and therefore he appeared like a bridegroom, kind and gracious to all, with angels singing his nuptial anthems; but his next coming will be against traitors, when his coun-

tenance shall be as a flaming fire, and pity shall be hid from his eyes. When the Pharisees brought the adulteress before Christ, he held his peace, but he wrote on the ground, John viii. 6. God now is silent, and we think all safe; but he still writes up all our arrears against this day of audit. When the law was given to Israel, Moses comforted them; "Fear not, for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before you," Exod. xx. 20. What a charge was this! Fear not, and yet fear. Indeed this glorious appearing is dreadful, while the Lord gives his law; but fear not this so much as that second appearing, when he shall call for an account of this law.

3. Let us admire that wonderful patience of God, that to wicked men and spirits, respites the utmost of their torment, and forbears it to the day of judgment. He might upon the first instant of the fall of angels, have indicted on them the greatest extremity of his vengeance. He might upon the first sins of our youth, yea, of our nature, have swept us away, and given us our portion in that fiery lake: he stays a time for both. Yet so much doth his mercy exceed to us lost men over it did to the lost angels, that he affords us not only a delay of punishment, but a fair conveniency of utter prevention; which to the evil spirits is altogether denied. They do suffer, they must suffer; and though they have now deserved to suffer all they must, yet they must once suffer more than they do.

4. What would a man give for a sure friend at that day? One good friend is a good conscience; and happy is he that hath that friend in a corner; for when all the corners of the world shall be on fire, this shall stand forth to plead for him. But the best friend of all, and without whom we can have no friend at all, is the Judge himself. To make him on our side, let us now think no pains too great, no prayers too fervent. Let us trample under foot these sinful vanities; and shake them off quickly, as Paul did the viper into the fire; lest into the fire those vipers shake us. Let us prostrate ourselves before Christ in the lowest degree of sorrow and shame, with the same confusion wherewith an adulterous wife would in her penitence present herself to her injured husband. Pour we out our tears at his feet, and say, Lord, though we be full of impiety, yet thou art more full of pity: if we confess the one, wilt thou therefore deny the other? If our sins be greater than they ought, yet thy mercies are not less than they were wont. It could be no goodness in us, that procured thee to make us, but even thy love. It was no merit in us, that did win thee to redeem us, but even thy mercy. Sweet Jesus, let that love which moved thee to make us, move thee also to save us; let that mercy which won thee to die for us, win thee also to save our life. It is late enough, but yet not too late, to call for mercy; and why should we languish away in silence? As it is impossible that Christ should forget the passions which he suffered, so it is not credible that he should not have compassion on us for whom he suffered.

VERSE 8.

But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

THAT atheistical dotage of the world's eternity being sufficiently refuted, our apostle proceeds to satisfy

and remove a scruple, which might arise in some better persuaded conscience. If the Maker of this world hath determined an end unto it, why is it so long deferred? why are the wicked allowed so large a space of time to domineer over the righteous? It is answered, Though this space seem long to them, that measure the length of time by the sharpness of their affliction, as minutes seem hours, and days months, to the miserable; yet it is not so with God, to whom all things are present; who hath neither beginning nor ending, but is the beginning and end of all things. If we be sick, and the physician promise to visit us to-morrow with his best relief, with what a tedious longing do we expect his presence! When we have a long journey to go, with what weary paces do we measure the way, pacing every step with a furlong, and extending every furlong to a mile! Our imagination makes every day of our sorrow appear like Joshua's day, when the sun stood still in Gibeon. The summer of our delight is too short; but oh the winter of our affliction goes slowly off. We cannot consider time, otherwise than by numbering of days and years: to-day, we speak of yesterday, and to-morrow; all these are as one moment to God. The first man that ever was, and the last man that ever shall be, is now as present to God as our living selves. He that stands upon the bank of a river, sees only the passing stream; but another upon a high tower, sees the water past and coming, as easily as the present. Time lies asleep before God, and with one glance of his eye he beholds all parts of it.

Could we but comprehend what eternity is, this mystery would be plain unto us. This life is preserved by feeding, digesting, sleeping, exercise: all which require the expense of time. Eternal life thinks of these temporary passages, as of a very dream. The dead body of a man lies buried in the earth, moulders to dust, and knoweth nothing; yet when he riseth at the last day, he will think he hath scarce slept an hour. Had he lived all this while upon the earth, and seen the generations of men succeeding one another, the innumerable multitudes rising and falling in this space, he would have judged it a great while. To our eternal Creator, all things are present; one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. For method, instead of a curious distribution, I will orderly raise such conclusions and observations, as are willingly colligible from the text.

"Beloved." This evidence of his love is used as a preparation to his lesson. No doubt, St. Peter wished the conversion of those unbelievers, who contradicted his holy doctrine: but these better informed souls, under his charge, were far more dear unto him; to whom he was tied in a higher bond than that of nature, even the grace of Jesus Christ: these he calleth his beloved. You cannot esteem it a point forced, or altogether begged at the door of my text, if I touch a little upon that question, concerning the degrees of charity; for as we are bound to love all men, so (with our apostle) a greater measure of love is due to some men. Charity looks to the preservation of three things; piety to God, purity in ourselves, equity to others. There be different degrees, but still it is the same charity. God must be loved above all, thyself next, and then thy neighbour; and him "as thyself." Luke x. 27. *As* sometimes imports a likeness, not a truth: in the psalm, righteousness is as the wings of a dove. Sometimes a truth rather than a likeness: "We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father," John i. 14. Sometimes both: God manifested his love to us, as to children. Although not the same measure of love, yet the same affection of the person

loving. (August.) The objects of charity have their degrees; as it is said, That is to be loved which is above us, viz. God; that which is within us, our own soul; that which is next to us, the soul of our neighbour; that which is beneath us, our own bodies, and those of other men. A man is to love himself both with the former and greater charity; but it must be understood in good things of the same rank: for otherwise, he must love his brother's soul before his own body. And that same, "thy neighbour as thyself," is of quality, not of equality. Friends have their due places in charity, and their love is often great, as was David's and Jonathan's. Yet is it not allowable in love, one friend to die for another. If in a shipwreck, one having a plank gives it away to his friend, and perisheth himself, he is guilty of self-homicide. No man must let the tenant out of the tenement, till God the Landlord call for it. This is not to love another as thyself, but more than thyself: yet to save a soul, love bids us venture a body.

If a man curse his father or mother, he was to suffer death for it; not so for cursing another: therefore we are not bound to love all alike. A man is to love his wife more than his child: he is tied to his child with a natural bond, to his wife with a sacramental bond. Howsoever the Romists disgrace wedlock, yet we appeal from them as not competent judges. Men ought to love their children above their parents; according to that of Paul, Parents lay up for their children, not children for their parents, 2 Cor. xii. 14. Greater reverence belongs to parents, greater love to wife and children. As Elkanah said to Hannah, "Am not I better to thee than ten sons?" 1 Sam. i. 8. We must love the tree better than the fruit: the wife is the dearest. "A man shall leave his father and mother, and cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh," Gen. ii. 24. Therefore is the wife put in the highest gradation by Moses: If any shall tempt thee to idolatry, be it neighbour, kinsman, brother, father, or the wife of thy bosom, the nearest to thine heart, thou shalt not consent, Deut. xiii. 6—8. The nearer the jar or breach of love, the more grievous: betwixt neighbour and neighbour, bad; betwixt brother and brother, worse; betwixt man and wife, worst of all.

Among all these degrees of love, that of the good pastor to his flock hath not the lowest place. Those children cannot but be dear unto us, of whom we have been the instrumental and ministerial fathers, to beget them to Christ, of the immortal seed, Gal. iv. 19; they are our beloved. Infants cannot help themselves, therefore God hath lent them the feet of others, and the arms of others, to bring them to the holy sacrament, Matt. xix. 13; the tongues of others to covenant for them, wherein they make their proxy-vows; and it were unjust in us to deny them those helps of charity. Some deeds of love are *actus innocentia*, acts of innocence, to do no harm; others, *actus beneficentia*, acts of beneficence, to do good. Job was so far from rejoicing at the destruction of his hater, that he did open his door to the stranger, Job xxxi. 29, 32. St. Paul saith that "love is the fulfilling of the law," Rom. xiii. 10. First, because without this the love of God may be dissembled, and falsely professed. Next, because by this our love to God is expressed, and our obedience to the law manifested. We are not commanded to love every thing in every man, no more than our apostle did love their infidelity, to whose souls he wished felicity. I am bound to love another's flesh, not his fleshliness; his body, not his bodily corruption. Are pagans no neighbours to us? Yes, every man is a neighbour. Even beasts, though they be not neighbours, are yet of or belonging to neighbours, and within the com-

pass of our charity. There is the person to whom we wish well; and that wherein we wish them good. May we have charity to the damned in hell? No, there may not be so much as sorrow for them, but rather joy in the justice of God. They are creatures of God naturally, but they are not so morally. No charity comes out of hell, therefore no charity must descend into hell. But the devils do us some good; for while they assault us with temptations, and afflict us with crosses, they in effect help us to crowns. Yea, but this is not from the intention of the devils, but from the providence of God: thus *jurat vel ab hoste doceri*, i. e. it is profitable to be taught even by an enemy; yet still no thanks to Satan, no charity to that enemy.

To conclude this point: charity is a new commandment, the sum of the commandments, the most excellent grace, the propriety of Christians. There is *amor* (love) among beasts, *dilectio* (esteem) among men, *charitas* (charity) among Christians; that is their peculiar. All other virtues may offend in the excess: a man may be over-just, over-wise, too humble, too patient; but he can never be too charitable. No man's charity is perfect upon earth, because it may be increased; but that which is perfect, admits of no augmentation. "He that feareth is not made perfect in love," 1 John iv. 18. Some have affirmed, that charity was more perfect in Paul, than in Adam before his fall. It might be so in regard to duration, not in regard to real perfection. As Demosthenes said of pronunciation or eloquence, that it was all the points of rhetoric; so charity is all the parts of religion. Faith and hope do ourselves good, charity spreads to others. Faith and hope, like the ship, bring the passenger to heaven, but then go no farther; charity dwells with him for ever. It hath a glorious reward; yet the reward may be the exciting, not the final cause. Love was a god, among the heathen; God is love, saith the Christian.

If charity be a lamp in common persons, it must be a bright star in the breast of divines. Such a jewel was in the heart of Paul, more precious than all the stones in the breastplate of Aaron, that he wished to be anathematized for his brethren, Rom. ix. 3. He was more afflicted that they should not be saved, than that he himself should perish, says one: sure they were his beloved. He wept for the enemies of Christ's cross, Phil. iii. 18: no one so much wept over his own sins, as Paul did over the sins of others. For this love, Christ prepared our apostle, by his threefold question, John xxi. 15—17: "Lovest thou me?" If thou dost, "feed my sheep." Doth not the same God invert that speech now to the people: Love you me? If you do, feed my shepherds. The sheep are well provided for spirituals, but the shepherds are discouraged for the want of temporals. In love to you, we wear out our days, and weary out our lives; cannot you, in love to us, minister of your superfluities? You give your servants meat, that they may do your work; and shall your minister be out of heart, through defect of maintenance? The rabbins have a traditional conceit, that Abel or Seth, or some of those holy patriarchs, burning their sacrifices on the ground, did melt the gold and silver that was in the superficial veins of the earth; which they perceiving to be useful for commerce, did so employ it: as therefore it was found out in the service of God, to the service of God let it return. Let our painful diligence, and your thankful beneficence, be real arguments and mutual testimonies of our love to each other, that we may all be blessed with the love and favour of Jesus Christ.

"Be not ignorant of this one thing." Here is an antithesis, in respect of those unbelievers mentioned

ver. 5: They are willingly ignorant of this; but he not you so. He that hath tasted and digested the sweet juice of knowledge, would be ignorant of nothing. But it is dangerous to be ignorant of that, whereof the knowledge is necessary. An imposthume bred secretly and insensibly in the body, is as perilous as an outward ulcer, seen and medicined. The day goes away never the less speedily because a blind man does not see the sun. He that travels securely without mistrust of thieves, may yet fall into their clutches. Ignorance of our danger is so far from saving us, that it exposeth us unprepared to ruin.

"Of this one thing." What so special a thing is that? "That one day is with the Lord as a thousand years." Why, is there such an absolute necessity of this knowledge? May not a man be ignorant of that, and yet be saved? No, for it is a familiar expression of the eternity of God; and he that is ignorant of the nature of God, is out of the way to salvation. Indeed his majesty is so great, that no man can behold it and live; the very angels cover their faces when his glory passeth by, Isa. vi. 2. Naturally we are prone to fashion God to some form of our own; and according to our conception of some glorious creature or admirable light, or what other image best pleaseth our fancy, such we imagine him: for we are all born idolaters. These gross conceits must be suppressed; and with Jacob, we must bury all our strange gods under the oak of Shechem, before we set up God's altar at Bethel. Let us banish all mental representations, as incorporeal images, and conceive of him simply, purely, spiritually; as of an infinite, omnipotent, and eternal Being; without form, without matter, without composition, without all limit of thoughts; whose wisdom is his justice, whose justice is his power, whose power is his mercy; whose wisdom, justice, power, mercy, is himself. We can adore, we cannot comprehend. He is good without quality, great without quantity, everlasting without time, present every where without place, containing all things without extent, and ordering all things without trouble. We must think of him, as one not to be thought of; at which height let us stay, and be content to wonder in silence; otherwise we shall lose ourselves in his infiniteness. Howsoever, though we cannot conceive of him as he is, let us never conceive of him as he is not. It is observable, that when God did reveal his glory to men, he did first exanimate them. So Daniel was enervated, Dan. x. 8, John fell down as dead, Rev. i. 17, the apostles were cast into an ecstasy, Matt. xvii. 6. In that terrible demonstration of the Divine power, Elijah wrapped his face in his mantle, and stood in the entering in of the cave, 1 Kings xix. 13: his obedience drew him forth to the mouth of the cave, his fear still hides his head. Had there not been much courage in the prophet's faith, he had not stood out these afflictments, the fore-runners of that awful presence, though with his face covered. The very angels do no less, before that all-glorious Majesty, than veil themselves with their wings. Far be it from us once to think of that infinite and omnipotent Deity without a humble awfulness. Paul was so transported with his rapture, that he could not tell whether his body was about him or not, 2 Cor. xii. 2. He had once said, I do what I would not; but now, I do what I know not.

"Be not ignorant of this one thing." This binds us all to a holy diligence, whereby we may fill our hearts with the knowledge of God. Lactantius saith, It is knowledge to know God, it is virtue to worship him: in the former consists wisdom, in the latter righteousness. There was in Paradise a tree of knowledge of good and evil, of which our first pa-

rents were forbidden to eat, Gen. ii. 17. Either sacramentally, because by it they might know how good it was to obey, to disobey how evil; or experimentally, because the event so fell out: as they were called, The waters of strife, because there was strife about them. Numb. xx. 13. Let us study to know good, the knowledge of evil will come fast enough. Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, nor the mighty in his strength, nor the rich in his wealth: but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he knoweth me, saith the Lord, Jer. ix. 23, 24. Why, the wicked know him, the devils know him; they believe and tremble; they have a kind of belief, therefore they have knowledge. But the knowledge that saves us, is more than a bare apprehension of God: it knows his power, and therefore fears him; knows his justice, and therefore serves him; knows his mercy, and therefore trusts him; knows his goodness, and therefore loves him. I do not mean a comprehensive knowledge of God's infiniteness; for so he only knows himself: and when with that philosopher, we have taken a seven-nights' time to consider of it, we may ask a fortnight more; and at the fortnight's end, a month; and be at our wits' end at the world's end, before we can make a satisfying answer; otherwise than his was, That the longer he thought of it, the more difficult he found it.

But knowledge to the Christian, is like his soul to his body; a kind of all in all. As it quickens, it is life; as it resolves, it is will; as it thinks, it is mind; as it knows, it is understanding; as it deliberates, it is judgment; as it remembers, it is memory; as it judgeth, it is reason; as it desires, it is affection; as it breathes, it is spirit: as it feels, it is sense. So knowledge concurs to every grace: "They that know thy name will trust in thee," Psal. ix. 10; so it is faith. Know the Lord, and tremble before him; so it is fear. Abraham knew God and called himself dust and ashes; so it is humility. They that know Christ, will become new creatures, Eph. iv. 21; so it is sanctity. The faithful know Christ, and relieve his poor members, Matt. xxv.; so it is charity. Be wise, know the Lord, and serve him, Psal. ii. 10, 11; so it is all piety. I have determined to know nothing among you, but Christ crucified, 1 Cor. ii. 2; so it is all Christianity. Let us know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent; and so it is eternal life, John xvii. 3. As feeling is inseparable to all the organs of sense; the eye sees and feels, the ear hears and feels, the palate tastes and feels, the nostril smells and feels: so knowledge is involved in every grace; faith knows and believes, charity knows and loves, patience knows and suffers, temperance knows and abstains, humility knows and stoops, repentance knows and mourns, obedience knows and does, confidence knows and rejoices, hope knows and expects, compassion knows and pities, thankfulness knows and praiseth the blessed name of God. As there is a power of water in every thing that grows; it is fatness in the olive, sweetness in the fig, cheerful wine in the grape, strength in the oak, tallness in the cedar, redness in the rose, whiteness in the lily: so knowledge is in the hand obedience, in the knee humility, in the eye compassion, in the mouth benediction, in the head understanding, in the heart charity, in the whole body and soul piety. How miserably are they deceived, that think they can find the way to heaven blindfold: as if holiness were the daughter of ignorance! Alas, it will be more possible for them, and more easy unto them, to weigh the fire, or to measure the wind, or call again the day which is past, or recover the verdure of the withered grass, than to get salvation without knowledge. If there be such an answer to such as have

known Christ, and so known him as to have prophesied in his name, as an I know you not, Matt. vii. 22, 23; how will he pour out his indignation among the heathen, that know not his name, Psal. lxxix. 6; and in flaming fire take vengeance on those that know not God! 2 Thess. i. 8. But let us know him, that we may love him; and love him, that he may both know and love us in Jesus Christ.

"Be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day," &c. Our apostle here bends his full artillery against the despisers of the Deity: they are not only ignorant, but wilfully ignorant; and so far from knowing God aright, that they will not confess him at all. Light itself is so dim, that they cannot see it; and themselves are so far from themselves, that they cannot discern themselves. God is light, so saith the Truth: and their souls are themselves, so saith their philosophy. They and their souls are strangers: as he in Marial complained of his sullen neighbour; Through the whole city, there is no one so near to me, and yet so far from me. Like our pair of eyes, which easily see all foreign objects, never see one another. O wonder! that this great Light from heaven, able to dispel all the powers of darkness, should not make the scales of malicious ignorance to fall from their eyes. Now their quickest sense is too slow to desery, one day their slowest will be quick enough to feel, that there is a God. Do they live, without a soul? Can their temperature, consisting of the four elements, subsist of itself one moment? Of dead, added to dead, no life can arise; as of nothing, multiplied by nothing, will never arise something; millions of eiphers will not so much as raise one unit. They must needs find a capacity in themselves, which distinctly, and in a moment, can present them with the heavens moving, the stars shining, the fire mounting, the air piercing, the sea swelling, the earth resting, gems glistening, varieties entertaining their thoughts. By their own rule, every body is so limited, that it cannot contain a thing bigger than itself. They are very little, and the world is exceeding great: how then can this great be comprehended in that little? The body cannot be thus capacious, therefore it must be a soul. While they are living, there is a thing within them, that waxeth as the body waneth; and is wisest to prescribe, when the bones and sinews are weakest to execute. It may be, ere night this tenant departs, and then that earthy bulk is no more able to grow, speak, or move, than a dull stone. Cannot this soul within them get so much credit of them, as to believe they have a soul? The very natural could feel with one hand that he had another.

But say they, we talk of God and a soul, but they could never see either. Nothing will sink into our gallant infidels' heads, that cannot be seen with their eyes, or felt with their fingers. They cannot see a God, the Fountain of all natures, in so clear a glass, as the mirror of all creatures. Why should not a work so wonderful prove an Author as skilful? We are now in a temple, and we never can think that an infant's wit, or a child's hand, did build it. Can we behold a world so admirable, for the capacity, majesty, firmness, use, order, and motion of it; and not find the track of Omnipotence in that firmness, of infiniteness in that capacity, of glory in that majesty, of goodness in that use, of wisdom in that order, of life in that motion of it.

Were one of these politic depose-Gods an ingenious alchemist, and should show us one of his rarest extractions; if we should judge it the distillation of some pedler aqua-vitæ man, would he not tax us with being an ignoramus? And yet shall this man observe a heaven, abounding in variety of influence,

managed by a consort of motions, thwarting and yet not disturbing one another? shall he tread upon an earth, which yields bread to strengthen him, wine to comfort him, gold to enrich him, drugs to heal him, wonders to astonish him? shall he sail upon a sea, which is a humour naturally spreading, and see it surging above the solid earth, without superinundation? and not acknowledge a God to be the Maker and moderator of this heaven, the confirmer of this earth, the controller of this sea? The earth, water, air, are huge elements: who overawes them to give their substance, moisture, and breath, to the nourishing of little plants and herbs? Is it not God? Who overrules the fierce and sturdy beasts, to yield their backs to serving, and their lives to feeding weak, little man? Is it not God? Could the greater be so subdued to the less, without an umpire of unimpeachable right, unmatchable power, unsearchable wisdom? The prince hath a power over the land and life of his subject; yet should he command the greater to serve the less, how ill would they brook it! Would nobles willingly condescend to serve a groom? would they fast to feed him, watch to guard him, die to save him? How then must we admire that Almighty Power, which hath commanded the heavens to serve us, the sun to give us light, the earth to give us meat, the creatures to obey us, the angels to guard us, and his own Son to die for us! Who else could compel honour to bow to baseness, learning to be taught by rudeness, power to be manacled by weakness, millions to be won by twelve, and the world to be caught by fishermen? What soul can revolve this wonderful variety, and be ignorant of the Deity?

I wonder whether these men believe that they breathe in summer as well as in winter. In summer they cannot see their own breath; but as cold grows on, it begins to appear. God's providence, and their own souls, are things of so subtle a nature, that they cannot see them during the summer of their pleasures. But when the winter of judgment comes, this will show them a God in their just sufferings; and in that soul of theirs, which they would not believe they had, they shall feel an unspeakable torment. Then shall their pained sense supply the want of their faith. Where lies all this anguish? It cannot be the aching of a head, nor the gout in a joint, nor the colic in the bowels; not a hand or leg, not a back or breast, that are thus vexed: but something so much more sensible than a mortal body, as the pains be greater than a mortal power can inflict. Their teeth have ragged with pain; yet was it ease to this. They have lain under the rack of the wind or stone, and found it ease to this. That they have felt was but momentary; but, what time shall put an end to that they do feel? Surely it must be an immortal soul, that suffers these indeterminate torments. And though they feel some strange thing which eternity can inflict, yet it hath somewhat to inflict which before they never felt. Oh that man's foresight were as sharp as his sense!

No element is burdensome in its proper place: in the bottom of the sea, all the waves are no burden; out of the ocean, to carry a pitcher of water is some trouble. Within the sphere of sin, men feel no weight; out of it, the easiest is very heavy. Therefore, *Ne deleas que sentis, quia que sentis erasisti*, says Augustine; i. e. Do not so much grieve for the sins thou feelest, because those thou feelest and sorrowest thou hast escaped.

In the old law, when violence was offered to a virgin, if she cried out, she was not to die by the law; but if she cried not out, she was to be punished. When the temptations of Satan set upon the soul,

and his assaults offer her violence, if she cries, and strives, and resists, she shall not die. Sin may hang like a viper upon Paul's hand, and not poison him; it may bring a potential guilt, not an actual; or a damnable, as the school speaks, but not damnation.

Oh how happy were I, if I could work in your hearts a true sense of these things! How joyfully should I present such a soul to God! With what sweet hymns of consorted angels would heaven entertain us! But if more would come in and our company increase, how then would that spacious vault ring! How great would the joy of all be for each one's part, how full would each one make the number of all!

Uses. 1. Let us learn to know God, that we may avoid the things that offend him. Every sinner is ignorant: not that all do sin out of ignorance, but they become ignorant by reason of sin. "They shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the Lord," Zeph. i. 17. The first punishment of a sin is blindness of mind; and blindness of mind is the cause of future sin.

If a thief should lose his eye in the very act of his robbery, would not all men call this a present judgment? Can God be thought to have spared the man who has lost his heart's eye? asks Augustine. When Joseph was thrown into the pit, his brethren sat down to eat, with no more compunction than Esau, having sold his birth-right, fell to his pottage. What stranger can think of poor innocent Joseph, crying naked in that desolate and dry pit, saying that he moistened it with his tears, and not be moved? Yet his hard-hearted brethren sit them down carelessly, with the noise of his lamentation in their ears, to eat bread; not once thinking by their own hunger, what it was for Joseph to be famished to death? Covetous oppressors, after they have sold all conscience of religion for money, and laid up their poor debtors in the pits and holes of prisons, fall with as good a stomach to their dinners, as if they had never known Jesus, nor his distressed members. Put out Samson's eyes, and you may easily bind him to the mill, as the hooded hawk is bound to the perch. Have you not read the eagle's policy to kill the hart? She gets to the sand, and there rolls and involves herself, till she hath filled and laden her wings with that dusty burden; then springing up to the head of the beast, she so shakes this gathered sand into his eyes, that it blinds him: thus she claws out his eyes with her talons, and by degrees kills him. It is the devil's plot, with the dry earthly dust of these worldly things, to blind the understanding of sinners, and so to take and lead them captive at his pleasure, 2 Tim. ii. 26. Fantasy puts up the game, the affections hunt it full ery; if reason once blow the horn, we are lost. How could it be else, that men should seek for content in vanities and vexations, while they despise those precious merchandise of heaven, which can only enrich them, but that Satan shows them things that are not, as though they were; as painters draw pictures, rather according to their own imaginations, than the true nature of the things they represent? As merchants show the best of their wares, and magnify that, but conceal all the blemishes and defects; or as blind affection takes even deformity for beautiful; so to the ignorant, Satan can pass odious vices for absolute virtues. If Christ should ask us, as he did that blind man, "What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee?" we might well answer him, as he there did, Lord, that I may receive my sight, Luke xviii. 41. Till we know the Lord, we cannot be happy.

2. Let us learn to know Christ, that we may know God; for we cannot know the Father, but by the

Son, John xiv. 7. "I know my sheep, and am known of mine," John x. 14. Indeed Christ is called "the hidden manna," Rev. ii. 17. First, hidden to nature, for that could not see it till the gospel did reveal it. Secondly, hidden to unbelief, for that cannot see it though the gospel hath revealed it. "Thou, O Father, hast hid these things from the prudent," Matt. xi. 25: they are hidden to the wisest naturians. "If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost," 2 Cor. iv. 3: so it is hidden to lost and unbelieving Christians. It is not so much knowledge of the head, as of the heart, that knows Christ. He is a treasure, which many know where to find, but they will not go to the price of it: not the being, but the worth and value of him is hidden. He is not only our Teacher, but our Example; in both easy to be known. The conclusion of his gracious works was, "I have given you an example," John xiii. 15. Bear ye one another's burdens: why? so you shall "fulfil the law of Christ," Gal. vi. 2: the law not only of his precept, but of his example. Forgive one another: how? "as Christ forgave you," Col. iii. 13. Love one another: how? "as I have loved you," John xiii. 34. Be ye humble and meek: how? "Learn of me," Matt. xi. 29. Be ye patient: how? as Christ hath left you an example, 1 Pet. ii. 21. Still as we run our race, let us look unto Jesus, Heb. xii. 2. For this cause he was lifted up like the brassen serpent, that we might behold him. If a man's occasions compel him to travel in the night, he will follow him that carries the light: Christ is the Light; let us be sure to follow him, and we shall not stray in darkness. As ye have received Christ, so walk in him, Col. ii. 6: how can they walk in him, that have not received him? He that would be drawn to the life by a painter, patiently and intently sits to him: if we would be conformed to the image of Christ, let us fasten our eyes upon him, and never so much as turn our countenances to the world. The lives of the saints to the life of Christ, in regard of example, are as the writings of the fathers to the sacred Scripture. Even the stars that are obscured in the light of the sun, are profitable in his absence, to give light to the world: but what are those borrowed and glimmering sparks, to that glorious Sun of righteousness, Christ himself?

Jesus is the subject of all tongues, but not the object of all hearts: the school disputes of him, the pulpit preaches of him, profession talks of him, profane ones swear by him, few rightly know him. This Manna is near enough to their doors; But, says one, they do not gather, because they do not love it; they do not love, because they do not understand it. God meant him the public Redeemer; his life approved him openly, his death was executed openly, his resurrection was published openly, the gospel proclaims him openly, preaching manifests him openly; all these ways he is open: it is only unbelief that keeps him hidden. The kings of the earth look for allegiance in their subjects, though they never saw their faces. And the kings of Persia and Mexico were wont seldom or never to come abroad, or to be seen of the people, to beget in them a more awful dread, and greater opinion of their state and majesty. But our heavenly King exposeth himself to all: He wills to be known to all, who willed to be born for all, says a father. It is we that are blind, the sun denies not his light: God does not hide Christ from us, but we hide ourselves from Christ. The peasant in the country knows there is a king in the court; but he apprehends not his magnificence: and not knowing his person, passeth by him as a neighbour, and it may be, at their meeting, takes the way of him. In many things, familiarity breeds contempt; but here,

strangeness and ignorance hath made men so profanely insolent, that they scorn their own humour should give place to the Prince of heaven, the Son of God. Would not a man be ashamed to have the name of a physician, and be utterly ignorant of medicine? or a mechanic to be called a carpenter, and know not what belongs to a rule? What other is it for a Christian not to know the rules of Christ, the way of eternal life? Therefore do the evil persecute the good, because they are evil; and therefore are they evil, because they are ignorant. "Had the princes of this world known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory," 1 Cor. ii. 8. But as it fared with Israel in Egypt, after the indulgence of the former Pharaohs, "there arose up a new king which knew not Joseph," Exod. i. 8; persecutors, that know neither Joseph, nor Jesus, will be far from mercy. Those things which the ground naturally produceth of itself, she brings forth in abundance; but what is sown, not without much labour; because she is to those a mother, to these a stepdame. The world favours and honours her own; but the righteous are strangers to her, whom she neither knows nor respects, John xiv. 17; 1 Cor. ii. 14. There can be no love without knowledge: zeal itself will grow wild without this corrective. Iron may be hot and softened in the fire; but without the hammer it puts on no new form. A tall man upon some high turret, seems to us on the ground, scarce a boy in stature. Therefore we think nothing in heaven to be worth the having, because we grow upon earth, and all there is out of kenning. Ignorant people think that the moon is the biggest star but the sun; whereas the learned find it by demonstration to be one of the least. But Mercury, our evening star, though it seem the greatest next those former two, is in truth the least of all. The reason why they appear so big, we easily conceive, because they are so low. Things of this world, for their short lasting and often changing, are compared to the moon; whose motion is swift, and her face divers. For their plianess, they are like to Mercury, whose property is to be either good or bad, as the star is with whom he is joined. Yea, there is a third reason of similitude; for these temporal things, like those planets, show fairer because they are nearer; and bigger, because they are lower than better things. But could we get up to the top of Jacob's ladder, there to see and know our God, we should both desery the sophisticated greatness of things transitory, and the infiniteness of eternal glory.

3. Lastly, having got the knowledge of God, let us be sure to remember him. "Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth," Eccl. xii. 1. Where we have an act enjoined, "Remember;" an object presented, "thy Creator;" a time prescribed, "in the days of thy youth." Job confesseth that God did write bitter things against him, when he made him to remember the sins of his youth, Job xiii. 26; yet still in the days of our youth let us remember God. To remember, is sometimes used for consideration, Remember thy Maker; sometimes for provision, Remember thy end; sometimes for caution, Remember Lot's wife; sometimes for injunction, Remember to sanctify the sabbath: and in respect of thanksgiving; so Pharaoh's butler forgot Joseph; that is, he was not thankful to him. The Romans had their ancestors' pictures in their houses, thereby to stir them up to the imitation of their nobleness. There can be no picture of an infinite and invisible God; but there is no creature which doth not occasion us to remember him. The understanding is hardly wrought upon, therefore we have many precepts: the will is hard to tame, the affections are

stubborn to be rectified; but it is easy to remember. No seal can be set on running water, nor goodness be begotten in a forgetful hearer. There is a sensitive memory that shall perish, but the intellectual memory is the soul itself. Know, therefore, that thou mayst remember, remember that thou mayst practise. Without impression, meditation hath no ground; without meditation, impression hath no growth. God begun his law with, Remember who brought thee out of bondage: Christ instituted his holy sacrament with, Do this in remembrance of me. We had better never have known him than not remember him. The merciful and gracious Lord hath so done his marvellous works, that they ought to be had in remembrance, Psal. cxi. 4. Therefore, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits," Psal. ciii. 2. Let our memory be the gallery of our souls, hung all about with the pictures and stories of God's mercies and blessings towards us. Let us remember him at all times in this our pilgrimage, and he will hear us when we pray, with that penitent thief, Lord, remember us in thy kingdom.

"One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." Divers interpreters have derived this sentence out of the psalm, "A thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past," Psal. xc. 4. If two harps be placed together, and tuned alike; when you strike a string of the one, you shall hear a unison answer of the other, by reason of the consent and harmony between them. Such an accordance hath the New Testament with the Old, being both tuned by the same Spirit, that the sound and tone of the one is rendered by the other; and it is true of them, what was fancied of those twins, they neither frown nor smile but both together. David and Peter wrote in distant times, and with several pens; yea, they were the several pens of the same Holy Ghost; yet (without wonder) they record the same thing. Face doth not more answer to face in the water, than apostle doth answer to prophet in the Scripture.

Out of this place, and that other in the psalm, have been collected dangerous tenets. First, that the world shall last but six thousand years, as it was made in six days; because a thousand years with the Lord is but as one day. The inventors of this opinion I take to be the Hebrews; who have curiously observed, that Aleph is six times repeated in the first verse of Genesis, for the beginning of the world; out of which they strangely pick the duration of it, which they limit to six thousand years. Those rabbins, Solomon and Isaac, are principally taxed for it. Among the ancients, Hierome, Lactantius, Justin, Hilary, Irenæus: of the later authors, Picus, Mirandula, Franciscus, Venetus, Galatinus; to omit Trismegistus, the Talmuds, the Sibyls. But why should men presume to find out that which God hath hidden from the angels? Secondly, there is an opinion, that because it is said of Adam, Thou shalt die in the same day thou eatest of the forbidden fruit; a day is not there to be taken strictly, according to our account of days, but as it is with God, before whom a thousand years are but as a day; and because Adam died within a thousand years after, therefore he died the same day. (Justin.) God indeed appointed to Ezekiel forty days for forty years, each day for a year, Ezek. iv. 6; but that he appointed Adam a thousand years for a day, is a strange and strained collection. So the papists would have that thief to pass from the cross into purgatory, notwithstanding that promise, "To-day shalt thou be with in paradise;" because a thousand years with God are but one day. But it is not said,

they are one day, but *as* one day; and in the sight of God, that is, in respect of eternity. But my purpose is not to trouble you with these nice impertinences. I come to some observations and conclusions.

1. Time is that inferior parent and devourer of things: time gave them composition, and time will bring them to dissolution. Heaven and earth shall wax old with time: the world began with time, and time with it. Whatever is set in motion, is set in motion during time. That which changeth, had a first, and will have a last. The world changeth from spring to summer, and then to autumn, till at last winter bury all in death, but that which shall be restored in the resurrection. *Χρόνος κτίσας σὸς*; i. e. Time is a wise workman: nay, but rather, He was a wise workman that made time. We must distinguish of precedencies; what is first in eternity, what in time, what in election, what in original. In eternity God goes before all; in time, the flower is before the fruit; in election, the fruit is before the flower; in original, the sound is before the song. If we ask what is first? God, the Ancient of days. Under God and his glory, what appears most beautiful? The world. What is greatest? Place. What is swiftest? The mind. What is strongest? Necessity. What is wisest? Time, the inventor of arts. Time was, when ignorance and blind opinion did deify Æsculapius, for drawing of a tooth; and Vulcan, for making a lock, for he knew not how to make a clock: there was no clock in Rome about three hundred years before Christ, if we believe antiquity. But now time hath perfected skill, discovered new worlds; found out the artillery of guns, those demolishing engines; invented printing, a rare means to disperse knowledge, and opened unto us the mysteries of nature. It is called the parent of truth: yet this beginner is also a waster. *Tempus edax rerum*; i. e. Time is the consumer of all things: therefore is Saturn painted eating up his own children. Time saw the creation, shall see the dissolution, together with all the changes and chances in the proceeding; yet I will tell you what time never saw: It never saw the righteous forsaken, nor their seed begging their bread, *Psal. xxxvii. 25.* It never saw God forget his promise, nor Christ lose his purchase. It never saw the soul of a believer perish. We may truly say of this great work of our redemption, borrowing and altering a little the words of the heathen poet:

—*neque dæmonis ira, nec ignis,
Non ferrium poterit, nec edax abolere vetustas.*

Nor fire nor rage that demons e'er employ,
Nor sword, nor withering time, can this destroy.

2. God is the Creator, Disposer, and Preserver of time; who spans the world in his fist, and measures the waters in the hollow of his hand, *Isa. xl. 12:* who brings forth Mazzaroth in his season, binds the sweet influences of Pleiades, and looseth the bands of Orion, *Job xxxviii. 31, 32.* It is not for us to know the times, which the Father hath put in his own power, *Acts i. 7.* He made time, the motion of heaven, to measure it, hours, days, and years to distinguish it: only he can give time, that is above all time. Man may shorten thy natural term some years, he cannot lengthen it one hour. The priest may do a thing which he cannot undo; he can tie a matrimonial knot, which he cannot loosen. The prince may undo a thing which he cannot do; he can dissolve the marriage knot between the soul and the body, which being undone, he cannot tie again. Only God Omnipotent can do and undo, divide and reunite, kill and give life, increase our time or lessen

it. He is the Father of eternity, and Lord of time. So he created it; "Let them be for seasons," *Gen. i. 14:* so he renewed it; "Summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease," *Gen. viii. 22:* so he continues it; There is a time for all things, *Ecc. iii. 1;* unto the dissolution of the world. For time had no being before, nor shall have after. Not before; therefore the Scripture says, Before the world, and, Before the foundation of the world. Not after; for the angels swears, There shall be no more time, *Rev. x. 6.* In that city, there shall be no night, but everlasting day, which is eternity. What needs any generation, where is no corruption? or distinction of that by time, which admits of no accident, no permutation? "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come," *Rev. i. 8.* Some think these three times belong severally to the three Persons: because the Father is called 'O', "I am," *Exod. iii. 14:* the Son, He that was; "In the beginning was the Word," *John i. 1:* the Holy Ghost, which is to come; The Comforter shall come, *John xvi. 7.* But indeed every term belongs to every Person; and all time, past, present, or future, is only the Lord's. Therefore I must say with the apostle, Doth any man lack time? as he, Doth any man lack wisdom? let him ask it of God, *Jam. i. 5.* If men want silver, let them ask the rich; if counsel, let them ask the learned; if help, let them ask the strong; if countenance, let them ask the noble; but with time none can supply them but God. Yea, and let us return all time to his glory. He is our first letter, Alpha, let us begin with him; he is our last, Omega, let us end with him.

3. Our whole life, be it never so long, compared with God, or presented to measure with eternity, is so short as if it were nothing. The longest liver reached not to a thousand years, and that is not a day unto God. "Thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end," *Psal. cii. 27.* "Are thy days as the days of man?" *Job x. 5.* He is called, The living God: it is an ancient and usual title to the Almighty, especially when he would disgrace an unworthy rival. As St. Paul in his speech to the Lystrians, opposes to their vain idols "the living God," *Acts xiv. 15.* I need not make man worse than he is, nor his condition more miserable than it is; but could I, though I would? As a man cannot flatter God, nor overpraise him; so he cannot injure man, nor undervalue him. He is "made to possess months of vanity," *Job vii. 3.* Paul calls the whole time of our life, to-day. Long life is but a summer's day; short life, a winter's day; troublesome life, a gloomy day. But it should seem, a day is too long a word for it; therefore Isaiah calls it a moment, "hide thyself for a moment," *Isa. xxvi. 20:* and David, nothing, "mine age is as nothing," *Psal. xxxix. 5.* The several labourers that were called into the vineyard at several hours, received an equal reward; because a thousand years to God are but as one day. The prophet Haggai, foretelling the coming of Christ almost five hundred years beforehand, calls it but "a little while," *Hag. ii. 6.* So vain a thing is man: but, As I live, is the oath of God: neither do I remember any thing, besides his holiness and his life, that he swears by. He is, he lives; and nothing is, nothing lives absolutely, but he: all other things by participation from him. In all other things, their life and they are two; but God is his own life, and the life of God is no other than the living God. And because he is his own life, he is eternal. Of such validity was the argument of Thomas against the Gentiles: Nothing ceaseth to be, but by a separation of life; and nothing can be separated from

itself: for every separation is a division of one thing from another; but the living God is a simple, absolute, and eternal Being. There is no similitude that can bear any proportion, in the illustrating of this point. A furlong is a great journey to a snail, to a horse or hound it is nothing. A hundred miles is a greater journey for a man by land, than a hundred leagues by sea. A ship with a fore-wind will reach far in a day; what is it to the voyage of the sun, that every day surrounds the world? In all these there is an intervenient necessity of place, time, and motion, which belong not to the infinite eternity of God.

4. We may read here the great difference between the Divine blessedness and our happiness in this world. All our pleasures or benefits have their times, and are denominated according to the seasons wherein they befall us. Of so poor elements is our happiness made, that time must concur to the being of it; and that we can scarce call any thing, is the something, the main thing, the essential part of our false happiness. All things are done in time; and what is time, but the measure of motion? It may seem to have three stations; past, present, and future: yet the first and the last of these are not; one is not now, and the other is not yet. And that which we call present, is not now the same that it was when we began to call it so: before we can pronounce the word present, or the monosyllable now, the present and the now is past. Well then, if this imaginary half-nothing, time, be of the essence of our felicity, how can it be durable? Time is not so. Nay, how can it be at all? Time is not so; not so, considered in any parts of it. How poor a felicity is that, which consists in a watchfulness to lay hold upon occasion; which yet is but a little piece of that which is nothing, time! And yet the best things are beholden to this nothing for all their something. For what content do we find in things out of season? Let the prince give a title of honour to a man on his death-bed, can it mitigate one pang he feels? What is the name of a lord to him, that shall not live to hear himself called so? that shall never come into the people's eyes, to receive honour from them who give it? Pleasures and possessions, presented to us out of time in our decrepit age, lose both their names and natures: they are not pleasures to us, who have lost our sense to taste them: they are not possessions to us, who are departing from the possession of them: we will soon be weary of them, when we are once weary of ourselves. Youth is the time that denominates them; the season that makes them pleasures or possessions: and when they are presented to us in an unapprehensive age, they come as a cordial when the bell rings out, as a pardon when the head is off. Thus are we bound and bounded with time; but God is eternity, and into that time never entered. For eternity is not an everlasting flux of time; but time is a short parenthesis in a long period; and eternity had been the same as it is, though time had never been at all. There is eternity, that hath neither beginning nor end; which is God himself: and there is perpetuity, that which we call everlasting life, the state of our souls in glory; this hath a time to begin in, but it shall outlive time, and be when time shall be no more. Now what a minute is the life of the most durable creature, compared to this everlastingness! What a minute is man's life, in respect of the sun's, or a tree's! The world is not a minute to eternity, man's life but a minute to the world's: occasion is but a minute to our life, and yet we scarce apprehend a minute of this occasion; we do not lay hold on this opportunity, wherein we may receive good, and become blessed.

5. I am loth to pass this point, without some useful application. God is eternal, and may do all things at his own leisure; whether it pleaseth him to do the work of a thousand years in a day, or extend the work of a day to a thousand years. But we are limited to time for all our actions; and as we are sure our life shall not reach to a thousand years, so we are not sure that it shall last out a whole day. "He that observeth the wind shall not sow," Eccl. xi. 4; but he that observeth not the time to sow, shall never reap. It is a preposterous course, while the ground is ready, the weather seasonable, the oxen in heart, the instruments at hand, to sleep; and then to begin sowing, when others are ready to reap. He that plays all summer may dance all winter, but he shall have sorry music to it. The old world had a time, while Noah preached; Sodom had a time, while Lot admonished; Pharaoh had a time, while Moses wrought wonders; Jerusalem had a time, during Christ's doctrine and miracles; the rich churl had a time, while Lazarus begged crumbs: but both they lost time and time hath lost them; for they are cast into that darkness, into which time cannot enter: it is a long night, when it will never be day. Abraham, Samuel, David, when they went about their holy businesses, rose early, Gen. xxii. 3; 1 Sam. xv. 12; Psal. lvi. 8. Christ, with his auditors, came to church early, John viii. 2. Mary came to the sepulchre early; In the first day of the week, and first hour of the day, Luke xxiv. 1. Too many defer it till the last week of their life, the last day of the week, the last hour of the day, the last minute of the hour. But let us not build upon this, that they had their peace which came into the vineyard at the eleventh hour: for it was not, as Hilary saith, a reward of work, but of mercy; his mercy that gave them, not their merit that earned them. There can be no more earnest way of getting in than knocking, nor more innocent souls than virgins: and then think there can be but small hope of that mercy at the last hour, which hath been so strange as to give no ear to so great a suit as knocking, and of so young and innocent as virgins. But it may be you stick at that singular example of the penitent malefactor, who found favour at the last, a good death the conclusion of a bad life, and went up from the cross to the crown. Do not venture on the hope of that happiness with the loss of present repentance. Athanasius says of that thief, that he was always a thief: living he was a thief, and stole from men; dying he was a thief, and stole from God. He stole from men the goods of this earth, by an injurious surreption; he stole from Christ eternal good, even the kingdom of heaven, by his humble confession. All men have not the luck to steal themselves into heaven, in spite of hell: many have the fate to cheat themselves into hell, in spite of heaven.

6. Let us be covetous of no worldly thing but time; and of this not for the duration of our pleasures, but to work out the salvation of our souls. For he that desires time to gratify the sense of his lusts, is not unlike that epicure, who wished a crane's neck to prolong the sweetness of his meats. There is no usury lawful but this; not that men should sell time to improve money, but husband time to improve grace: if otherwise, a long time shall bring but a long reckoning; for as Bernard saith, As much time as has been spent upon us, it will be required of us how it has been spent by us. When God gives us time to do the business we came for, it leaves us either without imperfection or without excuse. Neither a hair shall perish from our heads, nor a moment from our times. Redeem the time, saith St. Paul, Eph. v. 16. Many things are far-fetched and dear-bought, fit for

rich purses and curious palates; but there is a poor contemptible herb in the garden, more precious than they all, time: this we pass by in neglect, yet this is especially worth our gathering. The price of it appears in the diminution: nothing besides is of that nature, for it is diminished by addition. Every hour added to our time of life, is so much time taken from life. If a day be added to our beginning, we are by a day nearer our ending. Each step sets us forward to our graves; and we are nearer now, than when we entered the church doors. Yea, when it is past, it is past recovery. If a man lose his health, it may be recovered again by physic and diet. If he lose his goods, they may be found again; as we have heard of jewels lost in the seas, and yet brought home again in the bowels of fishes. Though he lose his life, it shall be restored him in the resurrection. Yea, some have lost the feeling of the favour of God, and found it again by repentance. Only time once lost is never to be found. We may say of opportunity, as he wrote of virginity:

Jewels once lost are found again, this never:

It's lost but once, and once lost, lost for ever.

Time goes away by minutes, therefore is not perceived: the shorter steps it taketh, the more insensibly it passeth. Therefore as it steals upon us, let us welcome it with good industry; and as it steals from us, let us send it away with a good testimony: thus though it quickly leaves us, it shall not leave us worse than it found us.

7. The narrow capacity of mortal men, wonders now it is possible for God to despatch so much business in so short a space. The last audit is called the day of judgment: a day consists but of twelve hours; what are twelve hours to try the several causes of twelve millions? as the disciples said, Here are five leaves, but what are they among five thousand? John vi. 9. Two judges have much ado to hear two hundred causes at a session: this last universal assizes shall have the appearance of all the world, and can they all be judged in one day? Yes, why not in one day as well as in a thousand years, seeing a thousand years with God is but as one day? "Are thy days as the days of man," that according to his measure thou shouldst search after sin? Job x. 5, 6. Man must take his times for doing justice; as some read that of the psalm, not disagreeing from the original, When I shall take a set time, I will judge uprightly, Psal. lxxv. 2. It was a temptation able to shake any man but a David, when he sees Saul in his cave, and hears such an argument urged by his followers: This is the day of which the Lord hath said, I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand, I Sam. xxiv. 4. The time, the place, the colour of justice, and a pretence of the promise of God, seem to carry such command, that David must be wanting to Heaven and himself, if he let slip this occasion. Malice is ever provident, and lays hold upon opportunity: that more subtle enemy of hell will lose no time, but hath great wrath, because he knows he hath but a short time, Rev. xii. 12. The priests came up by steps into the temple; the angels came down to Jacob by steps upon the ladder: but we find no stair by which God himself came to Adam in Paradise, or to Sodom in his anger; for he, and he only, is able to do all at once. Thus easy is it for him, in a day to judge the causes of many thousand years, to whom a thousand years are no more than a day.

8. He, to whom one day and a thousand years are of equal length, can make our days longer or shorter, though they seem not so to us; or make them seem longer or shorter to us, though they be the same. Joshua might be thought to command the greatest

planets of heaven to stay their courses; "Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon, and thou, moon, in the valley of Ajalon," Josh. x. 12. For Him that gave them both being and motion, to bid them stand still, is no difficulty, though the rareness deserves admiration; but for a man, that lives by the influence of the stars, while he is below on earth, to command those glorious lights in heaven, it is more than a wonder. It was not Joshua, but his faith, that did it; not by way of precept, but of prayer. God never got himself so much honour among the heathen by one day's work, when five kings and their huge armies fell together. It appeared to the Israelites a longer day than ever they saw before; but to the bleeding Amorites, a longer day than it was. Fain would they have been shadowed under the curtain of night, and still they looked when the evening should cease all pursuit: but the sun had his lesson; he must not go down, till they were all down before him; and the evening must be red with the sea of rebellious blood. The sun and moon were the ordinary gods of the pagan world; and who did not look that their standing still but one hour should be the ruin of nature? But now they shall see, there is a higher God than these; to whom they obey as servants, and must do what he will have them. He that can extend the day at his pleasure, doth no less for Hezekiah than he did for Joshua: "Shall the shadow go forward ten degrees, or go back ten degrees?" 2 Kings xx. 9; as if heaven itself lay open to his choice, and were ready either to mend his pace or retire for his confirmation. He that commanded the day a certain course of going on, doth now countermand it to a retreat. All days are alike to God; one day shall be longer than another, to satisfy the faith of his servants. Hezekiah fastens rather upon that sign which is more hard, more disagreeing from the course of nature; not without good reason. Every proof must be clearer than the thing to be proved; neither may there want a meet proportion between both. The going forward of the shadow was a motion no other than natural: the recovery of his health was against the ordinary current of nature; therefore the more difficult the sign, the surer the evidence. Now, either the sun goes back in heaven, that his shadow may go back on earth; or, no less miraculously, the shadow goes back on earth, while the sun goes forward in heaven. Indeed the prophet speaks of the shadow, not of the sun; either because the motion of the sun is best discerned by the shadow, or the motion of the shadow is led by the course of the sun. So the demonstration of this miracle was local, in the dial of Ahaz. It might be not universal, in the sensible length of the day. The retreat of the sun had made a public and noted change in the frame of nature: this particular alteration of the shadow in places limited, might satisfy no less, without a confusive mutation in the face of the world. Whethersoever, to draw the sun back together with the shadow, or to draw the shadow back without the sun, was a proof of that Divine omnipotency, with which a thousand years is but as one day. But it is probable that this miracle was not so confined; for presently upon it, the Chaldees, who were curious searchers into the secrets of nature, especially into the motions of the celestial bodies, were brought by this astronomical wonder to Jerusalem; that they might see the man for whose sake the sun forsook his place, or the shadow forsook the sun. All this doth testify, O Lord, that "the day is thine, the night also is thine; thou hast prepared the light and the sun," Psal. lxxiv. 16. Nature is forward to run her enjoined course, regular and pregnant to bring her work to perfection and light; and will not endure either the hastening or

retarding of man. She will not admit of preventions, nor anticipations, nor obligations upon her; for they are a kind of precontracts, and she will be left to her liberty: she will not be spurred, or forced to mend her pace, when she is disposed to bring forth vigorous and durable effects. We cannot make the July flower spring up in January; nor keep back the cowslip to August, nor the vermillion flowers to autumn. We cannot bid the fruits come in May, nor the leaves to stick on in December. The day will be but a day, and the night will be but a night to us; and our equinoctial comes but twice a year. But with God it is perpetual equinoctial; before whom one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

9. The hope of man is nicely and dangerously placed: it hath a snare on the right hand, presumption; and a pit on the left hand, desperation. The presuming conceit flatters a man, that he need not make such haste; one day, any one day, is enough to repent in: God is no respecter of time; but at what time soever a sinner repenteth, he shall be forgiven. I cannot but be thus far indulgent to a sinner's conversion, that though his former life hath been blemished with infinite spots, yet if he now return, and begin to wash them away in his penitent tears, all that foulness contracted in so many years shall be forgotten, as yesterday when it is past; and the Divine eye will behold him only as he is in the present state of grace, Ezek. xviii. 22. But let me not conceal from him withal, that as repentance makes the sins of a thousand years like one day, so apostasy from righteousness makes the sins of one day appear like a thousand years. The wicked heart so extenuates his malice, as if it were nothing; and esteems his sin, as Paul speaks of an idol, that "it is nothing in the world," 1 Cor. viii. 4. Philosophy says it is nothing. First, because it is a privation. Secondly, because it is an aversion. Thirdly, because it makes a man contemptible: *being* and *good* are convertible terms. But they shall find it something, when the sin of one day shall be punished with the torment of a thousand years, yea, of everlastingness. There will soon be an end of the reprobate's sinning, there shall be no end of his suffering. The least moment of time, compared with ten millions of years, (because both terms are finite, and the one a part of the other,) beareth, though a very small, yet some proportion. But one day to a thousand years on earth, is more than a thousand years to the perpetuity of hell. So long as God shall live, so long must the lost die; and when he shall cease to be happy, then they also shall cease to be miserable.

10. For some use of this meditation: Seeing all times have an equal regard with God, who spans it in his hand at once; but time is a fugitive with us, and having past the morning we are not sure to see the end of the day; let us not protract our conversion, lest we, losing our time to repent, repent for ever that we once lost our time. "Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth," Eccl. xii. 1: and "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?" Psal. exix. 9. A young man? why not rather an old man; whose hairs, if they have any left, like a white field, put him in mind that the harvest is near? Bar him of drunkenness, that, like Barzillai, cannot taste, 2 Sam. xix. 35. What should he do with music that cannot hear? Withdraw delightful objects from him, whose lookers out of the windows be darkened, Eccl. xii. 3. Let not him riot and revel out the night, that riseth at the voice of a bird, ver. 4. Load not him with the robes of pride, to whom the grasshopper is a burden. Forbid him the society of beauties, whose desire doth fail, ver. 5. Let him forsake the vanities of life, that must forsake life itself; and get

one foot into heaven, that hath the other foot already in the grave. Let him cease to be a bad man, who is already ceasing to be a man. Was not the prophet mistaken? Is it not the old man, to whom this charge is given? But to take the young man from that pleasure to which the heat of his blood invites him; to decourt young Absalom, the gallant courtier of his time; to pluck the young man from his voluptuousness, that cleaves to it as the green apple to the tree; to fetch lusty Samson from the lap of his Delilah; to strip the young man of his brave garments, pleasant companions, merry cups, proud revenges; and set him to seek humility in the dust, or tax him to the severe rule of mortification: it seems as unreasonable to desh and blood, as for a man to have meat and a stomach, and be forbidden to eat; to have fire in his blood, and be forbidden to burn: he is ready to challenge us, as Satan did Christ, that we torment him before his time, Matt. viii. 29. Either take away my youth, or grant me my pleasure. But none can be too young to amend, that is old enough to die. Ever so little a child, yet a great sinner: we are apt to sin before we are able to sin. Youth is a petulant time, that courts vanity with a passionate fondness. "Flee youthful lusts," 2 Tim. ii. 22: flee them, for they will haunt thee. Youth is prone to fall. "Remember not the sins of my youth," Psal. xxv. 7: let us remember them, that God may forget them. And what age is fitter for the service of God? Why are we called God's first-fruits, if we do not offer him the first-fruits of ourselves? They had their first-fruits, ears of corn, of loaves, and of fruits in harvest: the first were offered at Easter, the next at Whitsuntide, the third in September. Youth, middle age, old age, all must be dedicated to God. But the fruits offered in September, in old age, if none were presented before, are not acceptable to the Lord. Will he accept of our dry bones, when Satan hath sucked out the marrow? A tool that is broken in the work of the world, is not fit for God's building. Our middle age is given to ambition, our old age to covetousness; therefore in our youth let us remember our Maker. Nehemiah complained, that they laid the heaviest burden on the oldest men: how unjust are we to ourselves, when we load our most feeble old age with the greatest weight of all our holy business! Who presents a torn book to a king? The book of religious conversation, begun only in thy old age, hath the leaves torn out; God cannot read the beginning.

Some read that, "in the days of thy youth," in the days of thy choice. And shall we choose no time to serve God in, but our old age? Sure, so long as we are able to choose that, we are able to choose a better than that. He that walks in the night, is ready to suspect every bush for a thief; nothing appears in a true shape: to him that repents not till he comes to his death-bed, shadows seem substances, a sigh passeth for true repentance, a "Lord, have mercy on me," for assured forgiveness, and a little dormitory opium for a saving cordial to the soul. Say thy remorse be hearty, thy compunction bitter; yet is not this sorrow of thy soul beholden only to the pain of thy body? Hadst thou rather a sickness should bring thee to God than a sermon? Is this the physician's office, or the preacher's? If only judgment can bring us to remember God, it is but a stormy day. St. John wisheth to Gaius, that he may prosper in his health, so as his soul prospers, 3 John 2: for if the soul be lean, the marrow of the body is but water: if the soul wither, the verdure and good estate of the body is but an illusion, and the goodliest man a fearful ghost. So let us wish to the younger age, that their souls may prosper as their

bodies do, and that they may grow in grace faster than in years: otherwise, a wrinkled and deformed soul may dwell at the sign of a fair face. It is usual with luxurious sinners, to lay the imputation of all their errors upon their bodies; as if their constitution were the sole cause of all their prevarication. But he that chargeth his body with the whole discredit of the vices of his soul, is as very a fool, as he that carries his saddle to shame his horse. The pain of the body hath often been a means of good to the soul; I never knew the anguish of the soul conduce to the health of the body. Then we wisely redeem the time, when in the greatest reluctance of the body, we devoutly turn our hearts and souls to the service of our Maker.

Give me leave to explain this point by an apologue, familiar to the weakest capacity. Four travellers were returning to their own city; a day was their limitation: they must be there before night, or else, being shut out, they shall become a prey to the robbers. The first is assaulted by some ruffians, who so provoked him with uncivil language, that he draws and fights; and in that quarrel received such hurts that, for want of a surgeon, he is left behind; no city could he reach. The second meets with some boon companions, who after the preface of their drunken compliments, show him a bush that promiseth wine: this went so liberally and merrily down, that the sun was almost set before he thought of rising; then he would fain have reeled away, but neither he nor time could stand to it. The next hears of a mine of treasure by the way, but buried somewhat deep in the ground: he gets instruments, delves for it, and finds it; the more he digs the more he gets, and still the more he gets the more he digs. On a sudden it grows toward night; now he trusteth up his gold about him, and would be gone; but the burden was so heavy, that he could not travel with it, and he would not go without it. So the barred gates frustrated all hope of his entrance. The last went seriously on; and though many flattering friends still interrupted his speed, and persuaded him that he need not make such haste, he had time enough, it was but a little way home, and a great while to night; and so far importuned him, that he exchanged some words and courtesies with them, took here and there a taste of their kind offers; yet still thinking on the time, away he speeds: and make what haste he could, (though toward evening he mended his pace,) yet it was almost night before he arrived thither; and by staying a little longer, he had been shut forth for ever.

The moral is easy and useful: The city is the heavenly Jerusalem, the four travellers are four conditions of men, the contentious, the voluptuous, the covetous, and the religious; the night before which they must attain thither, is the end of their life; the gates are the opportunity of grace and mercy; the enemies that surprise them if they be shut out, are Satan and his angels. The first resolves to be at heaven by night, but trouble meets him in the form of a wicked law-broker, and puts such tricks into his head, whereby he may vex his neighbours, that he presently draws his sword, which is some writ or process, and furiously lays about him; till, having tired out all his adversaries, he wears the judge, the advocate, the attorney, and, which is most strange, his indefatigable solicitor, and makes his peripatetic profession tedious to him. The lawyer hath his term and vacation; but this man hath no term of his term, no vacation, till death serve a subpoena upon him from the star-chamber of heaven. Now perhaps he would make his peace, and be quiet; but now, alas, he must enter into everlasting disquiet, and fall

into the hands of worse furies than ever before he either found, made, or employed. Or perhaps the whimsies of a factious sectary have crept into his head; and then he will quarrel with his brethren, abuse the word of his Father, and scratch the face of his own mother; neither sparing God nor his church, though he forfeit all their blessings.

The next is the profane wanton, and he would also be saved; but temptation meets him in the shape of pleasure; which so bewitcheth him with her painted beauty, that he thinks her all sweetness. Not unlike Issachar, Gen. xlix. 14, 15, he sees the land pleasant, and he even lays him down, couching like an ass between the two burdens of excess and uncleanness. *Alca, vino, Venus*, i. e. play, wine, and love, is the tripartite division of his life. Time remembers him by his looking-glass, and diseases pinch him by the arm, to break off his method of sensuality and viciously sins; but he will not believe them; pleading against them, yea, rather against himself, that his bones are full of marrow, his roses are not withered, old age and he are strangers, he hath nothing to do with time. But time will have something to do with him, and sends him that unwelcome messenger, sickness, to warn him of the near approach of impartial death. Now he calls for his physician, repentance; he would leave all vanity, and begin his journey. But alas, his time is short, and the way is long; there is no hope of his seasonable arrival.

The third is the covetous churl: And I promise you, saith he, Jerusalem is a goodly place, I will thither sure. But temptation meets him in the form of a wedge of gold; he likes it well, it dazzleth his eyes, and fires his heart with a desire to get it. He is advised to betake him to his tools, and refuse no labour for it, without which he cannot hope to obtain it. What are those engines? The mattock of oppression, to strike into the bowels of the innocent; the spade of laboriousness, wherewith he must toil and tire his own flesh; the hook of plausible attraction, to draw in cheatable customers; the rake of penurious baseness, whose teeth are always scraping together; the shovel of dissembling closeness, whereby he may accumulate and multiply his heaps and hoards; the mine of policy, to take all advantages; the petard of usury, to blow up whole estates. With these instruments he must work, starving the poor, his servants, himself: for he is good to none, worse to himself; he lives miserably, to die damnably. Old age, like dark night, comes upon him; and now he would load himself with his thick clay, Hab. ii. 6, and, if it were possible, carry it all with them. But, oh, the weight of his unjust gains sinks him down to the lowest pit! Perhaps, with some unwillingness, he would buy a little time, but he cannot tell who should sell it. If he could, yet while he goes to buy that fresh oil for his old lamp, the bridegroom is gone in, and the door is shut, Matt. xxv. 10. But he will give some superfluous legacies to the poor; they can open the door for him, and receive him into everlasting habitations, Luke xvi. 9. No; they could have done somewhat all day, they can do nothing for him at night. Then he forgot the poor, now the poor must forget him: they can be no friends, where God is an enemy. This, you see, is not altogether a fable, and it is to be feared that three parts of the world go this way, even by the loss of time to perdition.

For the last: he that fears God, and loves the Lord Jesus, travels on toward eternal life; yet not without some interruptions. Sin is sometimes wrapped up in the temptation of wealth, and he may stay to look upon it; sometimes in a beautiful face, as Michael was given David to ensnare him, and he may cast a transient

eye upon it; often in the disguise of friendship, and that prevails so far with him, as to discourse with it. He meets with divers assaults; but though, like Jonathan, he tastes of the world's honey, he will not feed on it: and whensoever he wanders, the Spirit of grace recollects him; and draws him, as the angels did Lot out of Sodom; otherwise, he were in danger of being benighted; and do what he can, he hath time little enough. Therefore he concludeth, If I loiter, I shall be locked out. Unloose me from the bonds of sin, happy repentance; defend me, faith: hold me up, patience; strengthen me, zeal. I come; Lord Jesus, open the gate, I come, I come.

VERSE 9.

The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

"WHERE is the promise of his coming?" that was their challenge: God hath not forgot his promise; this is their satisfaction. He is not slack in any business he undertakes; much less in that which so nearly concerns his honour, as the making good of his word, the justification of his truth, the performance of his promise. He will not put off those that depend upon his covenant with dilatory excuses; but meets our zealous prayers at the door, as they are coming forth to solicit his merciful remembrance. That which seems dulness and slackness to our impatient desires, is rather an argument of his goodness; for the intent of his long-suffering is to bring us to repentance. Thus while the afflicted righteous think God forgets them, wandering sinners shall find that God remembers them: and it is fit, that the guests bidden to the same feast should stay for their fellows. Is God content to tarry for their conversion? and dost thou think much to tarry for thy reward? The consideration of the Divine patience is a bridle to our preposterous hastiness: therefore doth Christ defer his coming, to invite mankind to salvation; therefore he forbears to accelerate the last day, that the world might have space to provide for their last account at that day. When we perceive that he doth accommodate the respect of times to our safety, and means only our good in this forbearance, we have no cause to complain of his slackness. Oppressors presume that God hath no more regard of his servants than of themselves, because they are not visibly delivered; as the Jews thought he did not own Christ, because he did not save him out of their clutches. But they reckon one way, and God another; and the event will declare which of them was deceived. "The Lord is not slack," &c.

The text moves upon two poles. First, what God is not; He is not slack concerning his promise. Secondly, what he is; He is long-suffering toward us. The former is a removal of a suspicion, the other is a proof of a gracious indulgence. In the negative proposition we have three particulars. First, what he is not; The Lord is not slack. Secondly, in what he is not (slack); Concerning his promise. Thirdly, how he is not so; As some men count slackness. The affirmative proposition appears to me like Rachel with her two children, Joseph and Benjamin. First, the patience of God is the mother: and the two fruits are, that none perish, but all come to repentance.

1. "The Lord is not slack." Slackness is here usurped for a vice; for otherwise it is laudable, *Σταδίε Βραδέως, Festina lente*; i. e., Hasten slowly; which is

the golden mean between those two extremes of sluggishness and precipitancy. Gellius well expresseth it by the word *maturare*, to hasten; according to that of the poet Virgil; *Maturate fugam*, i. e. Hasten your flight. To Agamemnon was objected his slowness; to Achilles, his haste. Delaying Fabius preserved the medium; using neither more delay, nor more haste, than might consist with good speed. Certain coin of Vespasian did seem to hieroglyphic this; wherein was figured a dolphin upon the middle of an anchor. He is tardy, who negligently passes by his occasion; not he that comes not suddenly, but that comes not so soon as he should. As Tobias excused himself; "My father counteth the days, and if I tarry long" (that is, one day beyond the limited time) "he will be very sorry," Tob. ix. 4. In this sense must those precepts be understood, Thou shalt not delay to offer thy tithes ann first-fruits, Exod. xxii. 29; that is, in due time; for until then there is no slackness. Thou shalt not slack to pay thy vows, Dent. xxiii. 21; in thy prefixed times. That is then slackness, when we defer to do what we ought when we ought. Let us take a short view of both these extremes.

The first is a precipitant over-hastiness; which so flies slackness, that it runs into rashness; and is so greedy of doing, that it omits to deliberate, either what is to be done, or how it may best be done. This is like that which the physicians call predigestion; which doth rather fill the body with crudities and secret seeds of diseases, than conduce to sound nourishment. There be some that care only to come off speedily, to contrive some false periods of business, and to despatch things in a hurry. But it is one thing to contract that which is tedious, by reducing it to a method; another thing, to abridge or huddle up that which is necessary and essential, by an abrupt cutting it off. That which is made shorter in the several pieces, is commonly made longer in the whole. Let no man so run into action, that he leaves deliberation behind him. They are too hasty, that will mount into the pulpit before their wings be grown: not unlike to Ahimaz, who would needs be running, though he had no errand to deliver: "Let me also run, I pray thee." But "wherefore wilt thou run, my son, seeing thou hast no tidings ready?" saith Joab. "Howsoever, let me run," 2 Sam. xviii. 22, 23. And what will he say when he comes into the pulpit? "I saw a great tumult, but I knew not what it was," ver. 29: a confusion or tumult of words is all they can deliver. Sudden and rash attempts, if they meet not with sudden destruction, retreat with sorrow and shame. If we be put out of our way in the beginning of our journey, we wander all the day.

We cannot charge God with this over-hastiness; for if he should be angry as often as we sin, and strike as often as he is angry, what man could escape? It was a big word which Caesar spoke to Metellus, tribune of the people, when he violently resisted his entrance into the sacred treasury, knowing he meant to seize upon the monies there stored: Presume no further, or I will lay thee dead. And when he saw Metellus something daunted with these words, he added, Young man, it had been easier for me to do this than to speak it. This was but a bravado in Caesar; the powerful truth of it only belongs to God, with whom it is as easy to kill as to say the word. But our merciful God is not so hasty. Men are long in making any thing, quick in destroying: a city, which the succession of many years hath brought to her beauty, may soon be razed and demolished by the enemy's fire. Only God is quick in making, but pauseth upon destroying. When he came to question apostate Adam, it was in the cool of the day, not in

the heat of his anger. He that made the world in six days, and could have done it in six hours, spared it above a thousand years, before the flood came. He allowed Nineveh the respite of forty days; but who can number the days, months, and years, that licentious Nineveh had enjoyed in former times? Yet, as if God were content to sustain the loss and profusion of all this forbearance, there is an addition of forty days. Not longer, lest they should grow wanton by his patience; nor shorter, lest they should become desperate by the suddenness: but a convenient space; both to preclude all presumption of impunity and despair of mercy. His patience hath enlarged itself toward us; that if we should plead with our mother, Hos. ii. 2, and she with her children, and God with both, we were even speechless. Our unthankfulness hath striven with his goodness for the victory, as Absalom strove with David, whether the father should be more kind to the son, or the son more unkind to the father: we have been fated with his blessings, and then spurned at his precepts. Could he brook the innumerable adulteries of this land, the desperate homicides, the continual violation of his holy sabbaths, if he were hasty? Could he endure our presumptuous oaths, if he were hasty? We cannot walk in the streets or fields, but our ears are full of such dreadful blasphemies, sworn even by them that have scarce a good rag to their backs, as if they would send up defiance to heaven, and challenge the Almighty to meet them in warlike arms. With these weapons we fight against Christ and ourselves: these have scattered our regiments, and strewn the ground with our slaughtered corpses; these were the ordinance that have played upon our ownships; these have crossed our designs: not Dunkirk, not Spain, not Rome, not hell, have done us so much mischief, as our own mouths. It is true that the state may in some measure clear itself, by making good laws against such wicked lips; but the want of execution frustrates all hope of reformation. That the profane swearer is ever suffered again to open his mouth, discharge God from all imputation of lowness: praised be his patience for evermore.

The other extreme, slackness, is not incident to the Lord. "Though the vision tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come," Hab. ii. 3. "Yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry," Heb. x. 37. "He that believeth shall not make haste," Isa. xxviii. 16, but wait the Lord's leisure. There be men placed high, in the eminent seats of authority, that cannot vindicate themselves from slackness, when the poor have repaired unto them for succour. Some of them will give, will pardon, will do justice, but it shall be when they list: according to their own humour, not the others' necessity: and the oppressed client, that knows not the moods and seasons of the great ones, may starve before that gift comes, and ruin before the justice right him, and die before the pardon save him. Some trees will bear no fruit except much dung be laid about them; and justice comes not from some men till they be manured with bribes. Some trees require much watering, and some magistrates will yield no fruits of equity, except they be haunted with assidual importunity. Some trees require incision, and pruning, and lopping; and some men must be threatened and intimidated, before they will deliver the fruits of justice. Some trees require the early and often access of the sun; and some men will not be won to do good without court mediation. Some trees must be housed and kept within doors; and some will not open their favour and compassion, till the solicitation of a wife, or a son, or a friend, or a servant turn the key. Reward

is the motive of one man, and importunity of another; fear the incentive of one man, and favour of another; friendship is prevalent with one man, and natural affection with another: and till a persuasion is fitted to their dispositions, they are culpable of slackness, and regardless of doing any good. They will hear with others' ears, and determine by the report of others. But the poor may well answer, as that great soldier did to Caesar, when he was put off in the like manner: I fought for Caesar in mine own person, not by my lieutenants; therefore I expect that Caesar should hear my cause in his own person, and not by deputies.

But who can challenge God of such retardation? He is indeed slow to wrath, Joel ii. 13, but he runs to show mercy, Luke xv. 20. No sooner doth the penitent sinner turn his face toward heaven, but the Divine compassion meets him at the first step, and entertains him with peace. He did not stay to levy, arm, train, muster, and present troops of soldiers to overthrow Sennacherib; but he took a nearer way, and in one night, by the hand of an angel, slew almost two hundred thousand of his army: here was no slackness. Dothan is besieged, the prophet's servant distressed; a very apparition in the clouds shall secure him; not a squadron shall be raised, and yet the enemy is surprised: here was no slackness. The Midianites invade Israel, and are suddenly confounded by a dream, Judg. vii.: here was no slackness. Full often hath this island been endangered by foreign invasions, by intestine treasons; when even in the article and point of our enemies' hope, and of our peril, our gracious God hath stepped in with his wonderful deliverance: I hope here was no slackness. If we may believe our own chronicles, in the reign of Richard the First, before that great famine and pestilence, there appeared two suns in the firmament: (Holinshed's Life of Richard I.) which apparition hath eternized that day to all posterity, nor is the fame of it yet dead. Our times have yielded as great a wonder, when instead of two suns, two moons were seen in our hemisphere at once; the one in the sky, the other on the sea: a fatal prodigious crescent, whose horns, like the horns of that ram in the vision, so pushed westward, northward, and southward, that they supposed none could stand before him, Dan. vii. 4: therefore they antichristened it, The invincible Armada: yet the moon above laughed at the moon below; and as the one hath dominion over the sea, the sea got dominion over the other; and that daring crescent, like a meteor, waned, and went out. A meteor indeed, made up of squalid matter and corruption drawn out by pride and presumption, dissolved by the wind in derision, and so scattered in pieces, that nothing but the shame and ruins were left to testify there had been such a navy. When they made themselves so sure of our destruction, that they shared our possessions by lots, and threw dice for our patrimonies, the Lord presented our unexpected deliverance: here was no slackness.

God needs not the tongue of men nor angels to justify his goodness, yet he graciously accepts it. Let me therefore give you some other sensible demonstrations, to clear him from all suspicion of slackness. What an artificial hell had those desperate traitors devised, to blow up the head and representative body of the land! How closely did they conspire, how securely proceed, with what sacramental forms did they adjure secrecy! Catiline bound his conspirators with a drink of human blood; but these wretches sealed up their treason with the precious blood of the Son of God. The night was theirs, the vault was theirs, the opportunity was

theirs, silence was theirs, the pope was theirs, Satan was theirs: who could discover this project but themselves? Yet even when Faux was giving fire to the match, that should have given fire to the powder, which should have blown up men and monuments, even the whole state together, our never sleeping Father prevents him, and disloseth the whole design: here was no slackness. Let that day, the fifth of November, be ever branded with a black coal of mischief. It hath been observed a fatal, inauspicious day in history. Plutarch says, Among the Grecians it was kept with sad solemnity for the loss of noble Aratus, the often preserver of his country. Among the Jews it was famous for the slaughter of Zacharias the priest, who was that day butchered between the porch and the altar, which fact Christ upbraided many years after. Among us let it never be forgotten, but inserted with a rubric or capital letter in every calendar; for the powder-treason hath added everlasting infamy to it. It was a danger ever to be thought upon with horror and sadness; and a deliverance ever to be remembered with joy and thankfulness. Blessed be our God, who without slackness, did turn our intended funeral into a festival. The Jews were wont once a year to celebrate a feast unto sorrow, wherein they went barefoot, and with bitter imprecations they cursed Titus and Vespasian, for the destruction of their city and temple. (Calendar of Manlius.) I am persuaded that the Jesuits, priests, and papists, that have evil will at our Zion, do still upon every fifth of November keep a feast to sadness, and shut up themselves in their melancholy cells; if not for grief that this their hopeful plot miscarried, yet for shame (unless they be past shame) that ever it was attempted. Let their sorrow increase our joy, let our joy increase our thankfulness to Him that was not slack to deliver us.

We cannot forget our clear deliverance from that late woeful judgment of the pestilence. How sorrowful were those times, when every month swept away thousands from among us! when a man could not set forth his foot but into the jaws of death! when piles of carcases were carried to their pits, as dung to the fields! when it was cruelty in the sick to admit visitation, and love was little better than murderous! The more sad and horrible the face of those times looked, so much greater cause have we to proclaim the mercy of God in our present freedom. All the land was afraid of this city, now this city is clearer than many places of the land. We may now throng together into God's house without fear, and breathe in one another's face without danger. How gracious was this deliverance! yea, how speedy! To abate so fast, as in three months to decrease from a thousand a week to ten, yea, to none; certainly it was little less than miraculous: when we consider this, O heavenly Father, who can accuse thee of slackness?

"As some men count slackness." It is the madness of vain man to measure God by himself; and to interpret that for a slow pace, which is the precise opportunity he hath determined for his coming. We must be passive in receiving God's secret mysteries, not active in contriving his ways. Too many are ready to suspect God's power or purpose to succour those, who in foreign parts groan under heavy pressures in matter of religion, or are divested of their ancient possessions, and the inheritance of their fathers; and because he hath not yet restored them, nor yet raised up such means as in their apprehension are likely to effect it, therefore they think that God likes not the cause, and begin to stagger in their own religion at home, as if God neglected it abroad. We have attempted some

designs against our enemies, to redress our manifold wrongs, by an invasive war, the warrant of vindictive justice, and have come to the worst: shall we therefore challenge God of slackness? or our religion of weakness? God will do all in due time, that is, in his time, not in ours. The land to which he brought his people of Israel, was their own land before; they were the right heirs to it, lineally descended from him who was the first possessor of it after the flood; but so long were they out of possession of it, that they were not able to set their title on foot, nay, they did scarce know their own title. Why were they so long kept from it? was there any slackness in him that should give it? "At the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the self-same day, they went out from the land of Egypt," Exod. xii. 41. That was the precise time appointed, and the self-same day it was accomplished: if it had been deferred a day longer, then they might have accused him of slackness. If at any time the Lord delivers us, it is more than he owes us. Let him choose his own opportunity, that so freely grants the mercy. Let us tremble to challenge God for that, the fault whereof lies wholly in ourselves. Let us seriously examine the causes, why that wonted providence seemeth now so slow to help us.

1. The principal cause is our own sins: those are the obstacles that retard the mercy of God. The Israelites assault little Ai, and are beaten: what was the reason? was Ai too strong for Israel? No, but the sin of Israel made them too weak for Ai. Dunkirk is a greater scourge to us than Ai was to Israel: what, is their strength greater than ours? No, but our wickedness is greater than theirs. When we are crossed in just and lawful quarrels, we may well think there is some secret sin unrepented of in us: this, though we see not, yet God so hates, that he will rather be wanting to his own cause, than not punish it. If before we had put to sea about our warlike attempts, we had penitently cleansed our hearts, then we might have expected better success. Joshua sees this, rends his clothes, lies upon the earth, and mourns, yea, expostulates, "What wilt thou do unto thy great name?" The Lord replies, "Wherefore liest thou upon thy face?" Josh. vii. 9, 10. That he might see, God took no pleasure to let the Israelites lie dead upon the earth, before their enemies, himself is taxed for lying all day before the ark; "Get thee up, Israel hath sinned:" he does not say, lie still and mourn for the sin of Israel. It is to no purpose to pray against punishment, until the cause be removed. Though God loves to be sued to, yet he holds our requests unseasonable, till there be care had of satisfaction. When we have risen and reformed sin, then we may fall down for pardon. Victory is ever in the free hand of God, to dispose where he will; and it is no marvel to see the dice of war run with hazard on both sides: yet he tells us plainly the cause of all our discomfitures: we have sinned.

One Achan is enough to trouble all Israel: a lewd man is a pernicious creature: that he damns his own soul is the least part of his mischief; he commonly draws vengeance upon a thousand, either by the desert of his sin, or by the infection. The same God, who for ten righteous men would have spared five wicked cities, sometimes will not be content to drown one sin in the obedience of many righteous. But so venomous is sin, that one dram of it is able to infect the whole mass. How much more dangerous is it when it is common! God usually measures the state of any people by the most; and though there be some righteous, yet the greater part carries both the name and censure. Sins are so much the greater, as they are universal: so far is evil from being extenuated by

the multitude of the guilty, that nothing can more aggravate it. With men, commonness may plead for favour; with God it pleads for judgment. Many hands draw the cable with more violence than few: the leprosy of the whole body is more loathsome than that of a part. We are all still looking outward upon some one eminent and notorious sinner; concluding that he is the plague of our nation, and the sole cause of our ruin: but, O vain man, look inwards, and find an Achan in thine own bosom; apprehend, condemn, execute thine own sin. If a mote be in our brother's eye, our eye is still upon that mote. We all complain, and yet add to the common heap. Redress stands not in words; let each man amend one and we all live. If every one pull a brand from this flame, the fire will go out alone. A multitude is but a heap of units; the more we take away, the fewer we leave. Begin at home, and take thine own conscience to task; there thou shalt find work enough: while every one censures, and none amends, we all grow worse. If we could deduct our own evils from the evils of these days, God, the land, and our own conscience shall find the less. It is better for us to complain on earth, than to howl in hell, because we have been of that number. Though we cannot turn the stream, yet let us swim against it: it is glorious to have resisted, though we cannot prevail. Insensible sinners deny that the days are evil; but themselves are the greatest part of this evil, and but for them we had not such cause to complain. Their own conscience shall one day rack from their lips that sad confession, which Æneas made of the Trojan miseries; *Et quorum pars magna fui*: i. e. We have been no small part of these calamities. Sin makes a country like Jezebel, whereof nothing will be left but the feet and palms of their hands. Invisible persecutions be ever the worst, when Satan persecutes us by pride, by oppression, by malice, by profaneness. Alas, what hope of success can there be, while sins are the ballast of our ships, oaths the ordinance, pride the tackling, and security steers the helm? Our spring-tides bring in our merchandise, and the spring-tide of our sins will bring in God's judgments. We cannot complain that God is slack to succour us, it is well that he is not hasty to confound us. He made man, and yet man so degenerated from his creation, that he repented that he made him, Gen. vi. 7. He hath crowned this island with many blessings, yet we may so far provoke him, as to repent him of all his favours. No, but let us with speed turn unto him, and he will make haste to help us: if we be not slack in our conversion, he will not be slack to give us salvation.

2. The next cause is our slackness to concur with the means of our recovery. For though God made all things of nothing, and can do all things with nothing, yet he will have something from us. Do we sit still in our sins and sorrows, and complain of his slackness? Would we have him help us altogether without ourselves? Christ was able to have done as Satan bade him, even to have made bread of stones, when he had so great a number to feed in the wilderness, but he does not so. He asks his disciples, "How many loaves have ye?" Mark vi. 38. Though they were but five, yet since they were some, he multiplies them, and satisfies five thousand with them. Though he foresaw that the augmentation of Gideon's army would be the diminution of his honour, and therefore disquantified his forces, from thirty-two thousand to three hundred; yet a remnant he will have to fight his battles: a remnant of believers in Israel to make up his kingdom; a remnant of thy soul, his seed wrapped up somewhere, to save thy soul; a remnant of thy mind, of thy purse,

of thyself, to deliver thyself. God is a good steward of men's contributions, but contributions he will have: he requires a concurrence and co-operation of persons. He goes low, and accepts of small sacrifices, a pigeon, a handful of flour, a few ears of corn; but a sacrifice he will have. If Christians do not assist Christians, if neither our neighbours of the same faith confederate with us, nor we with them; if we fight for none, and none fight for us; at last, neither we nor they shall fight for Christ, nor Christ for them nor us, but all become a prey to the general enemy of the name of Christ. Though he be infinitely able to avenge his own cause, yet he requires our assistance; and when we have done our best, still we pray with that humble clause of acknowledgment, "Give peace in our time, O Lord, because there is none other that fighteth for us." The honour of this nation in noble achievements, hath been the terror of enemies, and matter of envy and admiration to the Christian world. What is become of this valour? Is it dead in the heads, hands, or hearts of men? in their heads, that they know not; or in their hands, that they cannot; or in their hearts, that they dare not, to do as they were wont? Of that I cannot determine; but this I dare speak; Whersoever the fruit appears, the tree is rooted in our sins. Plutarch could say, A ship is a ship for ever, if you repair it; and honour is honour for ever, if you repair it. But *aliquid famæ addendum ne putrescat*: i. e. honour will putrify if it be not repaired. The reparation of our honour must begin at the reformation of our lives: till we have put our sins to the worse, we shall never get the better of our enemies. God will not be wanting to us, if we be not wanting to him and ourselves. Do we expect a forward God while we are a backward people? I may not meddle with persons, but generally conclude this: It is our slackness to repent of our sins, our slackness to amend our lives, our slackness to render God service and the church her dues, our slackness to comfort the poor in their miseries, our slackness to guard our own selves, which makes our God so slack to help us.

3. Another cause of the Lord's seeming slackness to deliver us for the present, is our slackness to praise him for the deliverances past. Unthankfulness: this is the witch, the sorcerer, whose drowsy enchantments have made us even forget God himself. If we forget him, can he be blamed for slackness to remember us? Christ chargeth us to remember his words, what he hath said unto us, John xv. 20: but how shall we remember that, when we forget the good he hath done for us? What is become of all God's wonders? Whither is the memory of all his deliverances fled? We may ask after them as of the sculpture on monuments almost worn out, or as that insulting tyrant did of the kings of the nations which he had destroyed, "Where is the king of Hamath, and the king of Arphad?" Isa. xxxviii. 13. Where is the memory of 88, or of 605? Neither of these have worn out the age of man, and yet they are almost worn out themselves. Is the chronicle of that invincible fleet written in the same element that the deliverance was wrought on, water; so that no track of the story, nor character of the Divine hand, remains to be read? Sure, that wonder might even fill a volume, and give life to a story that should outlast the world, if our hearts were not drowned in unthankfulness, as that navy was in the ocean. What is become of the gunpowder plot? Hath three and twenty years quite extinguished it? Is the memory of it buried where it was begotten, the vault under the parliament-house? or is the record blown up, though the matter escaped? Those pioneers failed in their plot to blow up us, but Satan still goes on

with his plot, to blow it out of our memories. Is the remembrance of our woeful dearths choked with our present fulness of bread? Hath our health and jollity put to silence all those dying groans, which the dreadful pestilence rang in our affrighted ears? Have we forgot the language which our very doors did speak, "Lord, have mercy upon us?" These deliverances abide with us, and is their memory vanished? The grave of Pompey had not so much as an inscription, to distinguish the dust of his victorious body from ignoble stains and cowards; or to signify, Here lies Pompey. And have these times, these once glorious times, no difference in our remembrance or estimation? shall they lie promiselessly raked up in the dust of time, without any monument set over them, to tell they once were?

When St. Paul reprehended the Galatians, for observing "days, and months, and times, and years," Gal. iv. 10; when he forbade the Colossians all ceremonial, indicatory days, "Let no man judge you in respect of a holy-day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath," Col. ii. 16; he did not intend to take away all consideration, all distinction of days: though he remove them from being of the essence of our salvation, yet he leaves them for assistances, and for the exaltation of our devotion; to fix ourselves at certain periodical and stationary times, upon the consideration of those benefits, which in those days the Lord hath bestowed upon us. When in such a day we consider such a deliverance, and upon another solemn day are occasioned to remember such a blessing, we may the better judge ourselves, how these things have wrought upon us, and disposed us to a spiritual convalescence. Out of the common heap God hath chosen some, and "made them high days and hallowed them," Eccles. xxxiii. 9. The several companies in this city have (at least) their annual feasts, which want no ceremonious forms to set them forth: especially the pulpit must do them grace, and the first dish is a sermon. I censure not that, but this I would have, that those times whose memory should be precious might be better observed. Those two great feasts, Easter and Whitsuntide, may have some observance; but one day is not enough to celebrate either of these inestimable benefits, the resurrection of Christ, and the mission of the Holy Ghost; therefore the church thought good to join with each of them two others: and of what estimation are they among us? Even of such, as if they were ordained to play in, not to pray in. Can we meditate too much on those blessings, that give so little honour to that double pair of attendants, ordained to wait upon those solemn feasts? There be divers other, instituted upon particular occasions, which we pass by, and scarce give them so much as the courtesy of the day: we mind no annuals or yearly feasts to keep them up; but instead of a mention there is a blank, and a solemn silence instead of an anniversary. But why should the main deliverances of the land not be distinguished from the common heap of days piled up in the almanac? Certainly, he hath neither zeal to religion, nor love to his country, who doth not on those days bind the sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar, and send up to heaven some incense of thanks. Why should God remember us for the future, that have forgotten the former? Can nothing but new misery put us in mind of our old preserver? When a stubborn delinquent, being committed, was no whit mollified with his durance, but grew more perverse than he was before, one of the senators said to the rest, Let us forget him a while, and then he will remember himself. If our God should deal so with us, if he should forget us a little, our own calamities would teach us to remember both

him and ourselves. He that dwelleth in the heavens looked down upon us, let us look up to him: since by his mercy we live and breathe, let us live to breathe praise and thanksgiving to his blessed name.

4. The last cause, is our slackness to repent of our iniquities; and why then should God hasten our deliverance? Nineveh, upon the first summons, did not only fast, and mourn, and humble themselves, and turn from their wickedness, Jonah iii. 5; but they did all this immediately, without delay. It is our duty to turn first. Do we defer this, and complain of God's slackness? Would we bind God to our times, and have ourselves free? All times are his, there is not a moment we can call ours. Though it be not given to us to know the times and seasons, Acts i. 7, yet we know there is a time and season given us; which if we neglect, we forsake our own mercy.

"Concerning his promise." The promise here meant, is the second coming of Christ: and because this is not done suddenly, and so soon as they boast they would have it, they arm themselves either with infidelity, that there is no such matter, that he will never come at all; or at least admit of a wanton security, that it will be long enough ere he do come. But whether they wrangle or dream, Christ is not slack concerning his promise, and he will come soon enough to their cost; when they shall see him with fear, whom they would not receive with faith. But to leave them in their desperate unbelief, let it satisfy us, that all the promises of God are yea and Amen, 2 Cor. i. 20. He is faithful that hath promised, Heb. x. 23. "He hath commanded his covenant for ever; holy and reverend is his name," Psal. cxi. 9. Men are not so faithful: first, some will promise what they cannot do; as the devil proffered kingdoms to Christ, Matt. iv. 9, when he had none upon earth, only one in hell. Secondly, some promise what they can, but mean not to do; as the Shechemites did to the sons of Jacob, and the sons of Jacob to the Shechemites, when they meant on both sides to deceive one another, Gen. xxxiv. 13, 23. Thirdly, some promise what they meant for the time, and afterwards recant; as Laban promised Rachel to Jacob, and gave him Leah, Gen. xxix. 19, 23. Fourthly, some promise what they do give, but unwillingly; as Herod did not deny John's head, but he was loth to grant it, Mark vi. 26. Fifthly, some promise, and willingly perform; yet together with truth of performance, they are sorry for their promise; as Joshua dealt with the cunning Gibeonites. But these infirmities are strangers to the nature of God, who will remember his covenant to a thousand generations, even for ever, Psal. cv. 8.

1. Here is matter of imitation; if we be the children of our heavenly Father, we must (after his example) make good our promises, or we cannot assure ourselves that we are no bastards. Though we perform with our loss and prejudice, there may be no retraction of a lawful promise. Peter in effect so pleaded to Ananias: The inheritance was thine, thou needest not have sold it; being sold, the money was thine, thou needest not have parted with it; but promising all, and retaining part, thou hast lied to the Holy Ghost, Acts v. 3, 4. Israel enters into a league with Gibeon, and binds it with an oath; within three days they find the deceit: may they not now violate their promise? Fraudulent conventions oblige not; God hath forbidden all league with the natives, and Israel had put in a direct caveat of their vicinity: why then does Joshua hold himself bound to his covenant? There is no trusting to shifts for the eluding of promises; we must faithfully perform what we have rashly promised.

2. Here is matter of faith; shall we not believe the promise of God? Hath the Maker spoke it, and will not the creature believe it? The Almighty hates to be distrusted, and accounts infidelity so much a greater sin than others, as he magnifies his mercy above all his works. He that will not take his word for good, shall feel his sword for evil. Impotent man holds it a disgrace not to be credited; and will he that is eternal truth put up such an indignity? So near is unbelief to atheism, as the word of God is to the nobleness of his own majesty. It was a sweet saying of the psalmist, It is good to trust in the Lord: good in respect of him, and good for us. First, it is our own good, and that we are enabled to trust him is more of his mercy, than that we do trust him can be merit in our fidelity. Our goodness reacheth not up to him, but his goodness reaches down to us, in filling our hearts with confidence in him. There is nothing in all the world that can work our hearts to so comfortable and unconquerable a resolution, as our reposal upon God. "They that put their trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed," Psal. cxxv. 1. Faith can remove mountains, but the mountains that are raised on faith can never be removed. Secondly, it is good in respect of God; for it is one of the best pieces of his glory, to be trusted unto: as Joseph held, when Potiphar trusted him with all, that he could not do him a greater honour. The glory of God is so precious to him, that he will not part with it to any other. What other things does not he impart willingly? Being, life, knowledge, happiness, and such blessings, are originally, eminently, essentially in God: yet being he gives to all things; life, to many things; knowledge, to some kinds of creatures; and happiness, to some of those kinds: only his glory he reserves to himself. Riches he gives to his very enemies, and so gives them to others that he keeps them not at all to himself; but he will not endure his glory to be communicated to man or angel; not to the best guest in heaven, much less to the worst dross on earth. Our belief is a part of his glory, and shall we not do him that justice, as to give him his own? Him let us esteem above all, to him let us look up in all, on him let us depend for all, from his goodness and mercy let us acknowledge all, in him let us delight with contempt of all: and this is the confidence we owe our Maker.

3. Here is the ground of hope, even in the midst of delay. The deferring of our desires must not discourage our faith: it may be God hath long granted our request, ere we shall know of his grant. When God shall find patience mixed with faith in his clients, the cause shall go well with them. In the fervour of their expectation, he may hold them off; but when they least think of it, and have forgotten their own suit, he graciously condescends. Zacharias a long time failed of a son, for all his prayer; but when he had even forgotten that prayer, he had a son. The angel brings him good news, "Thy prayer is heard," Luke i. 13. When did he make this prayer? He was grown old, and had given over all hope of a child; so that this request was past over many years since. Yet God had laid it up all this while, and when Zacharias least looks for it, brings it forth to effect. The word of that God must needs be sure, who is so often better than his word. God is infinitely free, yet his own promise binds him: he can owe us nothing, except he engage himself, and that engagement is debt. Can we distrust him to give us that he hath promised, who gives us ten thousand blessings which he never promised? The favours of God, though they be most free, have a price set on them, and require a rent to be paid for them. Faith is the

price, and the rent is thankfulness. Believe and enjoy, that is the price. Be grateful and be happy, that is the rent. There can be nothing easier than he requirerh; there can be nothing richer than he giveth. O God, that undeserving man should grudge to return thee so little for so much!

4. Here is matter of obligation to us; for if we expect God should perform his promises to us, we must be careful to keep touch with him. Our promise in baptism obligeth us to his service; have we never broken this holy covenant? If there be any so profane, as to pretend that that promise was only made by proxy; and a contract made by a virgin in her childhood, doth not bind her to the betrothed husband; yet what beggar's daughter, espoused to a hopeful young prince in her nonage, will refuse that match when she comes to years? shall the miserable soul of man disdain marriage with the glorious Son of God? But didst thou ever receive that other sacrament? There was thy voluntary consent to that former vow; a repetition, a consummation of thy plighted faith. Sinners that we are, have we kept this promise? Have we done all for God, and nothing for Satan? Did we never confederate with the flesh, nor take part with the world? We have three enemies, and against them we have sworn resistance; we have but one King, and to him we have sworn allegiance. If we keep faith with our King, he will save us; if we revolt to those enemies, they will confound us. Yet for one act of duty performed to our King, we have done three thousand services for those three enemies: is this to keep our promise? Christ died to give us life, these live to give us death; and yet shall we cast off loyalty to our Sovereign, and desperately put ourselves upon the mercy of traitors? is this to perform our promise? The flesh works upon the world, the devil works upon the flesh, the conscience works upon all three, and God works upon all four: if we leave Christ, and cleave to these abjured rebels, they shall convince us of forsworn apostacy. Forsake thee, O Saviour, the most graceless sinner denies it. But as a cowardly ancient, that ran away from the battle, afterward perceiving the victory to fall on his side, when he returned home boasted, I bore colours for my king and country; another replied, But you never struck a blow for your king and country: so many bear the colours of Christ, that will not stand one stroke for Christ.

Nor is this fidelity only due to God, but to our neighbour. He that is not faithful to God, will never be true to man; and he that is not faithful to man, was never true to God. Promises fly up and down like chaff, raised with every breath of wind; but performance is the good grain that lies close in the floor. The tongue is a nimble member, and good words are cheap; but performance is an action, and it troubles a man to do. He may lie in bed and promise, but he must rise up to do. One son plainly told his father, I will not go, but he went; the other promised to go, but he went not, Matt. xxi. 29, 30. Some do and say not, but a thousand for one say and do not. Promises are like some princes' servants; when a stranger comes to the court, he shall see abundance of them: but performance is like the prince himself, who keeps state, and seldom comes into the public eye. Nor unlike some great man's policy, who had two chests; the one he called Promise, the other Performance: the former was easily opened, the other was locked and barred. To the one he sent all his clients and suitors, and there they found Hope. Betwixt his Promise and their Hope being long deluded, they resolved to surprise that other chest, and break it open; but he told them

plainly, that that chest could never be unlocked without one singular key, which he called Necessity: implying that men promise with facility, but they will not perform except it be for necessity. It is reported of Antigonus, that he never denied any suit that was asked; but withal he never did perform any thing that he granted. In promising, the beggar may be as rich as the king; and without performing, the king may be as poor as the beggar. The one is willing and not able, the other is able and not willing: the former is in want, but the latter is in fault. *Cujusquam est promittere, honesti solius præstare.* Any one may promise, but the honest man alone performs his promise, says Seneca. Failing of promises, of friends makes enemies: he that held thee his friend for thy fair grant, for illuding his trust becomes thine enemy. Let no man so demean himself, as by his own desert to procure hatred. Every lawful promise made to God or man, is written in heaven; while we perform not, our score runs on; and what we do not pay while we live, we shall be forced to pay for ever when we are dead. O then let us mend our pace, and God will mend his: if we be not slack concerning our promise, to serve him; he will not be slack concerning his promise, to save us.

"But is long-suffering to us-ward." I know not whether I should more wonder at man's perverseness or at God's patience. The more that Divine goodness suffers, the more this wickedness of dust and ashes presumes; and it is long before the fury of the one can provoke the lenity of the other. "I stand at the door, and knock," Rev. iii. 20. He stands at a mortal door, whose seat is in the heavens; and knocks at the gate of sinful dust, to whom the everlasting gates of glory willingly open. He stands calling, while we sleep unregarding: he knocks in love, while we are ready to return him knocks for his love. He is worthy to come under our roof, but our roof is not worthy to receive him, and do we not open? If we knock in prayer, he opens in pity; and when he knocks in compassion, shall not we open in duty? He stands; yea, how long hath he stood! How many grievances of attendance hath he digested, without withdrawing his foot! As if that immortal Lover did court the soul of a sinner. What mean thy barred gates in the time of peace? what courtesy wouldst thou afford an enemy, that shewest so little kindness to a friend? The night passeth away, and my locks are wet with the dew of heaven: open unto me, my fair one, Cant. v. 2. "Behold, thy King cometh unto thee," Matt. xxi. 5. A *King*, no common person: *thy King*, no foreign prince: *cometh unto thee*, not against thee: *meek* and humble, not with troops of armed soldiers: alone, unaccompanied, save with his inseparable love. How unspeakable is this patience! When he is angry, doth he presently strike? No, but like some noble warrior, that hath laid siege to a renowned city, viewing the goodly buildings, considering the number of infants and innocents, having no delight in blood; out of his own heroic disposition, sends a herald with the proffer and conditions of peace. All courses are to be tried in war, before the sword be stained with blood. Theodosius never smote a city till after ten days' siege with the offers of mercy: but God allowed Nineveh forty days to make their peace. It was the rule of his law, when they had besieged a city, first to "proclaim peace unto it," Deut. xx. 10. It was the order and practice of his gospel, when they approached any house, first to say, "Peace be to this house," Luke x. 5. Great works were wrought in Chorazin, before the ruin came, Matt. xi. 21. He spared his rebellious people forty years, Psal. xc. 10: but how long hath he spared us! He lent not

our forefathers so much time before us: his mercy strained itself for six years, and then persecution and superstition broke in among them. We have had the gospel of peace, and peace with the gospel, continued amongst us through the reigns of three gracious sovereigns, threescore and ten years: yet as if the commonness hath quite taken away the sense of the blessing, we esteem it like the air, cheap, because there is enough of it, whereas nothing is more precious and nearer to life. He is long-suffering toward us.

But that it may not seem lost time to rove in generals, let me point at particulars. God is long-suffering toward thee, and me, and every one. How often, and how justly, might he have taken thee away in the midst of thy sins! Why is not the adulterer with his harlot, like Zimri in the arms of Cozbi, smitten in the act of their lust? Why are not their souls sent compied to the fire of torment, as their bodies were undivided in the flame of uncleanness? While the mouth is opened to swear and blaspheme, why is it not instantly filled with fire and brimstone? While the homicide is killing another, why is not Satan permitted to kill him? When the drunkard falls into his dead sleep, why is he suffered to wake again alive? Why doth not the extorted bread of the poor choke the oppressor? and the house fall upon the head of the traitor? Why is not he carried quick into hell, that is the plague of all Christendom? There is no answer to be given but this, The patience of God is greater than the wickedness of man. Yet let not sinners presume; vengeance comes late, but it comes sure, Psal. vii. 12. The silent Judge will at last speak home: I have borne, shall I always bear? Isa. xlii. 14. The higher the axe is lifted up, the deeper it cuts: a water-course stopped and repelled, breaks forth at the opening with greater violence. The elephant suffers many injuries of the inferior beasts; but beware of too far provoking him; his revenge is more extreme than his patience was remiss. God is not easily provoked by our sins, he is easily pacified by our repentance. Christ suffered infinitely, yet he was not long in suffering; but for that short suffering of his Son, God is long-suffering towards all that be in the same Jesus.

How well may this unmatched precedent teach us all the doctrine of patience! It is the peculiar of Christians; in others it is to be admired, rather than praised: as St. Augustine speaks of Rasis killing himself; It was bravely done, it was not well done. There be some that suffer against their wills; which we call patience per force: they would revenge if they could. St. John calls it "the patience of the saints," Rev. xiv. 12: they are sure to suffer: the richest vessel is in most danger of the pirate, the full barn of the thief. Of all men, Christians have most need of patience, Heb. x. 36; and they bear injuries, not with a Socratic, but with a Christian fortitude. There be three exercisers of our patience, God, man, Satan: from our neighbour we suffer losses; from our adversary the devil, temptations; from God, scourges or stripes. Patience for these returns, to Satan hate and resistance, to man love and blessings, to God humility and thanks. In respect of God, it kisseth the striking hand: there can be no more forcible motive to patience, than the acknowledgment of a Divine hand in our sufferings. It is fearful to be in the hand of an adversary, but who would not be confident of a father? Yet in our frail humanity, anger may transport us from the remembrance of nature; but when we feel ourselves under the discipline of a wise God, that can temper our afflictions to our strength, to our benefit, who would not rather murmur at himself for swerving toward

impatience? Israel cries out for water; Moses seeks to quench their thirst with this contentment, God hath led us hither, Exod. xvii. 2. If the ignorance of their guide had misled them, or they had fallen by chance upon those dry deserts, though this were no remedy of their grief, yet it might have been some ground of their complaint. But now they see, that the providence of God hath brought them into this want; and shall not he as easily find the way out? Yet those sturdy Israelites murmur, and will not have their thirst quenched with faith, but water. Saith Origen, He will not deserve mercy, who is angry at punishment. Be patient, this is the way to be restored to your former condition. In respect of man, patience concludes, that he is not a good man, who shrinks from enduring bad men. If thou wouldst have all guilty creatures destroyed, what would become of thyself? Bear with them, their Maker bears with thee. For Satan, he may hurt the saints, but not the patience of the saints. St. Gregory says of Job, As many words of patience as this smitten saint uttered to the praise of God, so many darts did he hurl against the devil, and inflicted on him greater wounds than he himself sustained. Satan cannot so much vex us with sufferings, as we vex him by our patience.

"Let patience have her perfect work," Jam. i. 4. She must have some work to do: this must be her own work, proper to her nature and office; and it must be without imperfection. First, patience is not idle, but ever working; an active passion, or a passive action; whereby she worketh, not so much her own extrication out of troubles, as equanimity of soul to their easier bearing. Secondly, she hath *opus suum*: for she lives as a Hebrew with Canaanites in her company, that will be pricks in her sides and thorns in her eyes. No neighbourhood is able to make the serpent and the woman, the cursed seed of the one and the blessed seed of the other, ever to agree. One blood, one house, one education, could never make Cain and Abel accord; Jacob and Esau, Isaac and Ishmael, at one. Here is then work for patience; let us see the work of patience. Temperance hath her work; that the indulgence of the throat may not bring mischief upon the soul. Prudence hath her work; that perils may be prevented by foresight. Fortitude hath her work; that a good cause not be lost by a base fear. Justice hath her work; that neither injuries done by ourselves, nor the want of relieving the poor from injuries done by others, stand up against us at the last audit. Chastity hath her work; that the bodily uncleanness may not defile the conscience. Charity hath her work; to feed the hungry, and comfort the miserable. Repentance hath her work; to wash the soul from sins in a bath of tears. Innocence hath her work; that no wrong be offered. And patience hath her work; that much wrong be quietly suffered. This is her work, to turn necessity into a virtue, for she only can put evil to good use. She will not dance attendance to the humours of sinful greatness; but waits at the gate of heaven without weariness; and is still knocking at that door, which she never saw opened. Thirdly, this work of patience must be perfect; and that, first, in respect to its nature, hearty and sound. Integrity is the perfection of all graces, so of patience. I dare not commend the soundness of that which invites sorrow, and prostitutes itself to unnecessary troubles. It is not patience to offer thyself into bondage when thou mayst be free. That is right patience, *Pati contra quod libet, non præter quod licet*, as Bernard saith, To suffer contrary to what one pleases, not beyond what is allowed. Secondly, in respect to its duration. To quit the field

before we have got the victory, is to lose all the former benefit of patience. He that endureth patiently to the end, shall be saved, Matt. x. 22. Thirdly, in respect to its extent; it must be of a great latitude, for many are the troubles of the righteous. It is bootless to vanquish one cross, and sink under another. Patience must be universal, enduring all things, and going with the same mind to the shambles as to the fold. Our approbation is in much patience, 2 Cor. vi. 4. Those are counterfeit graces, that higgie with their duties; that stint themselves, and make their own matches with God. It is not faith which says, Thus much I will believe, and no more: sound faith believes the whole word of God. It is not charity which says, I will love one man, and not another: true charity loves all in Jesus Christ. It is not repentance that says, I will be sorry for this sin, and not for that: hearty repentance doth mourn for all sins. It is not obedience that says, I will keep this commandment, and not that: right obedience hath respect to all the commandments. It is not patience that says, I will bear this sorrow, and not that: I will endure so much and no more: perfect patience resolves to suffer any thing for Jesus Christ.

Virtus sine patientia vidua est; i. e. All virtue is a widow without patience. The apostle in the behalf of God, promiseth eternal life to them that by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory, Rom. ii. 7: as if we could not come to heaven by well-doing, without patience in well-doing. Faith without patience is but precipitancy; zeal without patience is but fury; hope without patience is presumption; humility without patience is dejection; charity without patience fills the vessel with milk from her breasts, and then kicks it down with her heels. Patience to the soul is as bread to the body, the staff of either the natural or spiritual life: we eat bread with all our meats, both for health and relish; bread with flesh, bread with fish, bread with broths and fruits. Such is patience to every virtue; we must hope with patience, and pray in patience, and love with patience, and whatsoever good thing we do, let it be done in patience. When our eyes be wearied with any other colours, we seek to refresh them with green; in all our troubles we refresh our souls with patience. Virtue is fair, rich, and lovely, but beset with many difficulties; we can neither get nor keep her without much patience. St. Paul would never have gloried in his tribulations, but for his patience. The devil implied so much in his challenge to Job. God commends him for a perfect and upright man, fearing the Lord, and eschewing evil. Satan grants all this, but questions his patience: Therefore he doth good, because nothing but good is done to him; but do thou cross him a little, "and he will curse thee to thy face," Job i. 11. Strip him of his robes, and clothe him with ulcers, and see what he will do then. This was the sorest trial: had Job kept his righteousness, his innocency, his integrity, his fidelity, and fear to sin, and lost his patience, he had lost the day; but keeping that sound, the old serpent slinks away with shame, confessing a feeble man too hard for him. It was not so much what Christ suffered, as with what patience he suffered, that did nobilitate the merit of his sufferings. Admit an apologue: Four graces were walking together, Zeal, Justice, Temperance, and Patience. Three other virtues meet with them, Innocency, Hospitality, and Meekness. While Patience went aside some little way, the other six conferred about the supereminence of their own worth. The argument grew so hot, that words were ready to beget blows: Zeal outfaeth Innocency, Justice tramples upon Meekness, and Temperance threatens to turn Hospitality out of doors. But on

the sudden steps in Patience, and there ends the quarrel. If the virtuous may fall out, much more sinners; but the matter will soon be compounded, if both sides admit of patience. This is one of those graces that is never seen but in distress: valour and fortitude are not known while there is no enemy; repentance appears not till we have sinned; nor is patience visible to others, or sensible to ourselves, till we are exercised with sufferings. These virtues in the time of miseries and exigents shine brightest, as the stars do in a dark night. But it is time to shut up this point. My argument is patience; make me the first object of it; if I have been tedious, digest it with your patience.

"Not willing that any should perish." There is no man that hates the effect of his own worth. If the painter have drawn a counterfeit, or limned the resemblance of a creature, he regards it as the effect of his own curious art. If a man begets a son, he is tied in affection to him by the bond of nature. If a preacher convert a profligate, and beget a soul unto Christ, he loves him in a higher degree of relation than those of art or nature, even of grace. And will the most wise and good Creator of all things hate the workmanship of his own hands? No, the Lord hateth nothing that he hath made. There is something in the creatures he hath made, which he hateth; but the creature itself, as it is a creature, he loveth. Our weakness doth often fail to distinguish between a man and his fault; so we hate the man together with his vice, whereas we should hate the vice and love the man. But God can distinguish betwixt the metal which is his and the dross of the metal which is not his: he rejecteth the dross, but he wisheth well to the metal. If a man's wife be an adulteress, he puts her away, because she then ceaseth to be a wife; but if she repent, God doth not put her away, because she does not cease to be a woman. Adultery may make her no wife, death itself cannot make her no creature. Both God and her husband detest her sin; yet God doth, and her husband should, love her soul.

But if God be not willing that any should perish, how then do any come to perish? Can they perish against his will? Shall any be lost whom he will save? I might answer this objection, that the question here is not concerning God's secret will; but so much of it as is revealed to us in his holy word, whereby he affords means of salvation to all, declaring himself not willing that any should perish. But let us soberly examine this point; for Scripture seems to contradict Scripture. "God will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth," 1 Tim. ii. 4: and here, he is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." On the contrary, "Whom he will he hardeneth," Rom. ix. 18: and, "I will harden the heart of Pharaoh," Exod. vii. 3. Is the Spirit divided? If truth be against truth, how can it stand? Who will harden? That God which is rich in goodness, whose mercy is above all his works, will he? He which is grieved for our offences, and willet not the death of a sinner, will he harden? And of all places, the temple for his Holy Spirit to repose in, the exchequer and storehouse for all his graces, will he harden the heart? He says, he will: yet dares the blasphemous sinner rub his filthiness on that immaculate purity of his Maker? Does he live by his mercy, and yet charge him of injustice, making it the midwife of so foul a progeny? Evil could never be the child of goodness, nor can sin (so basely descended) lay claim to omnipotency. Doth pure water and puddle flow immediately from the self-same spring? or light and darkness from the same sun? How

then comes it to pass? Consider with me these positions.

1. The devil was the first sinner, and sinned from the beginning, John viii. 44. From him, sin first boiled up, as out of the main sea; being thence derived to Adam, it ariseth as out of a spring; from the spring, it is reserved in nature, as in a conduit; from nature, it is conveyed to concupiscence, as by a pipe; and from thence doth flow all the mischief and wickedness that is in the life of man. Thy destruction is of thyself.

2. The eternal decree of God is unsearchable: to love his children and neglect his enemies, can neither impair his mercy nor impeach his justice. But why he should love this as his child, and neglect that as his enemy, is beyond the lawfulness of inquiry and possibility of apprehension. That is a saucy and curious eye, which will be too nicely prying into the closet of God's secrets. These should rather bring us on our knees, in the humble acknowledgment of his infinite wisdom and power, than prompt us to ransack his bosom, for the revealing of his intents. It is blessedness enough to be made God's stewards, though we be none of his secretaries. Will no mansion in heaven content us, but that which is the throne and chair for Omnipotence to sit in? no cabinet, but that which is the treasury and storehouse of his own counsels? If angels fell for pride and emulation, what place can be low enough for such busy inquisitors? Though God from all eternity knew how to reward every man, either with bliss or pain; yet he never imposed upon any man either a necessity or a will to sin. Far be it from us, to lay the burden of our sins on the shoulder of predestination, and to make that the womb of our foul enormities.

3. God is the cause of good, but in no respect of evil. By his grace, as Augustine saith, *Multi, ne laberentur, retenti; nulli, ut laberentur, impulsu*; i. e. He upholds many, he pusheth none down. He is said indeed to harden, but it is because he does not soften. *Impios cum non retrahit a malo culpa, dicitur dimittere*, When he does not restrain the wicked from evil, he is said to let them alone; so the schoolman. As the conferring of grace is the effect of his election, so the withholding of his grace is the effect of reprobation. For one and the same goodness to be the rise and fall of the same sins, is impossible. Says Gregory, *Dei claudere, est clausis non aperire*, God is then said to shut, when he does not open. It is from him that we stand, it is not by him that we fall. Our gravity is the reed that deceives us; God's providence is the staff that supports us. If he hardens any, it is not by causing us to commit sin, but by not granting us the grace to overcome sin. In a word, God never hateth, but where he is first hated. No man can take Christ from thee, unless thou first take thyself from Christ. We cannot lose him, but by putting him away, say the fathers.

4. God affords the means of salvation to all, therefore he would have none to perish. He offers his gospel, his gospel offers Christ, Christ offers his merits, his merits offer justification. If we bring willingness, his gospel is ours; if we bring faith, Christ is ours; if we join with it repentance, his mercy and merits are ours; if we add to all new obedience, salvation is ours. Why else are those affections attributed to God, which are properly and formally found in us, not in him? Sometimes he will not be hindered from punishing: Let me alone, that I may destroy them, Exod. xxxiii. 10. Why, what can hinder him? At another time, he desires to be hindered, and would have some stand in the gap, to save his people from his wrath, Ezek. xlii. :

as a kind father, being ready to correct his child, beckons to some neighbour to take him off. Other times he complains of his lost endeavours to bring them to repentance: "I have laboured in vain," Isa. xlix. 4. What do all these signify, but his unwillingness to have any perish? Why then does he punish with perdition? No otherwise than as some just judge, that would have all men live regularly, and free from disorders; but having transgressed the laws, justice compels him, and that by a good and rectified will, to punish them. Some would have this will of God to be *reluctantem* rather than *voluntatem*; not so much an absolute will and resolution, as a willingness and desire: not unlike a merchant's casting his freight overboard in a dangerous tempest. He would willingly save them, and yet he is willingly content to lose them, says one.

But if God be willing that none should perish, why then are not some made partakers of his grace, as well as others? St. Augustine answers, Some men therefore want grace, not because God does not proffer it, but because they will not receive it. Peter walking on the sea, and beginning to sink, cries out to his Master; and he took him by the hand, and saved him, Matt. xiv. 29—31. This world wherein we walk is a sea, storms arise, and we are ready to perish; while we do not cry unto Christ for help, is it his fault if we be drowned? Thou liest sick, an excellent physician comes to thy door with a sovereign remedy, and knocks for admission; if neither thy will nor ability can let him in, blame thyself, not him, for thy perishing. We are all mortally sick of sin; Christ our saving Physician proffers his help; but if either we want will to admit his presence, or power to take his medicines, or skill to follow his direction, we may die with the means of our salvation by us. *Merito perit ægrotus qui medicum non vocat, sed ultro qui venientem respuit*: (Muscul.) The patient is worthy to die, that will not invite the physician to come; but more worthy he, that will not accept of his help when he is come.

5. The willingness of God that none should perish, is proved by innumerable evidences. He made us once; certainly he did not make us because he would damn us. Yea, he hath often made us: when he redeemed us, that was a second making; when he renews us by his grace, that is another making: every one of his deliverances is a kind of "Let us make man." If our sins have made us our Maker's offenders, have they also made us that we are not his creatures? If the devil hath bereaved us of our purity, hath he also bereaved God of his pity? Though justice might rightly condemn us, cannot mercy possibly save us? If the Lord reject a sinner that cries to him for mercy, where is his willingness to have none perish? His word is a will, and his will is a power: he promises nothing but what he purposes, and he purposes nothing but what he performs. If he would have none perish, what necessity is there of our being lost? If he desire that a sinner should live, what difficulty is there of our being saved? What power of enemies, or number of sins, can either hinder what he would, or constrain what he would not? He will not so look upon us sinful wretches, as not to see himself; nor so regard our wickedness, as not to behold his own goodness; nor so remember the sins that we have done, as to forget the creatures that he hath made.

He that lends the sun of light to all, would have none perish in darkness; and he that sends the Son of his love unto all, intends the redemption of as many as will receive him, John i. 12. Why doth he not deny the knowledge of Christ? Why did he not hedge up that flower in some private garden? Why

not lock up that jewel in one principal treasury? Certainly he would never have communicated it, if he did not purpose a universal benefit by it. Why is the gospel forbidden to none, if any be debarred from the comforts of it? To whom doth not the bosom of the church be open? To what convert is the baptismal water denied? To what confirmed Christian is the sacramental communion of the body and blood of Christ not offered? We are not only admitted, but even invited to that blessed table. To what end are those gracious invitations, Come, ye that thirst, and drink; Come, ye that are heavy laden, and have ease? Is any guest excepted? He that bids all, forbids none. When a prince proclaims free audience to all sorts of clients, who can complain that his cause may be heard? Those that seem such terrifying speeches as, The gate is narrow, Few are saved, be rather meant for spurs to our devotion, than bars to God's compassion: they do not contract his mercy, which is so infinite, but they would enlarge our hearts, which are so contracted. His nature is now as apt to forgive, as his power will be seen hereafter able to punish. When did the distribution of his treasure cease? When was the door shut to his faithful clients? when we did sin, he did spare; when we did defer, he did expect; when we shall return, he will meet and embrace. He that doth all this, is not willing that any should perish.

6. There is no necessity that any man, any this or that man, should perish. Some think they have gone far enough in the clearing of this point, to say, that God is no cause of our perishing, though we must perish: they determine it in this; It is true, your condemnation is unavoidable, but you must blame yourselves. Others more fairly and comfortably carry it thus much further, and conclude out of this text, that there is no such unavoidableness, no such necessity of your damnation at all. The former only teach, that how desperate soever our case be, how irremediable soever our state, we ourselves, and not God, are the cause of this desperate irremediable, The other say better; There is no such peremptory sentence, there is no such desperate irremediable, declared to any particular conscience; but whensoever we repent, the Lord will receive us. Once hath the Lord spoken, and twice do we hear him, Psal. lxii. 11. We hear him once speaking for his own honour; he does not condemn us, if we be condemned. And we hear him speaking a second time for our comfort; we need not be condemned at all. "Thy ways and thy doings have procured these things unto thee," Jer. iv. 18; and destruction is of thyself: this fully dischargeth God from being the author of our ruin. But howsoever God be thus discharged, He does not kill me if I die; yet it is but poor comfort to me, if I must die, to be told that I have killed myself: therefore he gives us here a stronger consolation, by telling us, there is no such necessity, we need not die at all. What can make our case so desperate, that he hath not left us ways of returning to him? What can make our state so irrecoverable, that he hath not left himself ways of redeeming us?

It is not for us to dispute, what God of his absolute power may do, nor what by his unrevealed decree he hath done: but this we gather here, that he hath not allowed me, nor thee, nor any to conclude against ourselves, a necessity of perishing. "Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me," Isa. xlix. 14. But why will Zion say so? My Lord, and hath forgotten me? Can she remember that God is hers, and not think that she is his? Can she remember him, and think that he hath forgotten her? What contradictions are these?

If he have forgotten her, how is he then her Lord? If he be her Lord, how hath he then forgotten her? Can Zion retain her bowels of pity, and think that God has lost his? Every where in the Scriptures we meet with God's Come ye; both the Testaments are full of invitations to come unto God. There is a Come, without having; Come and buy, though you have no money. Isa. lv. 1, no merits of your own: yet come, and dilate your measures, and according to that dilatation, fill them with the merits of Christ. There is a Come and return; Come, though your coming be but a returning. Hos. vi. 1: be not ashamed of your returning, though it be a confession of your former running away: come in repentance, though you cannot come in innocency. There is a Come and consult: if you find it hard to come, or though you know not the way to come, yet come, that you may know the way: consult with God how you may come, and how you may stay when you are come. There is a Come and reason, argue, plead, dispute, expostulate. Come, though you come to reason with God, Isa. i. 18; come upon any conditions. There is a Come labouring; how heavy soever the burden of your sins, or the pressure of God's judgments, lie upon you, yet come for your own ease: "Come, ye that labour, and I will give you rest," Matt. xi. 28. There is a Come thirsting: Come, you that thirst for my righteousness, and be satisfied with it, be justified by it. There is a Come, ye poor; let the lame and the blind come, "that my house may be filled;" I have room enough for them all; "compel them to come," Luke xiv. 23. "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come," Rev. xxii. 17. There is a world of Come ye's, and the gospel abounds with infinite invitations to come. And there is a Come ye that closeth up all the rest; "Come, ye blessed of my Father," Matt. xxv. 34: you have obeyed my first, in coming to my kingdom of grace; you are now blessed with my last, come into my kingdom of glory. But there is but one Depart ye; that same, Go, ye cursed, is but once heard from the mouth of God; and that not in this world neither; as long as we are in this world, we are safe from rejection; God doth not cast us off, for he is not willing that any should perish. But if thy tender conscience, and thy startling soul, should mis-maginate the hearing of such a voice, or in thy melancholy distemper dream of such a sound from God's lips, as, Depart, thou sinner; a voice of separation, a voice that bids thee go: say thou with Peter, to his and thy Saviour, Lord, whither shall I go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And I believe and am sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God, John vi. 68; Matt. xvi. 16. And that Christ, the Son of the living God, will call thee back, and call back his own word, and entertain thee with mercy and peace.

For use and application of all this; here is matter of reprehension, of instruction, of consolation.

1. It reprehends those rigid and Stoically-disposed Christians, that would contract the mercy of God within their own limits, and make the gate of heaven straiter than it is. Malicious fool, is thine eye evil because God is good? Wilt thou confine the goodness of thy Maker, and set down what he shall do for his creature? thus much, and no more? These heirs of the old Catharoi see men sin foully and fearfully, they do not see them repent visibly; therefore they infer upon them damnation. Oh uncharitable censure! I would not pronounce it of the greatest sinner that I should see die; though I perceived his sins to cover him like a cloud, as if they would keep him from looking up to God, and God from looking

down upon him: the devil waiting for him, as for a certain prey; yet I would not pronounce it. The ways of thy mercies, O God, are past finding out; more unknown than the way of a ship in the sea, or of an eagle in the air. Let them show me how a flash of lightning melts the sword, without making any impression in the scabbard; and I will show them as well, how at the instant of our death mercy more sudden and more penetrating than the lightning, may melt our hearts into repentance, though this be not visible to mortal eyes. Of the two, the pope seems to me to offend the less, because more charitably, in canonizing them for saints, who for aught he knows are damned; than these men do in damning them, who for aught they know are saints. But if I might advise them, they should bestow more time in saving of their own souls; less, in damning of the souls of others. I know how frivolous a tale it is, that St. Gregory drew Trajan's soul out of hell; and how groundless an opinion is fathered upon Origen, that at last, Satan shall be saved; but if they could persuade me the one half, that Trajan or the devil came to repentance in hell, I might be induced to believe the other half, that they might be delivered out of hell. Far be it from us to cut short the mercy of God, or to weaken the credit of the merits of Christ, which so manifest his unwillingness that any should perish.

2. This teacheth us to understand the Scriptures aright. There be too many that press heavily to their own condemnation, every sentence of menace or terror; as, "The wages of sin is death," Rom. vi. 23; "The wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience," Eph. v. 6: It is impossible for him that falls after grace, to be renewed, Heb. vi. 4, 6: with these, and the like, they affright their own souls. On the other side, a great number flatter themselves with the promises of mercy; as, Christ suffered for all: God would have all men saved: At what time soever a sinner repents, he shall be forgiven: and with these they feed their own wantonness. But let us know, that it is not a few misunderstood sentences out of God's book that must try us, but the whole book itself; the tenor and purpose, the scope and intention, of God in his Scriptures. His book is a testament, and in the testament the testator is dead, and dead for us; and will he that died for us suffer us to perish? His book is gospel, and gospel is good tidings, a gracious message; and will God, under the colour of a message of grace and life, send us the fatal errand of death? The Scriptures may seem to jar in our weak apprehension; our best way is to reconcile them in our hearts. "Except ye repent, ye shall all perish," Luke xiii. 3; there is terror: God would have none at all perish; here is comfort: that threatening, and this promise, are both reconciled in our repentance. The soul that sinneth shall die, saith God by his prophet: The soul that believeth shall live, saith the same God by his apostle. He that hath sinned, may believe; therefore he should live: he that believeth, hath sinned; therefore he should die. How shall we atone those? how reconcile death and life? Yes, though we have sinned, and therefore deserve to die; yet if we believe in Christ, that died for our sins, and now forsake them, we shall live. Thus both the sentences of God shall stand, and we shall not fall. When thou art tempted to transgress, consider that part of God's word which threateneth vengeance to sin: when thou art broken with remorse of sin, remember that part of his word which promiseth mercy to repentance. Thus let us do our best to save ourselves, for God would not have us to perish. Why will you die, O ye house of Israel?

3. This pours oil into the wounds of a contrite heart. Were our souls in such a strait, as Israel between the Red Sea and the Egyptians; the spirits of vengeance, like those enemies, pursuing us behind; hell and death, like that Red Sea, ready to engulf us before: yet would I speak to you in the confidence of Moses, "Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord," Exod. xiv. 13. Thou that art oppressed with the violence and clamour of thy sins, and warest an advocate either to intercede or pity, hear the voice of the Lamb: Cry unto me, I will hear thee out of mine holy hill. Doth any soul hunger after righteousness? Behold, I am the bread of life: Take, eat, here is my body. Doth any thirst after the waters of grace? Lo, I am a living Fountain; come and drink; here is my blood. Art thou not yet quite dead in trespasses? are not thy ulcers past cure? are there any seeds of life remaining? is there any motion of repentance in thy soul? will thy pulse of remorse beat a little? hast thou but a touch of sorrow, a spark of hope, a grain of faith? Be comforted; the God of mercy will not have thee perish. Not a tear of repentance drops from thee, either unpitied, or unpreserved; God puts it into his bottle. Doth the Lord say, I would have none perish? And dost thou say, Nay, but he will have me to perish? Thee? why thee? He says, None; and dost thou except one? and that one thyself? What is this but to cross the cross of Christ? He would have all men saved, 1 Tim. ii. 4; and thou comest in with thy exceptive, All but me. What is this but, in effect, and at a distance, to give the lie to Truth itself? There be many that flatter away their souls in sport; but that a man should cast away his soul in wilful earnest, is a prodigious desperateness. Not so; but, God would have none to perish, therefore not me: this is a safe and comfortable inference. We are all naturally given to favour ourselves where we should not; why then do we not favour ourselves where we should? Justice thinks on us in the heat of our rebellions, but then we think not on justice; and in our sad remorse, when mercy thinks on us, cannot we think on mercy? If the greatness of thy sins, which is commonly heightened by thine own deceptions, and exalted by thine own sinking, grow so strong against thee, that thou canst not quench the jealousy, nor devest the temple of God's desertion; do but consider who should occasion it. It must be God, or thyself. God it cannot be, for he is not willing that any should perish. It is then thyself, it is thy fault, if it be done: and if thou humbly acknowledge that fault, it is not done; for God doth never so irrevocably threaten judgment for sin, but the penitent confession of that sin cancels and avoids the sentence. If our clamorous conscience, like some sharp-fanged officer, arrest us at God's suit, let us put in bail, two subsidy-virtues, faith and repentance, and so stand the trial. The law is on our side, the law of grace is with us: and this law is his that is our Advocate, and he is our Advocate that is our Judge, and he is our Judge that is our Saviour, even the Head of ourselves, Jesus Christ.

"But that all should come to repentance." The end of a thing is first in intention, though it be last in execution. The salvation of mankind was God's first end, next to his glory, why he made man; and the accomplishment of that salvation is that other end, wherunto in time he brings him. There is the end propounded, as we build a house to dwell in; and the end accomplished, when that house is made fit for our dwelling. There is the end of a man's life, when he dies; and the end foreappointing his death, why he shall die then. There is the end of which, and the end for which. As we call that the end of a

dinner, when we have done eating. As the end of eating our dinner is for strength and health. There is the middle end, and the ultimate end. The physician persuades his patient to walk: the end is to get him an appetite to his meat; that is the middle end. But why does he seek to procure this appetite? that this appetite may procure health: health then is the ultimate end. God calls all men to repentance: the end is that they might amend their relives; that is the middle end; but why would he have them amend their lives? that they might not perish, but have everlasting life: their salvation then is the ultimate end. He is not willing that any should perish: how should they escape it? by coming to repentance. The end of his gospel is, that men might repent; the end of their repentance is, that they might be converted; the end of their conversion is, that they might be saved.

This then is the point, the force of the argument, the sum and scope of the place: the intent of God's long-suffering towards us, is to bring us to repentance. The principal end is, that we might be saved; the subordinate end is, that we might come to repentance, the only way to be saved. Thus we have all the passages of the text: The Lord is not slack to help us; there we set out: much less is he slack to perform his promise; that way we went: but he is long-suffering toward us; thither we came: and the purpose of this long-suffering is, that none should perish; so far we are gone: but that all should come to repentance, and with this we conclude. For method in our proceeding, these five conclusions will naturally arise from the words. First, that repentance is the necessary way to salvation. Secondly, that it is the will of God we should repent. Thirdly, that this will extends not to some, but to all. Fourthly, that we must come to repentance, and not expect that repentance should come unto us. Fifthly, that the intent of God's long-suffering and forbearance, is our conversion and repentance. Of these briefly in their order.

1. Repentance is the necessary way to salvation. It is the will of God that none should perish; yet withal, it is his will, that all, except we repent, shall perish, Luke xiii. 3. There was, in the law, an altar for propitiation, and a laver for purgation: he that partook of the altar, must first wash in the laver. So in the gospel, John began to preach "the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins," Luke iii. 3. Before we can have remission of our sins, we must wash our souls in the fountain of repentance. Tears must not only wash out our sins, but stand in the place of our sins. My tears are in thy book, Psal. lvi. 8: our sins were in God's book before; but our tears coming, do both blot them out and fill their place. If there were any other way to heaven than sorrow, *vel felix mundus, vel fallens Christus*, the world were happy, and Christ had mistaught us; for he saith, Ye shall weep, but the world shall rejoice; but your sorrow shall be turned into joy, John xvi. 20, and their joy into sorrow. Ye shall mourn in this world; this is a perpetual prognostication: the wisdom of heaven teacheth us what weather we must look for; wet and rain, to the end of our journey. St. Augustine asks the price of the kingdom of heaven; and answers himself, that it is worthy of eternal labour; yet it is gotten with a short sorrow. God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes, Rev. xxi. 4; but dry cheeks have no need of wiping. The papists speak wonders of their holy water; but the right holy water is the tears of a sanctified heart: a repentant eye is the true cistern of holy water. *Pro brevibus lacrymis, caudila longa metent*, saith Paulinus; i. e. For short-lived tears, they endless joy shall

reap. The sight of our sorrowful spirits on earth, makes the spirits joyful in heaven. God that is grieved at our sinful joys, will rejoice to behold our penitent griefs. This is the happy harvest that grows out of the holy seed of our tears; we plough groaning, but we shall reap our crop singing, Psal. cxxvi. 5. The ancients in their sorrows were accustomed to rend their garments: the prophet diverts us from that custom, to the rending of our hearts, Joel ii. 13. The priests of Baal lanced their flesh, as their heirs, the Romists, now macerate their bodies: but there may be a broken heart under a whole skin, under a whole garment; as under torn clothes and hides, there may be untouched hearts. A whole garment is more handsome to men than a broken one; but a broken heart is more pleasing to God than a whole one. We are wont to cut and slash our apparel, in pride: oh that we would deal so with our hearts, in humility, and repentance! A robe that is thus artificially mangled, if the scissures and breaches be reconciled with "borders of gold and studs of silver," Cant. i. 11; or knit together with the ties of silk and precious stones; appears more glorious, than the former continuity could have made it. The contrite heart, which the remorse of sin hath cut out into pieces, after it is reintegrated with the Spirit of consolation, and made up with grace, peace, and remission; jewels so precious, that the pride of nature and art are baseness to them; it is most lovely in the eyes of God, and reserved for the wardrobe of heaven. The Israelites must cross the river Jordan, before they enter into Canaan; and necessarily, repentance is our way to that blessed Jerusalem.

2. It is the will of God, that we should repent: his commanding will, we speak not of his decreeing will; that will of his which he tells us; we may not meddle with that part of his will which he keeps to himself. All righteousness, all happiness, is the will of God to his creature. "This is the will of God, your sanctification," 1 Thess. iv. 3: holiness is the daughter of repentance. This is the will of God, your salvation, 1 Tim. ii. 4: that is the end, whereunto repentance is the means: we must go by the means unto the end. It is my Father's will that none of these little ones should perish, Matt. xviii. 14: we must all perish, little and great, if we repent not. It is your Father's will to give you a kingdom, Luke xii. 32: that kingdom hath been opened to deplored impiety, it is always barred against impenitency. This is not only a declaratory will, to all; but an efficacious will, to all that embrace it. God affords many proofs of his willingness to bring us to repentance. First, his word preached. Why doth he call us, but that he would have us come? Why is the voice of the turtle heard in our land, Cant. ii. 12, but that as one turtle echoes to another, in their mourning accents, so our sorrowful consideration of your sins in our sermons, should be answered with a reciprocal repentance in your hearts? Our voice is not always pleasing to your ears, but it is always profitable to your souls. This is the scope of all our preaching, to bring you to repentance: not to win your ears, but your tears; we would not have you commend us, we would have you amend yourselves. This is the honour of a sermon, when the hearer goes weeping home; and instead of, *He said well*, cries out to God in secret, *I have done ill*. Therefore is the word called fire, that it might melt your hearts. Therefore is Christ compared to the sun, Mal. iv. 2, and the Holy Ghost to the wind, John iii. 8; that they may both dissolve your clouds into tears. Secondly, the sacraments, both which are the real oracles of repentance. Baptism is a sacrament of faith, the Lord's supper a sacrament of love; both

are sacraments of repentance. Baptism is a key to let us in, the Lord's supper a lock to keep and seal us up; both are ineffectual without repentance. The former is precisely called "the baptism of repentance," Luke iii. 3: baptism is a sacramental repentance, and repentance is an allegorical baptism. In the former we are patients, agents in the latter: there, another baptizeth us; here, we baptize ourselves: in baptism we promise repentance; by repentance we perform our vow in baptism. That was once done, we were but once baptized at the font: this is often repeated, yea, we must daily baptize our souls in the fountain of our tears. That was one shower of grace falling from heaven above us; this is a continual running spring of compunction within us. To the other sacrament, who dares approach without repentance? The bread of life will choke him; and that sacred wine, the symbol of Christ's blood, which is so sovereign and cordial to all believers, will run like poison through his veins, without repentance. Yea, therefore, therein, and thereby, doth the Lord seal unto us the remission of our sins, upon the foregranted condition of our repentance.

I might add to these many other demonstrations; but I had rather press you with weight than oppress you with number of arguments. Wherefore doth the Spirit of grace knock at our doors, with such infinite holy motions, but that he would come in? He will not come in till repentance hath swept the house; therefore his first knock is for repentance. All God's blessings are like so many suitors, that woo us to repentance; yea, they put on even the forms of clients, and petition us for repentance. All his judgments are so many claps of thunder, to waken us to repentance. His afflictions are ambassadors, that treat with us about a league; which cannot be had without repentance. All the creatures of God, ordained for our use, are so many silent sermons, so many trumpets, that summon us to repentance. Nothing can be plainer, than that the Lord would have us come to repentance. Is he willing, and are we unwilling? Is it not for our good? Why then do we not consent? We should continually beg this favour on our knees, though it were hard to be granted; and do we despise it, being so graciously offered? No, let us present ourselves to him, whom we have provoked, if not in innocency, yet in humility; if not with a clean, yet at least with a broken heart; and seeing we cannot by our righteousness, let us endeavour to be saved by our repentance.

3. Neither doth he will this good to some, but to all; he would have all come to repentance; this is the infinite latitude of his mercy. God looketh down from heaven upon the children of men, and "there is none that doeth good, no, not one," Psal. xiv. 2, 3; and yet is his goodness so immense, that he would have none perish, no, not one. All men have sinned, and yet would he have all men saved. All have come short of the glory of God, Rom. iii. 23; and yet would he have all come home to the glory of God. What, all? There be some, Lord, that misbelieve thy truth, some that abuse thy word, some that despise thy name, some that blaspheme thine honour; and yet dost thou except none? Wouldst thou have all come to repentance? That extreme malice, Satan, would have all perish. The infinite goodness, God, would have all blessed. How well be their names fitted to their natures, in our language; *good*, and *God*; *evil*, and *devil*! In the creation, when God had made all things, he reviewed them, and saw that all was good; and such is the goodness of his love, such his love of goodness, that he would have all good again. I will not diminish

the mercies of God, by admitting here of any of these distinctions; of sufficiency and efficacy, of the generals and individuals, all of every kind, or every kind of all: let no man straiten what God hath enlarged. Oppress not thyself with what God can do by his absolute power, nor with what he hath done by his inscrutable decree; but comfort thy soul with what he reveals of his incomparable mercy. He tells thee, that he would not have thee perish; that he would have thee repent; which if thou doest, in a thousand places he hath told thee that he will save thee; but no where, at no time, hath he peremptorily told thee that he will condemn thee. "Where is the bill of your mother's divorcement, whom I have put away? or to which of my creditors have I sold you?" Isa. l. 1. Though I might have done both, and left you without just cause of complaint; yet I have not done it. If I have forsaken you, if I have sold you, show me your bill of divorce, show me your bill of sale. Do I wish well unto all, and dost thou exclude thyself, O thou wrangling soul? Upon what canst thou ground this jealousy and suspicion in thy Maker? If I have rejected thee, where is the bill? show me if any where under my hand. In the sixty-six books of both my Testaments, what one chapter canst thou pick out, what one verse, what one sentence, wherein I have peremptorily and definitively condemned thee? Every leaf abounds with the proffers of God's mercy to all; without limitation, to all that embrace it; but that he hath rejected thee, or me, or any name amongst us, this I am sure we never found. No, Lord, thou wiltst good unto all; oh that all would will good to themselves, and give all glory to thee, for thy tender mercies in Jesus Christ!

4. We are directed to come to repentance, and not to look that repentance should come unto us. Seek for wisdom as for silver, and as thou diggest for gold: we expect not that gold and silver should seek us out; if we do, our purses will be light, and our hearts heavy; and we may take up St. Peter's saying, "Silver and gold have I none," Acts iii. 6. It is true that without Christ we can do nothing; but having Christ will we do nothing neither? We may say of coming to repentance, as to that great supper, Neither all they that were bidden were willing to come, nor they that came could have come without calling. They that came, cannot ascribe merit to themselves, because they were called; they that came not, may well attribute blame to themselves, because they were called. But how should we come to repentance? Our feet are our desires: we are what we desire to be, and where we desire to be. Mary was not where she was, but where her desire was, and that was with Christ. When we earnestly desire repentance, we are at it. There may be a faint, languid wish of repentance, Oh that I were another man! this is a foot, but a lame foot; the soul cannot walk upon it. There may be an unwilling willingness to repent, which is a preposterous foot turned backward; Fain I would repent, but I am loth to lose the sweetness of my sin: so watermen look one way, and row another: they give a look toward repentance, but their actions move toward wickedness; they would arrive in the east, but they steer their course westward. We cannot go upon such stilts and crutches to heaven. Heartly prayer and diligent endeavour, these are the two sound legs, whereon we must come to repentance.

5. The intent of God's long-suffering towards us, is, that we might not perish: his patience invites our penitence. Knowest thou not that God's goodness and forbearance leadeth thee to repentance? Rom. ii. 4. Why doth he spare us so long, but that our amendment might procure him to spare us for ever?

Repentance, thither he leads us; and by his patience, so he leads us. O let us have ductile spirits, willing to follow so sweet a manuduction! "I gave her space to repent of her fornications; and she repented not," Rev. ii. 21. The Lord struck Ahab her husband with a violent death, her elder son Abaziah perished, her younger son Joram had twelve years' unfortunate reign; yet Jezebel take no warning by all this? No, for still she repented not. God is offended, it is he that suffers the injury and proffers the mercy: yet still she repented not. While he stands waiting, she is painting her cheeks, threatening his prophets, renting his holy name with blasphemies; but still she repented not. He doubles her days of forbearance, that might hasten her day of vengeance: he lets her breathe out reproaches against him, while he allows her breath to repent and cool her torment; and yet she repented not. The devil gapes to devour her, and solicits God that she might be turned over to him for punishment: who would use her worse than the lions did the enemies of Daniel, breaking her bones before she could fall to the bottom of the den, Dan. vi. 24: still the Lord puts off Satan, and enlargeth her term; but yet she repented not. May we not parallel this city with that woman? Those two daughters of the great King, have come hand in hand to woo us: "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other," Psal. lxxxv. 10; mercy going before with peace to you, if you embrace it; justice following after with woe to you, if you refuse it: the one with an open bosom ready to receive the penitent; the other with a drawn sword to devour the obstinate: and yet we repented not. One while peace hath planted laurels and palm-trees round about our coasts, and plenteousness hath kept her court within our borders; another while, fire hath demolished our buildings, plagues have emptied our walls, losses by sea have diminished our estates, strange proceedings have distracted our minds: in the mean time, the prophets of God have told us the causes and the remedies of all these sorrows; yet, as if our hearts were sermon-proof, were shot-proof, were thunder-proof too, truly is it said of us, that we repented not.

God is patient, that we might be penitent. All men continue, but with what heart? Behold the aged worldling, that hath overlived all the teeth of his gums, the hairs of his head, the sight of his eyes, the taste of his palate; yet he is loth to die. Why? Either he hath not yet enough, and would live to get it; or he hath too much, and would live to spend it. Most men would neither die, nor be old, nor are yet content in being young: to whom it may be said, as the vision spake to the shrinking professors of the primitive times, You would neither live to be old, nor die while you are young; what shall I do with you? We see old age, an emblem of misery, a burden; yet being asked what year we would die, we still shuffle it off to the next; and rather than want excuses, we would live to repent. This were well if it were true. But does not the greater number rather add to the heap of their sins by continuance, than diminish it by repentance? as if they coveted time, to swell the cup of their torment to the brim; or that hell-fire could not be hot enough for them, unless they had more space allowed them to blow it. The sin which our birth brought with it into the world, though we had never done actual trespass, is work enough for us to repent of. Besides, we sin too much actually every day, for that day's repentance. Sufficient to the day is the sinful evil thereof, Matt. vi. 34: oh that sufficient to the day were the godly sorrow thereof! yea, the sin of one hour may well task the repentance of many days. Lay all this

together, and see if thy time be not rather of the shortest for this great work of repentance. He that commits one sin, hath broken the whole law, though not the whole of the law; but we have broken every one of God's ten laws ten thousand times, and ten thousand ways. We have sinned; what shall we do unto thee, O thou preserver of men? Job vii. 20. What should you do? replies our gracious God. Make use of my patience; I allow you time, do you lay hold of repentance. Have we so many sins, and so few days; and shall we not set apart one hour of a day, one day of a week, for this weighty business? We sin enough in one day, to repent all our lives; and do we think, that for the sins of all our lives we can sufficiently repent in one day? If we have seen many rising and setting suns, and beheld the wheeling heavens turn over forty years; they say, we have had a fair time; yes, if we have repented; otherwise it may prove a foul time to us. Pleasure we have little need of, repentance is necessary; our time is too short for both, one of them can only possess it; give it to the worthier. Before we came into the world, we had sin; after we are gone out of the world, (except Christ by his satisfaction clear the core,) our sin remains in God's debt-book; in neither of these states is there place for repentance; only the season of life is the season of repentance. Time was when God did gently admonish men, "Why stand ye all the day idle?" Matt. xx. 6. The day shall come, when he will terrify their souls with a Why have you stood all the day idle? O then, let us not add to our other sins this sin also, that we have lost the time of repentance. Let us humbly prostrate ourselves before the throne of grace; and beg not only space for repentance, but the grace of repentance; that after God's allowance of time to repent, we may never be driven to repent that we had such an allowance. O let it never be said of us, as it was of that cursed Jezebel, that we repented not.

The use of all this teacheth us, not to abuse the Divine patience, but to take the first opportunity of repentance. If sin be fostered in youth, it will hardly be dispossessed in age. That which the young man took in for his play-fellow, when he is aged he shall find his master. Suppose that sickness surpriseth a man in the heat of his blood, and height of his joviality; though he had rather live to enjoy his pleasant sins, yet he would repent if he must die: as Augustine says, We neither deny him mercy, nor afford him security. Wouldst thou be put out of doubt? lay hold on that which is certain, let go that which is uncertain. Repent immediately, now in thy health; this is good; because in the time when thou mightest have sinned, thou hast repented: but then only to begin to be sorry, when thou hast no further appetite to sin, thy sins have cashiered thee, not thou them, saith Cyprian. If we see no flowers in the spring, we look for no fruits in autumn. The philosopher being asked, near his end, why he had not married in all his life, answered thus: In youth I was too young, now I am too old, betwixt both these times I had other business. In like manner do we shuffle off repentance, as he did marriage: in youth we think ourselves too young, and need not; in age too old, and cannot: in middle age we have other business, and will not. But as the bloody tyrants in the days of Queen Mary gave our forefathers a round and peremptory choice, Either turn or burn; so we tremble to speak it, but we must: Let dissolute sinners either hasten their turning to repentance, or expect their burning in the fiery lake of vengeance.

Thus we have all the parts of this verse, in every passage whereof we meet with mercy: that as at the

repairing of the temple, the people shouted to Zerubbabel, "Grace, grace unto it," Zech. iv. 7; so let our thankful hearts acknowledge in every piece of this holy building, Mercy, mercy, there is nothing but mercy in it. We may breathe upon every word, as that psalm closeth up every verse, with this bearing. For his mercy endureth for ever. First, the Lord is not slack to save and deliver us; for his mercy endureth for ever. Secondly, much less is he slack concerning his promise to do us good; for his mercy endureth for ever. Thirdly, but he is long-suffering toward us, full sweet is his patience; for his mercy endureth for ever. Fourthly, he is not willing that any should perish, he desires not the death of a sinner; for his mercy endureth for ever. Fifthly, but he would have all men come to repentance, and by repentance to forgiveness, and by forgiveness to salvation; for his mercy endureth for ever. Amen.

VERSE 10.

But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

WHEN God made this lower world, he did not intend it for perpetuity; but subjected it to mutations, to alterations, to successions: albeit these changes may challenge sin for the cause, which God did foresee but not predetermine; yet after his foresight of sin, he did foreappoint this mortality for punishment. One thing thrust out another, this age hath dispossessed the former, and shall be dispossessed by the future. Adam resigns to Noah, Abraham to David, the Jews to the Babylonians, they to the Persians, the Persians to the Grecians, the Grecians to the Romans. As it is in the general, so in all particulars: how hath this little island been usurped, mixed, metamorphosed, even to the utter extinction of her first natives! Kingdoms have their periods; yea, the earth itself, though it continually lie still, is not constant, because it continually changes, and melts in all parts thereof. Man is the noblest part of the earth, and he so melts and moulders away, as if he were a statue, not of earth, but of snow. His own envy melts him, and he grows lean with that; another's beauty melts him, and he languisheth away in the fruitless contemplation of that. But a sickness so melts him, as if lead were molten in a furnace; and death so melts him, that it calcines him, and reduceth him to atoms and ashes. In the nature of sensitive things, children outlive their parents; and so there is a successive propagation, one begets another. But in some things, the mother outlives the children; the fruits of the earth die yearly, the mother remains. We are also her children, and daily doth she receive us back into her womb: "One generation passeth, and another cometh; but the earth abideth for ever," Eccl. i. 4. Yet this old grandame must have her day; there is a funeral fire ordained for her aged bones. In the world one thing devours another; fishes devour fishes, and beasts devour beasts; yea, and men also devour men, till they even become monsters. We feed upon the creatures, the worms shall feed upon us, the earth shall consume those worms, time shall waste the earth; but the day of the Lord shall consume even time; this shall put an end to all. This mountain is bigger than that, this cedar taller than that, this

river longer than that, this man nobler than that; yet all have one earth for their foundation, and the same orbicular heavens for their roof: but the day of the Lord shall make all even; in the which, the heavens shall pass away roaring, the elements vanish melting, the earth with her works stand burning; hell shall open shrieking, and all mankind appear trembling, at the archangel's trumpet summoning, no less than all the world, to this last universal audit.

"But the day of the Lord shall come," &c. You may easily apprehend the parts, they are generally but two; an advent, and an event; a coming, and what shall happen in that coming. First, The day of the Lord shall come as a thief in the night; there is the advent. Secondly, In which the heavens shall pass away, &c.; there is the event. The fruit of the particular branches will be gathered in their due places. In the advent, we have two considerations; the matter, and the manner; what shall come, and how. First, the matter is, The day of the Lord shall come. Secondly, the manner is, Like a thief in the night. To proceed in order.

"The day of the Lord." Every day is the Lord's; all times are his; and he hath so put them in his own power, Acts i. 7, that he hath not communicated that power, nor imparted the knowledge of that disposition, to any creature. The day is thine, O Lord, and the night is thine, Psal. lxxix. 16. But some days are the Lord's by a more special right and peculiar interest; such as he hath culled out of the common heap of days, and set his own royal stamp upon them. So the sabbath is called The Lord's day; sanctified, and set apart by his own ordinance, for his extraordinary worship. In no day must we forget him, on this day we must forget all things besides him. The same sun enlightens other days, equally with this: but it hath a better light, by the rising of a nobler Sun; Jesus Christ doth enlighten it; this is the honour of it; for this cause, besides the moral precept, it is called The Lord's day. Shall we think that this day of the Lord shall fall upon the Lord's day? It was Christ's caution to the Jews, "Pray that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day," Matt. xxiv. 20. We may not pray so, concerning this day of the Lord. But this we know, that as when God had made six days, and all the world in them, he deposited them in the hands of a sabbath; so in this day of the Lord, we that are in Christ, shall enter into that everlasting sabbath, the glorious rest in heaven. There be other days which God hath consecrated to himself, and commanded a solemn celebration of them to us, ennobled with the memory of some famous works of his mercy: concerning every one of these we may say, "This is the day which the Lord hath made," Psal. cxviii. 24; he made it, he made us happy by it, and he would have us remember him in it: this is also the day of the Lord. Potentates and great persons have their solemn days: Herod had his birth-day, Matt. xiv. 6; and kings do ceremoniously keep their coronation-days. The Lord will also have his day. Once the people would have crowned him, but he refused it; that was not his day. Now he will receive that glorious crown at the hands of his Father, to the comfort of his loyal subjects, and the everlasting confusion of those rebels, that would not have him reign over them, Luke xix. 27: this is the Lord's day. The saints have their days of commemoration; and so we call them. St. John's day, St. Peter's day. Not that we dedicate these days to the worship of the saints, like our superstitious adversaries; we honour the saints more than they; with approbation, not adoration; with imitation of their lives, not invocation of their loves. On those

days we remember their graces, and the benefits God hath done to his church by their service; so that they are more properly the Lord's days than theirs. But the Lord "hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness," Acts xvii. 31: this is emphatically, The Lord's day.

First we have our day, and then the Lord hath his. O Jerusalem, that thou hadst known these things, in this thy day! Luke xix. 42. The ungodly have their day, wherein they may do their own pleasures, as it were without the controlment of the supreme Judge. The adversaries of Christ had their day; when the state was incensed against him, the Herodians came to tempt him in the dangerous question of tribute; that was their day. The Sadducees oppose him about the resurrection; that was their day. The scribe, expert in the law, that thought himself more learned than Herodias, Sadducee, or Pharisee, tempts him about the great commandment; that was his day, Matt. xxii. 15, 23, 34. Judas betrayed him for money; that was his day: the Jews accuse him for envy; that was their day: Pilate condemns him for policy; that was his day: Herod dismisseth him in mockery; the soldiers put him to death with cruelty; this was their day. But shall not Christ have also his day, to be avenged for all these injuries? Must he suffer unjustly, and not be openly justified? Had Pilate a day for his tribunal, and shall not the Maker and Judge of Pilate and all the world have a day to sit on his throne? The kings of the earth have their yearly audits, and shall not the King of heaven and earth have one day for his? Shall luxurious men riot, the covetous oppress, the unclean wallow in their turpitudes, swearers rend that dreadful name of God, and persecutors triumph in the sufferings of the innocent; and never be called to a reckoning? Christ put off divers suitors, his kindred, his mother, with this, My time is not yet come, John vii. 6; ii. 4. He put off his opposers, his malicious adversaries, with this, Mine hour is not yet come, John vii. 30; viii. 20. But certainly, his time, his hour, his day will come. Those souls under the altar cry with a loud voice, "How long, O Lord, holy and true?" Rev. vi. 10; and are answered in effect, My day is not yet come.

There is to every man a day of salvation, I Cor. vi. 2: we have not only the first days, wherein God spake by his prophets; but the last days, wherein he hath spoken to us by his Son, Heb. i. 2. There be some that are of the night; a night which they have superinduced upon themselves; but we are the children of the day, I Thess. v. 8; and the Lord hath shined upon us in a full noon. The gospel is the day of grace, whereof the word and sacraments are the bright beams: in this day there may be some dark passages, to them that will entangle themselves in unnecessary disputations; but to our modest and humble faith, the hours are light enough, and we may easily go our whole journey. That faith and repentance shall bring us to salvation by Jesus Christ; this a clear light. That the bread and wine in the sacrament, is not more assimilated to our body and blood, than the body and blood of Christ is communicated to us in that action; this is a clear light. There may be darkness in us, there is nothing but light in the gospel. This is our day, let us walk in it. He that is "the Ancient of days," Dan. vii. 9, will call us to an account for our days. Why do we stand here idle all the day, Matt. xx. 6, that are not sure of more days to make up our harvest? There are evil days, and still the latter the worse; therefore let us put on the armour of God, that we may be able to stand in the evil day, Eph. vi. 13. But there is a more fatal day than all the rest; the great day of

his wrath, in which no man shall be able to stand, Rev. vi. 17. This is our day, the next is the Lord's; if we do not in this day provide for that, that day shall condemn us for the loss of this. When the sun shines upon the dial, it reflects a shadow, whereby we observe how the day passeth; for although the sun, not the shadow, makes the day, yet we know not how the day goes by the sun, but by the shadow. The sun of mercy shining upon our prepared hearts, reflects a shadow, which is our pious conversation. The light of grace makes the day; but the shadow, or answerable reflection of our holy life, shows us how the day goes with ourselves, and in what forwardness we are toward the end of our journey, the consummation of our hopes, even the salvation of our souls.

This is the Lord's day, because he will then show himself in a more glorious form, than ever the world before saw, or apprehended him. The day of his birth was a day of humility. The day of his death was a day of sorrow; we cannot think of it without remorse: the whole frame of nature did put on mourning garments, to wait upon the funeral of their Maker. His resurrection was a day of triumph indeed; but because not visible, therefore not credible to the sinful and obstinate world. To us, it is a day of joy; and that traditional report of the sun's dancing upon every Easter-day morning, had more than a literal sense in the author's meaning. But the Jews pretended robbery; "His disciples stole him away." Him? what him alone? They were very favourable thieves, that would steal the body and leave the clothes. I have heard of sacrilegious robbers, that have violated the monuments of the dead, stealing the clothes when they have left the body behind; but to filch the body, and refuse the booty, was a senseless kind of robbery. No, the disciples did not steal his body out of the sepulchre; but the devil hath stolen the belief of his resurrection out of those Jewish hearts. The day of his ascension was a glorious day, but seen only by some few of his friends. His glory shall be the same at his coming down, that it was at his going up, Acts i. 11; but the manifestation of his glory at his going up was far less than it shall be at his coming down. But in this day of the Lord, every eye shall see him, even they that have pierced him through, Rev. i. 7. In the plague of Egyptian darkness, there was light enough in Goshen; so in this terrible day of the Lord, when darkness shall overwhelm the reprobates, the faithful shall be in a shining light; they shall shine as the light. To these, "the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold," Isa. xxx. 26. To the other, "the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light," Matt. xxiv. 29. Woe unto such that desire the day of the Lord! to what end is it for them? "The day of the Lord is darkness and not light," Amos v. 18. How then shall they discern one another? St. Chrysostom examines the reason, how the rich man could see Lazarus in Abraham's bosom; whereas it is not said, that Lazarus saw the rich man in hell-torments; and he answers it thus: A man that is in darkness can easily see him that is in the light, but he that is in light cannot so easily discern him that is in darkness: the light of Lazarus helped Dives to the sight of him, but the darkness of Dives hindered Lazarus from the sight of him. But this day shall make all manifest; the accursed darkness of the wicked shall be visible to the righteous, and the blessed glory of the righteous shall be apparent to the wicked. Every one shall see another, and all shall behold the Lord; they that have rejected him, to their horror; they that have embraced him, to their everlasting comfort.

The Scripture abounds with expressions of the desperate fatality of this day. It "is terrible, who can abide it?" Joel ii. 11. Happy is he that is "hid in the day of the Lord's anger," Zeph. ii. 3. Innumerable are the places wherein it is called "The day of the Lord Jesus," 1 Cor. v. 5; 2 Cor. i. 14; Phil. i. 6; 2 Thess. v. 2. He was put to public disgrace before, and insulted by men and devils; now his goodness shall be justified, and his glory published before men and angels. Then his attendants were poor fishers; now his throne shall be waited upon by celestial spirits. Then he sprang from the low estate of his mother; now he shall come in the glory of his Father. Then Herod tried to crush him in infancy; now he shall tremble to behold his majesty. Then they cried, Crucify him, crucify him! now they shall say, Glorify him, glorify him! Then they laughed at his sorrows; now they shall mourn at his sentence. Then they fastened him to the cross; now they shall do homage to his crown. Then he was a Lamb, bearing the sins of the world; now he shall be a Judge, condemning the world for sin. Then he was made a sacrifice for all men; now all men shall be made a sacrifice to him; either to his mercy in their salvation, or to his justice in their perdition. Then he rode to Jerusalem upon a beast, his cloth of state being the people's garments; now he shall come riding on the wings of the wind, and the clouds shall be the dust of his feet. Then a little star waited on his nativity; now the sun and moon shall be drowned in his clarity. All honour shall be swallowed up in the honour of Christ: as philosophers say of heat, that it does not only expel cold, but also call out a lesser heat: and light does not only expel darkness, but also extinguish a lesser light. Or as John the Baptist said of Christ, "He must increase, but I must decrease," John iii. 30; so that, Matt. iii., almost in every verse, there is a mention, there is a repetition of John: John baptized, John preached, John was thus clothed; until Christ's baptism is finished, and then there is no more mention of John: all is now referred to Jesus, and Jesus hath extinguished John. So now strong men have their powers, great men have their honours, lords have their commands, and kings have their crowns; but in this day they shall all resign to this Almighty King: all honours shall be swallowed up in the honour of Christ; all dignities, all titles, shall be concentrated in him; as at the creation, all that dispersed light was reduced to the one great luminary, and treasured up in the sun: all crowns shall be cast at his feet; and all glory and praise shall be given to his blessed name for ever.

"The day of the Lord will come." For judgment, that is the intent of his coming; yet it is his especial mercy, to give us warning. He might come, and never tell us so; yet he doth tell us of it, before he will come. "The end of all things is at hand:" what then? "therefore be sober, and watch unto prayer," 1 Pet. iv. 7. The Son of man comes in a cloud, with power and glory: what of that? therefore take heed to yourselves, that that day may not come upon you unawares, Luke xxi. 27, 34. Why doth he tell us that he will come, but that we might be in readiness to entertain him? In all God's proceedings to judgment, whether particular, or this universal, he ever leaves a latitude between his sentence and execution; and that interim is the sphere in which our repentance and his mercy move, and direct themselves in a benign aspect towards one another. God seldom comes to that despatch, a word and a blow; but to a blow without a word, to an execution without a warning, never. Cain imbrues his hands in the blood of his own brother: God takes upon him the

quarrel; (and indeed it was for his sake that Abel suffered;) he could have surprised and killed Cain; he does not, but only gives him warning: "Why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest not well, sin lies at the door," Gen. iv. 6, 7: you may proceed, but if you will needs, you will lose by it at last. Saul persecutes Christians; Christ meets upon the way, speaks to him, strikes him to the ground, tells him wondrously, and tells him actually, that he had undertaken an ill business in opposing him. This which God did to Saul, converts him; that which he did to Cain, wrought not upon him: but still God went his own way in both; to speak before he strikes, to lighten before he thunders, to warn before he wounds. In the case of Korah, God may seem to proceed apace towards execution, yet not without divers reprieves. First, when Moses heard of their rebellious challenge, he falls not upon them, but falls upon his face before God for them, Numb. xvi. 4; he laments and deprecates in their behalf. Secondly, he calls them to a fair trial, the next day: "To-morrow the Lord will show who are his, and who is holy." "Take you censers," and come, that it may be examined: and they said, "We will not come," ver. 5, 6, 12. Thirdly, it is likely that Moses cited them again, because again they peremptorily replied, "We will not come," ver. 14. Fourthly, upon this contumacy, God resolves to "consume them in a moment," ver. 21; but Moses and Aaron redouble their petitions: "O God, shall one man sin, and wilt thou be wroth with all the congregation?" ver. 22. Fifthly, Moses went up to them again, "and the elders of Israel followed," ver. 25; and yet all prevailed not. Sixthly, he makes a separation of the people from them, "Depart from the tents of these wicked men," ver. 26; hoping that the sight of the rest running from them, as from monsters, would have made their hearts misgive them. Seventhly, when they still impudently persisted to outface God's vengeance, Moses comes to pronounce the sentence, These men shall not die a common death, ver. 29. Eighthly, then after, and yet not instantly after this judgment, execution followeth; "The earth opened and swallowed them," ver. 32. But God begun not there; God opened his mouth, and Moses his, and Aaron his, and the elders theirs, before the earth opened hers. All concludes in this: God's judgments and executions are not sudden, there is always room for repentance and mercy; but his judgments and executions are certain, there is no room for presumption or security. "The day of the Lord will come;" it is certain: and "as a thief in the night;" it is sudden: yet he that gives us this premonition, intends our holy preparation, that we may find mercy in that great day of retribution.

"Will come." As no importunity can delay it, no secrecy avoid it, no policy corrupt it, so nothing but sanctification can give us comfort in it. The sudden beating up of a drum may make a very valiant soldier startle; and the sounding of the last trumpet may strike a fear into the holiest body that wakens out of his grave. It is some terror for a man to be awakened, when the whole world is on fire about his ears, though himself be a brand snatched out of the fire. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God," Heb. x. 31: which words a Christian considering, wished that he might fall into the hands of that Person who is both God and man: who even whilst he was a dead man, was still a living God. In death, his hands were nailed to the cross; then he could not strike us for our sins, because then he was stricken for our sins. As that prisoner appealed from Philip to Philip; so let us appeal from Christ: as he is a living Judge, to Christ as he was our dying

Saviour; that for his sake who once died for us, this living God may for ever acquit us. But it is a sweet thing, when a man hath slept quietly all night, to be waked in the morning with music. The body that hath slept in Christ, shall be called up with heavenly music at the resurrection: the testimony of our own conscience, the hallelujahs of saints, the choir of angels, yea, the very sound of that trumpet shall consent in this anthem; and that which makes up the perfect harmony, is the voice of Christ himself, "Come, ye blessed."

"As a thief in the night." Similitudes may illustrate the things which are to be proved, but they do not justify the things from which they are borrowed. Christ's coming like a thief is no warrant for thieves: no more than his comparison taken from piping and dancing, is a licence for fiddlers and dancers. That God, who would be understood literally, according to the direct and plain sense of all that he saith, doth not refuse also to speak by figures and metaphors. The institution of his whole worship in the old law, was a continual allegory; types and figures overspread all, and figures flowed into figures, and poured themselves out into further figures. Circumcision carried a figure of baptism, and baptism carries a figure of that purity, which we shall have in the perfection of glory. Nor did he only speak in this language by his prophets, but even by his Son too. He calls himself a way, and a light, and a gate, and a vine, and bread, oftener than the Son of God, or the Son of man. But that he should liken himself to a thief is the wonder. He is the Judge of thieves, and will that Judge assume any likeness unto thieves? Thieves will break into houses, violently take away other men's goods, and murder them; and will the righteous Judge of all do so? It was he that cut out men's several properties; for there can be no theft where is no distinction of ownages. And the state which had once allowed a community, found by experience quickly, that the common ass was never well saddled: and therefore were driven to make laws for the designation of every one's proper portion,—*Mens est hic ager, ille tuis*, This is my land, that is thine. Yea, the chief Lord of all hath been no less careful of fencing in his tenants' possessions, than in the maintenance of his own homage and service; for he wrote with the self-same hand, "Thou shalt not steal," with which he wrote, "Thou shalt have none other gods but me." He well knew the corrupt inclinations of men, and their itching desires to finger the peculiar of others; in whose judgment stolen waters are sweet: *Aliena nobis, nostra plus aliis placet*, as it is said, Other men's things please us more than our own, our things please others more than their own: and therefore made a law against it: and will he now so seem to favour it, as to admit a likeness to it? I might answer, that no like is the same: similitude and identity are different things: he that is like me is not myself. When Christ resembles himself by some good thing, that good thing he calls himself. Bread is good; therefore he does not say, I am like to bread, but I am bread. The light is good; therefore he does not say, I am like unto light, but I am the light. But when he fetcheth a comparison from some questionable or unwarrantable things, he sets it down with an *as*; which imports a similitude, not a truth. A snare is hurtful; therefore his coming is not called a snare, but "as a snare," Luke xxi. 35. A thief is mischievous; therefore it is not called a thief, but, "as a thief." Christ cannot be a thief, for what is there for him to steal? The principal right of all things he hath reserved to himself; therefore the Israelites did not properly rob the Egyptians; God himself,

by a special commission, entitled them thereunto. Our goods are his, our bodies are his, our souls are his, the world is his; what then can he steal? Yet I will tell you what he hath stolen, and wherein he hath played the thief: (let no profane misinterpreter abuse it to his diminution or dishonour, which I intend to the glory of his goodness :) He entered into the house of mortality, and stole from us our sins; he entered into the house of the grave, and stole from us the sting of death: he broke open the gates of hell, and stole from us damnation. Of these sorrows he hath robbed us, and with these robberies he was clothed, even when he hung naked upon the cross. If this be theft, it is so gracious a one, as merits praise to his holy name for evermore.

"As a thief." The Master began this comparison of himself, Matt. xxiv. 43, and the servants made bold to follow it; Paul, 1 Thess. v. 2, John, Rev. iii. 3, and Peter, all concur in the same similitude. But why like a thief? First, for the uncertainty of his coming. Secondly, for the suddenness of that uncertainty. Thirdly, for the peril of that suddenness. Fourthly, for the fatality of that peril. Fifthly, for the irremediableness of that fatality.

1. For the uncertain time of his coming, he is as a thief lying in wait. The thief doth not tell the master of the house what time he will come, for then he would prevent him, and fortify himself against his most subtle violence, Luke xii. 39. Nor does the Lord impart to his creatures, upon what day his day shall fall. He hath not said when he will come, though he hath given us some precedent signs, before the accomplishment whereof he will not come. Things questionable, are in the number of things knowable. Why do we study that which is impossible to learn? What kind of fruit soever that was, for which our first parents sold their birth-right in Paradise, I am sure there was not juice enough in it to quench that hot thirst of forbidden knowledge, which they imparted to their posterity. But that which only distempers Adam's taste, is now become inherent in mankind; that the more they know, the more they desire; and the admitting them to one secret, doth but hearten them on to seek for another. We all take after Eve, and setting our shoulders to the very portal of God's privy chamber, in we must go, and be made acquainted with the Divine counsel. The eye so itetheth after variety of sights, and the ear of sounds, that neither the one is satisfied with seeing, nor the other with hearing, Eccl. i. 8.

There be two questions that much trouble such scrupulous minds; where, and when, this judgment shall be. For the former; Christ speaks of a separation that should be made between two in one bed, and two in one field, and two at one mill; whereof the one shall be received, the other refused: unto this the disciples presently reply, "Where, Lord?" Luke xvii. 37. Some conceive two demands in that one word, because *πῶς* is taken in a twofold sense; importing both a place, where, and the motion to a place, whither. Where shall this place of separation be, and whither shall the separated pass? to what bar shall they repair for their doom, and whither shall that doom send them? Christ accordingly answers them with a wheresoever and a thither, including both the place and the end. He gives them but one answer to their two questions; but such a one as the perspectives speak of a sun-beam, which is made of two beams gathered into one; or as we say of two friends, which are one in heart but two in strength. This answer may resolve them so far as their salvation needed, though not so fully as their humours desired. There can be no question moved by a creature, to which God is not able to make a

sufficient answer. The epitomizer of ten into two, the digester of so large a volume as the whole law into so brief a sum as love, will be as plentiful in his satisfaction, as flesh and blood can be in a question. Do they ask, where they shall appear? he answers, wheresoever he shall keep his court. Do they demand whither they shall be translated? he answers, whither he hath gone before to prepare the place. For the other, Christ spake of Jerusalem's downfall, and "the disciples came unto him privately:" it was their boldness to press upon him, but that it was done privately, argued some modesty: "Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" Matt. xxiv. 3. Our Saviour, to leave a testimony how ill he liked of this eniosity, gives them no directer than an indefinite answer: and as before he would not vouchsafe their *where* so much as a *here*, or *there*; but did put it by as a demand not pleasing to him, with an unresolving *wheresoever*; so here he doth not satisfy their *when* with a *now*, or *then*; but clean discourageth such an inquiry; telling them, that though they were apostles, and had the privilege to be made acquainted with the heavenly mysteries, yet they must not look to know that which is concealed from the very angels, Mark xiii. 32. The Divine nature, as it is mercy itself, so it is wisdom itself. It is his mercy to impart unto us, that one day we shall be brought to judgment; but when this day shall be, and where this judgment, his wisdom thought good to conceal. To be sure he will come, may well deter us from offending; but to be sure when he will come, would breed a security of sin upon the vain hope of timely repenting.

In other things, knowledge is better than ignorance; but in this, ignorance is better than knowledge. Scholars that know their master will not return before such a day, are apt to play the truants; but when they are not sure where he is, nor how soon he will come, fear will make them ply their books. Give over thy proud inquiry, that may do thee hurt; fall to penitent humility, this will do thee good. Expect him every day, that may come any day. Let God's secret alone, it is too high for thee; but be wise, and look unto the secret within thee. Thou hast a secret pride, root up that: thou hast a secret infidelity, cast out that. Let it not be our business, to know where or when we shall be judged; but how we may answer for ourselves when the judgment comes. Did we know the place and time, we could not hide ourselves, appear we must. But knowing what will be said against us, and what may be pleaded for us, and how well the cause shall go with us, we rest in peace. If we were bound over to answer for some pretended crime at a human bar, would we spend the time in hearkening after the day of session, or place of execution? Were it not more wisdom, to furnish ourselves with friends and answers for that trial? There are three questions, where, when, and how? The two former, in this argument, are idle; the last is necessary. When shall this audit come, and where shall it be kept? are questions of foolish presumption. But how, how shall we provide for our account at that audit? this is the question of wise devotion. Martha thought, when she had set herself on work, that Christ would pay her her wages, or at least give her thanks; she puts herself to many troubles, and looks for many commendations, Luke x. 40. But Mary's breakfast was better than Martha's dinner. Let us mind that one thing which is necessary; and then one of the Three which bear witness in heaven, shall give us the testimony of so much discretion, as to choose that good part, which shall never be taken from us. Thy

impertinent questions please thy Saviour as little as that of Peter did, what should become of John? Propose it when thou list, thou shalt hear the same reply: Busybody, "what is that to thee? follow thou me," John xxi. 22. This is the uncertainty.

2. As it is uncertain for the time, so it is sudden for the event. The thief does not give a signal to the house, before his irruption; he is entered as soon as he is heard; his violence and his noise come both in an instant. The trumpet shall sound, the Judge shall appear, the graves shall open, the dead shall rise, the sentence shall be given, the world shall burn; all in an instant. The summons and the sentence, though they differ in order and number, shall seem in regard of time but one act. St. Augustine spends two chapters (Civ. Dei, lib. 20. cap. 14, and 16.) in the manifestation of this sudden proceeding. The great buildings of nature, like the walls of Jericho, Josh. vi. 20, shall fall together. If only one breach had been made in that city, as it is in other sieges, for the entrance of the enemy, perhaps new supplies might have made it up by their forces; or for want of materials, they might have stopped it with slaughtered carcases: but now, that at once Jericho is turned into a plain field, every Israelite without resistance might run to the next booty; and the throats of their enemies seemed to invite their swords to a despatch. Such a destitution of succour, and denudation of all refuge, shall, in this day, befall the reprobates, that they shall have neither means nor will to resist. Some men are sick of a preposterous desire of the last day; and would have the Lord come presently. Others are lethargized with a drowsy dullness; and they care not how long it be ere he comes. As the apostle hath (in the former verse) corrected the fervour of the one, by commending the Divine patience; so here he rouseth the torpor of the other, by threatening the last day's suddenness. These require the spur, as the former need a bridle: both are instructed, directed, here.

When Christ compared his second coming in fire, to that former judgment of water, Luke xvii. 27, did he mean there should be the same pauses and degrees in burning this world, that there were in drowning that? shall this hot element be as long despatching the one, as that cold element was destroying the other? No, the similitude intends not the same speed of execution, but the same dullness of expectation; the world shall be as secure now as it was then. When the apostle says, it shall come upon them, "as travail upon a woman with child," 1 Thess. v. 3, does he mean, with the same proportion of haste? St. Paul's purpose there, is not so much to express the suddenness, as the inevitableness: sinful men can no more escape their trial, than pregnant women can avoid their travail; the day of doom shall come as unavoidably, but more unexpectedly. When they least look for it, then they shall find it; or, rather, it shall find them. When they say, Peace, peace and safety, then shall they be overtaken with this extremity, 1 Thess. v. 3. As the thief watcheth his advantages, and when he finds the weakest prevention, gives the fiercest invasion. If the master be asleep, the servants abroad, the doors unbarred, or the house unguarded, there is the opportunity he looks for. When the servants of man, his affections, be wandering abroad; when his senses, his centinels, be stupified; when the mistress, conscience, is commanded silence; when the master, reason, is rocked into a slumber; and especially, above all the rest, when religion is put out of her lodging; then is the season of this woeful surprisal. Christ hath not promised sinners to come at their fittest times; this day of the Lord commonly takes them at the worst.

Cain was not in so bad a case when he was born of his mother, as after he had murdered his brother. Saul was pious, and begun his reign with God; but his proceeding was bloody, and the farther he went the worse he was; till even the night before he died he consulted a witch, and ended his reign with the devil. Absalom begun with pride, but shut up his life with treason. Pharaoh was never good, but never so bad as at his drowning. Judas had been long a secret robber, then he became a prodigious traitor, and yet his catastrophe must be in a desperate self-murder. Such is the fatal suddenness of this day, to come upon men at their worst. The greatest sinner hath some remission, some intermission of his wickedness: oftentimes Satan caught the demoniae, Luke viii. 29; oftentimes he caught him, therefore sometimes, in that violence, he caught him not. He had his lightsome respites; not ever tortured, not ever furious; betwixt whiles he might look soberly, talk sensibly, move regularly. It is a woeful comfort, that we are not always sinning. If God were bound to accommodate his respect of times to those distances and short vacations of sin, there were hope; but who can look that the Divine justice should wait upon the pleasure of man? I am going to sin, Lord, spare me now: there is nuckle pleasure or benefit in it, call me not away at this time. Whose voice is this? a mortal man's? Presumptuous fool, in vain dost thou appoint God, for God can disappoint thee. At all times fear to sin, if ever thou fearest to die in thy sin. Thou canst not be so quick to despatch thy sin, as God can be to despatch thy soul. The thief watches all night to break in; if at any hour thou take liberty to sleep, he will hardly be kept out. Give no place to the devil, Eph. iv. 27. What, not in youth? not in the heat of blood? not in the height of pleasure? No; give no place, at no time. There is a time for all things: "a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to get, and a time to lose; a time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace," Eccl. iii. 2—8; a time to sigh, and a time to sing; a time to marry, and a time to bury; but of all these times, and many more, there is no time to sin. Of all the exhibitions and allowances of God to man, he hath allowed no time for sin. We commonly kill our beasts when they are at the fattest; but judgment surpriseth sinners when they are at the leanest; in that point of their life, which is at the remotest distance from goodness.

Observe, God is slow to wrath until the last day, and then he is quickest. Before, if we pray, he hears us; if we repent, he pardons us; when we amend our life, he saves us. But in this day of the Lord, there is no time for petition, no place for conversion, no means of pacification. If we have done these things before, well and good, our salvation is sure; but if they are then to do, we are debarred for ever. As the lightning flasheth from one part of heaven to the other, "so shall the Son of man be in his day," Luke xvii. 24. He compares his coming to the lightning. First, for manifestation: his first coming was privately, some few acknowledged him; this last shall be public and apparent, every eye shall see him. Secondly, for terror: the sun gives a greater light than the lightning, but he is welcome to all eyes, as the messenger of joy, health, and comfort; he does not affright us with his beams, but cherish us with his influence; but the lightning is terrible, and makes the stoutest heart to shudder, especially when it is accompanied with thunder. Christ's first coming was in soft silence, like the gentle dew upon the tender grass, Psal. lxxii. 6: but his second coming will be with a

dreadful noise; the trumpet sounding, the earth trembling, the seas roaring, the angels shouting, the wicked shrieking, and the Judge thundering out his final sentence; for that extraordinary terror at the law-giving, Exod. xix., was a little image of this which shall be at the law-requiring. Thirdly, especially for the suddenness. The sun compasseth the world by degrees, he keeps a certain course, his wonted motion; but the lightning, though it move through the air, does not appear successively, or by gradual approaches, but suddenly, instantly, it flies from east to west, and darts through the hemisphere wherein it is begotten. So sudden will the Lord be in his day. Time was when he stayed for the first world a hundred and twenty years; he stayed for a rebellious nation forty years; he stayed for a dissolute city forty days: now he will not tarry a year, a week, a day, an hour, a minute, for any man. He was not wont to come in whirlwinds, or earthquakes, or violent fires, but in a still voice, 1 Kings xix. 12, in a soft and gentle air. Now, no imagination of man can conceive the terror, the suddenness of his appearance. He will make his process and his decree, his citation and his judgment, but one act; his summons, his battle, his victory, and his triumph, shall seem all but one thing: he will lead sinners captive, and deliver them captive to hell, as soon as he hath declared them to be enemies; and cut them off, as it were, without drawing his sword out of the scabbard. A disease may make haste, and death be quick of despatch, in dissolving the body; but much more haste, and quicker despatch, will God use, in re-collecting and reuniting the dust of that body at the resurrection. Then shall we all hear his angels proclaim, Rise, ye dead! though we be dead, we shall hear the voice: the sound of the voice and the working of the voice shall be all one, and all shall rise in a less minute than any one dies here.

Application. They vainly flatter themselves, that think it is enough to do good sometimes; if they serve God on the sabbath, it is no matter for all the week. As if they might not die upon a working day; as if God were bound to wait their times, till the good mood came on them. Those Levites, which once drew their swords for God and Moses against the idolaters, and for that deed won both praise and blessing, become afterward the forwardest in a rebellion against them, Numb. xvi. There is no assurance of a man for one act; whom one sin cannot fasten upon, another may. Yea, the same sin may find a repulse one while from the same hand, which another time gives it entertainment; and that yielding loseth all the thanks of the former resistance. It is no praise to have done once well, unless we continue. If a man turn from his righteousness, all that righteousness shall be forgotten; and in the sin that he hath sinned, he shall die, Ezek. xviii. 24. If we knew what hour the Lord would come, how easy were it, think we, to repent the hour before! If we were sure what day, what month, what year, we would not grudge that day's, that month's, that year's preparation. Yet now we wantonize, as if the Judge were a hundred leagues off, who, it may be, stands at the very door, Jam. v. 9. Suppose a man hath seven breaches or holes in his house, and knows the thief will enter at one of them; will he guard this, and not that? will he watch at six of them, and neglect the seventh? Thou hast seven days in the week, like so many inlets for his judgment; wilt thou watch only on the sabbath, the seventh day, and leave the other six unregarded? or be sober one day, and drunk another? Then, at the breach which thou mindest not, on the day thou least suspectest, this great Judge will come upon thee, and then, what shall

become of thee? Thy particular judgment follows immediately upon thy death. Is there no imposthume, no apoplexy, within thee; no sword, no instrument, without thee; no thunder, no judgment, above thee; no element, no fiend, under thee; that may in a moment despatch thee? God's door is ever open to let in our repentance, and our door is ever open to let in his vengeance: the only way to escape future malediction, is by present humiliation: now let us be converted, and we are sure to be saved.

3. The peril by this suddenness is very dreadful, for our everlasting state lies upon it. Thou hast a trial at the law, and knowest a famous and gracious advocate, who, if he undertake thy cause, will carry it for thee; but flattering thyself that the day of hearing is far off, thou forebarest to acquaint him with it, or solicit his counsel and assistance. In the mean time, the king prefers this advocate to the place of a judge. The session is come, and then thou humbly prostratest thyself before him, beseeching him to favour thy cause. But he answereth, That request comes too late, I am not now an advocate to plead for my clients, but a judge to give righteous sentence. If we sin, we may now have an Advocate, to propitiate for us, 1 John ii. 1; but in this last assizes, at the trial of all the world, that Advocate is turned into a Judge; and then they that have not formerly won him to be their Mediator, can have small hope to find him their Saviour. The thief does not break into the house, and so come his way, forbearing to touch the goods: no, but all that is precious and portable becomes his booty, and he looks for thanks if he spare the blood of the family. If this impartial day did only ransack our wardrobes, empty our chests and cabinets, fire our cottages, strip our bodies of their garments, or our souls of our bodies, and do us no more harm, it were very favourable. Death itself, which is but God's under sheriff, can do all this, by virtue of his office and commission: let but the soul escape, suffer not that to bleed or perish, and all were but an easy loss. But this thief (like the robbers in some countries, who break both the commandments together) never steals without killing. When a passenger complained to a captain, that some of his soldiers had robbed him of all that he had; the captain asked him, whether he had those clothes on when they robbed him: he answered, Yes: Then, says the captain, I am sure they are none of my soldiers that did it; for had they been mine, they would not have left you a rag to your back. This day shall rob the wicked of all that ever they had, and leave them not so much as a rag to cover their shameful nakedness. They shall speed worse than he did among those high-way robbers, Luke x. 30: for they shall be left robbed, and naked, and wounded, and more than half dead; without hope of any charitable Samaritan, to cure or comfort them. The Danite thieves stole away Micah's idols: the goods of a worldling are his gods: "Ye have taken away my gods, and what have I more" to lose? Judg. xviii. 24. What more? Yes, thou mistaken idolater, this thief shall steal away thyself: as Micah was there threatened, Let not thy voice be heard, lest they take away thy life with thy gods, ver. 25. I might parallel the thievery of those Danites with the avarice of many Christians: As those images appeared to those Israelites, so do riches to these worldlings; in their imagination no less than gods; and they will have them, though they steal them. A superstitious Levite was the priest to those, a covetous heart is the priest to these. There, because the gods without the priest could do them less service than the priest without the gods, therefore they steal the priest with the gods. Here,

the priest steals the gods, and the gods steal the priest: the heart purloineth riches, and those riches fleeth the heart; and both are contented with this mutual robbery. O miserable Danites, that could esteem that a god, which might be stolen; that could look for protection from that, which could not keep itself from stealing; which was won by their theft, not by their devotion! Could they worship those idols more devoutly than Micah that made them? If they could not protect their maker from robbery, how shall they protect their thieves? Yet their superstition hath made them mad upon a god, and have him they must, by what means they care not; though they offend the true God, by stealing a false. Riches are the gods of the world; men's hearts are the thieves; they make no conscience from whom they steal them, so they have them. Still one thief robs another, till this last thief comes, and he robs all of all. The oppressor robs the innocent, the lawyer robs the oppressor, the tyrant robs the lawyer, death robs the tyrant, and the day of judgment robs death: but if a traveller, having store of money about him, and one jewel more worth than all the rest, suspect to be set upon and rifled by thieves; he will so surely and secretly convey his jewel, that they shall never find it. Our soul is our jewel, and this subtle thief will narrowly examine us: let him take all, so we may save our jewel; and there is but one way to save it, that is, by hiding it in the wounded side of Jesus Christ.

4. The fatality of this peril may yet be further amplified, by the insulting tyranny of this implacable thief. It does not only rob sinners of all, and that suddenly, but dominions over them with painful derision: it mocks their fear, and laughs at their destruction, Prov. i. 26. Bloody thieves, when they are once masters of the house, first bind the family, then put them to racks and tortures, to force out a confession of their concealed treasure: to all this agony, they add scorn and contempt, which is a rack upon the rack, a merciless aggravation of their torments. The day of the Lord doth not only bind reprobates with the everlasting chains of darkness, that they cannot move hand nor foot, Matt. xxiii. 13; but delivers them over to those tormentors, who will never cease torturing of them, till they have both confessed and paid the uttermost penny, Matt. xviii. 34. Their temporal goods they call their movables; their bodies are also their movables; and both these may be removed without prejudice to their souls. When thieves in the night had robbed a merchant's house of some bedding and furniture; he hearing the noise, rose and went down, and finding them just gone, followed to see what would become of his goods. The thieves espying him, threatened him for pursuing them; but the merchant answered, I only come to see whether you remove me. If the soul could be safe, as that merchant was, whilst it saw misfortune remove her goods to the stranger, or death remove her body to the grave; there were but a slight ground of complaint. But as nothing but the dishonour and rape of Tamar could please Amnon, and nothing but the blood of Amnon could satisfy Absalom, and nothing but the heart of Absalom could content Joab, and nothing but the death of Joab could pacify Solomon; so nothing but the soul of an impenitent sinner can appease the just wrath of this day.

The reprobates shall cry at the last day, "Hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb," Rev. vi. 16. Can the Lamb be angry? or is there such lion-like terror in that mild face, so full of beauty and sweetness, when it looks upon wickedness? Why would they

be hidden? and hidden from the Lamb? O, guiltiness would fain keep out of sight: the limbs of that infernal head shall not esteem it the least part of their torment at that day, to see the most lovely spectacle that heaven can afford. He, from whom they fled in his offers of grace, shall be so much more terrible, as he was and is more gracious. When Christ was in his humbled estate, that prince of darkness was so humble as to kneel to him: and though he had so much boldness as to expostulate, "Art thou come to torment us before the time?" Matt. viii. 29; yet withal he had so much fear as to deprecate, "I beseech thee, torment me not," Luke viii. 28. For the former, whether it were music to Satan to hear the shrieks and roarings of sinners, because he is accustomed to enjoy their torments; and therefore held it a piece of his own torture, to be restrained in the exercise of his tyranny: or whether, as himself professeth, he were now in a fearful expectation of being commanded down into the deep, for a further degree of actual execution: or whether the very presence of Christ was his rack; for the guilty spirit cannot behold the judge, or the executioner, without a renovation of horror: howsoever, he deprecates a greater infelicity. Yet what a thing is this, to hear the devil at his prayers! "I beseech thee, torment me not." Nature teaches every creature to wish a freedom from pain: the foulest spirits cannot but love themselves, and this love must needs produce a deprecation of evil. Devotion is not guilty of this prayer, but fear. There is no grace in the suit of devils, but nature; no respect of God's glory, but of their own ease: they cannot pray against sin, but against torment for sin. It can be no news to hear the profane mouth, in extremity, imploring that sacred name, when even the devils do so. The worst of all creatures hates punishment, and can say, Lead me not into pain: only the good heart can say, Lead me not into temptation. If we can as heartily pray against sin, for the avoiding of displeasure, as against punishment, when we have displeased, there is true grace in the soul.

The conclusion is, If those wicked spirits trembled to come before Christ in his humiliation, when he was to suffer, how shall sinful dust appear before him in his glory, when he comes to judge? As one and the same thing works diversely upon divers constitutions, and the nourishment of one is the offence of another; so this day brings contrary effects to contrary dispositions, and that which is the greatest joy to some is most terrible to the rest, 2 Thess. i. 6, 7. The goats on the left hand never apprehended so dreadful a sound, as that of the last trumpet; the sheep on the right hand never heard such music. For the dissolution of temporal things, there is the same end to all. Men dealing in the world for riches, are but like scholars playing at dice for counters: which come and go; now the heap is on this side, by and by on that; on a sudden comes in the master, and he seizes all, both dice and counters; not without some just correction of the gamesers. Some men tug, and scramble, and wrangle for these paltry vanities, wealth and honours: this fountain dries, that cistern fills; one noble house withers, while another of low degree swells up to a lord; to-day this merchant hath the cash, to-morrow that; but the Lord's day confiscates all, and then who is the richer man? This world is like a broad table with a scant or narrow table-cloth; which every man is still drawing to his own side, though he pluck his neighbour's part from him: this day comes with a fatal voider, and takes away all, cloth, meat, table, and guests too. Thus far together, all are served alike; but then comes the difference. All

men hope well, and think themselves good; but let me tell them of this day, as Moses did those rebellious Levites, "To-morrow the Lord will show who are his, and who are holy," Numb. xvi. 5. A common hen, together with her own eggs, may hatch the eggs of eagles that are laid under her; but when they are grown up, while her own brood keep the base earth, those of a higher kind fly upwards. This world breeds us all, and is both to good and bad a common mother: but when that great day of separation comes, all they that are begotten of immortal seed shall leave their mother, and take after their Father; and while their kindred in the flesh sink down under their natural corruptions, these eagles that are sprung from above, shall mount up to the eternal nest of glory.

5. The irremediableness of that fatality shuts up the terror of this point. Thieves may have some mercy, in the prostration of their booty. First, either they will not take all the goods of the house. "If grape-gatherers come to thee, would they not leave some gleanings grapes? If thieves by night, they will destroy till they have enough," Jer. xlix. 9; Obad. 5: they will not, or, if they would, they cannot carry away all. Secondly, or they may be overcome with persuasions, and melted with the pitiful complaint of their undone clients. It was the little children's cries and tears that made Theodosius weep too, and reverse the sentence. Thirdly, or if they seize on the goods, they may spare the life: it is a rare cruelty, in this land, to murder the yielding; to second and secure theft with blood. Fourthly, or if they spill some blood in the conflict, they will not take the rest after the conquest. Those thieves had so much pity, as though they proceeded to wound the traveller, yet they left him but half dead, Luke x. 30. Fifthly, or if nothing but both estate and life can satisfy them, yet their rage can extend no further; all the malice of man is there determined: death is the end of all the sufferer's misery and murderer's cruelty. But the judgment of this day is not confined to these weak limits: it will not take away some of their riches, but all; not riches only, but their lives; not lives only, but their souls; nor their souls for a time only, but for ever; nor to repose them in tranquillity and ease, but in the extremity of torments. Poverty, or casualty of losses, is a thief; but it can only steal away thy riches temporal; and that is often no more than disarming a madman of the weapon wherewith he would wound both himself and others. Infamy or disgrace is a thief; but it can only steal away an airy title, an imaginary crown, which makes men prouder than they should be, because they think themselves better than they are. Humility hath made many good; promotion can only make them great. Advancement may thank God for the beginning; but if it swell into pride, the devil is at the ending. There is no sin doth more assimilate men to that cursed nature; for all other sins Satan made, only pride made Satan. Sickness is a thief; but it can only steal away health: and how many a man speeds like that soldier with the inveterate ulcer, who receiving a hurt in the place so desperately affected, was made whole of the grief, which before could not be cured! The soul hath grown healthful by the body's sickness, and one disease hath done more good upon them, than many sermons. Death is a thief too; yet what can it rob a man of, but a long, tedious, and troublesome way? Thieves take away from the traveller some of his money; this thief doth but rob him of some of his journey. When a young man is bereaved of life, he is but deprived of a die, wherewith he might either win or lose. Our

life is not more uncertain, whether it will be long or short, than the use of it is, whether we will spend it well or ill. When one wished the son to prove like the father, Cato replied, Is this a blessing, or a curse? When long life is desired for a child, it may be demanded, Whether is this a blessing or a curse? When it is said, Every man shall be rewarded according to his works, it may be doubted whether this is a blessing or a curse. If death takes a man from his lands, houses, coin, and helps him to a starry throne, a robe of immortality, a glorious kingdom; he rather rights him like a friend, than robs him like a thief. All the good that may be found in death (as the cessation of trouble, the extinction of sin, the deliverance from Satan, the quiet rest of the body, and enfranchisement of the soul) the good man steals from death; and so, in effect, doth but rob the thief. That which is not worth his respect or keeping, as his molestations, sicknesses, sorrows, of these death robs him, nor does he gain much by the treasure.

But this day of the Lord is like a severer thief; not only robbing the wicked of all their delightful good, but lodging them with all sorrowful evil. Other thieves may be brought to a restitution; this only yields to a permutation; exchanging pains for pleasures, torment for sin. If a man take away thy russet, and give thee velvet, we use to say, that exchange is no robbery: but if thou lose thy cordials for corrosives, thy peace and comfort for despair and punishment, surely this exchange is a robbery. A passenger stripped of his whole estate by thieves, may yet recover a greater fortune by the Divine blessing upon his industry. But alas, the happiness which this thief steals is irrecoverable; millions of years cannot wear out, nor myriads of tears buy off, that everlasting loss. Consider the vastness of the ocean, and conceive that a sparrow were allowed every hundred thousandth year to drink a draught of it; together with a promise to the lost, that when that little bird had thus drunk up this great sea, they should be released; here were some hope of an end, and some comfort from that hope, and some ease from the expectation of that comfort: but eternity cancels all, and puts out their light for ever. Their worm dieth not, and the fire never goes out, Mark ix. 44. It was a fearful fire that destroyed Sodom, yet it ceased with that destruction; but the fire of Tophet can never be quenched. Our bodies die; and when the worms have devoured them, even those worms shall die too; but the worm bred in our souls is not capable of death. We are God's creatures, yet we are mortal; but there is a creature of our own which shall be immortal. We must die, but the worm of our own conscience must never die, Isa. lxvi. 24. In our mortal life, this is but a mortal worm; the blood of Christ hath virtue enough to kill it: if now we mortify it, we shall feel it never; if it outlive us here, it will live with us for ever. Let our faithful repentance, without pity, put it to death, and our blessed Redeemer will in mercy give us life.

To make some useful application of all this: If we would escape the danger of this great thief, let us take heed of a little thief, sin: this is the thief that does all the mischief. Could we fervently pray against sin, we need not pray against punishment; which is no other than the inseparable shadow of that body: but if we have not watched against this secret thief, sin, in vain do we pray against the public thief, judgment: God must be just, and the wages of sin is death. This is a sly, cunning thief, insinuating itself into all places, into all actions. It robbed man in Paradise, of Paradise, of innocency, of peace, of

earth, of heaven. It stole into that garden like a thief, in the body of a serpent; it stole into the eye of Eve like a thief, in the shape of an apple; it stole into her mind, in the form of an ambitious advancement; it stole into the heart of Adam like a thief; and from his transgression, it stole like a thief into the loins of all his posterity, by a secret, but certain way: we have it, and can scarce tell how we got it. It is a vain question, How came this thief in? Let it be our study to cast him out. No bars can preclude his entrance: the monk in his cell, the hermit in his solitude, cannot forbid access to this thief. The very temple is not free from him: there he robs men of their attention, of their devotion, and transports their minds into a wilderness of vain thoughts. It steals into our best works, and robs them of their perfection and integrity: I dare not say the action is sin, I dare say there is sin in the action. It lays snares in every material; *Lequeos in cibo, in potu, in cultu, in veste*, as Augustine saith; Snares in our meat, in our drink, in our faces, in our clothes. It takes all forms, that it may be filching at all times. Like a chameleon, it can turn to all colours, but white, the symbol of purity; it can be any thing but innocent. Like a thief, it creeps into the ears of the wavering, and robs them of their religion; it creeps into the eyes of the wanton, and robs them of their chastity; it creeps into the mouth of the drunkard, and robs him of his wit; it creeps into the breast of the malicious, and robs him of his charity; it sits in the brain of the ignorant, puts out the light of understanding, and rifles the house at pleasure; it sits at the door of the swearer, and flies fiercely at the majesty of our Maker. This thief hath broken into the heart of the proud, of the covetous, of the profane, of the hypocrite, and there keeps possession, yea, pleads prescription; challenging the house, not as a strong usurper, but as the right owner. It cannot rob God of us, it may rob us of God.

The day of the Lord is but like a thief, but this is a thief indeed. No wise man, at least no honest man, will entertain a known thief: shall we bid him welcome, make him good cheer, lodge him in our best chamber, and think nothing too costly for him, that we know comes on purpose to rob us? Yet such is our madness, to give sin not only admission, but indulgence; to invite it home to our houses, to honour it with banquets, to allow it the command of our servants, and to let it sleep in the soft bed of our hearts: our senses receive it, our affections wait upon it, our souls make much of it; as if it were a dear friend, and no dangerous thief. This is that little thief within, that opens the door to the great thief without; this is the devil's intelligencer, his agent, his picklock, his engine, his trusty vassal, that betrays the whole world to his invasion. The thief robs the passenger, and if he escape apprehension, he applauds himself; but the sin of that act hath been a worse thief to him, and robbed him of the peace of conscience. Sacrilege presumes to rob the church, and therein the Lord himself; yet is so impudent as to expostulate, "Wherein have we robbed thee?" Mal. iii. 8. Alas, poor thieves! they do but rob us of our temporary provision; but in the mean time, sacrilege is a thief that robs them of their eternal salvation. It is just, that theft should be punished with theft, that one thief should rob another. Oppressors rob us, sin robs them, death robs sin, and Satan robs them all.

Our blessed Saviour once challenged the people, that they came out against him as against a thief, with swords and staves, Matt. xxvi. 55. He charged his disciples, to be so unfurnished of weapons, whereby they might do violence, as not to take with them so much as staves, Matt. x. 10; and yet in another

place, he allows them nothing toward their journey but staves, Mark vi. 8: as a staff is a weapon, it was forbidden, not as it is for support. The Master was taken as a thief: the servants may not be suspected. When they crucified him, it was between two thieves, one on his right hand, and the other on his left, Matt. xxvii. 38. Still he is crucified between thieves, in his afflicted members: the client, between the corrupt judge and the lawyer; the patient, between the ignorant physician and apothecary; the landed debtor, between the usurer and scrivener; the poor minister, between the simoniacal patron and sacrilegious parishioner: in all these he is crucified between two thieves. All this while they have been thieves to him; but in the last day he shall come like a thief against them, and his just fury cannot be avoided. It is a happiness, when we shall meet with this great thief, to have our goods safe in another place. He that shall say in this sense, *Omnia mea mecum porto*, i. e. I have all my wealth about me, shall be striped of all by this impartial robber. But if our treasure be laid up in heaven, if our riches be the merits of Jesus Christ, no thief can break through and steal it, Matt. vi. 20. Then, *Cantabit vacuus coram letrone viator*; i. e. The empty traveller sings before the thief. Our wealth is at home, in the hands of Him that will never suffer it to miscarry.

"As a thief." That natural dependence, which the most wise Creator of all things hath made between all things, may, by way of paradox, be called a kind of theft. The sea doth rob the land of some territories, and the land robs the sea of her waters. The earth steals from the heavens their influence, and plants steal from the earth her moisture. Among trees, one robs another; and the great oak pines the underwood. Flowers steal from the ground her fatness, bees steal from the flowers their sweetness, men steal from the bees their honey. We are the universal thieves in this sense, for we steal from all: our light from the sun, our breath from the air, our physic from plants and minerals, our food from beasts, fowls, and fishes; we rob the sheep of their wool, and the worms of their silks, to clothe us; we steal warmth from the fire, and coolness from the air or water; we rob the vine of her vital juice, and the olive of her unctuous fruit. We are the thieves in all this, and yet in all this we are no thieves; because the great Owner of all things hath ordained all these benefits for us. Only then we are thieves, when we rob ourselves of their comfortable use, or of our thankful obedience by their abuse. As Augustine saith, What becomes ours by the gift of God, becomes another's by our abuse of it. In all this our taking away from the creatures, we are rather borrowers than thieves; yea, rather owners than borrowers. By that patent sealed by the Father first, then renewed by the Son, and now confirmed by the Holy Ghost, we are lords of these things, not usurpers; not thieves, but proprietaries.

Here is then no warrant for that theft, which is the unlawful usurpation of another man's goods; therefore unlawful, because the owner was unwilling: whether deprived of his substance without his knowledge, by fraud and close carriage; or with his privacy, but against his consent: and that either his full consent, as by violence and oppression; or his consent in part, as in the exaction of covenanted interest from distressed debtors. For howsoever they be driven by necessity into that dangerous gulf of usury, they wish with all their hearts that creditors would lend according to the nature of loan, which is a contract of mere gratuity, their money according to the nature of money, which is ordained for an instrument of exchange, incapable of such monstrous

improvement. Certainly, I will teach no man to be a thief; nor give the least countenance to that legal robber, the soul-robbed usurer. God hath committed to the sons of men a right of use and dispensation; whereunto, for the avoiding of disorder, a general distinction of ownages was added by the law of nations. Whatsoever the Lacedæmonians did think of theft, that it was an allowable exercise of martial discipline; or others have said even of kingdoms themselves, that they are but *magna latrocinia*, whereas indeed they are *magna patrocinia*; i. e. not great thieveries, but great protections against thieveries: or Alcibiades dreamed, that theft was not a reproach in nature, because it was forbidden by the law; as if the law and nature had not both one Author: or other querulous dispositions have objected, that the laws of men are written in blood; because in the censure of this unjust and uncharitable sin, they have exceeded the punishment of Moses' judicials; forgetting the multitude of offenders, which is caused not only by the fierceness of a wild nation, but even by the wantonness of a peaceable nation; for the latter is no less powerful than the former, to quicken our original corruptions. This we must conclude; besides our Maker's express prohibition of theft, and the severe vengeance he hath threatened against it, it is against nature, to rejoice in the spoils one of another; and the very law of charity being trodden under foot, seems in a grieving accent to demand, If sterility is sent into the fire, what does rapacity deserve? And whether men steal in their own persons, or teach others so to do, as Anabaptists, and those elder heretics called Apostolici; the bounds of propriety are ancient bounds, and the killing curse of that flying book shall destroy their houses that dare remove them, Zech. v. 4.

In conclusion: Theft can find no shelter under the shadow of this comparison: The day of the Lord will come like a thief, and where it finds a thief, will sentence him to condemnation. Thieves? there are few or none amongst us: we will be all bound for one another's truth and honesty: but may I not say in the prophet's sense, All men are liars, so, All men are thieves? The receiver, we say, is worse than the thief: therefore said one, Show me a sinner, and I will show thee a thief. The oppressor hath a thiefish hand, the covetous hath a thiefish eye, the slanderer hath a thiefish tongue, the drunkard hath a thiefish throat, the harlot hath a thiefish lip, the idolater hath a thiefish knee, the flatterer hath a thiefish gesture; every sinner hath a thiefish heart. Do not hold it impossible for you to discover and attach a thief in your own bosoms. Our natural corrupt lust is a thief within us; if we examine him strictly, we may find out his haunts and fetches, his shifts and devices. Believe him not, for he will lie; spare him not, for he will steal; shrieve him to the proof, for he will hardly confess; arraign him at the bar of the conscience, condemn him with a penitent sentence, punish him with an impartial execution: punish him in the body, by fasting and mortification; punish him in the soul, by repentance and contrition; punish him in the purse, by the works of charity and restitution. If we can get quit of this thief, that sin be mortified in us, the coming of the Lord's day (though it be like a thief) shall not hurt us.

Lastly, there is a holy theft, which I would commend to your practice. There be five ways to get the kingdom of heaven: some innocently find it, some violently snatch it, some are compulsorily driven to it, some expensively purchase it, and others politely steal it. First, they that light upon it unlooked for, are infants dying soon after their baptism. They are *candidati fidei*, i. e. of the livery of faith:

and as they live in the womb by the life of their natural mother; so they live in the covenant by the faith of their spiritual mother, the church. These find salvation without trouble: they labour not in the vineyard, they groan not in prayer, they are not exercised with trials, they weep not remorseful tears, they are not charged with many duties; yet the blood of Christ cleanseth them from all their sins. "Suffer little children to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven," Matt. xix. 14: it belongs to them, and they belong to it; and there they are, before they know where they were: these find it. Secondly, they that take it by violence, Matt. xi. 12, are such as by an utter abdication of the world, do wholly dedicate themselves to God; that, by their continual prayers and pious actions, lay siege to that glorious kingdom; and in the fervent desire of God's service, offer up themselves a living sacrifice. Such are those martyrs, that swim thither in the stream of their own blood, whose souls mount up to heaven in acceptable flames. There be three sorts of martyrs: in both deed and intention, as was St. Stephen; in intention, not deed, as was St. John; in deed, not in intention, as were those innocents. And three annual holy-days are dedicated by the church, to the memory of these three kinds of martyrs; all which together, in their order, immediately follow the great feast of our Saviour's nativity. But the pontificians have found out a fourth kind of martyrdom, which is neither in deed nor intention: of which super-numerary number was their St. Thomas Becket; whose day they celebrate next after the three former. It is strange they take him for a martyr, whom those days never found but for a traitor. But the martyrs of Christ are led by another Spirit, who puts such courage into their hearts, that, like noble champions, they break through all difficulties to the kingdom of heaven. Thirdly, they that are driven to it, are beholden to compulsory means; they have shipped themselves in a man of war, and would prosecute their licentious mischiefs, but are beaten into the harbour with storms. The Lord often clips our wings, lest we should straggle abroad after our boundless and transportive fancies: he strips the body of pleasures, to clothe the soul with righteousness; and by impoverishing our temporal estate, he strengthens our state of grace. Not that we are therefore saved because we are afflicted; but we are afflicted, as proper to them that shall be saved. "Through much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of God," Acts xiv. 22: it is not on account of, but through tribulations. Affliction cannot work grace of itself; for sorrow can no more bring comfort, than thorns can bear grapes; but it is the needle that draws in the thread. There is no fault to be found with that necessity, which constrains us to be good. Bring hither the poor, the maimed, halt, and blind, Luke xiv. 21: yea, their own poverty shall bring them; their own blindness shall make them see the way, and their own lameness shall enable them to go. If they yet linger, there is a mandamus of further constraint; "Compel them to come in, that my house may be filled." Affliction is to us, as the whale was to the prophet; we go in fugitives, we come forth converts; we go in rebels, we come out penitents; we go in sinners, and come out saints. Fourthly, they that purchase it, lay out all they have upon earth, for a habitation in heaven. Let this ground be laid firm, that only the blood of Christ is the price of salvation; and he that confides in the merit of his own works, shall sit howling without doors. Yet, though faith alone doth save us, it must not destroy charity; and to our good deeds, there is a reward of mercy. There is a way, by selling all we have, to buy that incompar-

able pearl, that inestimable treasure, Matt. xiii. 44, 46. There is a policy, to make such friends of our riches, as may let us into those everlasting mansions, Luke xvi. 9. After, "Well done, good servant," there follows, "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord," Matt. xxv. 21. How dear do men buy a small turf of earth, and yet how cheap do they value heaven! They will venture their souls to get a little money, they will not venture a little money to save their souls. They can oppress the poor, to make their children rich; they will not relieve the poor, to make their children blessed. But as when a miserly worm excused his oppressions, because he had eighteen children; another replied, But eighteen? believe me, if you had eight and forty, the country hath curses enough for them all: so let me assure the charitable benefactor, how many children soever he hath, heaven hath blessings enough for them all. Fifthly, and lastly, there be some that steal this glorious kingdom; under the veil of humility, a holy dejection, and undervaluing of themselves, they lay hold on eternal life. Though the walls of that celestial city be too high to climb over, too strong for any thief to break through and steal, Matt. vi. 20; yet there is a way for this pious thief to get in: this is neither over nor through the walls, but through the gates, Rev. xxii. 14. He is fitted for entrance: the gate is low, and he is humble; the gate is narrow, and he is little; so little in his own eyes, that he can easily creep in, and being once in, he shall never be turned out. Such a thief was that modest woman, wasted with an issue of blood, resolving within herself, "If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole," Matt. ix. 21: she stole virtue from him by a touch. Such a thief was that penitent sinner upon the cross, Luke xxiii. 40, who both lived and died a thief: he stole their temporal goods from men, for which he died; and he stole paradise from Christ, when he died. (Athanasius.) Paul says, Give your bodies a living sacrifice to God, Rom. xii. 1; but there God accepted of a dying sacrifice. Judas had served Christ three years, and played the thief with his purse; he could steal his Lord's coin: but this man has scarce served him three hours, yet had learned a better way of theft, and stole from him salvation. Jacob wrestled with God, and by a holy kind of force, robbed him of a blessing. And the God of comfort thus encouraged that shamefaced and trembling patient, that touched the border of his garment, "Daughter, be of good comfort, thy faith hath made thee whole," Luke viii. 48: since thou hast stolen virtue from me, take it, and much good do it thee with it. Other theft shall be condignly punished; but such a penitent, humble, and pious thief (whom the world condemns for a sinner, but inward sorrow and compunction presents to God for a saint) shall not only be mercifully pardoned, but even gloriously crowned in the day of Jesus Christ.

"In the night," *Fur a furro*, say some; because that art requires the secrecy of darkness. *Ut jugulent homines, surgunt de nocte latrones*, as the poet saith; Thieves rise by night, that they may men destroy. Night is the season for thieves and harlots: "The adulterer waiteth for the twilight, saying, No eye shall see me," Job xxiv. 15. If the night should speak all it knows, it would put millions to the blush in the day. Thieves "in the dark dig through houses, which they had marked for themselves in the day," Job xxiv. 16. The night pays Satan no less custom than the day. Why else are sins called the "works of darkness?" Eph. v. 11. *Custe, si non caute*, i. e. Chastely, if not cautiously, was a rule to save their credit, though not their conscience. There be indeed some sins peculiar to the day, because they

are done only to be seen, and if they might not be seen, would not be done. But commonly evil-doers love the darkness, John iii. 19, and desire to sin out of sight. The harlot loves "the black and dark night," Prov. vii. 10. "It is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret," Eph. v. 12. Darkness causeth boldness, and secrecy is the mother of security: they think that is done with impunity, which is done in secret. Therefore it is proverbially spoken, *Non commoda secleribus*. Iniquity is beholden to the night, and Satan is a great noctivagant. The foulest fact of the world, Judas's treason, was a night-piece.

Of all, the thief longs for the night; then he hopes that sleep hath shut the eyes, and locked up the senses, of the whole family. So the last judgment shall break in upon men, when they are possessed with a lethargy, and drowsy negligence; not minding, nor dreaming of this sudden audit. But why doth this sentence begin with, "The day of the Lord," and subjoin, "as a thief in the night?" Day and night are opposites: if it be the Lord's day, how should it come in the night? If it come in the night, why is it called the day? Or shall we say, it is *quiddam tertium*, a thing mixed, between both, partaking of both, or compounded of both? As there is a double twilight: the dawning of the day in the morning, and the shutting in of the day in the evening, make day and night so much one, as sometimes you cannot tell which to call them. It is so much day that we cannot call it night, and so much night that we cannot call it day. It is true, that light hath no communion with darkness, 2 Cor. vi. 14: midnight and noon never met, never joined. In the regenerate man there is both flesh and Spirit, Gal. v. 17: the Spirit is not the flesh, the flesh is not the Spirit; and yet both are in the same man. There is darkness in his understanding, and in his understanding there is light also: there is corruption in his affections, and yet in his affections there is holiness too. As in a vessel of lukewarm water, there is both heat and cold together: we cannot say, this part of the liquor is hot, and that other cold; but cold and heat is confused throughout the whole vessel. In the twilight, we cannot say, this part of the air is light, and that other dark; but darkness and light is shed, spread, and mingled throughout the whole air. Shall we conjecture by such a similitude, that this judgment shall be in the twilight, when the season may be called either, or neither, day or night? Certainly, these fancies of men have so much darkness in them, as to be called night; but no ray or streak of light, to give them a name of day.

Some very venturously gather from hence, that Christ will come to judgment in the night; and they offer to prove it by many arguments. First, because the first-born in Egypt were smitten in the night. "While all things were in quiet silence, and that night was in the midst of her swift course; God's Almighty Word leaped down from heaven, out of his royal throne, as a fierce man of war," Wisd. xviii. 14, 15. This was indeed most fearful and astonishing, when God called for the blood they owed him at so uncomfortable a season. In one night, every house hath one dead in it; and (which was more grievous) of their first-born; and (which was yet more doleful) in an instant. No man could comfort another; every one was too full of his own sorrow; helping rather to make the noise more lamentable. But all this is no more than the cry of an infant, to the dismal shrieking at Christ's appearance, when all the kindreds of the earth shall mourn before him, Rev. i. 7. And why doth this plague of Egypt prove that he will come in the night, more than the burning of

Sodom makes it probable that he will come in the day? Secondly, the opinions of the fathers are alleged for it: St. Chrysostom thinks it shall be in the night; Euthymius consents with him; Hierome calls it an apostolical tradition; and Laetantius confirms it by the testimony of a sibyl:

*Cum venerit ille,
Ignis erit, mediaque horrendæ in nocte tenebræ.*

When he shall come, fire shall attend his steps,
And horrid darkness in the midst of night.

In the darkest night, saith he, the heavens shall be opened, and the Lord shall descend like lightning. To say nothing of those ecclesiastical hymns, taken out of Prudentius and Ambrose, that seem to favour it; nor to examine the reasons of Aquinas, why he stateth this great audit in the twilight, betwixt day of night: they be all but dreams of a night. Thirdly, they argue, that the passover was to be eaten at night, because the coming of the Lord was expected in the night: "It is a night to be much observed unto the Lord;" and "this is that night of the Lord to be observed," Exod. xii. 42. The Jews are said to look for the coming of their Messias in the midst of the night; and about that time of the night, it is very probable that our blessed Saviour was born. The angels came to the shepherds in the night, with this joyful tidings, Luke ii. 8. But what is all this to prove that his second coming shall be in the night too? That paschal night, whose observation was so strictly commanded, is also called a day: "This day shall be unto you for a memorial;" and, "Ye shall observe this day in your generations by an ordinance for ever," Exod. xii. 14, 17. And the night of our Lord's coming in the flesh, is not called a night by the angels, but a day; "Unto you is born this day a Saviour," Luke ii. 11. The acceptance of days for times is a figure frequently used. "The days are evil," Eph. v. 16: what! the days only? Are not the nights evil too? Yes, but by days are meant the times. Whether Christ will come in the day or night, we cannot tell; but we are sure, there is a time determined when he will come. Fourthly, they stick hard upon that speech, "At midnight there was a cry made," Matt. xxv. 6; concluding out of it, that at midnight the Lord shall come. But why may we not as well infer that it shall be in the day; because the Lord "hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world?" Acts xvii. 31. Some say, How should all things be revealed in the night? But they may be answered accordingly, That night cannot want light, when heaven and earth shall make one universal bonfire. Knowledge should keep her allowed bounds: It is better, says Augustine, to doubt concerning hidden things, than to wrangle about uncertain things. When the poor debtor was advised by his friends, to watch for his creditors' coming to town, and to entreat their favour about a composition, he answered, I will not trouble myself to seek out them, for I am sure they will find out me. But let it be our speedy diligence, to implore the mercy of our great Creditor, not for any composition that can be made by ourselves, but to accept the satisfaction made by our Surety, his Son Christ, upon the cross: otherwise, though we seek not after him, he will be sure to find out us, when we are neither able to put in bail, nor have one penny toward the payment. Night and day let us be prepared; and then, whether thou comest day or night, welcome our dear Lord Jesus.

The sum is this; The day of the Lord is not only uncertain for the time, but then most likely to be, when it is least expected. And to this centre, the

fathers, and all fair expositors, reduce their meditations: so Theophylact, Hilary, Hierome, Bede, and Gregory expound the metaphor. St. Augustine most plainly: He shall come in the night, when his coming shall be very dark and secret, and when it is not expected. Men sleep in the night, and look neither for guests nor thieves. His appearing shall be in the night of men's ignorance, when their intellectual eyes are sealed up with the spirit of slumber; no more expecting his descent from heaven, than he looks to find faith on the earth. But let us pray that he do not find us out in such a night, when we are fallen into spiritual darkness, the ignorance of him, and inconsideration of ourselves. Though he permitted darkness to be before light in the creation, yet in the making of light he did so multiply that light, as that it enlightened not the day only, but the night too. So albeit some shadows of dimness and clouds of disconsolateness have shed themselves upon our souls, let us beseech him to afford us the light of his Holy Spirit, against which the prince of darkness can never prevail, nor hinder his illumination of our darkest nights, our saddest thoughts. The visitation of the Holy Ghost upon the blessed Virgin is called an overshadowing: there was the presence of God, the Fountain of all light, and yet an overshadowing: nay, except there were some light, there could be no shadow. It is happy for us, when those shadows within us shall be overcome by God's irresistible light; that when those shadows have done their office upon us, to let us see that of ourselves we should fall into irrecoverable darkness, the Spirit of grace may do his office upon those shadows, dispersing them, and establishing us in the assurance of comfort.

The lascivious wife is glad of her husband's absence, and abuseth the time in unchaste embraces, till his unexpected return surpriseth her in the bed of adultery, and turns her over to just penalty. But the constant spouse, that hates the least violation of her faith, (even so much as in a wish or thought,) with earnest longing looks for her husband's coming, and knows no solace like to his presence. The holy soul, that hath kept her faith with Christ, desires this day, waits for it, and at last entertains it, and is entertained with it, in a sweet and blessed peace. But the straggling adulteress, that hath preferred her pleasure before her piety, and flatters herself with the remoteness of her Lord's coming, shall be taken in the night of her carelessness, in the act of her wantonness, and perish without hope of reconciliation. This day, like a thief in the night, shall break through into her house, Luke xii. 39. She hath barred the doors, and fortified her house against his entrance, out of a conscious fear, and unwillingness to see him; therefore there is no remedy, her house must be broken through, and that unfaithful soul be plucked out by force. But the other looks for the messenger, listens to the first knock: there is no need to break open her house, for she readily opens the door, and yields up herself in joyful peace to the arms of her lord and husband. Yea, she longs for a dissolution, Phil. i. 23, prays for the consummation, and cries for the hastening of his kingdom. "Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus," Rev. xxii. 20.

"In the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise." Concerning the manner and extent of the world's dissolution, there is a world of question: the school is full of perplexities, that tend more to the distraction than satisfaction of their readers. They do indeed but throw a stone into the well, and leave us to take it out. They lay such toils and nets for him that hunts after the truth in their forest, that

soon he is entangled; and being once in, let him get out as well as he can. Three circumstances are considerable in this first passage. First, the matter alterable, the heavens. Secondly, the measure of their alteration, Shall pass away. Thirdly, the manner of this transition, With a great noise.

1. "The heavens." Some extend it to all the heavens, even to that highest, which is the glorious court of God himself; but St. Paul saith, "We have an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens," 2 Cor. v. 1: that which is eternal, cannot be destructible. Others (Hieron. and Maginus) abridge the latitude of this combustion, and understand by the heavens the lower part of the air; confining this fiery deluge to the same limits with the former watery. But if the inferior air were the boundaries of it, why are the elements afterwards, namely, expressed? The air is an element. Others affirm, that they shall perish according to their very substance; as if there should be no more heavens: but this crosseth the Scriptures, which speak of a new heaven and earth; and of them, not as newly created, but purgely renewed. This then is our safest conclusion, that this purgation by fire shall reach as far as did the corruption of sin, and no further. The corruption of the heavens shall vanish, the matter of the heavens shall not perish. To inquire further may be dangerous, it cannot be profitable. God's power appeared in the creation of the world, his wisdom in the government and disposition of it, his indignation in the flood that drowned it, his mercy in saving those eight that replenished it, his grace in the mission of his Son that redeemed it, and his justice will appear in the re-sending of that Son to judge it. "The heavens declare the glory of God," Psal. xix. 1. Things or persons may teach two ways; either materially or occasionally, so the insensible creatures teach man; or morally and vocally, by doctrine and example, as we ought to teach one another. The heavens can teach us to look unto our own preparation; they cannot teach us the time or manner of their own dissolution.

2. "Shall pass away." There be two errors about this transition of the heavens. First, of some theological philosophers, who attribute to the heavens an incorruptible nature: from which figure being beaten by the truth, they labour to evade by distinction; that though the heavens are in their own nature capable of corruption, yet they may be intrinsically incorruptible, because they can never be corrupted. Secondly, the other sort hold them so corruptible, that they shall be utterly abolished. That the heavenly bodies are maintained by vapours, was but the dream of some poets and philosophers; for certainly, if the sun, moon, and stars were only nourished by waters and vapours, they would long ere this have hidden the world good night. Our Saviour foretold us, that "the powers of the heavens shall be shaken," Matt. xxiv. 29. Lactantius thinks these powers of heaven to be the angels, who shall then change the order of their motions. They are indeed spiritual and separated substances, which have not matter, but power: not united to any matter, as the souls of men to their bodies; and so are powers or virtues: but how those powers shall then be shaken, seems a forced collection. Chrysostom speaks peremptorily of such a shaking as shall be an utter abolition. Of the same opinion were divers of the Greek fathers, Theodoret, Theophylact, Oecumenius, grounding it upon the mis-interpretation of this and the like places: "They shall perish, but thou shalt endure," Psal. cii. 26; whereas the prophet there expounds his meaning of a permutation, not annihilation of the heavens; thus, as nature shall then

change them, and they shall be changed." So St. Paul, "The fashion of this world passeth away," 1 Cor. vii. 31; the figure, not the nature. We conclude therefore with St. Gregory, that the heavens shall pass away, and they shall not pass away: that image or form which they have, shall be done away; that nature which they have, shall be preserved: the substance shall not be destroyed, only the quality shall be changed. As we weed our gardens to succour the plants, and do not root up the plants because of the weeds; or as we sweep our houses from the dust and rubbish, and do not for the rubbish' sake pull down the house; or as the lapidary cuts a precious stone, or polisheth a jewel, and does not for the roughness or foulness cast them away: so the Lord will purge this great fabric of nature, and not for a little corruption destroy so goodly a creature.

3. "With a great noise:" after the manner of a storm or tempest, with a whistling or crashing sound, such as a flight of fowls make through the wind with their rustling feathers. Some think that the celestial orbs shall be put to a swifter and more violent motion, whereby the world shall be set on fire; and out of that concussion this terrible noise shall arise. Fire and water cannot meet without a hissing contestation; the air repelled, breaks not forth in silence: especially restrained fire hath a dreadful eruption; as the report of ordnance, or thunder from the clouds. What with the rapture of the superior bodies, and the confused combat of the elements, who can conceive the fearfulness of this noise? The law was given with a great noise, thunders, trumpets, and voices; the thunder was very loud, the trumpet far louder, but the voice of God drowned all, Exod. xix. 16. If such were the noise at the law-giving, what shall there be at the law-requiring? All things will appear strange at that day; such a Judge, such a session, was never seen; such a noise, such a sentence, was never heard; such an evidence, such a horror, was never conceived. The sound of the archangel's trump is a noise that shall waken all the world; the crackling of this great frame in the fire is a noise that shall astonish all the world; the voice of the Judge is a noise that shall confound part of the world; and the shrieks of the condemned is a noise that shall continue with them in the world to come. The first noise sounds out a *Surgite*, Rise from your graves; the second sounds a *Sistite*, Stand to your trial; the next sounds a *Discedite*, Depart, ye cursed; and the last sounds forth a *Uulate*, Howl for ever in the state of the lost. The rising of a tempest makes the passengers afraid; it more amazeth them when the waves beat into the vessel; but when they begin to sink, what a dismal cry is heard among them! The summons will be a fearful noise, the sentence more fearful, but most lamentable will be the shrieks of reprobates in their endless sufferings. If we hear but the cries of a city upon the sudden invasion of an unlooked-for enemy; or but the clamour of a family that cannot get out, when the house is burning about their ears; or had we heard the cry of the infants in Hinnom, which they contended to drown with their loudest instruments; there had been some shadow of that prodigious noise, which shall be produced by this universal conflagration. It hath been said, that deafness is a blessing when a man can hear no noise but cursing; but they are happy, that can hear this noise without terror, and escape from it without danger; and such happiness belongs to all that are in Christ.

To make some use of this point: 1. Seeing the heavens shall not lose their being, but only suffer a purgation, and must be changed in figure without

perdition of their nature; and in like manner, man hath an everlasting perpetuity assigned unto him, after his temporary transmigration; he cannot cease to be, he may cease to be happy: let us all labour to be cleansed in time, lest we remain uncleansed when time shall be no more. The heavens must undergo a purging for the sin of man, and shall not man endeavour his own purging for the happiness of heaven? The way to escape the horror of that purging fire, is for the present to purge ourselves in water. There be two fountains, wherein we may wash and be clean. The former is a living spring, and in many respects, a strange kind of fountain. It issues indeed from the side of a Rock, 1 Cor. x. 4. but that Rock is immaculate flesh. What is more hard and dry than a rock? what more moist and supple than water? yet He that once did fetch water out of a stone, to convince and shame the infidelity of the Jews, doth still bring it forth of a Rock, to refresh our believing souls. The clouds and springs are wont to afford water, but it comes not usually from the rocks. Other fountains may cool and cleanse the body, but they cannot make it immortal; this spiritual drink comes out of the well of life, and causeth the receiver to live for ever. The leprosy is not got off with other waters, this "cleanseth us from all sin," 1 John i. 7. That which proceeds from other fountains, is white; this is red as blood, even blood itself, and the purest blood that ever ran from veins; that sanguine laver, wherein if faith washes, we are cleansed for ever. This is the only purgatory of our souls, and without this there is no possibility of being clean. The blood of a man runs in his veins; in the blood of those veins are the spirits, and in those spirits a kindly and active fire, which by consuming the redundant and superfluous humours of the body, jureth it from contracted annoyances. Christ is the Man of men, the God of men; and the blood that ran from his sacred veins upon the cross, was full of so infinite a Spirit, that it concocts and overcomes all the diseases of his body the church, and cures the infirmities of all our souls. Lower fountains may be locked up, or dried up; but this spring runs freely, fully, continually, to the end of the world. No man's coming is debarred, no man that comes departs uncleansed. They that are purged in this bath of acceptable satisfaction, shall neither fear the judicial fire of the last audit, nor the penal fire of everlasting torment. But every day we gather new stains; for the mundation whereof, there is another fountain provided, within us, as the other was without us; repentance. This pumps tears out of our eyes, derived from the well of contrition in our hearts. Not that this water can cleanse us by its own virtue; for the spring itself must be fed and sanctified by the former, and is indeed rather a cistern than a fountain. But it is a secondary and instrumental means of our cleansing, a consequent and inseparable sign of our being cleansed by the blood of Jesus. And without this, the burning of the heavens shall but tend to their restitution; but the same fire to impenitent sinners, shall begin their everlasting torments. This great world was first purged with water, and is again to be purged with fire: so the little world, man, is first washed in the laver of regeneration, the sacramental water; and after this baptism of water, there is a baptism of fire, a fiery trial, 1 Pet. i. 7: and many are saved, but as it were through the fire, 1 Cor. iii. 15; as by fire the heavens shall be renewed. The best gold may gather some rust, and the purest garment catch a spot; and the holiest soul on earth needs cleansing. We are a candle set in the wind, blown out with every temptation; a curious instrument, that will out of tune with

the very change of the weather; a fine glass, that is not only broken with a knock, but stained with a breath. If we be not always supplying our lamp with the oil of meditation, and setting our instrument in tune by prayer, and scouring off our blemishes by repentance, decay and ruin will encroach upon us. There was a delicate person, self-enamoured, and too indulgent to his body, especially in the frequency of bathing: a true friend reproving him for many things, urged that in particular, Why do you bathe twice a day? whereto he deridingly answered, Because I cannot conveniently bathe thrice. Seriously we may invert the question: Why do we not bathe oftener? Why do we not wash our consciences twice, thrice, many times, every day in our penitent tears? Seneca tells us of a Roman, that kept his soul as clean as the best housewife keeps her house; every night sweeping out the dust, and washing all the vessels: examining his own soul, What infirmity hast thou healed? What fault hast thou done, and not repented? In what degree art thou bettered? Then would he lie down with sweet sleep. With how welcome sleep and quiet rest may we entertain the night! The burning of the heavens shall not affright us, because he that sets them on fire hath promised to save us.

2. This makes against all ambition of worldly dignities. The heavens are the purest and most glorious pieces of nature; if they must be dissolved, what shall become of temporal honours? The stateliest pyramid that ever was built to the memory of a man, reached not up so high as the heavens; yea, it is likely that the tower of Babel transcended them all; yet Babel is fallen, and the heavens themselves shall not stand. Of good honour the pyramid may be a fit emblem; for it is broad and large in the foundation, upon earth; but still as it riseth up toward heaven, it lessens, and shows itself the narrower; desiring in all the greatness of man, to seem little in the eyes of God: as Moses was a great prince, yet there was not a meeker man. Paul's honour was great to be rapt up into the third heaven; yet he only says, "I knew a man," &c. John was the beloved disciple; yet he only says, "whom Jesus loved." God gave them noble privileges, and yet they in modesty conceal their own names. Dignity comes two ways; either by desert, or by descent; by good worth, or great blood. But when it is stated upon the unworthiness, it is a *Noli me tangere*, Touch me not. "Friend, go up higher," Luke xiv. 10: but when he is advanced like a friend, if he be found none, he shall soon be pulled down again. God gives honour first for the public good, and then for our private; that it may make others better, but not ourselves worse. But ambition is the worm of greatness: the bramble desires to be king; the thistle to match with the cedar; the eagle to set her nest among the stars, Obad. 4: the spider to build in kings' palaces. Haman will never leave lifting up his head, till it be lifted a story higher than he would have had it. Ambition, the eldest son of pride, mounts up with his gaudy wings, as if he would bandy colours with the sun. The ground he thinks beholden to him, for vouchsafing to bless it with one touch of his foot; and extremely honoured, if he grace it with one humble look. Fame is his goddess, and all her servants are his trumpeters. He that crosseth him in his rising, and prevails not, shall be crushed by him when he is risen. He hath as many corrosives as he hath superiors; and cares not how much he gives Satan to rid him but of one rival. He could wish his frowns were lightning, and his words thunder. Poor men he looks should part with all their goods, to have him but take knowledge of them. Vain man,

whither wouldst thou raise thyself? Could thy blown-up honour reach the clouds, this last fire shall consume both it and them. How careful are men for the prolongation of their memories! What stately monuments are erected by their posterities! Marble pillars, and brasen sculptures, report to succeeding ages their names and acts. And above all, the poet undertakes to give life to their virtues in never-dying verses, with *Non norant hæc monumenta mori*; i. e. These records cannot die; and neither time nor fire shall consume them. Yet in this fire they cannot escape: the brass will melt, the stones consume, pillars, pyramids, monuments, all shall flame: poems, orations, books shall perish; and of all secular glory there is an utter annihilation. Then, which is the signior and which the servitor? Where is the difference between the potentate and the peasant? What coat, what crest can discern the gentleman from the mechanic? or the prince from his page? or the Lord from the lackey? What privilege shall the flourishing proud house of Austria have over the now deposed kings of India? Who can distinguish the slave that laboured in the mineral, from that worse slave which adored the metal? Why may not the tenant prove as rich a man as his domineering landlord? There is only one heraldry, that makes the difference of men, and that is the grace of God. This makes us of the blood royal, partakers of the Divine nature, heirs of the kingdom, bearing the arms of Jesus Christ.

Then, farewell all honour, but what comes by adoption: but who can allow the glory of this world so long a continuance? As the names of good men outlive their bodies, so too often great men outlive their good names. A good name lives after death; but the name of the wicked is rotten before his body is cold. "Ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes," Psal. lxxxii. 7. Not only like men, mortal; but like princes, remarkable. The fall of a prince fills the world with present horror, and leaves it full of ominous discourse for the future. Herod's glory lasted not long; it sat as proudly on his soul, as his royal clothes did on his back; but he that would be numbered among the gods, is suddenly devoured of worms, Acts xii. 23. Those worms were both *lectores* and *lectores*; i. e. executioners to punish Herod, and instructors to teach us the danger of vain-glory. The heavens are high and glorious, yet they are not proud; but rather full of humble benevolence, blessing the earth with their light, heat, moisture, influence: man is a piece of creeping earth, and yet he hath lofty and aspiring thoughts. Oh that humility should descend to the earth, while pride exalts itself up to heaven; and that the voice of a creature should dare say, "I will exalt my throne above the stars of God!" Isa. xiv. 13: but the Lord hath vowed to give pride a fall.

3. Seeing the heavens are doomed to a transition, let us lay up our treasure in a place that can never pass away. But first let us be sure that we have a treasure worth laying up. No man esteems his brass and pewter for a treasure; base and abject metals are no treasure; we may buy radish or lettuce with a farthing token; a horse, or a house, or a scarlet cloak cannot be so purchased. If we have a treasure that is not good, we had as good have no treasure. The dog would not change his bone for all the wealth of a kingdom; and the worldling will not part with his wealth for the kingdom of heaven. When a child comes into his father's study, he will rather choose a painted paper than the best book of his library. Among all the riches of God, none pleaseth the covetous so well as a little of the better-coloured earth. If this could be a treasure, yet it is

laid up in the earth, and shall perish with the earth. There be some that lay up a worse treasure, even a multiplied hoard of sins; which is as if a man should take his dung out of his stable, and curiously store it up in his parlour. They treasure up unto themselves wrath against the day of wrath, Rom. ii. 5; as if they did pile up plagues, and curses, and torments, to be spent upon themselves. The former do but treasure up snow. Job xxxviii. 22, which will melt, and flow away. But these treasure up fire, that will never be quenched. God layeth up the deep as in a treasury, Psal. xxxiii. 7; but these lay up treasure in the deep. The former is a vain treasure, and laid up in earth; the other is a cursed treasure, and laid up in hell; but that is a blessed treasure, which is laid up in heaven. Life is brittle, wealth is fickle, honour a bubble, favour a riddle, and the smiles of fortune like the kisses of a harlot, which flatter a man to his destruction. The pontificians promise to enrich their clients out of the church's treasury, the superfluous merits of the saints; whereof the pope is the great lord treasurer: but this treasure lies in some enchanted castle, in the fairy land; no man could ever find it. In the mean time, they picked the people's purses of their material treasure, for the hope of this imaginary supererogatory exchange. Christ doth not forbid all treasuring up in the earth, Matt. vi. 20; for parents may lay up for their children, 2 Cor. xii. 14. For your children, that is an allowed providence; but not for yourselves, that were a gross misconfidence. The Divine precepts are full of sweetness, and do not take away our affections, but rectify them. When the disciples rejoiced that in Christ's name they had cast out devils, he does not forbid them utterly to rejoice; for it were uncomfortable to leave the soul without some liberty of rejoicing: but he directs their joy; "Rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven," Luke x. 20. To have power over devils, is not so much as to be adopted saints. It is happy for subjects, when they can subdue their king's enemies; but it is happier to be made his heirs. So in that other passion of fear, when he says, "Fear not them which kill the body," Matt. x. 28, he does not preclude all access of natural fear; but disposeth that fear towards another object, and teacheth an awful dread of him, that can "destroy both body and soul in hell." St. Paul does not take from the mind of men all desire of glory, but instructs them to do it without sin; "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord," 2 Cor. x. 17. Christ, knowing our covetous dispositions, that we will needs be hoarding, doth not forbid us all manner of laying up, but gives us counsel, both for the choice of our treasure and for the place where we shall lay it up.

Our treasure must be good and precious. Good works are such a treasure, fit for the reconditory of heaven. Ostentation and hypocrisy are base money: If you give to my poor members, saith our glorious Head, and not in my name, you shall miss of your reward. No wise man exposeth his treasure to public view, but lays it up in secret. He courts robbery, who publicly exhibits a treasure, says Gregory. Hezekiah ran into an offensive weakness, when he showed his munition and treasure to the men of Babylon; for the men of Babylon did carry away both his treasure and munition, 2 Kings xx. 17. Why should we tempt an enemy with a glorious booty? He is a foolish traveller, that will show his gold to a thief. The affectation of the praises of men, is a thief that will steal away the credit of our good works with God. Give thine alms in secret, if thou desirest an open reward, Matt. vi. 4. Let every one lay in store by himself, 1 Cor. xvi. 2: the left hand

must not be made acquainted with the good deeds of the right. Two things belong to a good work, reward and glory: the reward God gives to men; the glory he keeps to himself. If we rob him of the glory, he will rob us of the reward. The grace of God is the fountain from whence they must all be derived, and the glory of God is the end to which they must all be directed. To all thy gifts add this, that thou give the glory to God. The praise of men will follow, but let it not be followed; lest to gain the shadow we lose the substance. The hands of Christ are like gold rings, Cant. v. 14: whatsoever we deposit in them, is safe for ever. Many men have impoverished themselves of wealth and wit to find out the philosopher's stone, in a vain hope to turn their base metals into gold. Only the hand of Christ hath this virtue, to turn all our dross into gold; our charitable contribution of things contemptible, into the precious pearls and jewels of eternal glory. Charity gives a cup of water, and receives a vessel of wine. Every penny that it leaves in the hand of Christ, it finds multiplied to a thousand pounds. Hypocritical alms is but gilded brass, which will be nailed to the post of derision, and pronounced base in the day of examination. In vain shall he give his goods to men, that hath not first given himself to God. This was the apostle's commendation of his Macedonians, that first they did give their own selves to the Lord, and then did minister to the saints, 2 Cor. viii. 5. Charity begins at home; be sure to do thyself good: but it ends not at home; "Do good to all men," Gal. vi. 10. St. Paul doth often call beneficence by the name of grace, 2 Cor. viii.; because it is then acceptable to God, when it is done by gracious men. Of all our works let our estimation be after the shekel of the sanctuary, Lev. xxvii. 3. The treasure and the treasury should be fitted together: we do not cast our jewels into the dust-basket, nor put rubbish into our cabinet. Heaven is a holy place, and will not admit of a counterfeit treasure. Faith is a jewel on earth, and will prove the beatifical vision in heaven. Patience is a jewel below, and will prove a crown above. Charity is a jewel here, and will become a kingdom hereafter. If a man had a jewel that would buy a kingdom, how precious would he esteem it! This treasure is laid up in those heavens that shall never perish; and yet they shall never perish that have it.

"The elements shall melt with fervent heat." It is a received principle, that there be four elements; fire, air, water, and earth. The earth hath the lowest place in nature, water next, the air above the water, and fire above the air. These be the four principles whereof bodies are composed. If by the heavens we understand the air, before, and the earth is expressly specified after, both which are elements, why doth he mention the elements between them both? Is not this a superfluous circumstance? No, for neither were the fire or water spoken of; which being left out, some would suppose them exempted from this universal dissolution. Besides, this sheweth the subtle and supernatural force of this last fire, which shall melt the very elements themselves, and work upon that which in its own nature is not exustible. Not that these things shall be abolished, but purged. For seeing that heaven and earth shall remain, it is not convenient that the air should be consumed, which fills up the void space between them. The mutable state of the world admitted no vacuity, much less the state of perfection. And for the element of fire, it is of the same nature with that instrument, whereby God will purge all things. The water is doubted of by some, because the vision of St. John says, "There was no more sea," Rev. xxi. 1. But he speaks there by way of figure, concerning a meta-

phorical sea; or if you take it literally, yet a total destruction of the sea cannot be gathered from the sense of the words. "The first heaven and the first earth were passed away;" not but that there remained still a heaven and earth, but quite changed from their first figure: so there is still a sea, but altered from what it was; no more shall it be troubled with storms and tempests; no more shall it swell and rage with foaming surges; no more shall the furious winds cause an agitation of her angry billows. (Aug. Civit. Dei, lib. 20. cap. 16.) A saint hath the same affections that he had while he was a sinner; but renewed, and otherwise disposed; provocations cannot stir up his choler, nor troubles work him to impatience. The sum is this; These elements shall suffer an accidental mutation, not a final annihilation; they shall remain as to their essence, not as to their quality.

The Lord himself tells us, that his coming shall be in the clouds, Matt. xxiv. 30; and his holy servant hath assured us, that we "shall be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air," 1 Thess. iv. 17. Howsoever some think, that afterward there shall be no more clouds, because they serve but to water the earth, and there is then no further use of their ministry; yet it is plain, that we could not meet the Lord in the air, if the air were vanished. Most interpreters think, and not improbably, that this great assizes shall be kept in the air; but in what part of the air is an unsearchable secret. When the disciples inquired of the place, "Where, Lord?" Luke xvii. 37, he did not shake them off as utterly unresolved; for he gave them to understand, that in the clouds he would come. But the mystery which he refuseth to break unto them, is that particular part of the air, wherein he will make his appearance. Yet there be some presumptuous persons, who (as if they had crept into the council-chamber of God, and overheard his secrets) bear the world in hand, that they distinctly know the place; and can appoint the settling of his throne over the valley of Jehoshaphat, near Jerusalem, at the foot of the hill; from thence he was taken up into heaven, and thither he shall come down from heaven to judge the earth. This Counsellor is silent, and yet dust and ashes dares speak. Indeed the Lord hath threatened to summon all nations into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and to plead with them there, Joel iii. 2. But why should this be understood of a material valley, and not mystically, or metaphorically, by way of allusion; because the judgment at last to be pronounced, shall resemble the judgment that was there executed, to the ruin of those reprobates, the incestuous generation of Lot, the Moabites and Ammonites? What is Jehoshaphat, if you interpret it, but the "judgment of the Lord?" And what is the valley, but the depth of that judgment? into the which every heart of man shall be brought, but the manner of it cannot be brought into the heart of man. Two ways is this last judgment alluded to the valley of Jehoshaphat. One was the fresh memory of that famous deliverance, which the Lord had there wrought for his people. Another, the near resemblance between that particular, and this general judgment. Three great armies confederate against Jehoshaphat and his Judah, the Moabites, Ammonites, and inhabitants of Mount Seir, 2 Chron. xx. 23: God sets them against each other; Moab and Ammon kill the men of Seir, and then fall upon and murder one another. The Lord was not long about it then, and such a quick despatch of his enemies will he make now. All those potent adversaries came against Judah, but they could not prevail; so though the Moabitish flesh, and the Ammonitish world, and the savage fiend of

Seir, the devil, conspire against God's elect, yet all the shame and ruin shall return upon their own heads, and they shall be tormented with their own consciences, as those accomplices fell by their own swords. And as the same place was a valley of judgment to them, which to the Jews was a valley of blessing, ver. 26; so this last day is a day of sorrow to sinners, when they shall be sent away with a "Go, ye cursed;" but a day of joy to the righteous, whose sweet invitation begins with a "Come, ye blessed."

The elements shall be melted, not destroyed. When we melt silver or gold, we intend not the rejecting, but the refining of it: we make it purer and better, we do not make it nothing. Man consists of the four elements; his breath is air, his blood and spirits fire, his radical moisture water, his body earth. Our blessed Saviour, by divers acts, did sanctify them all. By his breathing, he perfumed the air; by his mission of the Holy Ghost in fiery tongues, he hallowed the fire; by undergoing his own institution of baptism, he purified the water; and lastly, by shedding his precious blood upon the ground, and reposing his blessed body in the ground, he sanctified the earth. All these were cursed by our sins, and are restored by his grace and merits. Let us not think, that those elements, upon which he bestowed so much honour, shall perish for ever. Some have curiously observed, that as the times of many passages of Christ were much about the sixes; he came in the sixth age of the world, he was conceived in the sixth month, Luke i. 26, he was transfigured the sixth day, Matt. xvii. 1, he was crucified the sixth hour, Luke xiii. 44, and ascended the sixth week after his resurrection: so his place and position was usually in the midst, between others. By his eternal place in holy Trinity, he is the Second Person, in the midst between the Father and the Holy Ghost: he took flesh in Judea, which is the midst of the earth; he wrought salvation in the midst of the earth: at his birth he was placed in the stable, as it is delivered to us, in the midst between the ox and the ass: in the temple they found him sitting "in the midst of the doctors," Luke ii. 46: at his crucifying, his place was in the midst, between two malefactors, Luke xxiii. 33: after his resurrection, he stood in the midst of his disciples, John xx. 19: after his ascension, he appeared to John in the midst of the golden candlesticks, Rev. i. 13; and wheresoever we are gathered together in his name, he will be in the midst of us: his next coming as a bridegroom, will be in the midst of the night, Matt. xxv. 6; and his appearing is likely to be in the midst of heaven, for we shall meet him in the air, 1 Thess. iv. 17. The philosopher would have a fountain in the midst of a city; as the heart is in the midst of the body; and Christ should be in the midst of the heart. Virtue keeps in the midst; and the safest way is in the midst, between both extremes: so Christ is indeed a Mediator, in the midst, "between God and men," 1 Tim. ii. 5. This is the virtue to which we adhere, and this is the way by which we must go. Let compounded bodies be reduced to their first elements, and let the elements themselves be molten; if Christ erect his throne of grace in the midst of our hearts, we shall stand with comfort before his throne of glory in the midst of the heavens.

We have here offered unto us a figure of our own mortality: we are composed of the elements; and if the elements themselves shall melt with fervent heat, which are of so strong and valid a constitution, what shall become of our frail and infirm bodies, weakened with so much corruption? As this aseasoned heat is to the world, so is a fever to man; it does not only

melt him like snow, but even consume us to ashes. We study the art of health, and deliberate upon the choice of our diet, air, exercise; yet all our diligence, all our curiosity, cannot prevent a sickness; it summons us, seizes us, possesses us, and destroys us in an instant. Our care to preserve health is a tedious and regular work; but a disease keeps no method: when we have been long in hewing and polishing every stone that goes to this building, a cannon batters all in a minute, and levels it with the ground. Man is a little world, an abridgement of the great; and they correspond not only in their parts, but in their productions and alterations. The world brings forth monsters, compiled and complicated of divers parents; and do not our bodies bring forth strange diseases, of divers causes and divers kinds, for which we are so far from being provided of remedies, that we are scarce able to give them names? The world hath not so many noxious creatures, as we have venomous and infectious diseases, feeding and consuming diseases, intricate and entangled diseases, made up of several ones. Such is our miserable abundance, such our beggarly riches. For the world's earthquakes, man hath his sudden shakings; for those lightnings, sudden flashes; for those thunders, sudden noises; for those eclipses, sudden obscurations and darkening of his senses; for those blazing stars, sudden fiery exhalations; for those rivers of blood, sudden red waters. Is this the honour which man hath by being a little world, that he hath enough in himself to destroy and execute himself? to breed a sickness, to assist the sickness, yea, even to antedate the sickness, and to make it more irremediable by sad apprehensions? As fire is made more vehement by sprinkling water upon the coals, so we wrap up a hot fever in cold melancholy; and, lest the fever should not destroy fast enough without this contribution, we help to perfect the work of our destruction, by joining the artificial sickness of our own melancholy, to our natural, our unnatural fever. We are not only incident to sickness, but to the worst of sicknesses, continual fear of it. And when this fever comes, it melts us, it seatters us, it pours us out like water; so instantly, that it scarce leaves an answer for that question, How long were they sick? Yet our comfort is, that as the elements, though they be molten, are not taken from their being, but rather purged and restored to a better being; so our bodies, made up of those elements, though death take them in pieces, break them to clods, reduce them to ashes, and examine every dust, do but suffer a cleansing; and there is such a quickening virtue in the Divine Head of those scattered members, that it shall recollect those ashes, give life to that dust, renew those bodies, and make them shine brighter than the sun and stars in their clearest glory. When a rich garment, that is capable of washing, grows foul, we are content to rip it in pieces, to cut every stitch; and having thus sundered it, we scour it in some convenient larders; and having so done, we make it up again, and think not scorn to wear it on high days. Man's body is like a watch, consisting of many wheels; his heart is the principal wheel, his brain another, his liver a third; while these move rightly, that is, work kindly, all the inferior wheels keep their due courses: the eyes roll, the hands operate, the feet walk, the joints stir, all execute their several functions. Every day this watch is wound up, and kept in reparation, by meat, drink, sleep, and exercise. Often it gathers dust, and grows foul, and the hand of physick is employed to cleanse it. The string that unites these motions, and holds them in dependence, is the spirits. At last the string waxeth old and breaks, and then all

falls to pieces; this body drops asunder, and here lies a pin, there a wheel; here one bone, there another. Yet after all this woful dissolution, that exquisite Workman which at first made it, will reunite it, repolish it, put a new immortal spring into it, and lay it up as a choice organ of his praise, in his own glorious kingdom.

"The earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." The earth is the world's centre; and so extremely violent shall the last fire be, as to reach from the roof to the very centre. When a house is burnt down, yet the floor remains: in the destruction of Sodom, though the ground was cursed with a future barrenness, yet it was not reduced to nothing. This fire shall extend to the floor and pavement of that mighty fabric; to the permutation, not to the annihilation of it. The superficies of sin entered shall this flame reach. Indeed the works that are on the earth shall suffer more, even to a corruption, to a correction of them. The earth shall be burnt, not as we burn bricks, by condensing and hardening of the clay; nor as we burn wood or coals, by consuming them to cinders and ashes; but like metal in a furnace, or gold in the crucible, which by separation of the dross, is brought to perfect pureness. "The earth abideth for ever," Eccl. i. 4, what it was, and where it was, but not such as it was; an element, but not a sordid and sin-corrupted element.

Two things the Romists have reserved from this universal conflagration; one part of the earth, and one work in the earth. First, some of them, with Moses Barcephas, contend for the reparation and remanence of the terrestrial paradise; whereof although they can show no necessary use, but admit a vacuity into it; yet they think it no more absurd, than that the places of the lost angels are not yet supplied in heaven, or that divers parts of the earth are now without inhabitants. But Pererius and Abulensis are against this opinion, and affirm that it shall perish in the last, if it did not in the former inundation. Some have imagined a paradise about the moon, to deliver it from the water; others would have it still upon the earth, and yet escape the fire. But as while the philosophers disputed about the chief good; some stating it in this thing, and others in that; one seeking it here, and another there, and all looking for it where it was not; only believers, by the light of grace, found it where it was, even in Jesus Christ: so what paradise soever they strive for, or wheresoever they conceit it to be, let us seek it where it is, even in the kingdom of heaven. Secondly, some exempt the material cross of Christ from the power of this exustion. This privilege (howsoever they would father it upon the fathers, misunderstood, as Ephrem, Cyril, Chrysostom) is grounded upon a testimony of one of the silyls:

*O lignum felix, in quo Deus ipse pependit,
Cum renovate Dei facies ignita micabit.*

O happy wood, which bore a hanging God!
Blest shalt thou be, whenever that face Divine
Shall beam forth smiles in nature's final day.

What is become of that cross? Is it not cut in many pieces? Would not those fragments, which they pretend to be pieces of the cross, make up many wain-loads. Must they all be re-collected to the restoration of the cross? First, they have multiplied it on earth, and now they would advance it into heaven. Do they not honour it with this imaginary exaltation, only to colour their abuse of it unto superstition? This they understand to be that

"sign of the Son of man," Matt. xxiv. 30, which he shall advance in the heavens, when he triumpheth over his enemies; as conquerors use to erect trophies and monuments of their victories. What did Christ leave behind him at his going away, with which the papists cannot furnish him at his coming again? They have all his relics; some in one city, and some in another; this convent grows rich with one relic, that church or monastery is proud of another: amongst them they can appoint him where he shall have all his old furniture; in one place he shall find his coat, in another his sandals. These they have in abundance, but they have lost Himself. We have not, O most blessed Saviour, these thy relics in our hands; but we desire to show thee thyself in our hearts, and to find our names in thy book of life.

If the earth with her works shall be burnt, why doth St. Paul mention the earnest expectation of the creature for this day? Rom. viii. 19. Doth any thing naturally hope for an evil to itself, or desire its own destruction? *Ans.* 1. We must know, that the apostle speaks there figuratively, by a prosopopœia; personating the creatures and giving them affections, a kind of sense and feeling of their misery, and a longing desire to be delivered from it. He speaks of them groaning and grieving, as the prophets did sometime bring in the vineyard wailing, and the mountains lamenting. So that this is a pathetic and emphatical description of the hope and desire of the creatures. 2. They are subject to vanity, whereof they would fain be rid: not subject willingly, for this their vanity is against their natural inclination; every thing by nature would decline corruption. Erasmus' conceit is too curious, who interpreteth this vanity, the disappointing of the hope of the creature; whereby it faileth of that end at which it aimeth: as if it sought an immortality, in multiplying one individual, or one particular, by another; but that end it misseth. Nor is this vanity altogether corruption; for neither are the heavens of a corruptible nature, nor yet should the elements have been incorruptible, though man had never sinned; seeing they were ordained to serve for the generation and procreation of things, which cannot be done without corruption. But by this vanity we understand the frail condition of the creatures, much degenerated since the creation, both in earth, the elements, and heaven. There is a perfection, to which they long to be restored. The desire or expectation of the creature is twofold: one natural, as for the earth and trees to bring forth fruits: another supernatural, when a thing aspireth to an end above the natural constitution; as our corruptible bodies, to the state of incorruption, at the resurrection. So the creatures expect when the sons of God shall be revealed; not that they know who are the sons of God, but they look for their own restitution with the sons of God. As for man's cause they were enthralled, so with man's happiness they shall be enlarged. The bodies of the saints are made of the earth, and yet those bodies shall be glorified in heaven; corruptibles shall put on incorruption. Heaven is the highest part of the world, and earth the lowest; yet He that dwelt in the highest heavens, came down to the lowest earth, and carried up his body which was framed of earth, even to the highest heavens. It is the honour of the earth, that part of her is glorified above; and a kind of assurance that the rest shall be but purified below.

If the earth shall perish, why are we so taken with it? what folly can be greater than to adhere unto that which is destined to the fire? Thy habitation so pleaseth thee, that thou art loth to remove: it is

but earth. Thy gold bewitcheth thee, and thou lovest the enchantment: it is but earth. A woman's beauty tempteth thee, and with the wreck of virtue thou steerest a course to that unhappy port: it is but earth; some clearer-coloured earth. If the foundation be overturned, how should the roof stand? The earth is doomed to burning, and can the super-edification escape? The earth is but a turf for man to trample on, heaven is our home: here we have but tents, there are the mansions. No mortal Vitruvius can make an immortal habitation. Why do we build so gloriously upon so inglorious and miserable a foundation? Pride begins such a palace, craft undertakes it, oppression raiseth it, prodigality finishes it, emptiness inhabits it, vanity derides it, and fire shall consume it. The superfluous builder is a thief, if not to others, yet to himself. *Edificatio te capiat*, i.e. Let a rage for building seize thee, was a Lacedæmonian curse. Time hath demolished those great pyramids, the wonders of the world; but the remainders of time shall not escape the fire. The silly spider may teach us, who upon the least touch of her web flits and removes. The world is a cobweb world, to be swept down with the broom of fire. If Codrus' house burn, he even warms his hands at the flame; the loss never troubles him, because in two days he can make himself another as good; but when the rich man's house is on fire, he cries out on this chest, on that cabinet, and is distracted with impatience. Those pilgrims to the heavenly Canaan, which esteem the world but their inn, care not to see it on fire, because it is none of their own; but to those that have made it their habitation, such a sight will go to their hearts. Let no home content us, but that which is out of the reach of the fire, even the mansions prepared for us by Jesus Christ, John xiv. 2.

Though the house be on fire, be sure to save the jewel; provide beforehand that thy soul may escape in this universal conflagration. When a man's house is burning, he would save many things; but he is content to lose them all, rather than lose himself. This was St. Paul's motive, to keep a good conscience at all times, and in all things, because he knew there should be a day of account, Acts xxiv. 15, 16. Indeed, if there were a purgatory for future cleansing, after this life, there might be some hope; but he that dares sin upon the trust of a purgatory, shall find the event of his hopes in hell. Consider thy life, it is the time of sinning; so thou makest it: consider thy death, it is the date of repenting; so God makes it. St. Augustine calls death a time of depositing or putting off: we then put off our clothes, we put off our diseases, we put off our cares, we put off our bodies; but yet we may fail of putting off our sins. They often go with the soul, when that parts from the body; but they shall meet with the body, when that meets with the soul. Be sure to put off thy clothes ere thou go to bed, to put off thy sins ere thou diest, or they will find thee in the morning when thou risest. Thou that darest sell God's holy rites, without trouble to thee, wouldest thou be found in this day of flames with such a conscience? Thou that settlest thy estate upon usury, thy heart upon thy estate, wouldest thou be found at this day with such a conscience? Thou that swearest away thy grace, that liest away thy truth, that dissemblest away thy faith, that drinkest away thy estate, that playest away thy soul, wouldest thou be presented before the Judge with such a conscience? Hymenæus and Philatus taught that the resurrection was past already, 2 Tim. ii. 17, 18; and the conversations of too many are answerable to their doctrine: they so live, as if the day of account were over. He hath said, he will come: he is not yet come: O let us be

so kind to ourselves, as to remember that doomsday is not past. There is a day, an evening, and a morning: we shall find no peace in the evening of our death, nor in the morning of our resurrection, except we provide for it in the day of our life. O consider, with what a dismal cry, and ghastly look, the evil conscience shall behold the Judge. The sun shall be darkened; with what light shall the unrighteous shine? The moon shall be turned into blood; it will be too late then to turn good. The stars shall fall from heaven; alas, what hope then can meteors have of rising up to heaven? The powers of heaven shall be shaken, Matt. xxiv. 29; how shall the infirmities of the earth be able to stand? O then make safe the jewel, lay up thy soul in the bosom of Jesus Christ.

VERSE 11.

Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?

THAT which is commonly noted of our prognosticators, that they are more diligent to make mention of foul weather than of fair; storms and thunders they much harp upon, but calm and serene days pass them unobserved; the like may be said of man's corrupt nature, to be more feelingly affected with pain than with pleasure; his much good he little thinks on, a small evil disquiets him. He is more troubled with an injury than pleased with a benefit, more mindful to revenge the one than to requite the other. He regards not many years' health so much as one day's sickness; nor an age of liberty, like one hour's restraint. The hope of that which is good, does not stir him like the fear of that which is evil. Fear is the passion that most powerfully sways him, and accordingly the Searcher of all hearts proceeds to work upon him. Therefore the sacred rolls do more abound with the threatenings of judgment, than with the promises of favour. For howsoever love be the more noble affection, yet fear makes the first impression. For this cause doth God so frequently remind us of our own death, of the last judgment, and hell-torments; that seeing love cannot win us to do good, yet the horror of those endless pains may fright us from doing evil. We cannot seriously meditate on our last trial, and admit such things as make us culpable. But alas, it is a death, we think, to think upon death; and we cannot endure that doleful bell, which summons us to judgment. Therefore are we dissolute, because we do not think of our dissolution. But if we would deliberately consider the mutability of our condition, the necessity of our reckoning, and the dismal wages of sin; though we were not won with the love of God's goodness, and his blessed recompence, yet the terror of unavoidable vengeance might drive us to repentance. Divers thieves have robbed passengers within the sight of the galleys; but if a sinner could see but one glimpse of hell, or be suffered to look one moment into that fiery lake, he would rather choose to die ten thousand deaths, than commit one sin. "Seeing then all these things," &c.

The verse consists of a contemplative part, and a practical: Seeing all these things shall be dissolved; that is for contemplation. What manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness? that is for practice. How well do these two parts symbolize to a Christian the two main offices

of his life, speculation and action! These be his two wings, Rev. xii. 14, whereby he mounts up into heaven: yea, these be the cherubim's hands under their wings, Ezek. x. 8: a winged mind, that soars aloft in meditation; and a working hand, busy about pious actions. Here is contemplation, like devout Mary at the feet of Christ, hearing his word; and practice, like hospitable Martha, providing for his entertainment. Here is Moses at his prayers on the mount, and Joshua fighting in the valley; Jacob studying at home, and Esau hunting in the field. The papists place the chief perfection in a contemplative life; and understand it for that "One thing is necessary," of Christ to Martha; and that better part, which was chosen by Mary. Action (say they) may be lame and defective through the imbecility of the organ; but contemplation is pure and defecate on earth, and shall be perfected in heaven; a portion never to be taken from us. I deny not the excellency of contemplation; it is as heavenly a business as any belongs to man or Christian, and of unspeakable benefit to the soul. For by this we ransack our deep and false hearts, find out our secret enemies, buckle with them, expel them, and fortify ourselves against their re-entrance. By this we make use of all good means, fit ourselves to all good duties. By this we desery our own weakness and obtain redress; we prevent temptations, and store up comforts; we get more light to our knowledge, more heat to our affections, more life to our devotion. By this we learn how to condemn the world, and long for the fruition of invisible blessings. By this we see Christ with Stephen, we talk with God as Moses, and are rapt with Paul into paradise. This is the remedy of our disconsolateness, the pastime of the saints, the ladder of heaven, and the best improvement of Christianity. Yet albeit Mary's part is the better, Martha's is not disallowed for good. They are both sisters, and must go hand in hand; for if we suffer meditation to eat up all the duties of our life, God will give us little thanks, who rewards all men according to their works, Matt. xvi. 27. A public good excels a private; contemplation may do more good to ourselves, but the works of charity are more profitable to others. I had rather be wise than rich; yet to relieve a poor man's hunger or necessity, my riches will do more good than my wisdom. Three noble ends divinity propounds to her followers: the first and chiefest is God's glory; the next to that, man's own solace here, and salvation hereafter; the last is the edification and comfort of others: and in these consists a Christian's perfection. Having therefore contemplated in our minds this fatal and final doom of the world, let us proceed to action; and "seeing all these things shall be dissolved," God looks that we should be new persons "in all holy conversation and godliness."

In the former part we have two circumstances; how much, and how far: an extent. All these things: an extinet, Shall be dissolved. First, for the extent.

"All these things." The reason of this dissolution is the corruption of all things; therefore this future renovation hath the same latitude with the former corruption. St. Paul tells us, that "the creature was made subject to vanity;" and "the whole creation groaneth," or every creature, Rom. viii. 20, 22; comprehending (with our apostle here) all things. Origen would fetch the angels within this compass, alleging that they also are subject to vanity, in respect of their employment about the vain affairs of men; that as they rejoice at the repentance, so they grieve at the disobedience, of sinners. Augustine refuseth this interpretation, yet not without a query, whether the angels helping our

infirmities, may not be said to be affected with us, and in that sense subject to vanity? But the angels cannot be subject to vanity; for in the next world the saints shall be but like the angels, and yet quite exempted from all such affections. Gregory understands this "creature" only of the righteous man, who against his will is subject to this mutable and corruptible estate, and groaneth to be delivered. And Augustine, by "every creature," understandeth man in general, because he participateth the nature of every creature; he hath understanding with angels, sense with beasts, and a vegetative life with plants: but the sense reacheth a great deal further. Ambrose and Calvin fetch into this restitution, the brute beasts; as if they also should be no more than changed, of whom there will be no necessary use. But by St. Paul's "every creature," and St. Peter's "all these things," we may best understand things without life and sense, as the heavens, elements, and earth with her works. There shall be a dissolution of all these things.

Of all? Shall nothing escape? What a madman is the covetous, to seek the engrossing of all, when all shall perish? I will enlarge my barns, (if it were possible, according to the capacity of my desires,) "and there will I bestow all my goods," Luke xii. 18. Where we may observe, first, his pride; *my goods*, as if no man were worthy to taste of his bread, or drink of his cup. The worldling would dwell alone; but he shall have company; the rust will wait upon his gold, the moth upon his garment, the vermin on his garner; and, above all, the worm of conscience will not fail to be his associate: there is nothing else which he can so properly call his own; this will stick by him. Secondly, his greediness, *all*; he would have all that is, he will have all he can. All, without leaving so much as the tenth to the Levite, or the gleanings for the poor. All? if he could possess all the goods upon the earth, yea, and stretch his hand to the firmament, to make the sun and moon his, or reach a star from the sky; yet he and all these must perish. The wise man, that sees he must lose all at last, will part with something in time. Clip off thy superfluous riches, as Absalom cut his hair; it will grow the thicker. He that covets all, shall be left worth nothing. Thirdly, his presumption: *I will build my barns, I will gather my goods*. Wilt thou, O fool? How art thou sure of that? Alas, says Eliphaz, "We are of yesterday," Job viii. 9: not, We are of tomorrow. To say peremptorily, I will do this or that, is to rob God of his prerogative royal. And what will he do? First, pluck down his old barns: indeed barns full of rapine deserve pulling down; but if instead of pulling down old barns, he had pulled down the old man, this had been a far better exercise. Then he will build up new: his goods are his god, and he builds a barn as a temple to it. His drowsy is so insatiate, that he would drink up the whole world: but a drowsy is best cured by vomit. The worldling's vomit is a charitable beneficence: if this be not his physic now, he and all these things shall perish together. But happy are they that repose all in Christ; for when they that coveted all shall lose all, these faithful souls shall find all, in Him that is All in all, our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ.

"Shall be dissolved." This is the extinet. Full grievous is the corruption, whereunto the creature is subject, by the sin of man. This servitude appears in three things. 1. They are in continual labour to serve man's necessity. The sun riseth and setteth, and runs his diurnal course, to give man light. The moon waxeth and wane, and hastens about her sphere, to solace him in the night season. The

winds come out of their several corners, to do him good, both by land and sea. The rivers are still in action, running like servants by his side, and emptying themselves into the sea; from whence there is a reciprocal supply of springs and fountains. The pregnant clouds are in travail to be delivered of their fruitful showers: God wearieth the clouds in watering the earth, Job xxxvii. 11. All the creatures are in a continual labour to serve man; and this is one servitude.

2. They have a certain sympathy and fellow-feeling of man's misery; as the beasts of Nineveh were driven to fast with their masters: yea, they are often destroyed in the destruction of man; the cattle of Egypt were smitten, the ground of Sodom was cursed, and in the perishing of the old world nothing (save what was in the ark) escaped. Hence it is, that the heavens do wax old like a long-worn garment: the sun and moon have their blemishes, their eclipses; the face of the sky is overcast with clouds; the stars infect the air with bad influences; the air doth annoy us with pestiferous vapours; the earth doth often afford nothing but barrenness, and when she is opened for our relief, she seemeth to groan under that painful passion. The vine bleeds when it is cut, the mulberry weeps at a breach, and divers trees sweat out their gum, as if our sins had made them sick of a fever. If any demand, whether some injury be not offered to the creature, for being thus subdued to vanity? I answer with St. Chrysostom, No, for it was made for us, and therefore justly suffers with us. Some have too curiously observed, concerning this mutability of the heavens, that the sun (in the beginning) was ordained to keep his course in the equinoctial only, without swerving; and then, say they, there should have been a perpetual spring; neither pinching cold nor parching heat should have offended the earth, but the temper would have pleased all with an acceptable indifferency. But now his course is not round, nor doth perfect a circle, nor doth he keep his way directly; but where he rose to-day he comes not to-morrow, stealing by that point with a deceitful line; thus he changeth his race, and runs in the oblique circle of the zodiac, as it were hedged in by the two tropics. But all this is not so; for the sun and moon in the creation were appointed to distinguish the times and seasons of the year; which they could not do, if the sun should not by a serpentine course, in the declining circle of the zodiac, both remove and approach, and so make both inequality of days and difference of seasons. But still there is vanity in all things under the sun; and that which is infected with man's corruption, shall suffer in man's dissolution.

3. They are constrained to minister their service to the wicked desires of sinful men: and this is the sorest bondage of all, even to be a slave unto slaves. The sun was fain to lend his light unto those pagan monsters, while they committed their most execrable rapes and murders. The moon waits upon the thief, while he acts his robberies; upon the whoremonger, in his foul adulteries. The stars hide not their aspects from those atheistical astrologers, nor deny their influence to their heathenish idolaters. The winds with prosperous gales fill the sails of pirates, and the sea supports their unblest vessels. Upon the grounds of oppressors the clouds let fall their fructifying burdens, and the heat of that glorious carbuncle ripens their fruits. Viands make fat the epicure, and wine is ready for the unnatural thirst of the drunkard. Herbs and minerals are medicinal to the unholiest bodies, and recover them from their diseases. Jewels and precious stones are driven to adorn the proud, and gold is made to buy the

libertine's pleasure. The vine yields her grapes, the kine their milk, the sheep their wool, the ground her corn, the meadows their grass, and gardens their flowers; even to those that sacrifice all these to their idols, Hos. ii. 8. Birds are compelled to part with their feathers to stuff the bed of uncleanness; and the metals of the earth are made the instruments of homicide. The fire warms, and the air cools, and the water cleanses, and the earth bears, the ungodly as well as the righteous. They are all forced to serve them that do not serve God. This is the bondage under which they groan, and from which they labour to be delivered, longing for the time when "all these things shall be dissolved."

And yet they would be but dissolved, not destroyed; they desire a renovation, not an annihilation; not a cessation of being, but of servitude. So Paul says, "The creature shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God," Rom. viii. 21. What! shall they be delivered only by being utterly abolished? Shall they so cease to be miserable that they shall cease to be at all? No, that cannot be called a deliverance, but rather a punishment. But they shall be delivered into a glorious liberty; both putting off their servile corruption, and putting on a happy freedom. As for our sakes they became corruptible, so together with us they shall be restored to incorruption. I dare not (with Calvin) gather in the beasts, fowls, fishes, that remain at the last day, to this number; they are certainly within the compass of this dissolution, but whether designed to such a restitution, it is doubtful. Their services being done, in the ministration to our necessities, why should they be restored to glory? But there shall be a new heaven and a new earth, Rev. xxi. 1: the heavens shall be decked with stars; the earth adorned with trees and plants; the moon shall shine as the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, Isa. xxx. 26; Rev. xxii. 3: and for the end and use of all this renovation, it shall then be revealed when it is performed.

Seeing all these things must be dissolved, why does not man herein read the necessity of his own dissolution? His body is not made of the same matter with the sun, or stars, or heavens; and if it were, yet even these must be dissolved. But man is the son of the earth and grandchild of nothing. There is nothing in life more transient than life itself; in the midst of life we are in death. It eats out itself, spends upon its own stock, and is consumed by being pieced. Every day that is added to it is so much as a day taken from it. From the morning of infancy we come to the meridian of youth, and presently it is evening, our sun sets. Our life is like a candle in the wind, soon blown out; like a spark in the water, soon extinguished; like a thin air, soon expired; like a little snow in the sun, soon melted; like a flower: what in the spring is sweeter for smell, fairer for sight? Solomon in all his royalty was not clothed like one of those, Matt. vi. 29; yet in the morning it flourisheth, in the evening withereth, Psal. xc. 6; if it last a day, that is all. Dews, vapours, shadows, snow, dreams, dust, and ashes: a ship, post, meteor, air; so man's life passeth. We are not debtors to the flesh, saith Paul, Rom. viii. 12; but we are debtors to the death of the flesh. Let not this little world, man, think that he can hold out with the great: common experience confutes it; daily man dies, whenas the world stands. There is but one thing appointed to dissolve the world, and that is the last fire; but there are a thousand things to bring man to his end. We use to say, that a man may live of a little; but alas, of how much less may a man die! There is scarce any thing that hath a

killed somebody; a hair, a feather hath done it. Let us therefore be carefully prepared for our own dissolution, and the dissolution of the world shall never trouble us. If we live well, we shall do well; and if we die well, we shall do better. The world shall be dissolved, but nothing shall separate us from Jesus Christ.

"What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?" This is the practical part. The wise man first looks to the end which he desires, and then studies the way conducing to it. He does not say, This way will I take, because it is fair and pleasant, and I have store of company whithersoever it brings me. But because of the smoothness and frequency, he rather mistrusts it; having heard that the road to hell is very delightful, populous, and numerous of passengers; and therefore resolves to choose the surer way, though it be troublesome and solitary. Heaven is the place to which we would all arrive: sin is a pleasing way, but not the right: piety is the right way, but not so pleasing: if we be wise, we will not mind the pleasantness, but the directness of the way; and suffer a little sorrow in our journey, for that inestimable joy at our journey's end. Reveal to us this way, O Lord, and see if we have followed it: that thou mayst have glory, if we have; and we pardon, if we have not, and help that we may. As one expresses it, Lord, my heart is ready, I fear lest it should not be so: I wish that it were so; woe is me that it is not so! We have here, for satisfaction of our good desires,

1. The way directed to felicity, which is godliness.

2. Our progress in that happy way, our conversation.

3. The sincerity of that progress, holy, all holy.

4. The perfection of that sincerity, What manner of persons ought we to be! how holy, how godly, how excellent in all grace and virtue!

Godliness is the way; and this, in the latitude of it, comprehends all those duties which God requireth of us. Indeed, it is a conformity of the whole creature to the will of his Maker. To live a life as near to the life of God as possibly we can, is godliness. In the understanding, it is knowledge; in the will, it is readiness; in the affections, it is simplicity; in the conscience, it is sincerity; in the heart, it is alacrity; in the hand and in all our actions, it is obedience. This is too large a field for us now to survey; we will look but upon one canton of it only: the trial of godliness is obedience. First, it is listening, and hath an ear listening to the word of God. That same "Hear ye him," runs continually in the mind of godliness. Hear not the world, which bids you seek after transitory things; but hear him that says, "Love not the world." Hear not the world, proffering her honours; but hear him, that tells you, Humility is the way to glory.

Secondly, it is ready. The guard, that watcheth at the chamber-door of kings, soon break off their prattle at the voice of their master, and are ready to execute his commands. The godly heart forgets his own business, when his Maker sets him on work. The refractory are like a heavy-laden vessel, not moved without strong winds; but the pious heart is like a spherical body set on a plain, the gentlest breath of God's Spirit stirs it. No war-horse is so guided by the hand of his rider, as the godly soul is by the will of his Maker. Those are paralytic and stupified members of the body, which will not move at the impulse of the head: if we be living members of our glorious Head, we have a motion pliable to his direction. The vessel of honour is "meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work," 2 Tim. ii. 21. They are more stubborn than the winds

and seas, that will not obey the voice of Christ. Thirdly, it is perfect: to serve God in some things less repugnant to our corrupt natures, and in other duties to be recusants, is a defective godliness. Miriam, for one contumely against her brother, became a leper. Moses, for failing in one act of obedience, was not suffered to enter into the land of promise. Eli, otherwise godly, for a little indulgence to his ungracious sons, was severely punished. They that profess godliness in divers things, and take liberty in one ungodly custom, are like a vain traveller, whom the desire of seeing some famous city, after the tedious measure of many hundred leagues, hath brought to the gates; and there taking up his inn, he is so well pleased, that his glass being run out, he dies without the sight of that happiness for which he undertook the journey. (Basil.) If a man have many fair rooms in the house of his heart, all which he reserves for God; and one little closet, which he lets out to Satan, by the tenure of one filthy lust or affection; will not God dislike all for that one? Will he not for that one secret rival forsake the whole dwelling? Much honey cannot sweeten a little wormwood, but a little wormwood will imbitter a great deal of honey. You have seen a mouse caught in the trap by the very tip of her tail. A little sin cherished puts us out of the way of godliness. The word is plural, in all the duties of godliness. This then is the way, walk in it; and God hath passed his word, you shall be saved by it.

The progress in this way is our conversation. Man is a sociable creature, ordained to converse with his own kind. It is neither good nor safe to be alone. Of conversation there is a necessity; all our care must be to make it holy. There be three objects of a Christian's care; the devotion of his heart, the profession of his mouth, and the conversation of his life. The first and last of these are hard tasks; only the middlemost is easy: with small difficulty we can say well; but to mean well, and to do well, be the points of labour. Our conversation is the index of our estate; if that be bad, the credit of our profession is lost, and we are broken in our religion, as was Demas. The ungodly may be hoisted aloft, like chimneys; but we know by their smoke that they are full of soot. The poets talk of a wedding girdle, which, being tied about the bride, would instantly break if she were not a virgin. The name of Christian is a universal challenge among us; but if we be not virgins of a pure and holy conversation, this girdle will break, and we shall be exposed to ignominy. In vain do men speak well of us, when God knows no good by us. If he pronounce us dead, all the mouths in the world cannot breathe life into us; if he pronounce us living, all the devils in hell cannot take life from us. A man is what his manners declare him to be; as the tree is judged by the fruits. There is nothing more honours or dishonours God, than our good or evil conversation. The thoughts of our hearts, whether they be foul or clean, are only known to himself; and in the matter of his glory before men, they neither make nor mar; as the unknown contents of the earth neither grace nor disgrace a country: but the words of our lips, and works of our lives, these either hinder or advantage his glory. But do our filthy aspersions below, stick any spots upon the brow of heaven? Do we violate the virgins there, by committing uncleanness here? Doth it trouble the blood of Christ in heaven, that we swear by it upon earth? If we oppress the poor, is this any wrong to God? Whatsoever evil we do, is he ever the worse? Indeed his honour, in its own nature, can no more be depressed by our impiety, than it is heightened by our obedience; but in the regard

of men, according to our conversation it receives either increase or diminution: as the glory of the sun is still the same, but not so to our eyes, when it is obscured by the interposition of clouds.

There is nothing so truly speaks a man as his conversation; what he does I am sure he is, not evermore what he says. Judas was a traitor: why? he delivered up his innocent Master: this he did, whatsoever he said. Herod was a murderer: why? he slew the infants of Bethlehem. Pilate was an unjust judge: why? he condemned the innocent. The conversation is an evident and unanswerable proof. Not that every bad act denominates a sinner: as to be once overtaken with wine, makes not a man a drunkard; nor one oath a swearer; nor one falsehood a liar. That which justifies or condemns a man, is his conversation, the accustomed course of his life. If his manners be lewd, he shames his profession. It were better with philosophers, to have honesty without religion, than with wicked Christians, to have religion without honesty. Yea, he shames himself. In the preparation of solemn nuptials, the wedding-clothes are sumptuous, the bride-chamber is richly furnished, the marriage-bed is adorned with silken curtains and glorious ornaments, the rooms are strewn with roses and violets, the presence is honoured with a great number of fair virgins and noble friends, great cheer is provided, the bridegroom is decently accoutred, the attendants wait, all things are in readiness; yet after all this expectation, when the bride is presented, if she appear swarthy, evil-favoured, and deformed, not to be looked upon without contempt, all the spectators hang down their heads, and the whole honour of the nuptials is quashed. (Chrysost. Hom. 41.) So though there be an affluence of riches, a concurrence of honours, and all that this world can afford, in abundance; yet if thy soul, which is the bride, ordained for the Prince of heaven, Jesus Christ, be foul and stigmatical, besmeared with lusts, and polluted with an unclean conversation, the Bridegroom will none of thee, and thou shalt be despised of men and angels. Be gracious therefore in thy conversation, that thou mayst not be rejected of that heavenly Bridegroom.

The sincerity of this progress follows: our conversation must not be sensual, but holy; not in part, but all holy; even throughout sanctified, 1 Thess. v. 23.

1. Holy. Holiness is God's own image, a beam of that Divine light shining within us; a resemblance of one property of the Divine nature: the character of Christ, the print of the Spirit, the cognizance of a saint, and the glory of men and angels; without which, all riches is poverty, all honour ignominy. For what is all the glory of the world, without holiness? It is all nothing, or nothing worth. God "hath chosen us before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy," Eph. i. 4: holiness is the end of our election. He "hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness," 1 Thess. iv. 7: holiness is the end of our vocation. "This is the will of God, your sanctification," ver. 3: his holy word doth command it. "Be ye holy; for I am holy," 1 Pet. i. 16; his holy example doth commend it.

Yet, alas, how doth the universal practice of the world despise it! Be holy? it is the least of all their cares; nay, they are ashamed to be holy, for fear of being contemptible; as if they had made a statute, and sworn to observe it, Let no man amongst us be holy. Preach holiness to them, and they reply, This is no age for saints: they will not be so holy as to go to heaven before their bones be cold: that holiness is but a sullen quality, and makes men unfit for any good company. Thus do they scoff at the

means to be saved, and make themselves merry with their own condemnation. But we must tell them again, that whosoever will not be a mortified saint on earth, shall never be a glorified saint in heaven. He that will not be so sullen as to be holy, for fear of displeasing the company of sinners, shall never be so happy as to enjoy the society of God and his holy angels; for without holiness no man shall see the Lord, Heb. xii. 14. Holiness is that perspective, through which we must see God. It is as possible to see the sun without eyes, as to see God and be saved without holiness. No sanctification in this life, no salvation in the world to come; no holiness here, no happiness hereafter. By living ill, thou art seen of God, but dost not see him; by a holy conversation, thou both seest him, and art seen of him. Our holiness begins our blessedness, and our grace is the handseil of our glory. The kingdom of God is an undefiled kingdom, 1 Pet. i. 4, because none that are defiled shall enter into that heavenly mansion.

This is that spiritual circumcision of the heart, whereof the carnal circumcision was but a symbol. The differences are many. First, the circumcision of the flesh was wrought by the hand of man; this, by the finger of God; therefore St. Paul calls it a "circumcision made without hands," Col. ii. 11. Secondly, the carnal circumcision was only concerning one part of the body; the spiritual extends to both body and soul, to every part of the one, to every faculty of the other. Thirdly, that was only done on the eighth day, but we must be spiritually circumcised every day. This is the suburbs, through which we come to heaven the city. Holiness is that royal road to all honour; and they that decline this way, shall be written in the infamous dust. Enoch walked with God, and was translated; but shall a man walk with Satan, and speed so? Fain we would be saints, but we are loth to be holy: as if a man should desire to be a courtier, yet refuse to leave his rustic behaviour, or to put off his sordid garments. Oh for a religion that can make a man a saint, though he were never holy! This is that popish bait, which catcheth so many thousand gudgeons, under the pretence of a holy faith, the toleration of an unholy and licentious life. It is their objection, If we be not in the right, it is a wonder that so many flock unto us: few of our religion turn to you, but abundance of yours come over to us. But we answer, that for the corrupt nature of man to adhere unto a doctrine that promiseth carnal liberty, is no more wonder, than for stones to fall downward. Philosophers of divers sects turned to the Epicures, but never did Epicure accept of any other sect of philosophy: an easy proffer will win us from a laborious life to a pleasant; but who will change a pleasant for a laborious? Callista boasted against Socrates. All thy philosophy cannot alienate one of my lovers from me; but my beauty can fetch many of thy scholars from thee. But he answered her, This is no wonder; for thou temptest men to the pleasing way of perdition, but I persuade them to the troublesome way of virtue. We are all naturally disposed to be evil, to be holy and good is the difficulty. We are born sinners; there is much ado to make us saints. Yet holy we must be, or we can never be happy. This is the only way to ascend that mountain where the Lord dwelleth; even that holy hill, which none can come unto, but he that hath clean hands: which none can have, but by that one and strong way of making them clean, which is by washing them in the immaculate blood of Jesus Christ.

2. All holy; our conversation must be holy throughout; separating ourselves from every known sin, and sanctifying our hands to every good work.

Indeed many intercurrent infirmities will mingle themselves with our best actions; but still our desires must be hearty, our endeavours holy, and the constant purpose of our souls resolved in nothing to offend. Holy in all the parts of holiness, in all the kinds of holiness, in all the degrees, in all the means of holiness.

(1.) In all the kinds of holiness. There is a holiness imputed; which is properly inherent in Christ, but made ours through faith by imputation. And if this holiness be imputed to us, we are reputed as holy in the sight of God, as if it were inherent in us. There is a holiness imparted to us; either habitual, or actual. The former is a divine, spiritual quality, wrought in us by the Holy Spirit, who furnisheth us with all graces required in the saints. The actual holiness is that power of grace whereby we sanctify ourselves, both in the affections of our heart, and operations of our life, 1 John iii. 3; 2 Cor. vii. 1; Jam. iv. 8. There be some that care only to carry a fair show of holiness; flattering themselves that their garments are of the holy fashion, their going is of the holy pace, their language is of the holy style, their ruffs are of the holy set, their hair is of the holy cut: but their heart is all this while of an unholy metal; the invisible stuff is mere rottenness and dissimulation. Others think it enough to have a good heart to God-ward, as they say, how lewd soever their life appear to the world; and that if all be well within, they need care for no more. Some content themselves with fine linings, how coarse soever their outsides be; others will make shift for glorious outsides, though they have sluttish linings. Neither of them both is holy: to the former we may say, if the life be spotted with a sinful leprosy, we cannot think that the heart is holy. To the other, that pretend sanctity at the root of the tree, when no fruit but wickedness is seen on the branches, I remember what Paulinus answered to Severus, when he wrote unto him to send him his picture: modestly dispraising his own feature, he said, I must blush to picture myself as I am, and I scorn to picture myself as I am not. Of the two, it is better humbly to confess the unholiness we have, than arrogantly to boast the holiness we have not. But to be all holy, is to be holy within and without: like the king's daughter, who as she was all glorious within, so her clothing also was of wrought gold, Psal. xlv. 13; her outside was comely, her inside lovely. Or like the ark of God, which was overlaid with pure gold, both within and without, Exod. xxxvii. 2. A good conscience is the gold within, and a good conversation is the gold without. The holy soul provides for things honest, not only before God, but also before men, 2 Cor. viii. 21.

(2.) In all the parts of holiness. There is a privative holiness, in the reforming that which is evil; and a positive holiness, in performing that which is good. This consists in putting off the old man, corrupt with deceivable lusts; and putting on the new man, created after God in righteousness and true holiness, Eph. iv. 22, 24. It is but a piece of holiness, to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts; the better half is to live godly, righteously, and soberly in this present world, Tit. ii. 12. We must be "holy in all manner of conversation," 1 Pet. i. 15. No exception may be admitted against the general rule of holiness: This work I will do; in that I will be excused. Sanctification is like leaven, spreading the powerful virtue of itself throughout the whole lump. He that hath a tight shoe and a tender foot, is sensible of the least stone or rubbish got in; nor can he be at ease till he hath taken it out. The holy soul is troubled with the smallest error he com-

mits; and is so far from favouring any sin, that he will not pardon himself for stumbling against his will. It was the saying of one, and it is the conceit of many, Lord, be merciful to me in this infirmity, and in other things I will be holy. But holiness grants no such dispensation; he that makes not some conscience of all sin, makes no true conscience of any sin; he that is not in some measure sanctified in every part, is truly sanctified in no part. In secular armies there be soldiers discharged; but in our holy war against sin, neither young, nor old, nor weak, nor sick are privileged. There be some trespasses of so small a value, in their opinion, that they presume, neither will their faithfulness be exacted, nor shall their unfaithfulness be noted. But will you not be faithful in the least? who then shall trust you in the greatest? If holiness must be in all our conversation, what sin can hope for toleration?

(3.) In all the degrees of holiness. We must not content ourselves with, Thus far will I go in holiness, and no farther; but we are charged to perfect holiness in the fear of God, 2 Cor. vii. 1. How far soever we have proceeded, there is a greater measure and degree of holiness to be attained. He that is righteous, let him be more righteous; and he that is holy, let him be more holy, Rev. xxii. 11. It is a happy comfort to a man's life, when he shall find in himself the sweet experience of going on and growing on to more holiness; still increasing with the increase of God. This is a sound proof to his conscience, that he is truly sanctified, because he desires and endeavours to be more sanctified. St. Bernard reports the saying of a monk; I would be no worse, and I care not for being better. But we not sooner cease to be better than we begin to be worse; nay, were never truly good, if we desire not to be better. The waters continually run forward, the winds do not look back to their native home, the sun is never weary of his course; and shall the Christian be weary of well-doing? Shall our holiness be at a stand? No, but let our daily progress be from strength to strength, till every one appear before the Lord in Zion, Psal. lxxxiv. 7.

(4.) In all the means of holiness; of which there are especially two, the word and prayer: for we may say of men, as the apostle doth of the creatures for meat, that they are "sanctified by the word and prayer," 1 Tim. iv. 5. 1. The word is that outward means which God hath sanctified, to sanctify us. "Father, sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth," John xvii. 17. And, "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken to you," John xv. 3. Therefore is it called pure, not only because it is pure in itself, and contrary to all corruption; but also as having the power to make us pure and holy. It is no more wonder to see a man profane that neglects the word preached, than to see his hands foul that did never wash them. 2. The word is God's means to work holiness in us; and prayer is our means to obtain holiness from God. The Holy Spirit himself is given to prayer, Luke xi. 13; and what grace comes not with him? When the disciples were at their prayers, the Holy Ghost did especially come upon them, Acts ii. 1; iv. 31. As prayer is the hook to draw down holiness from above, so the time of supplication is the time of sanctification. Though God do grant us more than we beg, in his bounty, he will not deny our holy suits, in his mercy. If we would be holy, let us be devout; they that pray well, cannot live ill; the desire of sanctification shall be granted.

Thus happy is it to be holy: nothing can make that man poor; he graceeth all conditions, and honours all places. Though he be humbled with the lowest,

and with the vile have a vile estimation, yet he is truly noble; the estate cannot dignify him, he shall dignify the estate. When a worthy person was set, by the ignorance of him that ordered the feast, at the lower end of the table; and another demanded why he was placed there; it was answered, *Honestare locum*, i. e. To bring that place into credit and reputation: so it pleased the master of the feast to honour that end of the table. Wheresoever the holy man is, he hath honourable company; the holy church to pray for him, holy creatures about him, holy comforts within him, holy angels to attend on him; and above all, the Holy of holies, even that holy, holy, holy, the Lord God of sabaoth, everlastingly to bless him.

The perfection of this sincerity shuts up all: "What manner of persons ought ye to be?" The form of speech is interrogatory. There is a question of trial: "Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?" saith Christ to Philip; and it is added, "This he said to prove him, for he himself knew what he would do," John vi. 5, 6. There is a question of denial, "Is the Lord's arm shortened?" Isa. i. 2. No, it is not. "Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he?" 1 Cor. x. 22. No, we are not. And there is a question of asseveration: "Have I not chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" John vi. 70. "Are there not twelve hours in the day?" John xi. 9. Yes, there are. Of this nature is our question here, "What manner of persons ought ye to be?" He means, very holy, very devout, very zealous. The word in the original signifies rather *quantos* than *quales*; implying not so much the manner as the measure of this required godliness: How great should we be?

There is great ambition in the world to be great, but not to be great in goodness. Who shall have the greatest honour, millions contend; not who shall have the greatest virtue or sanctimony. Men press in throngs to the doors of secular glory, and strive who shall be the foremost; but for the way of piety, we are very mannerly, and will give any man leave to go before us. We would have no man richer than ourselves, no man nobler than ourselves, no man happier than ourselves; but any man may be holier than ourselves, without our envy. The sensual man wisheth his life, as the naturian chose his wife; he would have her well born, fair, rich, kind, with divers other fortunate qualities; but he quite forgot to have her good and virtuous: so among all the desired privileges of life, men commonly leave out holiness. But if a little godliness will not serve the turn, what shall become of them that have none? "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the sinner appear?" 1 Pet. iv. 18. Our religion shall not only be examined by the test, whether it be pure or no, but also by the balance, whether it will hold weight or no; if it be either too light, or too slight, refuse silver shall men call it, not able to endure this trial of the universal fire.

What manner of persons we should be in our conversation, we have seen plainly expressed; godly, holy, and all this in all things, whether thoughts, words, or deeds. Let me add three cautions to the manner; how godly, how holy soever we are, let us, together with these, be penitent, patient, vigilant.

1. Repentance must not be left out; for as we have brought upon ourselves a necessity of sinning, so we must not exclude the necessity of repenting. Every day we gather some spots, therefore must every day wash them off with our tears. This house of our soul is but mortal, made of brittle earth, subject to innumerable breaches, to let out the inhabitant; death will creep in at a little hole; yea, the very

soul hath her breaches too; every small sin is a flaw, every greater sin a fracture in this goodly building. Repentance is the only material wherewith we stop all the leaks of our vessel, wherewith we mend all the rents of our garment, and repair all the ruins of our edifice. It is one of the good man's titles, "The repairer of the breach," Isa. lviii. 12. The godliest life cannot escape errors; the eye will wander, the tongue will trip, the foot will tread awry, our thoughts will ramble; therefore the heart must be always ready to mend all with repentance.

2. Patience hath her work too; for the most godly conversation will be exercised with troubles. Either the good we would have shall be deferred, or the evil we would not have shall be imposed; we shall mar all, if we lose our patience. The same measure of trouble being laid upon two men, is far lighter to him that bears it with patience. Of how pure wood soever an instrument is made, yet if it warp with the sun, or crack with the weather, we dislike it. Let us not lose our credit of the holiness, by the least murmur of impatience.

3. Vigilancy guards all; our sanctity, our piety, our charity, all will be stolen from us, if they be not kept by watchfulness. If all be asleep in the house, the thief fileth at his pleasure; but when the master meets him at the door, he feigns another errand, as if he came upon some business, and speaks to him with all reverence. If the tempter find thy soul waking, he goes away sneaking; he is disappointed, and thou art preserved. Thy end may come upon thee, as the last day upon the world, like a thief in the night; if it find thee sleeping, it will never give thee leave to waken; as Jael served Sisera, when he slept his last. One finding a soldier asleep, killed him; and being charged with the fact, he made answer, that he only left him as he found him. Should God Almighty deal so with us, to take away our souls when he finds them in a spiritual slumber, how desperately dangerous were our condition! They that lie in camps, during that service never sleep; we are in a continual warfare, besieged with enemies that will give neither truce nor quarter; if we fall into a spiritual drowsiness, and be taken napping, their rage will be cruel, their insultation unmerciful.

But alas, what will become of the swearer at this day? can his loudest oaths drown the archangel's trumpet? What will become of the drunkard? can his floods of wine quench this universal fire? Where shall the worldling appear? his bags of gold will be melted, his stately manors turned to cinders, and all his lands shall lie fallow for ever. What will the adulterer and his harlot do? the mistress of his affections shall then prove the mistress of his afflictions. There is no appearing in this court by proxy, no commuting the pence; they must answer the matter themselves. Two things will affright voluptuous sinners at the last day; the sight of the creatures which they have abused, and the presence of the poor whom they have not refreshed. Such manner of persons shall perish with the world, from the world, worse than the world. But blessed are they that have kept faith in their hearts, holiness in their lives, and sincerity in their consciences, for they shall escape both the last fire of judgment and the everlasting fire of torment.

VERSE 12.

Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat.

It pleased God to make use of two instruments for the calling together of the assemblies of the saints, bells and trumpets. In the foundation of his militant church, his first institution was trumpets: by his appointment the congregation was called into the tabernacle by trumpets; and when they were in, he gave them also the sound of bells, from the garment of his priest. In the Christian church, we have the use of bells, but not of trumpets: yet if we distinguish this church, as it hath a militant, and as it hath a triumphant part, we have both bells and trumpets employed, but with an inverted order. A bell calls us to the temple, and a bell calls us to the tribunal; for as the sermon-bell calls us to the church material, so our passing-bell calls us to the church celestial. The bell tolls, and we come into the militant assembly: the bell tolls again when we die, and then we go out unto that triumphant company. And when we shall receive our further consummation, the reuniting of bodies and souls at the resurrection, it shall be done by the sound of trumpets. In a spiritual sense, we have both these, bells and trumpets, inviting us to the way of goodness. Every sermon we hear, is as one of Aaron's bells, that rings us to repentance and a holy life; but every sermon upon such an argument as this, the presentation of the day of judgment to our souls, whereof the day of judgment will call for a presentation, this is a loud trumpet, thundering in our ears the necessity of that preparation, which may save us from eternal destruction. Hear therefore these lower trumpets to your profit, that you may then hear that last trumpet to your comfort.

"Looking for and hasting unto," &c. Wherein we have two general parts: the object requiring some exercise. The coming of the Lord's day; and the exercise concerning that object, Looking for it, hasting to it. The object hath two appendances; the firing of the heavens, and the melting of the elements. The exercise consists in two actions, expectation and expedition; the one of hope, the other of desire: the former is patient, looking for; the other is properant, hasting to. Both these affections of the soul are resembled to two actions of the body: looking for, that is work for the eye; hasting to, that is the business of the foot: the one is an organ of vision, the other of motion: hope must keep the eye open to look; and desire teach the foot to mend his pace, and to hasten. The object hath the last place in the text, but it shall have the first in my discourse: the journey being known, we set forwards.

"The coming of the day of the Lord." God is no judge dormant, nor demurrant, nor rampant. Not dormant, none of those judges that fall asleep on the bench; that, like those idol-gods, hath ears, and hears not. Not like him that would not right the poor widow, till her importunity had wakened him, Luke xviii. 4, 5. Not demurrant, like Felix, that put off Paul to a longer day; I will hear thee another time, Acts xxiv. 25. Nor rampant, like those in the prophet, that slay off the skins of the poor, and grind their faces. He is uncorrupt, no bribe can tempt him: not dilatory, no business doth detain him; inflexible, no power can sway him. This Supreme Judge hath set the day of his assize, and all men must appear before him. All eyes shall see him, but with a different aspect; which is strange,

that the same object should be so acceptable to some, to others so terrible. "They shall see the Son of man coming in a cloud," Luke xxi. 27; but with no comfort. Not that the excellency and splendour of his glory shall be hidden, but there is an indisposition in their sight to receive it. They shall know him to be the Son of God, by the clarity of his person, the majesty of his word, the readiness of the angels to serve him, and by divers other perspicuous and evident demonstrations. But as a weak eye is offended with a shining light, so this glory shall amaze, not cheer them. The good man's honour is the envious man's torment. If Joseph's sheaf stand, the brethren repine, Gen. xxxvii. 7, 8. If the fat calf be killed, the elder brother is angry. Saul finds not so much pleasure in his kingdom, as vexation in the prosperity of David. The glory of Christ shall add to the reprobates' confusion, when they are driven to confess, This is he whom we had in derision. They will rather choose to endure the horrors of hell, than to stand in so glorious a presence. Christ says of the wicked, that they shall see him no more, John xvi. 10. If we understand this of the Godhead, they never saw it at all. If of the manhood, they shall see it again: They shall see him whom they have pierced. Indeed they shall see him no more as a Redeemer, that time is past; but as a Judge they shall, to their endless discomfort.

But these are scarabees and beetles, and this day of the Lord is to them a rose; so sweet that it kills them. The breath of a man hath this property, that at the same instant it can warm that which is near it, and cool another thing somewhat removed. It is no otherwise with the breath of God. Doth any man fear him? Then is he near him; for his salvation is nigh to all them that fear him, Psal. lxxxv. 9: and this breath of the Lord, the promise of his second coming, lights warm upon him, and is a cordial reviving his heart. But if a man be far off from God, through the vast gulf and separation of his sins, then comes this breath very cold and bleak to his heart; and the mere mention of the day of judgment sends a shivering through all his bones. It was the Son of man, whom the high priest was promised to see one day in the clouds, Matt. xxvi. 64. The Father hath given him the commission of judgment, and that by this title, as he is "the Son of man," John v. 27. Which consideration makes us bold to take Paul's speech out of his mouth, Acts xxvi. 2, 3; and what he said to Agrippa, to apply better to Christ: I think myself happy, O King Jesus, because I shall answer for myself this day before thee, touching all the things whereof Satan accuseth me. Especially because thou hast knowledge of all customs; whether they be the adversary's, who is busy in assaulting; or the flesh's, who is false in betraying; or my poor soul's, which is weak in resisting. Thy own temptations have given thee experience of my frailty. I see the wounds yet bleed, which were taken for my sins: yea, and mine own nature is assistant in judgment, to assure me I shall be partaker in glory. Is my brother Joseph thus great? Then shall not his brother Benjamin be forgotten, Gen. xliii. 34. If Esther be so dear to Ahasuerus, her kinsman Mordecai shall be advanced: there is in store for him, a robe, and a ring, and a horse, and a crown, and a train to proclaim his favour, "Thus shall it be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honour," Esth. vi. 11.

"Wherein the heavens being on fire," &c. Concerning the conflagration of the heavens, liquefaction of the elements, and dissolution of the world, sufficient hath been spoken before. My meditations now are directed only to such profitable uses, which if we

devoutly practise, our soul shall escape in that day of vengeance.

1. Let there be a holy fire within us, which will be an antidote against the rage of this fire about us. The word of God is fire, a holy fire from the altar of heaven: sin is also like fire; but one heat doth advocate another; the greater fire extinguisheth the less. The word is compared to fire. First, it doth warm the heart: more extensive of beams than the sun; "nothing is hid from the heat thereof," Psal. xix. 6. The most frozen breast will thaw when God shall lay this fire unto it. Secondly, it can give light to the ignorant, if it be not misplaced. The fowler that carries the light on the top of his head, lights others plainly, himself sees not so well. Some carry this light only for the good of others, not of themselves; while they teach well, and walk ill; such men, when they go abroad, leave their lamp at home. Some keep this fire to themselves, and grudge it to others: their light is kept within doors, and shall do no good to their neighbours: they have knowledge, but they will part with none of it. Others take up this fire under the embers, as Christ calls it putting the light under a bushel; so that neither others nor themselves shall be the better for it. Thirdly, fire can search, try, examine, and purge away the dross from the metal: this operation if the word had in us, we should be presented pure gold to the treasury of Christ. Sins are rust, and rust will not be gotten out but by fire. When we find our affections so drossy, rusty, foul, we must remember that this fire hath not been made on our hearths; the word hath not been admitted into our hearts. Fourthly, fire can assimilate, make the matter it enters into like itself; as iron in the fire becomes fire. The soul that humbly entertains the word, is made pure and holy, like the word. If we see an uncharitable man, like a cold, unformed lump of metal, know that his conscience hath not yet taken fire. Fifthly, it will last long in fit matter; as a mark made in a board by fire, will last as long as the board. If the word have once thoroughly taken hold of our hearts, that gracious fire will never go out. God's word and man's ear are like the steel and the flint; they quickly strike out fire; but to no purpose, unless our heart be as tinder to receive the sparks. If we have this fire, let it not go out for want of fuel. Hearing and meditation are like oil to the lamp, and fuel to the fire: "My heart was hot within me, while I was musing the fire burned," Psal. xxxix. 3. If we maintain this holy fire in our hearts, we shall not be hurt by the burning of the heavens.

2. The heavens shall burn, and the elements shall melt, both with one fire. Our affections are our elements; under the command of the heart, as the elements are under the rule of heaven. By the creation, the elements were pure, and so were our affections; now both of them are corrupt, feculent, and drossy. Therefore let this same holy fire melt our elements, new-cast our affections. Hast thou a covetous affection, greedy of those baser things? Melt it. How? Dissolve it into charitable contributions; like molten lead, that runs into empty corners. Melt thy riches into alms, thy rapacity into mercy. Thy money was congealed in thy chests; put the fire of charity to it: were it frozen to a stone, and bound with iron bars, as with the bands of Orion, Job xxxviii. 31, this fire would thaw it; charity would set it a running into the stomachs of the poor, the fittest receptacles for all our wealthy superfluities. When an ill-gotten estate is left to a prodigal heir, we say proverbially, yet prophetically, it will melt like snow in the sun. The father, like a con-

stable, kept in the stocks; but the gallant son will let it loose, and set it a running. The penurious father did clip the wings of his riches; but the son will open the cage, and make them fly. This is a melting without thanks, without reward. But that which is molten in charity, runs into a blessed treasury; it is but put over by a bill of exchange, to be paid a hundredfold in heaven. This is a holy, a happy fire; but alas, we may say of this virtue in special, as the poet doth of virtue in general, *Virtus laudatur, et obget*; i. e. Virtue is praised, and yet grows cold. Charity is so cold, as if these many winters it had seen no fire. A man had need blow strong and long upon this pile of charity; for it is green wood, and hard to kindle. But if this fire cannot melt our hearts into beneficence, the last fire will more than terrify them with vengeance. Stones will lie long in the fire, and before they melt, they fly in pieces; and such will be the meed of all stony hearts. Hast thou a proud affection? Melt it into humility; lay thy ambitious desire of honour in the dust. Hast thou an affection of revenge? Melt it into forgiveness, without which thou shalt never be forgiven. Art thou transported with a lascivious affection, troubled with the itch of wantonness? Melt it by mortification. Do not feed this fire, lest it burn thee to cinders; but withdraw the fuel, and it will go out of itself. Is thy desire set upon wine? dost thou long after the cups of excess? Melt it, or it will melt thee. The drunkard indeed can melt his estate into drink, his body into surfeits, his time into vanity; but he cannot melt his sin into sorrow, his inordinate lust into sobriety. These elements of our corrupt nature must be molten by repentance, that when the elements of the world shall melt with fervent heat, we may be found pure and refined ore in the eyes of Jesus Christ.

"Looking for and hasting unto." The one is the work of hope, the other of desire; the former commends tolerance, the latter diligence. Looking for; this eye of expectation hath three beams; vigilancy, hope, and patience. Without watchfulness we cannot look, without hope we will not look, and without patience we should not look, for the coming of the Lord.

1. Vigilancy is required in this expectation, even a continual waking. The prophets of God were called both seers and watchmen: not only seers, endued with a power of seeing; but watchmen, evermore in the act of seeing. Sleep in the Scriptures, hath so heavy a sense sometimes, as not only to be taken for sin itself, "Awake, thou that sleepest," Eph. v. 14; but even for the punishment of sin. The most fearful and irrevocable malediction is presented to us in a perpetual sleep: "They shall sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake," Jer. li. 57. Sleep is as often taken for natural death as for natural rest. There is a privation of motion in both; in sleep an interruption, in death a cessation. Sleep is a short death, death a long sleep. Spiritual slumber is a very death. The Romists compare the state of nature but only to sleep, or to a man fallen into a deep ditch: He can hear thee call, give him a rope, and pull; he will take hold and be drawn out. This is false, for he is dead. A man may struggle out of natural sleep, or sleep away his surfeit; but it is not in our power to awake from sin: we must have a continual grace, or we cannot stand. "I stand at the door, and knock," Rev. iii. 20: I stand, not, I stood, nor, I will stand; he is ever there. Yet we must add our own endeavours, and with waking eyes be always looking for our deliverance.

There be signs before sleep, natural and spiritual. First, heaviness of the head and temples, by reason

of the rising up of fumes and vapours. Worldly desires induce such a drowsiness upon the soul; these hinder the contemplation of heavenly things: the bodies of such men are at church, while their minds are at home. Oh that they could remember to rub their temples with holy thoughts! this would keep them waking. Secondly, yawning is another sign of sleep invading the body; answerable whereunto there is a torpor or laziness of the soul. Oh that this sermon were done! When will he make an end of prating? Shall I go to my prayers? I care not if I do: yet it is no matter; let it alone till another time. Is this man awake? Doth he look for the day of the Lord? No, but the day of the Lord may take him napping.

There be symptoms of sleep. First, snoring: every one that sleeps does not snore, but every one that snores does sleep. This is a profound sleep; when the whole parish rings of a man's vicious acts, yet still he snores in the room. This man speaks of his greediness, that of his frowardness, one of his folly, another of his baseness; he hears all this, yet snores, laughs at it: *Populus me sibilat, at mihi plaudo*, says the poet; i. e. The people hiss me, but I applaud myself. Do we know none such? I would there were none such to be known. Secondly, dreaming. There be many fancies in both sleeps, of body and mind. One while he dreams that he is on a mountain, and sees the glory of kingdoms: an ambitious dream. Another while, that he hath found a great treasure hid in the earth: a covetous dream. Another time he eats and drinks plentifully; and yet, alas, wakens hungry: a voluptuous dream. All the pleasure, all the bravery, all the money of the world, is but a waking dream. Such men will not be persuaded that they are asleep: indeed it is hard for a sleeping man to know that he does sleep; yet by his dreams he may in some measure find it. The head hath often very frightful dreams in sleep: lions and bears seem to assault us, gulfs of water to drown us, fire to consume our houses, thieves and murderers to rob and kill us. The sleeping soul hath such dreams too: one thinks, If I be honest, and keep a good conscience, I must needs be poor: it is but a dream. Another, If I do not flatter I shall be despised: it is but a dream. A third thinks, If I do not bribe I shall lose my cause: it is but a dream. Another, If I put up this injury without revenge, I shall be held a coward: it is but a dream. Another thinks, If I be every day giving to the poor, I shall be poor myself: it is but a dream. A thousand of these fond dreams surprise us in our sleep: if our hearts were awake, we would detest them. We have slept enough, it is high time to rise. Carnal fancies are but bug-bears to hinder us from good works: when we awake, we will count all things loss for Jesus Christ.

But suppose that such sensual souls be possessed with the spirit of slumber, what say you to them that put on a zealous form of godliness, and overrun the common professors more than Ahimaaz did Cush, 2 Sam. xviii. 23, till they are quite out of breath. Are these men asleep? Yes, too many of them that think themselves waking. You shall have a Pharisee that walks from church to church, till he hath heard three sermons in a day: what! doth he sleep? Why not? did you never hear of men that walk in their sleep? They that think the whole duty of a Christian consists in visiting the temple, and hearing the preacher, do (in effect) but walk in their sleep. But they can tell you some notes of the sermon, repeat the doctrines and uses to their family. It may be so, but did you never hear of men that talk in their sleep? If this be all that they learn by those

doctrines, if this be all the use they make of those uses, only for matter of discourse, they do no more but talk in their sleep. But they can conceive long extempore prayers in their private houses, and cut out large pieces of devotion: and are they still asleep? The Pharisees had their long orisons, petitions made up tedious with repetitions; yet under the colour of long prayers they devoured widows' houses: I hope you will not say these men were awake. As the sensual man falls asleep at his prayers, so the hypocrite doth but pray in his sleep. It is a bastard devotion that is not begotten in the heart; without the heart, all the labour of the lips and lungs is but a stinking sacrifice. Christ's spouse acknowledgeth, "I sleep, but my heart waketh," Cant v. 2: the dissembling professor inverts the words, I wake, but my heart sleeth. Add to all this, that such a man is industrious in his calling, he follows his business close, and thrives in this world: is he yet asleep? He may be for all that. Are there none that pull up the clothes about them, and wrap themselves warm in the coverings, even while they are fast asleep? Even the sleeping man may be sensible of cold, and catch at something to hili him: the scraping together of worldly wealth is no more argument of a man's being awake, than coldness and breathlessness is that he is alive, or the absence of the sun proveth it to be day. Far is it from my intent to censure those holy actions in any man. Hear that you may learn to pray, and pray that you may hear to learn: spend the sabbath in those holy exercises; and woe unto you if you do not! But let me tell you, that if you have a false and unfruitful heart, a dishonest and unconscionable life, for all this hurry and precipitation of outward zeal, you are still fast asleep.

Security and expectation are opposites: the servant that looks for his master's coming, is afraid to fall asleep. There be four ways to waken men from their slumbers. First, some loud and sudden noise, as the beating up of drums, or the sound of trumpets; especially the claps of thunder. We hear the rumours of wars on every side: the bulls of Rome, worse than those bulls of Bashan, bellow and roar against us: how many horns of that seven-headed beast threaten to gore us! If they once get the power, we too well know their malice. Can none of these noises waken us? If we could be safe at home, yet shall we not pity our distressed brethren beyond the seas, because we are not within the hearing of their groans? Shall we not rather say with Uriah, Is the ark of the Lord, and Israel, and Judah in danger, and can we sleep in security? 2 Sam. xi. 11. The tolling of a bell will waken a man at midnight; especially if it go for a friend. We have heard the fatal knell of that ever to be lamented Palatinate, the dying groan of long afflicted Rochelle, with the expiring gasps of innumerable Christians in other places; and are we still asleep? We have heard the honour of those unhappy conquests, given away from God to idols and images; and are we still asleep? Secondly, if noise will not waken us, methinks pain should. We have felt the loss of estate, the loss of honour, the loss of our blood, like so many mortal wounds in our sides; and can we still sleep? Ill success abroad, worse distractions at home, the fear of our enemies, the fear of our friends, hath touched us; and cannot all this awake us to fear our God? Thirdly, there is yet another way of rousing the sleeper; pull off the clothes, lay him naked, expose him to the cold, and try what that will do. Disgrace strips us of honour, trouble strips us of peace, bondage strips us of liberty, sickness strips us of health, poverty strips us of wealth, persecution strips us of friends, death strips

us of all. Will not some of these, will not all of these waken us? Fourthly, well yet there is one thing that will not fail to effect it; even that summons which shall be given at the coming of this day of the Lord: the last trump shall raise us. O then let us look up in time, and look for that day when time shall be no more. It is comfort for a man, when he wakes, to see the light. "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light," Eph. v. 14.

2. Hope must not be excluded from this expectation. Evil is the object of fear, and that we suspect: the object of hope is good, and this we expect. None but the gracious can be said to look for this day. They "love his appearing," 2 Tim. iv. 8. They pray for it; "Thy kingdom come." They cry for it; "Come, Lord Jesus." All this argues their hope; yea, they "have boldness in the day of judgment," 1 John iv. 17. We confess with St. Augustine, That he who is to be judged rejoices in that he has feared him who is to judge. What chaste and loving spouse will not earnestly look for the coming of her bridegroom? What princely heir does not long for the day of his coronation? In heaven is the perfection of all good things: fulness is the perfection of measure; everlastingness is the perfection of time; infiniteness is the perfection of number; immutability is the perfection of state; immensity is the perfection of place; immortality is the perfection of life; God is the perfection of all. We have nothing but what is imperfect below, why then do we not long for that universal perfection above? If we hope for it, we cannot but look for it; and if we look for it, there is some comfort to our conscience that we hope for it. But many are mistaken in their hope. "The righteous hath hope in his death," Prov. xiv. 32. Divers have hope for the death of others, that they may get by them: some reversion or legacy runs in their minds; whereof they are not seldom frustrated. But the good man hath hope in his own death; that death itself, like some more gentle jailer, shall but unlock the door of his prison, and set him at everlasting liberty. Simple people cannot discern hope from desire; they think that they hope to be saved, whereas indeed they only desire it, and do not truly hope for it. We may desire many things which we cannot hope for; as to raise the dead; but there is nothing that we hope for, which we may not desire. As divers have *fides*, i. e. faith, that have not *fiduciam*, i. e. constancy; so there may be *desiderium*, i. e. a desire of blessedness, where there is not *spes*, i. e. a well-grounded hope to be blessed.

But the soul that knows herself redeemed by Christ, is never thoroughly contented, till either she returns to Christ, or Christ returns to her. The waters do not more naturally run back to the sea, nor heavy substances incline to their centre, than the pious soul desires to ascend to her Maker. The converted unthrift can never rest, till he returns to his Father. A bladder blown full of wind, and held under the water, will still be rising upwards, because that is not the place of the air. My soul cleaveth to the pavement, as some read that of the psalm. Throw dirt on the pavement, and it sticks there; but cast down a ball, and it rebounds, it comes back again to the thrower. The body is but earth, and when that is thrown to the earth, there it remains; but the righteous soul, when it is cast down by humiliation, or dejected by the afflicting hand of God, it still rebounds to him: the spirit returns to him that gave it, Eccl. xii. 7. Hope then should make us look up, and desire inflame us to look for the coming of Jesus Christ.

3. Patience must not be left out; as we look for

the bridegroom's presence, so the bridegroom looks for our patience. We are unworthy of his honour, if we cannot endure to tarry his leisure. The nobleness of a Christian is seen in his patience. Magnanimity is patient; like the flint which hath fire in it, but it appears not till it be stricken. How contrary is the opinion of the world, to the judgment of God, concerning valour! They think it consists in a brave revenge; God stateth it in a humble patience. What greater courage can there be, than to suffer? What victory so great, as to conquer a man's self? Our expectation may be charged with too much violence, if it be not qualified, and corrected by patience. Patience is the best chemist, for out of coarse earth she can draw pure gold, out of trouble peace, out of sorrow joy, out of persecution profit, out of affliction comfort. She teacheth the bondman, in a narrow prison to enjoy all liberty. He hath within those strict limits, his galleries, his walks, his orchards; though he be alone, he never wants company; though his diet be penury, his sauce is content: all his miseries cannot make him sick, because they are digested by patience. It makes the poor beggar rich: though he goes for his drink to the well, for his bread to another's cupboard, for his garments to the refuse of a cast wardrobe; yet he looks with as cheerful a countenance, as he that "was clothed in purple, and fared sumptuously every day," Luke xvi. 19: or he that said to his soul, "Eat, drink, and be merry," Luke xii. 19: for this man had but a purpose to be merry, but the patient man is merry indeed. A superior's unjust frowns are all one to him with his flattering smiles; and causeless aspersions do but rub his glory the brighter. The jailers that watch him, are but his pages of honour, and his very dungeon but the lower side of the vault of heaven. He kisseth the wheel that must kill him; and thinks the stairs of the scaffold of his martyrdom but so many degrees of his ascent to glory. The tormentors are weary of him, the beholders have pity on him, all men wonder at him; and while he seems below all men, below himself, he is above nature. He hath so overcome himself, that nothing can conquer him. As it was said of Demosthenes, that other lawyers got not so much by their speaking, as he did by holding his peace; so suffering sinners find not so much ease in their complaints and murmurs, as the patient man doth by his humble silence. If with such eyes we look for our Lord's coming, we shall "through faith and patience, inherit the promises," Heb. vi. 12. Jacob thought not his service tedious, because his beloved Rachel was in his eye: the sight of glory future, mitigates the sense of misery present. The best example teacheth us, to "run with patience the race that is set before us," Heb. xii. 1. As we look for Jesus, so let us look unto Jesus, who for the proposed joy, endured the cross, and despised the shame; and then we shall dwell with him, that sits at the right hand of the throne of God, ver. 2.

But doth our apostle write this only for the comfort of the righteous? would he not also (through the use of this expectation) win sinners to repentance? What can sooner break off a servant's disobedience, than every day looking for his master's presence? Fear and hope are opposites; but in this day, men's hearts shall fail them for fear, when the powers of heaven shall be shaken, Luke xxi. 26. Show me the man that says he doth not fear that terrible day of the Lord. When the master of the house perisheth, all the family is troubled: the servants look sad, and all things are out of order. No marvel, if there be such a combustion in the elements, such a commotion in the heavens; no marvel,

if the stars fall, and the seas roar; when man, the lord of all these, is brought to his judgment. Though fear and hope have their opposition, yet it is not in diametrical terms, but in terms remiss. There is no hope on earth, without some fear; no fear in a righteous heart, that is quite destitute of hope. There may be a fear without faith; but who will say, that he hath a faith without all fear? Both may consist in the same subject: the holy heart believeth his salvation with confident trusting; and yet that holy heart worketh out his salvation with fear and trembling, Phil. ii. 12. The ground of our faith, is God's infallible promise: the cause of our fear, is our own sinful weakness. "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?" Matt. viii. 26. They had some faith, but the best part of it was lost in their fear: the more faith, the less fear; and consequently, the more fear, the less faith. Yet not only may fear and hope consist together, but even fear and joy: the women "departed from the sepulchre with fear and joy," Matt. xxviii. 8. The women who were made supernumerary apostles, apostles to the apostles, the mothers of the fathers of the church, angels of the resurrection; they did run, and they ran upon two legs, fear and joy. Those joy in the Lord that fear him; and they only fear him that feel joy in him. The fear of God and the love of God are inseparable: innumerable are the places wherein we are called upon to fear the Lord; and yet the greatest commandment, which is the root of all, is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God." He doth neither, that doth not both: he omits neither, that does one. Well therefore may we fear the last day, when we consider our own desert; yet hope and long for it, when we remember the covenant in Jesus Christ.

Let unbelievers and impenitent sinners tremble; let such fear to die as have no hope to live; let them wish for the shelter of rocks, that have not built upon the Rock of salvation: as the devils believe and tremble, expecting the full measure of their torment. But if we have made our peace through the blood of Him that reconciled God and man, and led a life worthy of that noble privilege; let us look for that day with joy, which shall begin our glory. Blasphemers do not look for this Judge, for then they would not offer to swear him out of his throne. Worldlings do not look for this breaking of all asunder, for then they would not be busy in scraping all together. Dissolute sinners do not look for this day, but this day shall come upon them unlooked for. "The Lord of that evil servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of," Matt. xxiv. 50. He that looks for his master's return, after a long absence, will be sure to have the house in a readiness, cleansed and furnished for his entertainment. They whose consciences lie sluttish, and full of sordid lusts, surely do not look for the coming of their Lord: but he is not bound to their times; when they cry, Peace, peace, then comes that fatal trouble unlooked for. Only the faithful look for Christ: as before his first coming he was the Expectation of nations; so until his second coming he is the Expectation of all good Christians. And this long looked-for comes at last, Heb. x. 37; to deliver our eyes from tears, our soul from death, and our feet from falling, that we may "walk before God in the light of the living," Psal. lvi. 13.

"Hasting unto." It is not enough to hope that this day will come toward us, but we must approach towards it. We may pray earnestly, Come, Lord, come quickly; yet he will come never the sooner. For he hath appointed the day wherein he will judge the world, Acts xvii. 31: he will come in his own determined time, not when we would have him. We

cannot hasten the day, but we may hasten to it. There be certain degrees of preparation, preceding this preparation. Hasting is in effect the same that St. Paul calls running; "Let us run the race," Heb. xii. 1. A man that is down on the ground, must arise, and stand, and be able to go, before he can run. First, a sinner is laid, and must arise. Up, Elijah, thou hast a great journey to go: first he must up, and then go. Repentance is the only angel that raiseth a sinner; and we may to as much purpose call a dead man out of his grave, as an ungracious soul from sin without repentance. Secondly, when he is risen, let him try if he can stand. If a sinner thinks to stand alone, he falls faster than he rose. He that stands upon his own feet, shall soon feel them double under him. It is because, like children, we will presume to go of ourselves, that we get so many knocks. The same hand that lifted us up, must hold us up: if either God let go us, or we let go him, down we fall. But being strengthened by his might, let us stand, Eph. vi. 13. Standing up is a sign that a man purposes to be going. It is an erection of body, an elevation of it towards heaven; not creeping upon the earth, but bearing upwards: it is a disposition of motion; he that standeth, hath put himself into a posture of going. Thirdly, that is the next degree: let him try how he can go. He that hath lain long bedridden, and at the first sets out running, will soon be out of breath. When we are helped up, and enabled to stand, yet without the same support we cannot go. Uphold thou my goings, O Lord, that my footsteps slide not, Psal. xvii. 5. As an infant learns to go by the hand of the mother, so we by the holding hand of God. But being thus uphelden, let us be going. It is a shame for them to stand still, that have so long a journey and so strong a convoy. Fourthly, when we have learned to go well, let us try to run: the same power will strengthen us in any pace, so long as we keep the way of goodness. Our journey requires haste, let us make as few lets as may be. In many things, the more haste the worse speed; but he can never speed amiss, that runs the way of God's commandments, Psal. cix. 32. Not seldom we shall stumble; but a trip in the way sets a man somewhat the more forward, if he does not fall. When we do fall, let us remember, that either we have gone out of the way, or neglected our Upholder. It is our prayer, "O God, make speed to save us; O Lord, make haste to help us;" and it is God's charge to us, O man, make speed to be helped, make haste to be saved.

Haste makes waste, is a true proverb in the precipitant carriage of businesses. Fair and soft goes far: Not too fast for falling: Stay a little, and we shall have done the sooner: these be the sayings of moderation, to correct the rashness of undertakings. But in spiritual proceedings, delay is more dangerous than celerity. If salvation be, we cannot work it out too fast. I speak not for a flashy zeal, that runs upon a line like a firework, and ends with a crack; but for a holy and hearty desire to do God all possible service, and to make the best improvement of our time to his honour. This apostolical charge condemneth two defects in sinful men; the neglect of resolution, and the delay of inception to be good: it riseth in full strength against those, that neither begin to resolve, nor resolve to begin, the amendment of their lives.

1. The neglect of resolution to enter into the way of righteousness, is the forlorn estate of a sinner. What hope can there be of him, that hath not so much as a purpose to be holy? Sloth hath been reproved in the very market, Matt. xx. 6; how much

worse is it in the vineyard! Time is the measure of business, as money is of wares; and what thrifty husband will lose his market? Yet business in the world is no better than idleness in the sight of the Lord. As David saith, that he kept silence, though he roared all the day long, Psal. xxxii. 3; or as Jerusalem is said to be a solitary city, though she was then full of people, Lam. i. 1. As the wisdom of the world is foolishness before God, so all carnal negotiation is but a more serious kind of play. Children think themselves very busy, when they are riding upon reeds, or making of puppets; men do not think so. What time soever is spent out of the service of God, or our own calling, is but lost in vanity. Idleness itself is damnable; nor is it sufficient excuse to say, We do no ill; for it is ill to do nothing. Thou hast a servant, which neither is thief, nor drunkard, nor swearer, nor taxed with any vice; but because he sits all the day with his hand in his bosom, thou correctest him. Why? what harm hath he done? Thou canst charge him with nothing, but the not doing of something; yet he deserves chastisement. (Chrysost. Hom. 16. in Eph.) St. Augustine confesseth, that in his unconverted estate he returned to God's call slow and sleepy words; Anon, Lord, anon. But the law is not written for those who sleep, say the lawyers; nor is heaven open to the lazy. St. Augustine calls idleness the burial of a living man.

When thy heavenly Master calls thee, O evil servant, why dost thou loiter? Zaccheus "made haste and came down," Luke xix. 6: the shepherds came with haste, to find the child Jesus, Luke ii. 16. To-day let us hear his voice: To-day, that is God's note; To-morrow, is the voice of the tempter. Licentious sinners keep to-day for themselves, and promise God the morrow; they will be their own now, and the Lord's another time. This is truly the "deceitfulness of sin," Heb. iii. 13; the persuasion of that pestilent spirit who says, Give to me the present, the future to God; give me the flower of thy age, and thy old age to God. St. Nazianzen. But God's to-day allows no morrow; and man's day is not sure of a morrow. Out of a whole piece of cloth we may cut any kind of garment: but when a garment is made of one fashion, it will be hard to translate it into another; either we shall spoil the stuff or deform the garb. When we have been long fashioned to this ill-favoured world, to reform us to goodness, or to conform us to Christ, is an alteration that requires much difficulty. When we lend money, we call for security, and colour the suspicion of our want of trust with mortality: Men are mortal, we have no lease of our life. But for the matter of conversion, and in the business of our salvation, we promise ourselves Nestor's years; and so live, as if we never looked to die. Some have been called into the vineyard at the eleventh hour; but if God call thee at the third, fail not to come even then, for thou art not sure to live unto the fourth. A snowball grows bigger by rolling, and sin multiplies by time. A ship of never so great burden, may be overladen till it sink again. He that shall ascend into the hill of the Lord, "hath not lift up his soul unto vanity;" Psal. xxiv. 4: the vulgar reads it, *qui non accipit in vanum animam suam*; i. e. that hath not taken his soul in vain. Surely, he that hath a soul, and doth not use it well, nor seek to save it, hath taken it in vain: as he that buys a garment, and never wears it; or that farms good land, and never tills it. We desire to have all good that belongs unto us: Abraham would have a good son, David a good servant, Jacob a good wife; we would have our beds good, our garments good; not so much as our very beasts, but we would have them good too: and do we not wish to have

good souls? If but our shoes be foul, we will have them made clean; and have we no care to cleanse our souls? Be not so unkind to thyself, as to esteem thy shoe above thy soul. What earthly business hath the worldling, which he doth not most diligently prosecute? If he be in law, how duly doth he frequent the chamber of his advocate! If sick, what running is there for the physician! If he have a hundred things to do, not one of them shall be neglected. His land shall be husbanded, his house lighted, his garments brushed; the very hairs of his head pass not untrimmed; he thinks of every thing in due place and order: but for his soul, when it comes in his mind, he lays that by till another time; for the mending of that, for the cleansing of that, it is the least and last thing he thinks on. No wonder, if that man never come to the end, that hath not so much as attempted to begin. Here is no haste.

2. Delay is dangerous, even when we have resolved. If ever we mean to be good, why not now? There is but one month in the year called May: if some flowers do not spring up then, we look for none afterwards. Purpose and performance are like Jacob and Esau: our good purpose, as Esau, is the first-born; but our good performance, as Jacob, carries away the blessing. The holy soul, like that virtuous woman, doth not only meddle with the distaff, but she layeth her hands to the spindle, Prov. xxxi. 19. Purpose is but the distaff, actual obedience is the spindle. The raw flax is upon the distaff, the spun yarn or thread upon the spindle. Ask the harlot, the swearer, or the oppressor, if they ever intend to change their lives. Yes, one day: O, they will do good works apace, when they once fall to it. These put their fingers to the distaff, not to the spindle: they have some raw thoughts of repentance upon the rock, but they do not spin it into thread, nor work it into actual obedience. They trust to the good works they mean to do; but who knows when? Mariners in a storm, if they see but one fire upon their sails, look for an unlucky voyage; but if two fires appear to them, they take it for a good omen, and promise themselves safety. The purpose of amendment is but one fire, and many have had that, who are sunk into the bottomless gulf of hell: but if the other fire be present, a real conversion to righteousness, prosperous success will not fail to follow, and the end of our voyage shall be salvation. What servant that looks for his master every hour, will have the house to sweep, the fire to kindle, the bed to make, when he knocks at the door? Yet, alas, neither are our affections swept by repentance, nor is the fire of charity kindled in our hearts, nor have we prepared the bed of our conscience, though we may well look for our Lord every moment. We are so far from hasting toward this day, that we cannot endure to hear of this day's hasting toward us. Kind servants, that love their master, will be ever and anon talking of his coming: This night, say they, he lies in such a city, so many leagues off; to-morrow at night in such a city, nearer; the third night he will be at home. What shall we prepare for his entertainment? how shall we welcome him? Be these our thoughts, or is this our discourse, concerning our Lord's? No, but rather falsehood, hypocrisy, contumely, scurrility, blasphemy dwells in our lips, as if we talked of Satan, not of Christ. When birds are ready to fly, they spread their wings: if we did make haste toward our Saviour, we would dilate our affections, enlarge our desires, and, like the cherubims, spread the wings of our souls to be with him. Abraham sat in the door of his tent, when he entertained the angels, Gen. xviii. 1: Elijah stood in the door of the cave, when he had that vision of God, 1 Kings

xix. 13: so let us stand in the door of our life, by a continual meditation of death, that we may be ready to entertain our dear Lord Jesus Christ.

When we expect the coming of our best-beloved friend, we often run to the door, and give many a look out at the window; and not seldom a sigh steals from our hearts, and forth a sound out of our lips, Oh when will he come? If we did love Christ so well as we ought to do, or but so well as we say we do, we would give more frequent looks towards him; and though our eyes cannot carry up our souls, yet our souls would send up our eyes, to the place where his honour dwelleth. The father ran to meet his returning child, Luke xv. 20, and shall not we hasten to meet our returning Father? The cunning serpent does not at first bid us utterly forsake God, but he persuades to delay: What need you make so much haste? God is never to seek; you know where to find him: at what time soever a sinner repents, his mercy is at hand: you may take your pleasure yet a great while; you shall be saved at last, I will warrant you. Hath not that soul a goodly security for her salvation, that hath Satan's warrant? Do not bad debtors, by deferring of payment, grow more unable for the discharge? When a ruinous building is suffered to run into further decay, will it not require the more charges to be repaired? One knot or two may be soon undone, but when we have tied ten thousand knots upon our souls, by multiplying sin all the days of our life, can we think to untie them all at once in the hour of our death? If we cannot pass over the ford when the waters are low, how shall we do in a flood? If sin while it is a twig be not easily plucked up, how shall we eradicate it when custom hath grown it to a sturdy tree? The coals, the sparks of sin, be not lightly quenched; how then shall we put out the flame? There is trouble in curing green wounds, much more old festered sores. Try thy strength in combating with one sin; see if it does not put thee hard to it; thou must pant, and blow, and sweat, and bleed too, ere thou gettest the victory. If it be so hard to wrestle with one devil, how wilt thou encounter a legion? Youth is vigorous and hath nimble feet; old age is stiff, and fitter for the couch than the race. Let us cast away delay, lest it cast us away; and with all present speed make haste toward salvation. If you ask me how you should hasten to this day?—

(1.) By sending up your hearts to heaven, as an earnest that you would have your souls there. Let our desires be above, though our bodies are below. The sign that we are risen, is the object we have chosen; there we are, where our delight is: neither can we go from our hearts, nor will our hearts go from our treasure. Would you know where this object is? first tell me where your joy is. Would you hear where your joy is? show me where your mind is. You are young and witty, and your mind is upon that. You are old and wealthy, and your mind is upon that. Are you ambitious, and have your mind set upon honour? are you effeminate, and have your mind set upon beauty? are you proud, and pitch your hearts upon envy? Then here is your mind, for here is your treasure; and here is your treasure, for here is your heart; and here is your heart, for here is your joy. You may cry with the lapwing till you be hoarse, There, there, above; but you are here, even here, below. Heaven is a great way from earth, and, if you do not make more haste, you will never come there. It is not enough to be righteous, but we must be zealous in righteousness; not enough to do some good works, but we must abound in all good works; and this is to haste to the coming of the day of the Lord.

(2.) By soliciting God with our constant devotions; still praying, Thy kingdom come. That Christ may have the consummation of his dignity, by entering into his last office, the office of a Judge; and may have the society of human bodies in heaven, as well as he had ever of souls. That as he hateth sin itself, so his hatred to sin may be expressed, in the abolishing of all the instruments of sin, the allurements of this world, and the world itself; and all the temporary punishments of sin, the stings of sickness and death; and all the castles, prisons, and monuments of sin, in the grave. That time may be swallowed up in eternity; and hope swallowed in possession; and ends swallowed in infiniteness. That all men ordained to salvation, may both in body and soul become one entire and everlasting sacrifice to God; he receiving delight from them, and they glory from him, for evermore, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

VERSE 13.

Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

THERE is no comfort that sticks longer to a man than hope, none that more unwillingly leaves him; nay, it never forsakes, unless it be forsaken; and when it is desperately cast off, it leaves us desolate, and destitute of all comfort. But for hope, the heart would break; and when it departs, the heart is broken. Not broken by remorse, a fracture which the hand of mercy hath promised to heal; but broken by despair, such a breach as will not suffer itself ever to be made up again. Our souls are anguished with the sense of our sins; we lie under that unsupportable load, panting, and groaning, and afflicting ourselves with unconceivable pangs, yet there is hope; a pardon from our offended King revives us, and we look up with comfort. Our bodies are sick; they languish away in faintness, and painful distempers; yet there is hope. For God hath created both medicines to heal us, and physicians to apply them; and there is something in the great world to help the little one; something in nature to relieve man, if they can light upon it. Or if these fail, yet he hath prescribed us another method of physick: "Pray unto the Lord, and he will make thee whole," Eccles. xxxviii. 9. But go we further: our friends die, our children die, ourselves die; where is our hope now? Yes; death may kill our life, not our hope. Still we hope to find those in heaven, that have left us upon earth: and we patiently resign our own bodies to the grave, in the hope of a better resurrection. Still hope cleaves to the soul, as Ruth to Naomi: Whithersoever thou goest, I will go with thee, Ruth i. 16. When we consider this goodly fabrick, the magnificent structure of heaven and earth; of so spacious a capacity, and of so spacious a form and beauty; it cannot but wonderfully astonish us, to think that this glorious all should be reduced to nothing. If that were so doleful a lamentation, *Jam seges ubi Troja*, i. e. Corn grows in the streets of Troy; or if the foresight of Jerusalem's downfall drew tears from the Son of God, Luke xix. 41; certainly, the thought of the world's abolition may justly confound the hearts of the sons of men.

But blessed be our God, that hath not left us without hope, even the clear hope of a better renovation. This world shall perish, a more perfect one shall succeed. These heavens and this earth shall pass

away, but hope hath comforted us with a restitution; for we look for new heavens and a new earth. Neither have we a groundless or unwarranted expectation of this, but a confident hope, built on so sure a foundation as the infallible promise of God; according to his promise. Nor shall there be a blended confusion or mixture of good and bad, of order and disorder, of holiness and sin, in this new place; but righteousness dwelleth there; only righteousness, and that for ever.

Conceive the whole verse to be one entire building; and therein we have,

1. The foundation of it, The promise of God.
2. The material parts of it, Heaven and earth.
3. The quality of those parts; they are new, New heavens, &c.
4. The inhabitant that dwells there, Righteousness.
5. The hope of it; for it is a reversion, a future inheritance; therefore there is a looking for it; and it is a thing worth our looking after: We look for.
6. The heirs that expect it: not all the world, for hell is ordained for some; but we, all those that serve the Lord in all holy conversation and godliness, ver. 11.

Before we come to these particulars, I intend to set down certain theses, grounds, and positions in general, to give the better light to the ensuing discourse.

1. There is a certain infallible end and consummation determined to the world. Aristotle thus scoffed this opinion in his days: I was once afraid, says he, that either tempest or time would overthrow my house; but now I have great cause to fear the ruin of my house, and of myself too; for there be some, that, in words, go about to pull down the world. But to be serious, there is a twofold end, the one of corruption, the other of annihilation. The end of annihilation is, when a thing so loseth its present being, that no part of it, whether matter or form, remains in nature, but as of nothing it was framed, so it is turned into nothing: and such an end the world shall not have. The end of corruption is, when a thing is changed, not simply from a being to a not being, as if it altogether ceased to exist in nature; but into another being, which before it had not. As when fire hath turned wood into ashes, we say there is a corruption of the wood; for it ceaseth to be wood, and is become ashes; but we cannot say, there is an annihilation of it; for there is a substance remaining: and the matter, which was under the form of wood, hath now put on the form of ashes. Of wood corrupted are ashes generated; according to that worn axiom, *Corruptio unius generatio alterius*: i. e. The corruption of one thing is the generation of another: and such an end the world shall have.

2. Creatures, of their natural disposition, infused by God, do not desire their own corruption, much less annihilation; but rather they have a natural love to be, and an innate hatred of destruction. Why else is there such a sympathy and antipathy, even in things destitute of reason? The lamb, though it never had experience of the wolf's cruelty, yet at the very first sight of him doth tremble and fly for fear. Scalliger tells us of a tree, that at a man's approaching draws in her large shoots and branches, and at his departure spreads them out again; which is therefore called the shame-faced tree. But this is not so much shame, as a natural divination of some present or imminent danger, and a uniting of the dispersed forces, for the stronger resistance. That same groaning of the whole creation, and fervent expectation of the creature, Rom. viii. 19, 22, must not be understood of any intent it hath to corruption, but to perfection: not being contented

with the inherent form, it affecteth a better. As the militant saints, though they groan under their burden, do not desire to be unclothed, but to be clothed upon, that mortality may be swallowed up of life. 2 Cor. v. 4. Like the child, that cries to put off the old coat; not that it would go naked, but put on a new garment. It is perfection therefore, not abolition, which is the natural appetite of heaven and earth.

3. It must be some higher power than nature that can effect this renovation. For as nature cannot make something of nothing, so neither can she bring any matter from being to a not being, because she hath a finite and limited power. A natural agent may change a form, whether substantial or accidental, but never work an utter extinction. We may turn a river, we cannot dry up the water. Tyrants may kill the living body of a man, and make it a carcase; they may burn it with fire, and bring it to ashes; and this is as near to nothing as all their power can possibly reduce it: but let them spend a thousand thousand woods, in the burning of one poor carcase; yet still ashes are ashes, the elements are elements; and they shall never bring this body to nothing. Much less can any natural power annihilate the heavens. Yet an end they shall have; but such a one as man hath; whose body in death is not lost, but changed into the first matter; whose soul is not extinct, but passeth from time to eternity. So the world is incapable of annihilation; but shall be changed into a more glorious condition, in the day of the Lord.

4. Concerning the incorruptibility of the heavens, some questions would be moved, and some errors removed. It hath not only been the tenet of antiquity, but the observation of all ages, that there is an immutable estate of the heavenly bodies. In the sub-lunary region of elementary bodies, we find great variety, and almost a circular alteration; but not so in the heavens. And if the heavens were capable of corruption, how could the sphere of the moon, being situated so near to the region of fire, continue so long unconsumed? It is not right to say, that by reason of sin foreknown, the heavens were made corruptible: for, in propriety of speech, we cannot say so of any creature, much less of the heavens. (Chrysost. Hom. 14. in Epist. ad Rom.) And when Job saith, "The heavens are not clean in his sight," Job xv. 15; he does not mean that they were unclean, but that they have not so perfect a cleanness as in God; and what cleanness soever they have, is by the gift and maintenance of his providence. As Plato (In Timæo) brings in the supreme God telling the inferior ones, that they were corruptible of themselves, and only kept from corruption by him. The truth is, that the heavens are corruptible, for they shall be changed: unless we say, that this change shall be no more but only the staying of the wheels of the clock, the clock still remaining the same; so there shall be a cessation of motions in the heavens, the use whereof serves for the generation and corruption of mixed bodies. They shall depart as a scroll that is rolled together, and the host of heaven shall be dissolved, Isa. xxxiv. 4; as we shut up a book when we have done reading it. The clear sum is this; The heavens are capable of corruption; and they are only kept so long in this constant and unchanged estate, by the same hand of God that shall hereafter change them. "They shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed," Heb. i. 11, 12.

5. There is no impeachment of God's justice, in this dissolving of the world. It was an old evil, if God be infinitely good, and the world also good in

its nature and degree, why should he destroy it? Shall one good ruin another? If he destroy that which is good, how shall he continue good himself? If he pull it down because it is evil, how shall he be free from evil, that made it so? The answer is plain and easy: The world in its original state was good, for all things were very good, so allowed upon the Maker's review; but doth it therefore follow that it is so now? Doth not a man pull down his house, when it is grown rotten and infected, that he may build up a new? But the heavens were not infected, why should they perish? I answer, who can clearly prove that the sin of man hath not also infected them? Or if they were granted to be clean, yet they were made for some other end, hereafter to be revealed, and not for themselves. Therefore must they be dissolved, that that end might appear for which they were ordained. An egg-shell is curiously framed, yet to manifest the end for which it was made, it must of necessity be broken. So the present state of this world must be dissolved, that the glorious kingdom of heaven may be manifested. This degenerated condition must be done away, that the state of incorruption and immortality may be restored. This world shall have an end then, not of annihilation, but of corruption; not a destructive, but rather a perfective end. "The light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days," Isa. xxx. 26. Not that this greater light shall emanate from the glorified bodies in heaven; nor that it shall be only by the removal of those fogs, clouds, and vapours, which formerly did obscure those lights. But certainly, those luminaries have lost much of that clearness and splendour, which they had in the creation, and which at the world's end shall be restored to them. Not that there shall be an augmentation of their heat with their light; for as heaven shall have no need of their light, (that city hath no need of the sun nor of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God doth enlighten it, Rev. xxi. 23,) so nor earth of their heat, when there is nothing to be generated by it. This permutation of the world, therefore, doth nothing derogate from the Divine justice.

6. Yea, it is the praise of his mercy and goodness, to place perfection in the stead of imperfection; or for a less perfection, to give us a greater. "Heaven and earth shall pass away," Matt. xxiv. 35, that better may succeed; they shall wax old and perish, Psal. cii. 26. The use of a garment is wearing; no wearing, no further use. When the number of the elect is complete; and that there is no need of the heavens for more generation; they shall be no longer for garment, they may be for ornament. Thus in a familiar phrase of speech, the world is said to perish; as we say, a man is past his infancy, an old man hath lost his youth: these vanish, but in neither of these did the man himself perish. If the world should be reduced to a nonentity, the apostle would not have said, new heavens, but, other heavens. But as in the resurrection men's bodies shall be of the same substance, though of a purer disposition; or as our imperfect knowledge in the after-world shall be abolished that a more perfect knowledge of God may take place, 1 Cor. xiii. 8, 10: so must the Scripture be understood, when it speaks of the world's destruction; that it shall only suffer a permutation, and the same substance be endued with a more glorious condition. The Stoics glance at the means of this dissolution, concluding the instrument to be fire. They thought that the stars and the very skies were fire; and that they had a wasting action upon the inferior elements: so that their nourishing moisture, by little and little, decaying; whereas neither the

air can have power of procreation, nor the earth receive further refection by the water; there should then remain nothing but fire, to consume all; from whose ashes should arise a new world. This their opinion was something consonant to our apostle's doctrine, saving that they differ in this: the philosopher ascribes all to a natural necessity, the apostle to a supernatural destiny; even to the purpose of God at the first, and to the hand of God at the last. Yet this dissolution shall not reach, either to the seat of the blessed souls in heaven, nor to the dungeon of the damned spirits in hell; neither the joys of the saints, nor the torments of the damned, shall be interrupted by it.

These conclusions being laid in general, would not pass without some useful application to ourselves.

1. Let us never repine at any alteration of our being, which shall conduce to our better being. If the world must be dissolved, how shall man escape a dissolution? Location is inseparable to existence; therefore seeing the world, which is man's habitation and mansion-house, must be changed, the principal inhabitant must needs have a joint and fellow-dissolution. The heavens shall cease, not from being, but from motion. The ordering of things below, the continuance of generation, the propagation of the species in living creatures, is the end of their motion: this end being ended, there is also an end of their motion. So the labour and trouble of mortal man shall cease together with this motion of the heavens. Yea, there is an end put to the travail of the earth, to the working of the sea, to the procreation of those elementary, lifeless, and under-bodies. Not that we attribute all this only to the quiet rest of the heavens; for when, at the prayer of Joshua, the sun stood still in Gibeon, and the moon in the valley of Ajalon, and with them the rest of the celestial bodies, there was not a cessation of the natural actions of things below; for even then, the Israelites did fight, and their enemies did fly. But the true cause of all this rest from motion, is the will of the First Cause; without whose helpful working, the second causes are not only suspended, but disabled to perform their functions. As therefore when the firmament, and other inferior spheres together with the elements, put off these accidents and affections of corruption, fit for the continual generation of natural bodies, they do not then cease to be; but are endued with a far more excellent condition, and receive other qualities fit for that incorruptible estate of the future world: their substance remains, however they alter or better their qualities; whereat nature does not repine, but rather incessantly desire it. So is death to man; it may change him, it cannot destroy him. Nay, that permutation is for the better, as Ambrose speaks of the greater world. (In ep. 1. Epist. ad Hebr.) We may call both these dissolutions, a perishing: *Quia percutit ab eo quod sunt, dum immutatur in melius*. They perish from what they are, by being converted into better.

"To die is gain," Phil. i. 21: this is a paradox, which the world will not believe. They think wealth the only gain, and life the only time of this gain; and death, not only a loss of life, but of all things with it. But death a gain? Let them take this gain that have a mind to it: as for themselves, they will none of it. This some melancholy and miserable Christian may imagine a profit, who is so weary of his life, that he thinks it an advantage to die. But rich men that are wise enough to refuse no gains, would none of death by their wills. As Guerverra cites one of their epigrams:

Death did this rich man kill,
Who lies here against his will.

But what do the heavens lose by their changing, or men by their dying? Have we not cedar for mulberry, and for brick, marble? Isa. ix. 10. As it was said of the temple, so is it true of the world after this destruction, and of man after his dissolution, the glory of the second house shall be much greater than the glory of the first, Hag. ii. 9. Death is the sleep; in the morning, after sleep, the body riseth more fresh and full of vigour, than it was over-night when it lay down. Our bodies lie down in weakness, dishonour, mortality; they are raised up again in power, in honour, and to immortality, 1 Cor. xv. 42: and, I pray you, what loss can you find in this? But to live is a loss, a double loss: privative, because it hinders us from the joy and peace that is in heaven; positive, because it subjects us to miseries and judgments, and to, worse than all, sins. But in death there is a privative gain, it frees us from all cares and troubles: and a positive, for it helps us to all joys and comforts. If my landlord pull down my sere, weather-beaten cottage, and build me up a stately palace for it, I have no cause to complain. Could the physician turn my foul, crazy, aged body, into a vigorous and youthful one, in reason, I should rather reward him, than blame him. Death, which is the end of the little world, man; and the last day, which is the death of that great man, the world; are not works of dissolution, so much as of absolution: the world shall be repolished, man immortalized, and in all God shall be glorified.

2. Seeing that a dissolution is determined upon the world, and all these lower things are condemned to the fire; let us "set our affections on things above, not on things on the earth," Col. iii. 2; let us seek heavenly things. Seek we will, certainly, for something, and something there must be for the mind of man to rest upon. If we make this world our centre, that and our hopes must fail together; the fire shall despatch them both at once. Therefore it were wisdom for us to seek for somewhat without the extent of this combustion, and there to repose our hearts. The sum of man's natural desire, is rest and glory; pleasure and riches, safety, health, and liberty, are but subordinate to them, and comprehended under them. Neither of them is to be found here. Not rest: what Satan sought in envy, and Solomon in vanity, that all men seek in curiosity; walking through these dry places, they seek rest, but find none, Matt. xii. 43. Here we all dwell in Meseeh, Psal. cxx. 5, and meet with nothing but disquietness. They that are tossed in a tempest, how do they long for a good haven or harbour of rest! And the more our pilgrimage is prolonged, the more we seek this rest, find it how we may. But now the heavens move; they have no rest: the earth fructifies; she hath no rest: the waters, winds, clouds, and all work; they have no rest. Man least of all; no rest is allowed him below. Let us not think to set up our rest here, in this tumultuous throng of troubles. "Where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work," Jam. iii. 16. Upon this wheel ever whirling about, we are no sooner set down, but some trouble or other rouseth us with an "Arise ye, and depart: for this is not your rest," Micah ii. 10; here we cannot have it.

Nor glory: we love rest well enough, yet for glory we are content to disquiet ourselves. How many enter themselves into a restless course of life, for a little puff of honour; which the prince's breath blows up, and the people's breath blows away! In the garden of our delight we find worms; and spiders even in king's palaces. This is the orb of worms and spiders; and can we find glory in dust and cobwebs? Yet if two such things, as rest and glory,

might be had upon earth, they can never be had together. The most honourable places afford not the quietest lives; and they that live in most quiet, are least glorious. Mortal rest is a thing inglorious, and secular glory a thing restless. Some men are of Issachar's mind; Rest is good, though it be between a pair of panniers: they bow their shoulders to bear, and become servants to tribute, Gen. xlix. 15. If we would live unmolested, we must live ungraced; more for ease than for honour. But if we will be famous men, of place and credit, then farewell rest. The fane is advanced above the house, but the wind will not let it be in quiet. The obscure man's door may stand safely open, but the nobleman's gate gets many a knock.

Well, though these are not to be had here, they are to be had somewhere; even both of them, and both together, and that for ever. For rest; "Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest," Psal. lv. 6. In Christ there is rest: and that not only for the body, which sleep may seem to afford; but you shall find rest unto your souls, Matt. xi. 29. The rest of the soul is the very life and soul of rest. The soul is from above, and above is this rest, and there only to be found. "Return unto thy rest, O my soul," Psal. cxvi. 7. Where is that? "In the land of the living," ver. 9. Yes, there is the joy of it. Would it not grieve a man, that hath toiled and turmoiled out his whole life in this world, at his dissolution, when he looks for rest, to hear the Lord swear, that he shall not enter into my rest? Psal. cxv. 11. How unhappily have they spent their labours, that at the end of these temporary pains must begin everlasting pains; and for their working without thanks, be rewarded with working without ease, where there is no rest day nor night! But it is blessedness and comfort, to be called from our holy labours, to enter into God's rest; for that is rest indeed. Glory also is his, and he gives it only there. It is but folly to be ambitious of it below; it were to seek fresh water in the midst of the sea: or as the angels said to the women, "Why seek ye the living among the dead?" Luke xxiv. 5. After two years, Felix is gone, Festus succeeds, Acts xxiv. 27: the wheel turns, places are changed: such is the ease of all secular glory. Princes and nobles are but great during their life, or at most the world's life; then all those titles and distinctions cease. Thus then for the rest and glory of earth: either we seek and not find them, or find one separated from the other; or if both together, yet soon we lose them again: but "to them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, shall be eternal life," Rom. ii. 7. Only in heaven let us seek them; there we shall be sure to find them, and to find them both together; and have good assurance to hold them both, and that unchangeably for ever.

"Nevertheless we, according to his promise." Of which, first, the material parts, the heavens and earth; next, the quality of them, which is newness, or rather renovation, they are new; and then the manner or method of this renovation, which is a purgation by fire. Of these having formerly treated, I will now only give you the sum; and that, for our plainer proceeding, by the resolving of certain doubts or questions.

1. The apostle only mentions heaven and earth in this dissolution, or renovation, without those other intermediate elements: as Moses in the creation, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," Gen. i. 1. But the first question is, why the heavens should be purged, that never were corrupted. The angels sinned in the highest heaven, the glori-

ous court of the Deity; yet this was never threatened, nor ever shall be punished with an innovation. We answer, that the same reason holds not. First, because their abode in heaven was but short; they "abode not in the truth," John viii. 44. And as they fell presently into sin, so they were presently cast out of heaven. But man and his sin continued long in the world; so that this infection did soak into the grain of nature, and stained it quite through; and that so foully, that nothing can get it out but fire. Secondly, that heaven was the presence-chamber of the omnipotent and most holy King; and his infinite goodness was of force to keep the room from any contagion, which the sin of those ambitious spirits could breathe into it. For if in nature there are antidotes and preservatives, to keep a house or man from pestilential infection; much more could the immense goodness of God preclude all access of contamination from his own dwelling. But the Divine Majesty did not dwell in this world so presentially; nor was he pleased to exercise his grace so powerfully and extensively to us: so that the world was defiled by man's transgression, and therefore must undergo this final reparation.

So there be some that exempt those elements which have permission with other bodies and qualities, from this necessary restoration; as the fire under the sphere of the moon, and the air in its highest region. But in vain doth man dispute for the unnecessary of that which God hath decreed; whose decree only doth make a thing necessary. Whether compound or simple, whether heaven or the elements, the Maker and Owner of them all hath determined them to a final renovation.

2. There is a wondrous mutiny amongst popish writers, the soldiers of error, what should become of those infants that die without baptism at the last day. Where should they dwell? They are incapable (say they) of heaven, by reason of original sin; and they have, not deserved hell, because they were never guilty of actual: what then shall become of them? whither should they go? Lord, what a puzzling thing is error; and how many absurdities may be built upon the foundation of a false principle? Whither should they go? Let me ask them, Where are they now? If they can demonstrate to me where they are for the present, I can certify them whither they shall go at the last. There they shall be then, in the same place wheresoever they are now. They point me to a limbo of infants; but where is that limbo? Catharinus, Pighius, and divers other, promise those unbaptized children a certain natural blessedness, and a pleasant abode in some paradise; that they shall have knowledge of God, and of separated substances, and the revelation of angels. Bellarmine is as hot on the other side, and reproves Catharinus for such an opinion; affirming them to be the children of wrath, forsaken of God, under the power of the devil; and that then there shall be but one place of punishment: they that are not in heaven must be in hell. (De Amis. Grat. lib. 6. cap. 2. 3.) Thus Bellarmine against Catharinus. Salmeron and Pineda differ from them both; who will have them to be in the same state that man was in his pure naturals, yet not free from all Satan's molestations. Some say, this privilege shall not be to them at all; others, that it shall be, but they know not where; and others allow it, but they cannot tell how. For if the elements should be reduced to their first order, then *omnia pontus erat*, i. e. all was sea; the waters covered the earth. Gen. i. 9, as being the lighter element; and were restrained by God's immediate hand, for the convenience of man's habitation. Now if those waters shall return

to their first place, where shall be their paradise for those unchristened infants? Pineda so expoundeth Job: "He hath compassed the waters with bounds, until the day and night come to an end," Job xxvi. 10; and concludeth, that after this vicissitude of day and night, when time shall be no more, they shall return to their first being. What then? Shall their paradise be under water? That were a drowned conceit. Shall it be in the orb of the moon? Or must the man in the moon resign his place, and in his stead there shall be children in the moon? These be the fancies of moon-sick brains. The truth is plain, and needs no evasions or starting-holes. Why may not the children of Christians, being within the covenant, though they die without the seal of the covenant, be admitted through the blood of the covenant, into the place promised by the covenant, the kingdom of heaven? What should be against it, when the Scripture is for it? "I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee," Gen. xvii. 7. Who shall hinder them, whom Christ will receive? Suffer those little ones to come unto him, and forbid them not. In truth, neither is there now, nor shall be then, any third place; all men shall perish in hell for their sins, that are not saved in heaven by the merits of Jesus Christ.

3. To what end shall these new heavens and earth serve in the next world? what use shall be of them? The answer must be partly negative and partly affirmative. Negatively; the sun and moon shall not serve for times and seasons, to distinguish days, months, and years; for then there shall be neither winter nor summer; time itself shall be no more. Nor by their motions and influences to cause a fructifying power in the earth; for then there are no creatures for whose use the earth should bring forth. The sun shall not come as a bridegroom out of his chamber, nor rejoice as a giant to run his course, Psal. xix. 5; his circuit shall no more be from one end of heaven to the other. But rather it shall be as in the days of Joshua, when the sun stood still in Gibeon, and the moon in the valley of Ajalon, Josh. x. 12: there shall be an everlasting solstice. Nor shall they serve to give light to the world, for then there shall be no darkness at all. Not that their light shall be diminished, much less extinguished, but septupled and multiplied, Isa. xxx. 26. The sun may be left without heat and motion, because these qualities tend to generation; yet still the light may continue: many things are lightsome, that give no heat, as the glistering and shining precious stones. Nor shall the earth labour of fruits in her pregnant womb, waiting for the heat of the sun, and moisture from the clouds, to deliver her of her burdens. The ministry and service of all things, such as it is now, shall cease; it shall be a time of rest, the great year of universal jubilee to all creatures. Neither yet shall the new earth be without inhabitants. Bellarmine's conceit, that it shall be covered with the waters, and so unfit for habitation, may easily be refuted. First, "The first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea," Rev. xxi. 1. If we take this literally, there shall be no more sea; much less shall all be one universal sea. Secondly, "Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth," Matt. v. 5. This promise is not performed here, therefore we look to have it fulfilled hereafter. Thirdly, the state of all things shall then be most perfect: not confused and mingled together, as it was in the first act of the creation; when the earth was without form and void, darkness upon the face of the deep, and the deep covering the

face of the earth; until God made a distinction and separation of things, reducing all to order, beauty, and harmony; which harmony and beauty shall be restored at the great day, and blessed with an unchangeable perfection.

Nor yet shall the saints so inhabit the earth, as to live in terrene delights; eating, drinking, and sporting after the old manner. This was the heresy of Cerinthus, and the dream of the carnal Jews concerning a terrestrial paradise; and the damnable doctrine of that juggling prophet Mahomet. For in the Turkish histories, we read of one Alahodinas, the founder of the Assassins, who with this strange imposture got many adherents, and made them the instruments of his bloody designs. He provided a garden most pleasantly situated; so secure, that there could be no looking over the fence. This abounded with all earthly delicacies; curious music, beauteous women, sumptuous cheer, delicious wines, fruits, and whatsoever might content a sensual appetite. By an intoxicating drink he would east them into a dead sleep whom he meant to practise on; in which sleep he conveyed them to his garden; where waking, they found themselves encompassed with variety of pleasures. Having there solaced themselves a while, by the help of the same drink, he reported them to their former place: and these, at their next waking, would give out with noise and confidence, that they had been in paradise. But corruptible pleasure is not for an incorruptible place. The eye hath not seen, nor the ear heard, nor can any heart of flesh comprehend, those delights which are given to the saints and angels, 1 Cor. ii. 9. Our joys here are mere toys and vanities, in regard of those that are laid up for us in this new world, the blessed kingdom of Jesus Christ.

Thus negatively; now for the affirmative part of the question. To what end shall they serve then? If not for these purposes, yet for some other, sure. What are those? First, it is for the glory of God that they should remain. Praise the Lord, ye heavens, Psal. cxlviii. 4: that cannot praise him, that hath no being. But how should they praise him? Man is occasioned to praise God, by the heavens, and for the heavens. Not only now, but even then also, the heavens shall declare the glory of God, and the firmament show his handy-work, Psal. xix. 1. The clear and perspicuous light of this new world, the perfect harmony, the glorious beauty, the wonderful texture of heaven and earth, shall present us with continual occasion to magnify the Creator of all. This is one end, and that were enough; there can be no higher, no greater, than the glory of God. All ends are swallowed up in this, as all rivers run into the sea. Secondly, the other end is for the use of man; not such a use as we have now; but as there is a new world, so a new use of that world. "The first heaven and the first earth are passed away," Rev. xxi. 1; and the first use of them is gone with them. Heaven and earth shall be the seat of the blessed: not only heaven, for that is granted. All that we stick at is the earth; how should the earth be the habitation of the righteous? In the state of this question, I determine not; I speak nothing definitively, but by way of probability; and I think I have good reasons to prove what I say.

(1.) From the text itself. St. Peter speaks of both heaven and earth, and affirmeth that in them both dwelleth righteousness. What is this righteousness? It is a gracious quality; and every quality must have some subject to inhere in. This cannot be the matter of the earth; for what righteousness can an insensible subject be capable of? We do not say, there is justice in plants, or holiness in

stones, or religion in beasts. And for the righteousness of God, that indeed filleth all places, but properly dwelleth in himself. Therefore by righteousness, we understand the righteous; on earth shall the righteous dwell, and in them dwelleth righteousness.

(2.) We may collect it from that promise of our Saviour, "Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth," Matt. v. 5. They do not now inherit it; they, of all men, have the least share in it. (Origen.) "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable," 1 Cor. xv. 19. Nimrods, and tyrants, and oppressors, men of rapine and violence; these now divide the earth amongst them. Whereas men of a meek spirit are thrust out of house and home. Innumerable are the places, where the godly are called strangers and pilgrims upon earth; therefore they can have no inheritance there. Pilgrimage and inheritance are far different things. The meek have it not here, therefore they must have it hereafter; or how can they inherit the earth? This old earth is a place for usurpers, and roars, and those sons of violence; there is nothing but noise and disturbance in it. What earth then should the meek inherit? Sure it must be the earth of the meek: this is not to be found here, therefore to be expected hereafter. Besides, Christ ascribes blessedness to the heirs of the earth: but millions have fair inheritances upon this corrupt earth, that are far from blessedness. Some have whole countries, large continents, yea, many kingdoms, yet without blessedness. How vast dominions hath the Turk, yet (I am sure you will say) that he is not blessed. It must be the habitation of a new earth, that affords blessedness; therefore this new earth shall be inherited by the righteous.

(3.) As the elements had corruptible qualities, fit for the generation of corruptible bodies; so, then, they shall be made answerable to the state of incorruption. (Aug. Civit. Dei, lib. 20. cap. 16.) But what needs this renovation and concord of the elements, if the bodies of the saints should not converse where this new earth and elements are? It is true that now heaven is the receptacle of blessed souls, where Christ sits in his throne, Heb. viii. 1: yet this hinders not, but that both the new heavens and earth may be the habitation of the saints, after this life. Why may there not be such an intercourse between heaven and earth then, as hath been before? The angels did often come from heaven, and appear in human bodies upon the earth. In the next world, the elect shall be "as the angels of God," Matt. xxii. 30: even their bodies shall be made spiritual, 1 Cor. xv. 44; and by the supernatural property of a glorified body, may ascend and descend at their pleasure. Moses and Elias came down from heaven, to talk with Christ on the mount. Our Saviour himself, after his resurrection, was conversant with his apostles upon the earth forty days. Why may there not still be such an intercourse between the circumference and the centre, betwixt heaven and earth?

(4.) Further yet; the saints "shall be ever with the Lord," 1 Thess. iv. 17, wheresoever he is. They shall "follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth," Rev. xiv. 4. Now Christ is not bounded in heaven; he hath liberty to go where he pleaseth; and certainly the saints will wait upon him with incomparably more diligence than ever courtiers did attend their king. The glorious presence of God can make a heaven upon earth; and wheresoever the Lamb is, the place is blessed, and all blessed with him.

(5.) Lastly, it is but reason, that God should be there glorified where he was dishonoured. The earth was witness of the offences done against him: let this

new earth bear witness of the praises given unto him. Besides this, all the combats and conflicts of the saints were upon the earth; therefore even there also let them wear their crowns. On earth they were persecuted; give them leave in the same place to triumph. Here they suffered; here also let them be solaced; that the memory of their past sorrows may be an accidental variation of their infinite and essential joys. When they shall thus revolve with themselves; Here we were derided, there oppressed; in this place wounded, in that martyred. Now those old monuments of our pains shall turn to trophies of joy; and that earth, which was the land of the dead, is become the land of the living. How spacious shall be the kingdom of the saints, when heaven and earth is within their dition!

But it is not safe wading without a bottom; this is one of those secrets, which shall be revealed when this old world is dissolved. How the elect shall be disposed of, whether wholly to heaven, or sometimes to heaven, sometimes to earth, at their own choice, or how otherwise it pleaseth God to place them, is a great mystery not yet opened unto us. But that the saints shall have the liberty of coming to the earth, seems very probable by good reason, gathered from the Scripture. And this is enough for us to believe, concerning this point: That there shall be new heavens and a new earth, prepared for the righteous; and that God shall have a glorious church, the new Jerusalem, both in heaven and earth; for in them both dwelleth righteousness. Whosoever God's glorified children shall be, they shall never want the beatifical vision, the fulness of joy, the brightness of glory, the eternity of peace, the society of saints and angels, and the blessed fruition of Jesus Christ.

4. The last question is, what creatures shall be restored in the next world? In the clearest likelihood, though thereof we can deliver no certainty, no living creatures shall be restored but only men. The unreasonable creatures, as beasts, fishes, fowls, shall cease, there be probable reasons.

(1.) They were not created for immortality, as the rest, which shall remain, were: such are the heavens, earth, sun, and moon. Neither yet were these latter made, by their constitution, apt to immortality; howsoever some schoolmen have thought so, because they are a simple body, without qualities one repugnant to another. But immortality is the frank gift of God, and dependeth not on the power of nature; for naturally, as they had a beginning, so they must have an end. (Bucan. Loc. 37. qu. 8.) In the purpose of God, those creatures that shall remain, were created to immortality, so were not the beasts.

(2.) Those creatures only, besides man, shall be restored with man, which immediately pass from their corruptible estate into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. But the unreasonable creatures, after they are dissolved, do not enter into glory; nay, they fall into corruption; their life and spirit is extinguished with them. But the heavens and earth, in the same instant, shall both be freed from corruption and receive a glorious liberty, Rom. viii. 21. And herein appears the Divine equity: the heavens and earth, for man's cause, were subdued to vanity, almost from the beginning of the world to the end. The other creatures are but a while under this servitude of corruption; their time in the world is but short; and they are renewed and multiplied by continual generation. Therefore it is just, that they who stood the whole term of bondage, should at last be restored to liberty; whereas they that for a time only suffered, vanish with time into nothing.

(3.) If the unreasonable creatures should be re-

stored, then either the same that were before, (as the same individual bodies of men shall rise again,) or some other of the same kind newly created. But not the former; for the parts of those creatures die with them. Were it not absurd to think, that there shall be a resurrection of beasts, as if Balaam's ass, or Job's oxen, should rise again? Nor of the second; for in that day there shall be no new creation. It is a time of restitution, Acts iii. 21, not of creation.

No kind of creatures shall remain, unless they have something to do; (Martyr.) for it is against nature, to constitute any thing, that it should be entirely inactive. It is a trite axiom, that without necessity we must not imagine a plurality in nature, for she abhorreth vanity. These irrational creatures now serve for the profit or pleasure of man: there shall be no such use of them then; therefore, by consequence, no such creatures. But in this point I confess, with the Master of the Sentences, That I do not know what I do not remember to have read in the Holy Scriptures. Doubtless, nothing shall be wanting which may conduce to the perfecting of our joy in Jesus Christ.

For application of all: Seeing there shall be a new earth and heavens, why do not we become new, that hope to dwell in them? As we do not put new wine into old bottles, grace into corruption; so neither will God admit old tenants into this new world, corruption into glory. If he therefore will pull down the old world, shall not we mortify, destroy, and pull down the old man? We must put off the old man, before we enter into that new Jerusalem. We have heard how the heavens and earth shall become new, by way of purgation; the same must be our way too. There is a way of purifying the body, by bleeding. So that corrupt blood, with which the ill diet of wickedness hath filled the veins of the soul, must be let out. The word of God is that sacrificing knife, Heb. iv. 12, which opens the vein where this ill blood lies. The hearts of those Jews were foul, subject to the pleurisy of presumption, till Peter pricked them, Acts i. 37: that puncture cured them. There is a vein of covetousness in thee: humbly desire God to open that vein, though by the knife of poverty; rather be content to lose thy wealth than thy soul. So could that heathen conclude, when he was put to the choice: I had rather that poor Aristippus should lose his wealth, than that rich Aristippus should lose his life. Or indeed, save God the labour, and let thyself blood of thy redundant riches, by a charitable beneficence. Cast away thy superfluities, thy health will be the better for it. Hast thou a vein of pride? Breathe it out by humiliation. What sinful affection soever hath distempered thy soul, do not lance thy flesh, like a superstitious priest of Baal; but rend thy heart, like a penitent servant of Christ. If the heavens cannot be made new without a purifying, much less shall we enter into those heavens but by a gracious renovation.

This is principally the work of God upon us, even of the whole Trinity. The Father purgeth the branches of the Vine, John xv. 2: the Son washeth all those that have part in him, John xiii. 8: the Holy Ghost reneweth us by regeneration, Tit. iii. 5. Yet doth not God so minister all the ingredients, that he leaves no *do's* for ourselves to put in. Lord, do thou "purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow," Psal. li. 7. So also, man, purge thyself: "Wash thy heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved," Jer. iv. 14. And every one that hath this hope, "purifieth himself, even as he is pure," 1 John iii. 3. What are our ingredients, and where shall we find them? The apothecary's shop is the storehouse of grace; the

physician's prescript is the word of grace. There the good Samaritan bath both oil and wine: wine to search, and oil to supple; one handful of the law to humble us, and another of the gospel to revive us. Let Moses cast thee down, that Jesus may raise thee up. Physicians to swellings in the body, first apply fomentations, then cataplasms; the former gentle and lenitive, the other purging and sanative. Eli put in too much oil, not wine enough; Do no more so, my sons. James and John put in too much wine, not oil enough, when they would have commanded fire from heaven upon the Samaritans. Thunder without rain, is a sign of much wind: they that only thunder judgments, and never shower down mercies, are but windy preachers. You never found us so doing, to build judgment on the ruins of mercy. Neither yet dare we handle you so gently, as not to be felt. For while we are no further than in your dead flesh, you can be quiet; but if we once touch the quick, we shall quickly hear of it. If I might teach you to make a spiritual purifier, it should be after this manner.

Take a bundle of time, the consideration of the shortness of thy life; a scruple of the law, to correct thy proud humour; a dram of the gospel, for a cordial to thy fainting spirits; take humility, temperance, patience, of each a like quantity: put in a great deal of charity; and that simple which is the carrier of all the rest, faith; without which no physic will work. Mingle all these in the liquor of thy own tears: be sure to steep them in repentance; that is a constant ingredient in all our compositions: no recipe, with us, without a *respice*, i. e. repent: there is no bill, that hath not this in it, to which we dare underwrite a Let it be taken. After this cleansing, the patient must keep a good diet, of holiness and obedience; otherwise he will relapse into the same sickness by a misordered life. He must "keep himself unspotted from the world," Jam. i. 27. But you will say, Heaven and earth shall be purified with fire; why are not we put to such a purgation? We are, doubtless, not seldom. Therefore, "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial," 1 Pet. iv. 12: think it not strange, for it is a usual custom with God to bring his children this way to heaven. It is a sore trial; yet better this fire to purify us, than hell-fire to burn us. Any way to Christ, how sharp soever: let me be saved, although it be through fire, 1 Cor. iii. 15.

To conclude: We look for a new earth and new heavens, and those new heavens and earth look for new creatures. All men are greedy of news; concerning news abroad, or news at home, is the universal question. Scarcely two of acquaintance meet, but after salutation, and a little compliment, the next word is, What news? Lo, my whole argument hath been of news; of new heavens, of a new earth, of a new world, and of new things in that world: from the first to the last, here hath been nothing but news. But there is yet one news wanting; our being made new creatures in Christ. What joy would it be for us to report, and for heaven and earth to hear, this news; that we had left our old ways, our old works, our old customs and sins, and were become new men; new-born to that new world, wherein are those new delights for ever!

"According to his promise." This is the foundation of the building. The foundation of our faith, the foundation of our hope, the foundation of our patience, the foundation of all our comfort, is the promise of God.

4. But where shall we find this promise? What evidence, what record can we show for it? Hugo and Catharinus cite for it, Rev. xxi. 1, "I saw a new

heaven and a new earth." But our apostle could not well have relation to that testimony; for in all likelihood, Peter's Epistle was written before John's Revelation. He speaks of a promise which they then had, not of a future one which they hope to receive; and in nature, a promise must go before the expectation of it. Thomas Anglieus refers us to Luke xxii. 29, "I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me." There is a promise indeed, and an effectual one, and that of a kingdom; but there is no mention of the place. Christ's glorious kingdom is in the highest heavens; but what is this to the renovation of heaven and earth? Some clearer testimony therefore must be found out; and that we may do without much difficulty. "Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered," Isa. lxy. 17. This is to purpose; what can be plainer? Neither does he speak of a future act, but a present; not, I will create; but, I do create; for the more certainty of it, as if he were now doing it. This is promise and assurance enough, that he will do. Nor is this promise single; though one word from the mouth of God be sufficient; but, "God hath spoken once; twice have I heard it," Psal. lxvii. 11. "As the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, so shall your seed and your name remain," Isa. lxxvi. 22. The reason is drawn from the certainty: I will as surely save you, as I will make a new heaven and earth wherein you shall be saved. We may add that, Isa. lxiv. 4. I am not ignorant, that divers interpreters understand by all these places, that restitution of things which the first coming of Christ should bring with it. "Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new," 2 Cor. v. 17. And, "I make all things new," Rev. xxi. 5. As if it were only meant, that there should be a new face and form of the church; and to this purpose (they further allege) Paul quotes that of Isa. lxiv. 4, in his 1 Cor. ii. 9, "Eye hath not seen," &c. But this exposition takes off from the literal sense, and turns it into a mystery: nor yet doth this applying it to the time of grace, hinder the referring of it also to the day of glory. So the fathers understand that of Isaiah, concerning the beatifical vision, and those other places, literally, of a new heaven and earth, and the church triumphant in them. And indeed, if we make all this no promise, where shall we find it? unless we shall add that, They shall all wax old as a garment; but thou art the same, Psal. cii. 26. The Maker is unchangeable, but these shall be changed: now this mutation shall not be for the worse, certainly. (Hierom. in *En. locis citatis*; Aug. *Civit. lib. 20, 21, 26*; Ambros. in *cap. 1. ad Heb.*; Tertul. *de Resurrect. Carnis.*)

2. This promise then we have: the prophet delivers it, the apostle repeats it, we believe it, and St. John in a vision sees it: "I saw the new Jerusalem." Rev. xxii. 2. The heavens and the earth, and the elements between them, shall be restored into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. What the form and fashion of those new heavens and earth shall be, as it is not expressed, so it were curiosity for us to inquire. But that the heavens and earth shall be new, of this the Scripture makes us certain. It may be expressed by this similitude: As a nurse that brings up a king's son, is made partaker of his preferment when that prince comes to his kingdom: so the heavens and earth are now our nurses, contributing their virtues to our preservation, and cherishing us with their best indulgence: therefore it is fit, that when Christ shall advance us to our glory, they should also be made glorious with us. (Chrysost.) When God was about to make man, he provided an

excellent dwelling for him; a beautiful roof, and a fruitful pavement: so when he is pleased to remove man from this lower tenement, into an everlasting mansion, he will make a new heaven and a new earth for him: and this is his promise.

3. The foundation of our faith, is the promise of God: without a promise there can be no faith. Faith is the foundation of prayer, and the promise of God is the foundation of faith, says Theophylact. Man hath divers ways or means of apprehending things. That which I know by sense, is my knowledge; that which I know by argument, is my reason; that which I know by proof and trial, is my experience; that which I know by authority, is my faith. The sun shines, and I see it; I am pained with grief, and I feel it: this I know by my sense. The pillars of a house uphold it; take away those pillars, and it will fall: this I know by my reason. In my sickness or bodily distempers, I have found such and such things comfortable to me, and available to my recovery; therefore I conclude they are good for me: this I know by experience. In my wantonness I have often sinned; affliction hath humbled me, and brought me home again by repentance; therefore experience makes me know, that it is good for me that I was afflicted. God hath promised eternal life to all them that are in Jesus Christ: this I know by authority, and it is my faith.

Now this faith is either divine or human. The object of divine faith is the promise and word of God only; the object of human faith is the report of men. That St. Peter was at Rome, and bishop there, is not God's word; therefore it does not bind my divine faith. Yet see the wonder! Upon this supposed foundation all popery depends. For thereby the pope challengeth to be his right successor; and under that title, obligeth men upon pain of damnation to believe and obey whatsoever he decrees. Thus the authority of popish faith is only tradition, the report of men, and not the word of God. Hence it comes that they have so much of their own stuff, and so little of Christ's: five Ave-Marias, for one Pater-noster; more of our Lady's Psalter, than of our Lord's. So they have seven sacraments, whereas Christ ordained but two. As a grave divine, expounding that miracle of the seven loaves and two fishes, Matt. xiv. 17, wherewith Christ fed so many thousands; and finding some of the pontifical writers, by a stranger kind of miracle, to turn them into their seven sacraments, and so to make a flourish as if they had gotten Scripture for it; wittily observed, that there was indeed some proportion or resemblance between them. For, saith he, here be seven things in all: five loaves, and two fishes: two of them were of God's making, the two fishes; and the other five of man's making, the five loaves. So two of their seven sacraments, baptism and the holy supper, are of Christ's institution; but the other five of man's invention. But "other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ," 1 Cor. iii. 11. His word is that we build upon; his promise is the rock whereon we fix the trust of our hearts, the life of our hope, and the dear salvation of our souls. To make this useful to us:

First, if God hath spoken it, this binds us all to believe it: shall we call in question the truth of God, the God of truth? Heaven and earth shall fail, Luke xxi. 33, that his word may stand: heaven and earth shall be restored, that his word may not be infringed. Believe God's word, who doth not? You may speak this to Gentiles; but God is well known in Jewry, and his name is great in Israel, Psal. lxxvi. 1. But here is the misery of it, our hands give our tongues the lie. We say we believe, and it may be we believe what we say; but may we not be de-

ceived in both? Faith is a thing not seen, and faith is of things not seen: yet there is a faith that may be seen; invisible in itself, visible in the fruits it produceth. "In the city of our God, as we have heard, so have we seen," Psal. xlviii. 8. We have not only heard the profession of faith, but seen the works of it. Faith is a spark, and a deluge of lusts may drown it. There is an historical faith, which believes that there shall be new heavens and earth; but this comes short of true blessedness: and there is saving faith, that believes our own part in that new glory; that we shall have a dwelling in those heavens, prepared for us by Jesus Christ; and this is the faith that shall do us good. It was small comfort for the old world to see Noah's ark building, while themselves had no hope of preservation in it. But Noah believed that it was built for his safety, and rejoiced. The want of our faith shall not disannul or frustrate the promise of God, nor make his word of none effect; that shall stand, though we perish. Lord, thou wilt make this new world for us, make us new for it; that we in it, and thou by us, may be glorified for evermore.

Next, let us always bear in mind the promises of God: much good comfort is lost for want of memory. The troubles of a Christian heart be very great, for number, variety, and bitterness; only there is one ingredient that sweetens them all, the promise of God. "I will be with thee in trouble;" and, "Thou shalt not be tempted above thy strength:" if we could but remember these promises, when we feel such assaults or pangs, how could we want courage? Why should we fear poverty, the loss of a little rubbish; or death, the breaking of a brittle glass; that have God's infallible promise, both for a new world and a new life in that world, never to be taken from us? The memory is the soul's exchequer or treasury, the safest hold in her citadel. All the promises of God are jewels, more precious than gold or rubies: where should those jewels be stored up, but in this cabinet, the memory? This place is not built of brass, but frail and brittle. Of all faculties in man it does first wax old: beauty, which is but a flower, doth often outlast it. Of all powers in man, it is least at command: a man may be the master of his invention, of his elocution; but who could ever boast himself to be the master of his memory, or promise himself that that should not fail? There is a thief still lurking at the door of this treasury; even he that robbed us of our first estate, the innocency of nature, and would also filch away our second, the happiness of grace. Therefore look well to thy memory; keep that closet full of the Divine promises; that in all thy spiritual distempers thou mayst have a cordial ready to revive thy fainting heart. But alas, our memory is more apt to lose, than to gain: there's both land and sea in it; the losing part, that is the sea; the keeping part is the land. Many hear the word, as a tankard-bearer fetches water from the conduit: all the way he hath it, carries it, feels it; but at last he empties it into another's cistern, and is never the better for it. We are harrowed with oppressions, hurried with persecutions; our estate is taken from us, death dissolves us; yet what can dishearten us, if we trust this promise, that a new heaven, new earth, a new life and new glory, shall be provided for us, and everlastingly abide with us?

"We look for new heavens." As God hath prepared this inheritance, and promised it; built it, and given us the grant of it; it is fit we should do our part, and confidently expect it. Expectation is the action of hope, a continual action; as hope never ceaseth looking till it be stated in possession. Hope

is taken three ways. First, for the doctrine of faith; Render "a reason of the hope that is in you," 1 Pet. iii. 15. Next, for the object of hope, the thing expected; "We wait for the hope of righteousness by faith," Gal. v. 5. Lastly, for that holy affection of the mind, which looks for the promised blessedness. Faith and hope differ three ways. First, in order: faith goes before and begetteth hope: faith is the hypostasis, or foundation, of things hoped for, Heb. xi. 1. Yet not faith, but the Spirit of God, is the efficient cause of hope. Faith may be the mother, but the Holy Ghost is the Father, of all gracious hope: He begets us again to a lively hope, 1 Pet. i. 3. There is a hope blown into us, and as soon blown from us; but this is a hope generated in us, and it brings forth a substance. Secondly, in operation; the proper office of faith is to justify us; of hope, to support us. Thirdly, in the subject; and this differs three ways; in manner, measure, and time. In the manner; for faith relieth on the promise, hope resteth in the thing promised. *Fides respiciet verbum rei, spes autem rem verbi*, as Augustine saith; Faith regards the word of the substance, but hope the substance of the word. In the measure; our salvation begins in faith, is perfected and made complete by hope. In the time; faith apprehendeth the remission of sins and justification in present; hope is exercised in the expectation of life to come.

2. We expect these things, we have them not yet. "We are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?" Rom. viii. 24. It may be said, we now see heaven, why then do we hope for it? There is one heaven and earth which we look upon, another which we look for: they be old we look upon, we look for new. But Stephen "looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God," Acts vii. 55. Yes, he saw God's glory, not his own: we look for the things which concern ourselves. Stephen saw the glory which he should have; yet until his death he did not enjoy it, but in hope. But a man running in a race, may set his eye upon the prize which he runs for, and hopes to obtain; so there is a hope seen. We answer, that there be two things in hope: the material part, which is the thing itself; and the formal part, which is the obtaining and fruition of it: the former may be seen, not the latter but in hope.

3. The future estate of the militant saints is an inheritance, and that is properly a state of expectancy, and so a fit object for hope. Our hope is in this life, our inheritance in the life to come. Hope we have here, in the state of grace; inheritance there, in the state of glory. Vain is the hope which looks no further than to the pleasure of a mortal condition; that hopes only to be rich, noble, happy here. The blame is not in hope, but in our misplacing it. As that is we hope in, such is our hope. We lean on a reed, Isa. xxxvi. 6, take hold by a colweb, Job viii. 14, catch at a shadow, Eccles. xxxiv. 2; we put our hope in them that must die, and then our hope must die with them. Hope not in princes: for if we do, to dust they turn, Psal. cxlvi. 3, 4, and there lies our hope in the dust with them. But a right hope makes a man alive again that was half dead: when he droops, give him hope, and his spirits will come afresh. As Jacob, when he was put in hope to see Joseph alive, he revived, Gen. xlv. 27. The other hope is but a waking dream; but this is the helmet of hope, 1 Thess. v. 8, the anchor of hope, Heb. vi. 19; things of substance, that will hold, that have metal in them. When breath, life, and all fail, this hope fails not; but even then puts life into us, when our life is gone; from us. When we must forego our

life, it bids, Let it go: when it is gone, it presents us with a better; even an eternal mansion in the heavens, 2 Cor. v. 1. My soul had fainted within me, but that I hoped "to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living," Psal. xxvii. 13.

4. That there is an expectation, it is granted; but who are they to whom it is granted? For, as St. James speaketh, "If any man seem to be religious, and brideth not his tongue, this man's religion is vain," Jam. i. 26. So if any man hopes for this new inheritance above, and does not first become a new creature below, that man's expectation is in vain. For shall a man engross this world, heap up riches, and glue his soul to them; and yet after all this present felicity, look for a new heaven and a new earth? No, that rich man heard otherwise from Abraham: "Son, remember thou in thy life-time receivest good things, and Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented," Luke xvi. 25. To him that had all this plenty, all this pleasure, is this spoken. But this expectation belongs to God's afflicted ones; they that suffer so much misery in this old world, to them is promised a new. For "if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable," 1 Cor. xv. 19. But we have a hope that can make us rich; and rich the poorest Christian may be, in three respects.

(1.) By propriety and right which he hath to an estate, though for the present it be out of his hands. The wealthy merchant may be sometimes out of cash, because his wealth lies in traffic or commerce, or is intrusted out to others; yet in respect of the evidences and bonds he hath to assure him his own, he is still rich. Let a saint be miserable, even to the want of bread, yet he hath a right and evidence to infinite riches, the treasure of blessedness laid up in this new world; confirmed to him under the hand and seal of God; a sure Debtor, that never broke his word. Yea, he hath already the earnest of this glorious estate, a heavenly peace in his heart; so that he may say to the richest worldling, *Plus mihi in corde quam tibi in arca*; i. e. I have more in my heart than you have in your chest. Wealthy Croesus had not so much riches in his coffers, as poor Job had in his conscience. So long as heaven hath any treasure in it, and that Christ himself does not break, the believer cannot be poor. Well therefore may we look for these new heavens, that have so little under the old. Here is one expectation, of right it belongs to us.

(2.) By reversion. A man purchaseth a lordship, endowed with fair revenues, to fall unto him after the decease of some one in present possession of it. During this expectation he cannot be called poor; for before the expiration his credit is good, and at the expiration his state is good. We prefer the reversion of some great manor, before the present possession of a small farm. This glorious new world is the militant saints' in reversion; though we tarry for it, we shall have it. Temporal reversions wait the end of another's life; for this we must wait until the end of our own life. This is another expectation for us; it is also ours by reversion.

(3.) By heritage. "The heir, so long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be Lord of all," Gal. iv. 1. The heir in his minority lives at his father's finding; and must learn how to rule, by being first taught how to serve. We are heirs, but yet in our nonage. And as the law provides in some tenures, that men shall not come to their lands before they come to their wits; so this heritage is not given to us, till we be fitted for the inheritance. There is great difference betwixt a temporal and this eternal heritage. Below, the inheritance comes not but by death of the party in

possession: above there is no prejudice to the ancestor; he dies not for the heir to succeed him. We need not fear to do God any wrong, from whom it comes, by our coming to it. Below, the father must be dead, and the son living; but above, the Father is ever living, and the son cannot inherit till first he be dead. Here we come to inherit by the death of others; there we come to it by our own death. There is no son inquiring into his father's age before the time; but rather a succession of the young without a recession (departure) of the elder: a succession, as of lights; the second burns clear, yet the first goes not out, but burns as clear as it. Thus rich we are, though our purses be empty. "Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?" Jam. ii. 5. We say of a rich man's son, There goes a great heir, though for the time his means be short enough. "We are now the sons of God, but it doth not yet appear what we shall be," 1 John iii. 2. We are now the children of grace, we shall be the sons of glory. We confute our own distrusting hearts, with what we are; and the disgracing world, with what we shall be. Let them devour this world that have a mind to it; this perishing, troublesome habitation; we look for new heavens and a new earth, full of peace and pleasure, and that for ever.

"Wherein dwelleth righteousness." A heathen could say, I had rather a man without money, than money without a man: so a man without a house, or a house without an inhabitant, is an unhappy separation. To what purpose should God be at such cost in the reparation, at such trouble in the reparation, of this great building, if at last there should be none to dwell in it? But he that re-edifies the house, will be sure of a tenant, and such a one as will pay him rent duly for it; even all he requires; thankfulness and praises. But what do you call this tenant? Righteousness; which is a gracious quality, or rather a habit: but what is this to an inhabitant? Shall we imagine a quality without a subject? Holiness dwells in God's material houses on earth, as being consecrated to him, and hallowed by him: but yet doth any holiness that is inherent to the walls or seats, praise him? Do the stones set forth his glory? No, there must be some other nature, endued with life and understanding, that can be capable of this office. Righteousness alone cannot do it, nor can it be done without righteousness. To what purpose is the sun's shining into an empty house? It might be as well dark as light, if nobody ever comes into it. We must therefore seek out some capacities, wherein this righteousness may be resident. Of this there be divers interpretations, each containing a full and complete sense.

1. Some understand by this righteousness, the clear justice of God, which shall pronounce a general sentence upon all the world; rewarding every man according to his works; binding the ungodly with everlasting chains of darkness, and crowning the saints with a glorious peace. Then shall his righteousness shine forth; and it shall be the universal acclamation of all creatures, The Lord is just. Here, men that live best, commonly speed worst; misery waits only at the door of piety; none but Christians dwell at the sign of the cross. Pleasure courts the rich, and the rich court pleasure; all their things are fortunate and fruitful. They prosper with them, as if prosperity itself had sworn not to dwell without them. Is this thy righteousness, O Lord? (forgive our expostulation). Is this justice? that thorns should flourish, vines languish? that thy friend should mourn, while thine enemies are jocund? Is

this the God you have served all this while, says Job's wife to him? Curse him to his face, and die. But, Thou speakest as a foolish woman: she had that for her labour. When trouble comes to a good man, one would think that the messenger were mistaken, and should be told that he knocks at the wrong door. While the innocent suffer, and the guilty domineer, is this justice? Yes, the righteousness of God is beyond exception: all men shall find it; they to their cost, that cavil against it. The sun of that Divine justice shines clear now; but there is a mist before our eyes, we do not so well perceive it. In this renovation of the world, it shall be perspicuous and manifest; all men and angels shall take full notice of it in that final sentence of Come and Go; "Come, ye blessed," and, "Go, ye cursed:" and it shall be the acknowledgment of heaven and earth, and of all creatures, Righteous art thou, O Lord, in all thy ways, and holy in all thy works, Psal. cxlv. 17.

2. But if we thus understand it, the justice of God dwells every where: no place can exclude that which is infinite. Heaven is full of his justice; crowning those souls there, that are justified by the righteousness of Christ. Hell is full of his justice; punishing those impenitent spirits with insufferable pains. The earth is full of his justice; the wicked are often met withal in their sins, and the innocent are delivered from their enemies. Micajah is justified, Naboth is revenged, the Baalites confounded, and Ahab judged. Justice keeps her circuit; yea, without deferring all matters to the last assizes, she walks her round, and does martial law upon incorrigible offenders. Though the last day shall be honoured with the full execution of God's justice, yet it hath a dwelling in all places; in the highest heavens, in the lowest hell, and in the midst between both; justice dwells every where. Therefore some make the opposition thus: In the new world dwelleth justice; in this, mercy. Now the mercy of God suffers evil men to live promiscuously among the good: in that new world there shall be a separation; the goats shall be driven from the sheep, the tares weeded from the wheat, the chaff fanned from the corn, the dust and rubbish shall be swept into hell, and this new house shall be filled with nothing but righteousness.

There is no hope beyond mercy, and this is the time of it; the next is of justice. There is no hope of mercy without repentance, and this is the time of that too; the next is of judgment. All things are not in season at all times. Repentance is now in season; first, because there we weep for sin where we have done it; then, because there we cease from sin, where we might still continue in it. If the heart be broken now, mercy is ready to heal it; but if that day find it obdurate, justice shall fearfully break it. The tears we shed now, shall be dried up then; but if our eyes be dry till that day, they shall be set a running for ever, without either ease or pity. Repentance now seeks sinners, and they will not entertain it; sinners shall then seek repentance, and not find it. If they could, yet in that world repentance shall do them as little good without mercy, as in this world mercy will do them without repentance. Now therefore let us embrace repentance for our sins, because here dwells mercy to pardon them; at that day it will be too late, for there dwells only justice to punish them.

3. Others, by this righteousness, conceive those new delights, and spiritual pleasures, which shall fill this new world. So they would have the opposition to stand between the sorrows of the old and joys of the new. This is the vale of miseries, that the mount of blessedness. And why should not

righteousness be taken for delight, as well as sin is put for anguish? Never did man find pleasure upon earth, like the sweet testimony of an appeased conscience, cleansed by the blood of the Lamb, and quieted by the presence of the Holy Ghost. It is a continual feast: other feasts may be soon broken off, as was Adonijah's; or conclude in bitterness, as did Belshazzar's; this is an everlasting banquet.

What meet we with in this old world, but trouble and misery? If we travel into this little world, man, we shall find new discoveries. Let him be a world, and himself will be the land, and misery the sea. Misery, like the sea, swells above all the hills, and reacheth to the remotest parts of this earth, man. We are but dust, coagulated and kneaded into earth by tears; our matter is earth, our form misery. We may have one day in seven a holy-day of happiness, but our whole week is misery. We may have a breathing of happiness, but our whole journey is misery. If there be one greensward or fair meadow to refresh us, yet the greater part of our pilgrimage is rough and dirty. There may be a dram of honey in the brim of the cup, but the main draught is bitterness. Few and evil are our days: few in number, and those few evil in nature; not one of them named for good. Few and evil below, many and good above. Misery is our familiar, happiness but a stranger to us. Of this world's happiness, man is the tenant; of misery, the landlord; of happiness, the farmer; of misery, the freeholder; of peace, but the temporary holder; of trouble, the proprietary. If we have one dish of comfort once in many meals, yet our continual diet is sorrow: "My tears have been my meat day and night," Psal. xlii. 3. The deluge of calamity overflows this human earth many cubits. Of this earth, the highest ground, the loftiest hills, are kings; and yet even they have not line enough to fathom this sea, and to say, My misery is but thus deep. As one expresseth it, To-day also has its Massah and its Meribah: bitter, bitter all. As the repining Jews said of the bread of heaven, We see nothing but manna; so we may justly say of the bread of earth, the bread of affliction, We see nothing but misery. Misery in want, misery in abundance; in want, the misery of murmuring and impatience; in abundance, the misery of riot and unthankfulness. Misery in honour, pride and envy; misery in a low estate, filthiness and drudgery. In health misery, misery in sickness: there wantonness, here painfulness; in the latter men cry, Oh their head; in the former they might cry, Oh their heart. The next world begins with happiness, and with a happiness that never ends. Therefore we look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness, that we might exchange our old woes for new pleasures.

4. All these be fair expositions, and analogical to the truth: they all bear a good sense. But why should we not take righteousness here in the literal acceptation? There dwelleth righteousness; that is, holiness, pureness, innocency, and the perfection of goodness. There dwelleth Christ, and he is Righteousness: "The Lord our Righteousness," Jer. xxiii. 6. So here is the full antithesis of this new world to the old. Righteousness dwells there, unrighteousness here: here, sin and guiltiness; there, grace and holiness: below, transgression; sanctification, above. This world is the orb of sin, which corrupted all; that new one, the orb of righteousness, which restoreth all. This is the winter wherein all things wither; that is the spring which revives them. The world was made good, only sin depraved it. Satan was honourable before sin, for an angel; amiable before sin, for a celestial intelligence: his nature

was good, his disposition good; but sin, when that came, marred all. Good was before evil; before malice charity. Decay entered by sin, dishonour by sin, death by sin. Call his name Ichabod, for the glory is departed, 1 Sam. iv. 21. At the birth of Ichabod, sin, the glory is gone, the ark of God is removed. This is a constant incumbent of the earth; never non-resident, never out of business. No place can be rid of him, no time exclude him, no action escape him. He crept into heaven with an angel, into paradise with a devil, into man's nature with the root of that nature. Where can we devise to keep it out? At home in our houses he is an hungry, abroad a companion, in our journeys a fellow-traveller, at our feasts a guest, in our taverns a pot-companion, in our beds a bed-fellow, in our bosoms a tyrant, every where an enemy. In God's temple sin will not leave us; at our prayers it will be interrupting us; it insinuates itself into every action we do; even our best is not without some touch of sin, or at least some assault of sin. It may get into our beneficence, and be vain-glory; into our devotions, and be hypocrisy; into our friendship, and be flattery; into our hope, and make it smell of presumption; into our humility, and turn it into base dejection; into our repentance, and work it down to desperation; into our best works, and there be an opinion of merit; which is a blow with the left heel, that kicks down all our milk.

Sin is the epidemical disease of the world: as the air is a common benefit, so sin is a common mischief. Other elements know their own lords: for the earth, this piece of ground is one man's, that another's; for the water, this well is mine, that my neighbour's; for the fire, every man sits by his own hearth: but the air is equally beneficial to all; the tenant hath as much air as the landlord, the fool as the learned, the beggar as the prince. So sin is a common infection. "In many things we sin all," Jam. iii. 2. One man languisheth of a consumption, another labours of a fever, a third is racked with the gout, a fourth swollen with the dropsy; every one hath a disease, to bring him to the common end, death. But sin is the universal disease of all: "Death passed upon all, for that all have sinned," Rom. v. 12. The sin of the world, is indeed a world of sin.

As the assaults of sin are incessant for continuance of time, so also innumerable for the choice of place. There is no faculty of the soul, no member of the body, but is a speeding place for sin; but especially it aims at the heart. Let us watch and ward every where; the one an ocular, the other a manual, martial, presidial defence; but especially keep the heart. The tongue is an unruly member, yet it hath fewer bars; only the teeth and the lips are set to keep in the tongue. But for the heart, there is a universal defence or barrier, and all little enough to keep the heart. Sin shoots some men in the eye, and here his arrow is uncleanliness; thus he wounded David in the eye, by the beauty of Bathsheba: some in the hand, as Gehazi; and his shaft was bribery: some in the tongue, as Ananias, by lying; and this is his common artillery for tradesmen: some in the gall, as Joab; and they are all for blood; turning their embraces into embrocadoes: some in their forehead; and they will carry the mark of the beast to their graves, Rev. xiii. 16: some in the foot, by profaneness; and they are not only swift to shed blood, but ready to trample upon all religion and goodness: others in the head, with the frenzy of dissimulation; others in the heart, by covetousness; and Satan shall have more service of them for an ounce of gold, than God shall have for the kingdom of heaven. Thus standeth man in the midst of the assaults of sin, like

the anatomized figure of him in the frontispiece of an almanac; where Aries is discharging at his head, Taurus at his neck, cowardly Leo at his back, Cancer is gnawing his stomach, Sagittarius is shooting at his thighs, and Pisces nibbling on his toes. By this time you perceive, that this present world is the region of sin; sin will dwell in us, so long as we dwell in these tabernacles. Let us now look upon the condition of the next.

There dwelleth righteousness: no sin there, altogether righteousness. Here indeed we have some righteousness, but it is blended with sin: in the most regenerate saint on earth, there is flesh as well as spirit; and it is a question sometimes, which of them shall get the predominance. We have a righteousness that is perfect now; but that dwells in heaven. In the person of Christ, and is only imputed to us. This is a justifying righteousness, and it is absolute; but without us. That same sanctifying righteousness, which is within us, inherent to our own persons, is so imperfect, that sin is joint tenant with it in our mortal body; and there is a perpetual contention between them, which shall have the superiority. They are like the land and sea within us, the one would keep, the other would gain; Michael and the dragon in one heaven; Cæsar and Pompey in one empire; Nehemiah and Sanballat in one city; Isaac and Ishmael in one family; Jacob and Esau in one womb; the ark and Dagon in one temple; grace and corruption in one Christian. Michael against the dragon, Cæsar against Pompey, Nehemiah against Sanballat, Isaac against Ishmael, Jacob against Esau, the ark against Dagon, grace against corruption, shall prevail; but not yet. The flesh is wounded, not vanquished; or conquered, not dead. We are still mortifying it as fast as we can; but it hath a serpent's trick, to keep the head and tail safe and whole. Often it bites us, and not seldom stings us; till we are full of St. Paul's groan, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Rom. vii. 24. Nothing will rid it out of us, but that which rids us out of the world, death itself.

Only these new heavens and earth challenge this privilege, that there shall dwell righteousness without sin, life without pain, happiness without fear, and joy without sorrow. Darkness (we know) is compared to sin; as, "the works of darkness;" now sin is as universally overspread this deformed world, as darkness was over that unformed world; until God said, Let there be light; and there was light, when as yet there was no sun. Before the light was made, darkness was over all; afterwards, the light being formed, darkness was reduced to one place and season, the night. This light continued for three days unfixed; on the fourth day God created the sun; and then it is likely that all the former dispersed light was gathered into that one body, and treasured up in that great luminary the sun. So shall it be in the recreation of this world: now grace and sin are scattered all over, as light and darkness in the twilight is confused throughout the air; it is twilight with us yet. But at the last day Christ shall make a separation; as the waters once were gathered into the sea, that the dry land might appear. All darkness, all sin and wickedness, shall be removed down into hell, and there be confined, never to break out. All light, that is, all righteousness and holiness, shall be gathered into this new heaven and earth, and there be concentrated for ever. There dwelleth righteousness, and happy they that dwell with it.

"Wherein dwelleth righteousness." As travellers that have embarked themselves for the discovery of some new land, unknown, but not undesired, purposing to ing a plantation there, when they are once

arrived in it, labour to satisfy themselves of the particular commodities it affordeth; omitting no occasion or convenience, but thoroughly examining the site, the air, the fertility, the strength and safety of it; no corner escapes unsearched, no pleasure unconsidered; and finding all according to their desire, they not only resolve themselves, but also invite their friends, to dwell there. So, these four sabbaths together, our meditations have been busy in surveying this new world, the land of promise, the inheritance of the saints, and the habitation of righteousness. And yet all we have said is but drawn from a negative divinity; and indeed, what other way is there to describe this future happiness, than by removing from it such defects, as fill all temporal things with encumbrances? One day's journey more let us add to our former discovery; that the glorious beauty of these new heavens and earth may both inflame our own hearts, and kindle a holy fire in others, to desire it. This present world is troubled with three diseases; a contagion, a consumption, and a palsy. The righteousness that dwells in this new world, as it is out of the reach and danger of these distempers, so it is diametrically opposed to them. First, contagion or infection, as in the pestilent fever, is full of spots; but righteousness is most pure. Secondly, the consumption is a pining away, and languishing into death; but righteousness is immortal. Thirdly, the palsy is a shaking grief, they that are troubled with it can hold nothing steadily; but righteousness is constant, inflexible, unalterable, and endures for ever. Thus by the present sickness of the old world, we may guess of the death of the new.

1. This world is infected, yea, infection itself. Take it metaphorically, and what find we in it but infection? Our evil deeds infect by their example; our evil words infect by their persuasion; our looks infect by their allurements; we breathe nothing but infection. Materially, this earth soils us: in summer we are soiled with dust, in winter with dirt. These be those pollutions of the world, which we are evermore rubbing, or brushing, or washing, or wiping off. There is nothing in this lower region, but it is subject to soil: the very earth itself is a soil: our land we call the soil; how can it then but soil us? Nothing undefiled below; whatever it is, wherever it is, it must needs savour of the nature of the soil. All foul, all blemished here: but in that new world dwells righteousness; a pure and sincere being, without any foreign mixture; "an inheritance undefiled," 1 Pet. i. 4, not capable of defilement. Nothing can come in to soil it. Into that city shall enter no unclean thing, Rev. xxi. 27: all uncleanness shall be kept out for ever. We would have all things clean here below; we cannot: we desire to have clean houses, clean ways, clean diet, and clean apparel. Oh how sweet will it be to dwell with righteousness in those new heavens, where all things are clean! Crystals and diamonds, nay, the firmament and stars, be not now so pure. That same galaxy or milky way, a bright circle of the sky, which the poets imagined to be a walk for their gods and goddesses in summer evenings; but philosophy better says, is caused by the reflection of stars; it is but wan and dusky in comparison of the diaphanous clarity of all things in this new kingdom.

2. This world is in a consumption; the vital parts of it are corrupted. The best estate of things doth not hold long: and if the substance remains, yet the lustre is gone; and the first symptom or degree to a consumption in a man, is the losing of his colour. The glory of all flesh is but as the flower of the grass, Isa. xl. 6: grass, that is the substance; flower, that is the beauty of it. The grass itself lasts not long,

but the flower of the grass not so long as the grass itself. Helen outlived her fairness, David his strength. Let no blasting change the flower, no canker eat it, no beast tread it down with his foot; yet of itself will it fall off, and leave the stalk standing. The rose will wither, and the violet grow pale, of themselves, though no violence be done to them; the one will fade, the other wax pale and wan. A flourishing estate is not kept long, either by the flowers that are worn, or by us that wear them. Were the things of this world clean, yet take them at their best, they are fading. Every year flowers and leaves too fall off, till the spring comes and revives them. Of many things the substances themselves fade; and of this fading we all complain. Or if they fade not of themselves, to us they do. We are hungry, and we eat; yet even that fades, and we are as weary of our fullness as we were of our fasting. We are weary, and we rest; yet even that fades, and we grow as weary of our rest as ever we were of our weariness.

There is a melting takes upon all temporary things; but righteousness, the household stuff of this new mansion, knows no consumption. Decay and death are the effects of sin; above there is no sin, therefore no decay; no decay, therefore no death. The roses and flowers that make up the garland of righteousness, never can wither: the pearls and diamonds, and stones more precious, set in that "crown of righteousness," 2 Tim. iv. 8, can never be sullied. The songs of that triumph never cease. There is an eternal spring; and as the glory is new to us at first, so old it cannot wax; it shall be new for ever. As the shows made for the glory and state of some solemn day, are first seen of vulgar eyes, before they arrive at their sight for whom they were ordained; so the honour and bravery of this earth is more in the spectators, than in the spectacle, more in the lookers-on, than in the persons that wear it. Say they are gallant shows, yet but shows, transient things, pageants wherewith the eye is soon glutted. After three or four times beholding them, they grow old and stale, and we look upon them with an idle and careless eye. But the glory of these new heavens, the splendour of righteousness, those true and substantial honours, as they are ever permanent, so they are ever new; as they are never fading, so never cloying: there is infinite variety, satiety none at all. Of vanity we soon surfeit, grow weary, and loathe it: but the joys of righteousness will be as everlasting in our desires, as they are in their own sweetness.

3. The things of this world are taken with a palsy; so shaking, that their joints cannot hold together. There is nothing certain, nothing steady; nor can we be more certain of any thing among them, than of the uncertainty of them. They tumble daily from man to man; one man's inheritance shakes into another man's purchase. From them that have riches, to them that are covetous, there is a continual shaking. Much wealth is co-heated for want of heirs, or confiscated for some offences, or rioted and made away by unthriftiness, or consumed with fire, or drowned with water; many a fair patrimony falls to the ground. Or if riches be not taken from us, yet we are taken from them; which comes all to one pass. The choice is not great, whether I lose my servant, or my servant loseth me; either way he may be masterless, and I without a servant. Such a palsy possesseth all secular things! Do we not find it truly proof daily? When we feel the pulse of nature, by the hand of time, do we not complain that it is sick of a palsy? Yet even in this unfaithfulness of the creatures, there is a kind of faithfulness too; they are our friends, in telling us their

own fickleness. As the mechanic that had a parcel of rich stuff delivered to him, to make up a curious garment, told his customer plainly, that for a small matter given him in courtesy, he would save him a great deal of money. Put it to another, quoth he, that hath more skill; for if you trust me with the making of it, I shall certainly spoil it. So when we are about to place our confidence in worldly things, they tell us really, experimentally, the downright truth: We are fickle creatures, and have paralytic and trembling hands, that can hold nothing steadily for you. Set your minds upon heavenly things; they are constant to you. Trust us with nothing, but what you give for lost, and mean to be deceived of. This is plain dealing. Not unto us, say they, not unto us, but to the Lord give your hearts and confidence. "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they put not their trust in uncertain riches," 1 Tim. vi. 17. Not only doth God charge Paul, to charge Timothy to charge us, but even the creatures themselves charge us, not to put our trust in their unstableness. They will not suffer us to set up our rest in them, not in any thing below; but they force us upon the Creator of all, who hath provided an inheritance for us, out of all danger, wherof we shall never be dispossessed; gold that shall never be embased by any bad mixture; a crown without cares, without rivals, without envy, without end: there is a treasure worth our hearts.

It is an inheritance, and all shall inherit; y^e, without prejudice to the right Heir, Christ. There shall be no wrong done, by him to us, or by us to him. Earthly inheritances are divided oftentimes with much inequality; and the privilege of primogeniture stretcheth further in many places, than it did among the ancient Jews: so that the elder serves the younger. One carries it from all, and the rest go without; or, if they have any share, the patrimony of the eldest by so much is the less. In this new world it is not so: all the sons of God are heirs, none underlings; and not heirs under wardship and hope, but possessive inheritors; and not inheritors of a small pittance of land, but of a kingdom; and that not of a temporary kingdom, subject to domestic treasons, or foreign invasions; no murmuring, no conspiracy, no mutiny shall disturb this kingdom. There may be, as Augustine saith, a different glory of each, yet there is a common glory of all; all shall have the same glory, though not the same degree of glory. It is of the nature of light, and such spiritual things; which be one and the same to all, and the whole to each. So it is in sounds and smells: let there be a thousand together, when the bells ring, and they hear all alike. Let there be multitudes in a garden of flowers, and every one smells as much sweetness as if there were no more but himself. There is but one heaven, and what room soever we have in it, we shall find peace without trouble, joy without sorrow, glory without envy, and pleasure without end.

For the application. 1. If we would dwell with righteousness, first, let righteousness dwell with us; if we are with that in the new world, that must be with us in the old. Many would dwell in heaven, but they have no mind to righteousness. We have three lives: life, here; fame, when we are dead; and glory, in heaven; but there is a fourth, which is the life of all these lives, the life of grace and righteousness; without which, not only our bodies shall rot in the dust, but even our memories shall stink above ground, and our souls perish in the lowest pit. Righteousness is life indeed. But doth righteousness dwell with us? Where, O where shall we find it? If we look for it in the country, there it is igno-

ance and superstition; if in the city, there it is fraud and oppression; if in the court, there it is pride and affectation. But you will say, it dwells in our hearts. Who can tell that? In men's lives we do not see it; only in their lips we hear it. So then righteousness is hard driven for habitation, when it can be admitted no further than the mouth, and have no other dwelling than in the lips. Into the chamber of our hearts it may not come; in the hall of conversation it is not seen; only we allow it a little residence in the door of our lips; a lip-righteousness, that is all. It is in many men's courses or lives, as in some discourses or treatises; we can see no fruit for leaves, nor matter for words. But I remember what answer a statesman made to a frivolous petition. I may divide, saith he, your petition into two parts, matter and words: now your matter is naught; and with me, assure yourself, your words shall not carry it. There be two things respectable in a Christian; his life, and his profession: and if his life be naught, let him never think that his profession shall carry it out with God.

"Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart, &c. He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation," Psal. xxiv. 3-5. We must get righteousness to dwell with us, or never look to dwell with righteousness. If we do not entertain it here, it will reject us there. When "mercy and truth have met together, and righteousness and peace have kissed each other;" then "shall truth spring out of the earth, and righteousness shall look down from heaven," Psal. lxxxv. 10, 11. But alas, those holy-days be gone. When we read the volumes of the fathers, we would think they did nothing else but write; when we consider their devotions, we might think they did nothing else but pray. But coming to these our days, and marking the backs of men and women, we may well think they study nothing but pride; observing their full tables, that they mind nothing but excess and intemperance; looking upon their lives, that they regard nothing but sins, and mind no such thing as righteousness.

2. The hope of this future life sweetens all the bitterness of the present. There is nothing that so troubles a good heart as sin; to be rid of sin, it holds a great happiness. All the epithets and attributes of this world cannot make up so full a grievance as this one, that it is sinful. When we have called it, as it is, a vain world, a false world, an unquiet world, a miserable world, one would think we had said enough to disgrace it, and to make it loathed; but they all come short of this, a sinful world, a wicked world: when we have said that, we have indeed hit it right; that alone is sufficient to make it detestable. Let us examine our own hearts, if ever one drop of remorse hath entered into them, whether we would not have given all the world, yea, even our own life, to be sure of the forgiveness of one sin that troubles us. And yet that being forgiven, and our heavenly Father pacified by the blood of his Son, drying up our penitent tears with the beams of mercy; after all this, we are apt to fall into new sin, and again to trouble heaven and earth. Oh what peace can there be in the region of sin? But in this new world there shall dwell righteousness, and her inseparable companions, peace, joy, glory, happiness, and eternal life. "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you:" the hearing of which words in the end, shall make us blessed without end. Amen.

VERSE 14.

Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.

THERE are two especial motives to bring us into the way of goodness; the bitterness of this life, which we feel, and the sweetness of the future life, which we expect. For the former, howsoever some besotted earth-dwellers have deified this world, and call it by no meaner a title than their god, and their maker; yet they shall find it rather a destroyer. There be divers kinds of makers, in an abusive sense: so drunkenness makes beasts; that is a kind of maker; so pride makes devils; that is another maker. The devil made sin; he is a maker too: sin made death; that is a maker too: death made destruction; and hath a stroke in making also. But all these makers be properly unmakers, marrers, destroyers. So we use to say, that wealth makes a man: but what does it make him? It may make him proud, it may make him licentious, it may make him a fool, a sinner, fuel for the fire of hell; it can never make him a man, much less a saint. The way for a man to have the world his friend, is not to be friends with it. Men are naturally friends to their friends, and enemies to their enemies; but the cross, humorous, and peevish world is his enemy's friend, and his friend's enemy. As the poet says,

Insequeris? fugis? fugis? insequor —

*Dost thou pursue? I fly: but dost thou fly?
I then pursue —*

Scorn it, and it will woo thee; love it, and it will undo thee. But is not the world kind to the covetous or voluptuous man, her darling, the worldling? Yes, as Delilah was to Samson, or Jael to Sisera; she will cut his throat in kindness, and for pure love send his soul to hell. But to the poor man that despiseth it, it is indeed a friend, and a means to help him unto blessedness; in the same sense that the law is said to help a man to salvation, or righteousness. For the law shows him that he hath no righteousness of his own, and so occasions him to seek it where it may be found, which is only in Christ; so the world shows him that it hath no happiness of its own, and therefore sends him to seek it in this new world, there he is sure to find it. And that is the other motive. In heaven there is a constant and eternal fulness of joy; therefore, thither let us lift up our hearts. "Wherefore, beloved, seeing that," &c.

Generally, in the words, we have an insinuation, and an injunction; a matter granted, and a charge imposed. In the insinuation, there is a word of tender affection, Beloved: and a word of charitable persuasion, Ye do look for these things. Upon this ground of encouragement is the rest of this text and charge built; this is the ground of all that follows. First let me despatch these two, before I come to the distribution of the rest.

"Beloved." There is no better cognizance of Christ's servants than love: there is no love but wisheth good to the person loved: there is no such good to any person, as to be saved. Thus our apostle expresseth his love to us, by persuading us to diligence in the great business of our salvation. All affections are radiated in love: there is a fear to lose, and that fear is grounded on love; there is a desire to enjoy, and that desire is love; there is a sorrow for parting, and that sorrow proceeds from love. Mary wept for their having taken away her

Lord; and this was because she loved much. Christ was all love; not a word he spake, not an action he did, not a passion he suffered, but was an argument, a character of his love. When he complained of the heaviness of his soul, it was not, as one says, stupor that caused this, but love; nor was his mind cast away, but cast down. He opened the windows of his body, that through them we might see the love that was in his heart. He brought love, he bought love, he exercised love, he bequeathed love, he is love. As the Jews said of Esdras, that if knowledge had put out her candle, at his brain she might light it; so if all our love were extinguished, yet at the love of Christ we might easily rekindle it. Here is the fire, but where is the sacrifice, our practical charity? We say, charity begins at home; but Christ's charity began abroad; to show love to us, he neglected to love himself. But our love will neither begin at home nor abroad, neither at his nor our own fire. "Love is the fulfilling of the law," Rom. xiii. 10; and the want of it is the transgression of the law. We complain that the papists rob God of one commandment; but he that wants love, robs him of all, and so commits the worst sacrilege.

There is too little of this love in the world: lustful love there is enough, too much, but charitable love is very scant. To that question, *Lowest thou me?* we answer readily with Peter, *Yes, Lord, I love thee*: but to that other question, *If thou lovest me, what wilt thou do for me?* we are dumb; or if our lips make a fair promise, yet our hands will fail in the performance. Some men indeed at some times will be beneficial, that at most times they may be injurious. Their love is like the laughter of Apollo, who was said to smile once a year. Such is most men's love to their pastor, that they will spend ten times as much in law to maintain wrong, as they will give him by way of right. It was a by-word, *Love and a weapon will kill any man*: the world's love is joined with a weapon, it dwells at the sword's point; you shall sooner feel it cold at your heart, than warm in your kitchen. Witness these days so full of desperate homicides, as if violence would leave nature nothing to do. The mercenary soldier can hardly be justified; for when he puts on his armour, he puts off his charity, and only fights for money. This is to use one's strength against him who gave it. When Moses saw the Egyptian smiting the Hebrew, he smote the Egyptian: we may smite our enemies to help our brethren; but when we find our brethren quarrelling, and say to one of them, *Why smitest thou my brother?* he is ready to reply, *Who made thee a judge?* But for us that are tied together by so many bonds, of nature, nation, grace, neighbourhood, upon every slight occasion to be vexing and wounding one another; here is a love that fills the channels with blood: we may truly say, *This love lies a bleeding*. A curious and spruce soldier, and a furious and rough citizen, are two of the worst sights.

There is store of love in the world, but it is naught. There is a love to other men's wives, and it is adultery or wantonness; a love to other men's goods, and it is rapacity or covetousness; a love to other men's blood, and it is murder and revenge; a love to other men's honours and places, and it is envy and ambition. As the pharisaical Jews had a grammatical devotion, so we have a bastard dilection. But for that love which is the true-born child of goodness, charity to men's persons, to their estates, to their lives, to their names, to their souls; alas, it is dead in the cold, and buried in the grave of uncharitableness. So that now to preach charity, or to persuade men to be in love with love, is but our oration at the end of

a funeral sermon; which is to go on a dead man's errand. As water is of divers colours in divers places; in the sea it is green, in puddles black, against rocks foamy, among green herbs clear: so love is according to her different objects; when it affects carnal beauty, it is concupiscence; when riches, it is covetousness; when honour, it is ambition; when any sin, it is malice. It is discoloured according to those sensual things upon which it reflects. But let it be set upon goodness, upon God himself, and such things as are in relation to him, as the welfare of the church, of the state, of ourselves, of our neighbours; it is then clear and perfect: no crystal so diaphanous, no flower so sweet and lovely, as charity. Then in the heart it is compassion, in the eye pity, in the tongue comfort, in the hand beneficence.

If there be love in the pastor, he will feed his people; if there be love in the people, they will not wrong their pastor. There is indeed a kind of love in this city to preachers; but generally it is shown to those voluntaries, that will content themselves with the pay of benevolence, and graze on the commons. But if he once require his own, and challenge a proper maintenance by right, though he were an angel of God, they would abhor him. But it is not, *What wilt thou give?* but, *What didst thou owe?* Luke xvi. 5. First, pay thy debts and just dues; then talk of benevolence. It is far more fit that the preacher should receive what God gives him, than stand to the people's courtesy; which as it is not honourable for the priest, so nor is it safe for the people: for then he must square out his positions according to their dispositions; and not dare to speak to the full extent of his conscience, for fear lest, by displeasing his auditory, he should lose his salary: and where is he then? Most of our patrons are worse: for they love a divine, as the usurer loves an unthrifty heir, that he may suck his estate, and squeeze him, and leave him nothing. The church at first chose lay-men for their patrons, and now those patrons have made churchmen their slaves. In the council of Carthage, some eminent men were chosen to defend the church against pagans; they were ordained to oppose the tyranny of others: now they are the worst tyrants to it themselves. Oh where is charity? It is our prayer frequently, "From envy, hatred, and malice, and from all uncharitableness, good Lord, deliver us." Surely there is more included than some men suddenly think on: we may thus enlarge it in our thoughts: From quarrelling swaggers, from biting usurers, from litigious neighbours, from seditious lawyers, from corrupt justices, from simoniacal patrons, from politic church-robbers, from covetous engrossers, from all oppressors, and from all their uncharitableness, good Lord, deliver us. Let each one be the others' beloved, let God be the Beloved of us all, that we all may be the beloved of God in his only beloved Son, Jesus Christ.

"Seeing that ye look for such things." This is the second branch of the insinuation; wherein he presumes of their well-disposedness towards it.

I. Expectation is an action of hope, and hope is not without some ground. Blessed be God, who hath begotten us again to a lively hope, and to an inheritance incorruptible, reserved in heaven for us, 1 Pet. i. 3, 4. He begat us once in the first Adam, to this life; but this being corrupted, he begat us again in the Second Adam, to the hope of a better. This act of regenerating is doubly determined; to hope first, then to the inheritance; to hope in the state of grace, to inheritance in the state of glory. This is no dead hope, but lively: they that are be-

gotten, are begotten to life : this is somewhat. Yea, to an inheritance, which is more ; for all that are begotten, are not begotten to inherit. Poor men's children, younger brothers, are begotten ; but where is the inheritance ? Yet in inheritances there is some odds : one may be better than another : this is the best of all. And if this were in our old world we would suspect some encumbrances ; but it is in the new, in heaven, and there kept. Earth could not keep it ; here it were in hazard to be lost every moment ; it would go the same way Paradise went ; but there it is safe. These, and there, be the things we should look for. But do we ? Our wants, our wanton desires, find us looking work enough all our lives long ; but our looking fails us in the manner, and in the place. " Seek those things which are above," Col. iii. 2. So we do ; but it is an ambitious above ; we would be above one another in honour, favour, and power. There be high places, which we would not have taken away ; but offer in them, and offer for them too, rather than go without them. But such things are too low and base ; our expectation should be higher, above the hills ; higher yet, above the clouds ; yea, higher yet, beyond our sight, even above the heavens : there we are right.

2. Expectation is a fervent desire of having. " The earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God," Rom. viii. 19. Do we thus look for it, that we long to enjoy it ? No, we are so taken up with worldly things, and with looking upon them, that we have no mind to heavenly things, no looking after them. The possession of the vanity we have, thrusts out the expectation of the felicity we might have. But who does not desire the glory of this new world ? Some do not believe it, therefore never desire it : some believe it, but never mind it ; others desire it, but not yet ; they would have a large share of this world before it. Most men are content to embrace it, but they will take no pains for it, nor seek the way to it. We have fat desires, but lean endeavours ; as C. Flaminius played upon Philoxenes ; that he had goodly arms, and strong thighs, but he had no belly. He meant that Philoxenes had brave and valiant soldiers, fair troops of horse and foot, but no money to pay them. It may be inverted upon us : for we are all belly, full of appetite and desire to happiness ; but we have neither hands nor feet ; we will not move nor labour to attain this happiness. If death do but offer to prefer us to it, we refuse him with deprecations, and fortify ourselves against him with antidotes and preservatives. Where is our desire of heaven, when we rather die, as one says, by the constraint of necessity, than by the compliance of the will ? Instead of looking for it, we look from it ; and then only pretend a faint desire to it, when we can make no other shift, but that we must needs venture on it.

3. There is an expectation of fear. There remains a fearful looking for of judgment, Heb. x. 27. So the timorous traveller looks for the thief ; so the conscious malefactor looks for the coming of the judge ; but had rather he would never come. There is an expectation of hope : I looked for thy saving health. So in the pangs and sickness of our bodies, we look for ease ; so in the agonies and sorrows of our souls, we look for comfort. There is an expectation of desire : " My soul thirsteth for God, even for the living God," Psal. xlii. 2. We give many a look toward the thing that we love : the chaste spouse is still looking for her bridegroom. There is an expectation of faith : so Abraham " looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God," Heb. xi. 10. Our conversation is in heaven ;

whence we look for the coming of our Lord Jesus, Phil. iii. 20. A merchant in a foreign country, that hath wife and children at home, fixeth all his cares, employeth all his endeavours, to confirm an estate to himself, not where he is, but in the place whence he came, and where he desires to be. We make use of spectacles, to succour our eyes in reading ; yet we take no pleasure in looking upon the spectacles, but upon the object which is presented through them, and which they help us more clearly to behold. All temporal things are but spectacles, through which we look at the joys of heaven.

Lastly, besides all these, the expectation of our eyes, of our desires, of our hearts, there is also an expectation of our hands ; when our profession and our conversation speak all one language, that we earnestly endeavour to be saved. This is the right looking for it ; and when either of these part, we take the wrong way, and our souls will miss of their desired end. It is well, when we seek those things which we really desire. Prayer is good and necessary ; and without this constant devotion, we shall never see the glory of these new heavens : but if we do not join prayer and endeavour together, we shall no more get to the new Jerusalem, than our bodies can from one place to another without motion or transportation. There is a heresy in faith, which believes a lie ; and there is a heresy in manners, which causeth a lie to be believed. The devil persuades men, that Christ's death shall save them, though they live not such a life as he hath commanded them. This is a " strong delusion, that they should believe a lie," 2 Thess. ii. 11 ; and that is a lie which sensual men believe. Hypocrites, with their fair profession, make a show of going to heaven, though hell itself be in their hearts : and this is a lie which ignorant men believe. Either of these lies, passive or active, the one which sinners receive, the other which they make, is enough to send them to the father of lies, John viii. 44. But as we look for that we would have, so let us strive to have that we look for : our eyes, hands, hearts, and all must be employed about this weighty business. Then have we an upright heart, when we have a heart set upright ; then pure eyes, when they rest upon none but pure objects ; then clean hands, when they meddle only with clean actions. Then indeed are our souls in the way to glory, when they are set forwards by the works of grace. Then may we look for these new heavens, then do these new heavens look for us, and the blessed Renewer and Purchaser of both bring us all together.

" Wherefore seeing that," &c. This is the very point upon which the whole text turneth. It is as it were a bond between heaven and earth ; an argument to win us, a ligament to unite us. We look for a glorious place, wherefore let us be gracious men. Joy and honour is our expectation, wherefore let holiness and innocence take up our conversation. We hope to have an inheritance in that world, wherein dwelleth righteousness ; wherefore righteousness looks to have her habitation in us, while we dwell here. This is the sum of all ; which I should press in general, before I come to express in particular.

Let righteousness dwell in us ; that is the substance of this verse ; oh that it were granted in all our hearts ! If you ask, what is righteousness ? you have it here described to be undefiledness, unblamableness, and peaceableness. In these consist righteousness, and that righteousness must now dwell in us, if we look to dwell in those heavens wherein dwelleth righteousness. Indeed Christ is " The Lord our Righteousness ;" let him dwell in us, and then we shall be sure of righteousness. Let us hear the end

of all: Through this righteous and holy life, without spot and blameless, God will be won to dwell with us, which is the perfection of this life; and we shall be admitted to dwell with him, which is the last and highest perfection of the life to come. For with whomsoever Christ vouchsafes to dwell here, they shall dwell with him there. He sends down his grace to us, that he may dwell with us below; he will advance us to his glory, that we may dwell with him above.

I have done with the general scope of the text; which persuades us to a pious and sanctified life here, by the hope and expectation we have of dwelling in the new heavens hereafter. I come now to the particulars; in the handling whereof I shall desire pardon for the prolixity; the profit I hope will make amends for the length of my discourse. If I have not run over things with a brief dexterity; yet, I am confident, with an honest sincerity. Nor would the ampleness of the argument bear with a quick despatch. The Scripture is like a house of many rooms, that hath many doors; and those doors have their several locks, and those locks require their own proper keys, to let in our understandings to the view of those hidden treasures. So therefore I would, if I were able, distribute a text, as our blessed Saviour did the loaves, when he commanded the broken remainder to be gathered up, that not a syllable might be lost. All places of holy writ are not only to be examined according to the literal word, but according to the mystical sense.

"Be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless." This the apostle makes the use of his former doctrine, the application of all. Wherein we have four dependences, like so many links of one chain. First, here is an industry required, Be diligent. Secondly, the object of that industry, which is innocency or holiness, Without spot and blameless. Thirdly, the end of that object, that we may so be found of the Judge in that day. Fourthly, the blessedness of that end, to be found of him in peace; that is, in his love and favour. First, there is no remedy, but we must be found. Secondly, there is no comfort for us, if we be not found in peace. Thirdly, we cannot be found in peace without an unspotted innocency. Fourthly, and we shall never be without spot and blameless, unless we be very diligent so to keep ourselves.

"Be diligent;" *σπουδαίοντες*: this some render *satagite*, (the busy,) which they would have to signify more than a sufficiency of doing; even a vehemency of action. As Quintilian (lib. 6. c. 4.) relates of Manilius Sura; who was so nimble and expedite in a design, that Afer said of him, *Non agere, sed satagere*. They take it for some anxiety and distraction about the difficulty of an enterprise. They stretch it very far, and for my part I would not shorten or restrain the acceptance of it, in this place, and in this matter; being a business of such consequence, that our eternal life lies upon it. Be as careful as you can, and all little enough; we can never be too diligent in the work of our salvation. Morally we may be over-just, Eccl. vii. 16, and press justice so hard, till it grow rank rigour. We may be over-zealous, till our anger against the errors and infirmities of others become cruelty to their persons. We may be over-patient, till injury grows insistent, and oppressors make use of our insensibleness. We may be over-merciful, and wrong many innocents by favouring one malefactor. But we can never be over-good, nor over-holy, nor over-diligent in our care to be saved. We will never say of such men, with that heathen, *Non enim nimium diligentes*; i. e. I do not like the too-diligent. Though we strive never so hard to enter, we shall find the gate of heaven strait enough. Run we

never so fast, we are in danger of being cast behind, or coming short.

"Be diligent." The other reddition is, *studete* (study); the former makes it a work of the hand, this of the head; there it is labour, here affection; in both an earnest endeavour. Study is a busy intention of the mind, a searching of the spirit: "I communed with mine own heart, and my spirit made diligent search," Psal. lxxvii. 6. So that one referreth to action, *satagite*; the other to affection, *studete*. There be two works that argue spirit and life to be in us; motion, and sense. In the *agite*, there is motion; in the *studete*, sense. There is a defect of motion in them that labour not, and a defect of sense in them that mind not. We must both mind what we are to do, and do what we mind; both together; one is little worth without the other. There be many that will *satagere*, find themselves work enough, though they have no thanks for their labour. So Martha was troubled about many things, but she neglected the necessary one. So Peter undertook enough to save his Master, though thereby he had lost himself. Here was *satagere*, too much; but without a *studere*, no knowledge to guide it right.

There be others that have their *studere*, their knowledge in some good measure; but at the *satagere* they are quite out. They have competent science, but are the worst doers in a country. Less of their study, and more of their practice, would do better. As Augustine saith, They understand equally with us, but they do not love equally with us. They understand something of this future blessedness, but they are coldly affected with it. But *studete* and *satagite* would be kept together. For as in a natural body it fares between the head and the stomach; a rheumatic head spoils the stomach with distillations, and a distempered, crude stomach fills the head with raw vapours; they injure each other: so an erring mind misguides the endeavour, and a wrong endeavour puts the mind out of frame. If there want a mind to heaven, our endeavour will tend to the worse; if there want the endeavour of a good life to come thither, our contemplation of it is to no purpose. The one of the head, without the other of the hand, will not stir a foot: the one of the hand without the other of the head and heart, will move, but out of the way; better sit still. Put them both together in their joint offices, and then give them as much diligence as may be.

But herein, alas, our diligence flags. A runagate son, leaving his father, and living in foreign countries, was brought to want; and finding little charity among strangers, he was driven to work for sustenance. Industry brought in gains, and the sweetness of gains whetted on industry: soon he grew rich, became a merchant, and dealt in traffic with divers nations; and, among the rest, with some of that nation wherein his father lived. Hearing news how potent and opulent his father was grown, of his wealth and authority in the city, he resolves to steer his course thitherward. Four businesses he puts in his head; one was to congratulate with his friends and allies, another to be merry with his old companions, the third to gather up his debts, the last and principal to be reconciled to his father. Being arrived there, he follows his three former employments close, he fails in none of them; but these did so wholly take up his time, that he quite forgot the main, the reconciliation to his father. The mariners on a sudden call aboard, the tide carries no man; presently he must take ship, and so leaves that business utterly undone. We are all strangers upon earth, our Father is the Almighty King of heaven; we are charged but with four businesses here. First,

honestly to provide for ourselves and our families. Secondly, to perform all just duties to our neighbours. Thirdly, to solace our hearts with the sober and thankful use of God's creatures. Fourthly, chiefly of all, to serve our Maker in all holy obedience, to acknowledge our sins with humble penitence, to get his pardon through the merits of his Son Jesus, and to make sure our inheritance in these new heavens. We are diligent in the rest; we heap up riches, we satiate ourselves with pleasures, we are indulgent to our bodies; but for the matter of most moment, the pleasing of our God, and the salvation of our souls, we are as negligent as if they were things not concerning us. Death calls us aboard, carries us away in his deep vessel, and the main business we came for is left uneffected. When we truly examine our life, the whole course of it to this day, do we not find this true? We cannot but confess it, let us also amend it; and whatever become of our riches, of our pleasures, of our bodies, let us be diligent to save our souls.

"Be diligent." To make up the composition of diligence there must go three ingredients; vigilance, labouriousness, and speed: where either of these is wanting, there is no true diligence.

1. There is no right study without some watchfulness: be diligent, must needs include, be vigilant. "Awake, thou that sleepest, and Christ shall give thee light," Eph. v. 14. They that be called into Christ, and yet live in sin, are sleepers. "They that sleep sleep in the night," 1 Thess. v. 7. But our day is broken, why then do we sleep? When the sun is once up, all good husbands think of rising. The slumber of the body and soul are not much unlike. First, when the body is asleep, the senses have done working; the eyes are closed, and suspend the act of seeing. In this spiritual slumber, sinners do not hear God's word, nor see his sacraments, nor feel his grace and comforts. We do not say they cannot, but we are sure they do not. Secondly, in sleep there is an interruption of the working of the animal faculties; so there is a suspension of grace's powerful operation in the soul, during this spiritual slumber. Clarity is cold, faith benumbed, zeal stupified; neither patience nor temperance awake. Thirdly, the ascending of vapours from the stomach causeth sleep; so worldly thoughts in a covetous heart, hinder the influences of God's Spirit. Spiritual sleep is more dangerous than corporal: this only hinders some actions of mortal life; that robs us of our prayers, meditations, repentance, and things that conduce to our salvation, it borders upon death: when the divine should preach, he sleeps; when the magistrate should do justice, he sleeps; when the rich man should show mercy, and hear the complaints of the poor, widows and orphans, he is fast asleep. Call you this diligence? Indeed it is so in one acceptance, even a diligent course to perdition.

2. The endeavour to be saved is no easy task; it will require some labour. It is not wickedness glossed over with a fair pretence or profession, as popery is, but atheism dipped in the colours of religion. It is not like the trade of usury, to sit still and receive money. Nor a walking in some pleasant gallery, where that epicure spent his time, as if he had been hired to do errands from picture to picture. It is not a tumbling upon roses and violets, like the old Sibarites, or our new libertines; that know no felicity but delicacy, nor other heaven than sensuality. No, but heaven is the reward of labour; no labour, no reward. I exercise myself always to have a good conscience, saith Paul, Acts xxiv. 16. Idleness is allowed to no man, no, not to the great man. *Quo major sum, magis laboro*, says one; i. e. The greater I am, the more

labour I have. And as bodies inclined to be fat, had need of most exercise; so men that have the world coming too fast upon them, and are in great danger to be rich, should be most busy in the works of charity. "If riches increase, set not your heart upon them," Psal. lxxii. 10. If they increase: there is not so much danger till then. St. Paul knew that nothing could separate him from the love of God in Christ, Rom. viii. 38, 39; yet who was in labours more abundant? 1 Cor. xv. 10. No labour is hard, by which heaven's glory is obtained. Refuse no work for such a reward: we go to heaven as Paul went to Rome, when they were glad to row for their lives, to throw their goods overboard with their own hands; and yet when we are got ashore, think it a saving voyage.

The wicked take pains to do mischief; as an able beggar creeps on his hands and knees in the mire, to get money. Ask the covetous, whether it be not in vain, that he riseth so early, and so late takes rest, Psal. cxxvii. 2. Ask the proud popinjay, that, like to the fantastical builder, is still dressing and undressing, changing tires, yea, changing colours, turning pale into red; and never out of exercise. As it was said of Cain, He built, Gen. iv. 17, he did never finish; so of her, She adorns, she hath never done. Ask the ambitious, whether with lofty eyes, and a laughty heart, he does not exercise himself in matters too high for him, Psal. cxxxi. 1. Ask the pragmatical censurers of other men's labours; and there is some labour in that too. Howsoever it was the philosopher's answer to that question, What is the easiest thing in the world? To find fault; yet the wits of this age make it their exercise. There is no vanity without weariness; and that which the flesh accounteth her greatest pleasure, is accompanied with labour. Let us run so much the faster, as we run for a better prize. It is a shame that voluptuous men should contend harder for this old earth, than we for that new heaven. Reward is the encouragement of labour: now the greater reward challengeth the greater labour. We must all confess, that our reward is better; "For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting," Gal. vi. 8. The ends are divers, the ways are divers, the pains is much at one.

Heat is the state of grace, coldness the state of sin, lukewarmness has the middle place, Rev. iii. 15; it neither ebbs nor flows, but is just standing water. The sweet and pure waters are ever in motion; but stagnant waters breed nothing but venomous and noxious things. Houses that are not inhabited, soon abound with vermin. Grounds untill'd, will be overrun with weeds. Birds are taken while they sit, not so easily flying; and while they stay in their nests, they moult and lose their feathers: idleness doth neither get nor save. What is profuseness and the wasting our estates, but the effect of negligence? Earth useth to consume other men, but the prodigal heir consumes earth. He runs out of his wits first, then out of his patrimony; applauding himself in his witty riot, that though he should sell it for sixpence, yet he should be no loser by it, for it never cost him a groat. But that a man should loosely squander away his eternal patrimony, and be so prodigal of the purchase of Jesus Christ, which cost him no cheaper than his own heart-blood; for what purpose is this waste? It hath been said, that of all craftsmen, musicians were the happiest, because they did earn money with making themselves merry; but to buy everlasting woe and pains, with the expense of a short merriment, is no less than extreme madness. There is a great deal of diligence in the world, a world of diligence;

but it is all for the world. If men by chance think on heaven, they think withal, that a very little diligence will bring them thither. But it will grieve them when it is too late, to find how they have deceived their own souls. The labourers, not loiterers, have the reward. The crown is laid up, 2 Tim. iv. 8, not for cowards, but for conquerors. There is a crown of misery, which is worn below; but a crown of glory is laid up, and you know for whom, even for those who have fought a good fight. Be diligent then, and in this point, that you may be saved; yea, in this point of holy life be diligent, and you shall be saved.

3. "Be diligent." As this implies more than a simple act of diligence, even a habit, which is a continued act; so it binds us to the present. It is a charge that does not only bind always, but for always, or all times. It allows no dilation, not, Be diligent hereafter; no cessation, not, Be diligent until such a day, and then give over; no interruption, not, Be diligent sometimes, at other times take your liberty. But it imposeth a constant course, a perpetual practice of diligence upon us. Languishing is dangerous, especially where the days be short, and the ways not very fair. "Teach us to number our days," Psal. xc. 12. Our life is called days, for the brevity, clarity, misery of them. First, for brevity. The longest day will have a night. Every day that does not abate our reckoning, increaseth it. Secondly, for clarity. All works are seen in the day: we may sin in the darkness, by doing works of darkness; but the darkness and the light are all one to God, Psal. cxxxix. 12. A man that is in darkness, better sees another that is in the light, than he that is in the light can discern him that is in darkness. But on the contrary, God is in light, yet he plainly sees us in darkness; but we that are in darkness, cannot perceive him being in light. Thirdly, for trouble. The day is full of business; our work, we complain, is never at an end. There is no rest till night comes; then we fall asleep. Therefore let me pray, with one who says, Let my sleep be a ceasing from sin, as it is a ceasing from labour, that I may not in my dreams think of any thing which may offend thee, O God, and pollute my own soul. Death makes a stop of all, whether sin or trouble: it silenceth all tongues, both that which hath discoursed of the sun and stars, and that which hath conversed with fiends and devils. Sleep is the image of death: let me think, therefore, that long sleep the sleep of death, the grave a bed, worms the furniture, dust the covering. Let us do the work of Him that sent us while it is day; for in the night no man can work, John ix. 4.

In the driving of a nail, we begin easily, but proceed to the redoubling of our blows; and the oftener we strike, the more is the nail fastened, and the harder to be drawn forth. In the same manner doth sin fortify itself in the soul; so that in our old age, when we grow weaker, the old man in us waxeth stronger; and the sin we are not able to do, we take pleasure to think. What madness is it to defer our amendment to such an unstable estate; which is so far unfit to sustain those austere exercises, that both the conversion of a sinner and conversation of a Christian require, that it is scarce able to sustain itself. What carrier will lay the heaviest burden upon the weakest beast? will God accept of the blind, lame, or sick for sacrifice? Mal. i. 8. If he require the best of our substance, much more the entire substance of ourselves. Heaven and hell are diametrically opposite; and the ways unto them are full contrary: if we travel altogether the way to hell, is it possible that in the end of our journey we should arrive at heaven? I know it is impiety, to abridge either God's mercy or his power; but when ever did he

promise a happy death to a sinful life? Say that men should repent in their last hour, doth it not rather proceed from fear than from love? Or if it be from love, is it not rather the love of themselves than of God? And what thanks shall they have, to forsake their sins, when they have no longer time to enjoy them? Such an advantage Satan gathers by their delay, that if he can possess them all their life, he will hardly lose them at the hour of their death. I know that God never faileth in his promise of receiving a sinner, whensoever he turneth to him; but whether this turning to God, when men are turning out of the world, be a true conversion or not, here is the doubt. They returned not to the Most High: they cried not unto him with their hearts, though they lay howling upon their beds, Hos. vii. 14, 16.

To die well is a long art, but we have no long time to learn it. Die (we know) we must all; all by the bond of necessity; the righteous by a willing surrender of their souls. Nor is death an easy passion; the very dissolution of the holy is not without pains. If the death of an innocent man be fearful, how much more fearful that of the guilty! When impediments shall be multiplied, helps diminished, the distraction great, the inclination small, the leisure none; in this hurly-burly of businesses, pangs, assaults, vexations; where shall we get room for a preparation to die well? Shall a man in one day's sickness, learn more than he could in many years' health? Dare we adventure to cross those seas, without any fear, wherein so many passengers have miscarried; whereof so many skillful pilots make a doubtful and fearful report? Christ died, that sin should die, and we might live; and shall we suffer that sin to live, which will make us die? Look to thy clock-house, the time past, and be sorry that it is misspent; to thy store-house, and dispose of thy temporal trash; to thy closet-house, thy inward conscience, and cleanse that by repentance. To this reason, equity, law, do bind thee: to this heaven, earth, and hell, life and death, justice and mercy, do partly invite, partly enforce, altogether call thee. Wilt thou still desperately persist in sin? The devils sinned, having no example of justice to restrain them: thou hast seen many examples of God's just vengeance upon sin; is not thy wickedness, in that respect, worse than the devils'? For fear of human laws, thou dost moderate thy delights; and wilt thou not forbear one sinful pleasure for the love of God? A table of delicate meats is presented unto thee; but a friend tells thee in private, Take heed how you eat, for some of the dishes are poisoned: here thy discretion can bridle thine appetite, and thou wilt rather be content with homelier fare, so it be wholesome. The whole world is a table spread full of pleasing dainties: the prophets and apostles tell us plainly, there is danger in tasting; we will not believe them, but eat and perish.

Why should we presumptuously sin against that Majesty, which is only able to pardon our sins? If we be persuaded of his mercy, we are ungrateful to offend him; if we doubt of his mercy, we are unwise to provoke him. If by his mercy we ever come to repentance, the longer we have been without it, the greater sorrow we shall find in it; for our sorrows, in some degree, must be answerable to our sins. Therefore, explore, deplore, and implore. Explore: try and examine thine heart; search out the secret sins that there lie skulking. Deplore: weep, mourn, lament for them. Implore: pray for mercy to pardon them, for grace to amend them. Let there be an echo resounding in the thickets of our hearts: Seek ye my face; thy face, O Lord, will I seek, Psal. xxxvii. 8. And as the echo never answers the voice

so well, as where be ruins and ragged buildings; so doth sorrow best echo unto sin, where the heart is ruined and broken with afflictions. The waters stand in the valleys, and fill the furrows: the tears of repentance are found in the humble soul; you shall be sure of them in the fractures and breaches of a contrite heart. We weep; are those tears for our own sins, or for the sins of others? Take either of them, they have a large field to water. The two midwives that stifle the brats of sin in us, are repentance and circumspection; and these are only available in their season. There is abundance of sorrow in hell, but not one dram of comfort. You remember the story of him, that being often reproved for his ungodly and vicious life, and exhorted to repentance, would still answer, that it was but saying three words at his death, and he was sure to be saved. Perhaps the three words he meant, were *Miserere mei, Deus, Lord, have mercy on me.* But one day riding over a bridge, his horse stumbled, and both were falling into the river; and in the article of that precipitation, he only cried, *Cipiat omnia diabolus,* Horse, and man, and all to the devil. (In Vita Thom. Mori. cap. 32.) Three words he had, but not such as he should have had. He had been so familiar with the devil all his life, that he thinks on none else at his death.

Worldly men let slip no advantage of gain, no occasion of getting riches; but, Lord, how many opportunities of getting grace, and pardon for our sins, and of doing good works, pass by us without acceptance, without regard! Alexander having set his army in battle-array, and finding a soldier then mending his arms, cashiered him; saying that that was the time of dealing blows, not of preparing weapons. We use to bridle our horse before we ride, not in the midst of our race: if we do not rein in our passions before our dying time, they will scorn to be checked then. We have our season, and that season is in time, as the joint in a member: if you hit on the joint, you may easily divide; if on this side, or beyond, you shall not do it, or not do it so well. Delay and diligence are incompatible things: the time is all, the main matter, and more ado ever about that than the thing itself; of that let us take special care. It was not without great cause that our Saviour complained of that point, "If thou hadst known, in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace!" Luke xix. 42. And so was fain to break off, the tears coming so fast, that he was not able to speak out, but to weep out the rest of the sentence. Those tears show what time is; they show that opportunity is a grace, even to have it; that it is a second grace to know it; but a third grace, and better than both the rest, to make good use of it.

"Without spot, and blameless." Some would have these two synonymous terms; and indeed they are so in effect, meaning the same thing; they both tend to holiness of life: that is the main object of this diligence. But can there be such a perfection in this life? Some may be without blame; but is there any without blemish? The world doth blame some that are without spot; and God finds spots in many that appear without blame. There be four sorts of men; as St. Bernard makes four habits or states of conscience. First, quiet, but not good; the way of Nabal, whose heart was dead within him. Secondly, good, but not quiet; the way of David, who was blest in God's love; yet still complained of his anger. Thirdly, neither good nor quiet; the way of Cain, without giving one look toward heaven. Fourthly, both good and quiet; the way of angels filled with joy above their fellows. So of men. First, some escape without public blame, that are not without

inward spots: such are hypocrites. Secondly, some are without the spots of scandal, yet undergo much blame; as they picked quarrels with Daniel about his God, and charged Paul with sedition, who had no fault but his devotion: these are maligned innocents. Thirdly, some are both polluted with many spots, and convinced of just blame; and such are dissolute and incorrigible sinners. Fourthly, others are pure from spots, and free from blame; and these be happy saints. This undefiledness is proper to Christians; and not as they are in themselves, but as they are in Christ: it is not a legal perfection, but an evangelical righteousness: holy, unspotted, and blameless they are; either by comparison, in regard of the profane; or by reputation, in regard of the world's just challenge; or rather by imputation, in respect of Christ's righteousness made theirs, which doth both cover their sins from the eyes of God, and justify their persons in the presence of God.

"Without spot." That we may be found thus immaculate, two things are required of our diligence; first that we get off the spots we have, and then keep ourselves from contracting new.

First, we are spotted by nature, we came not into the world without uncleanness; but for this God hath ordained a laver, a sacramental font to wash us in, the blood of Christ. And this remedy must be applied with all diligence: for so God's mercy provided for us, that presently after we are born according to nature, we should be new-born by his grace; and that the blood of the Second Adam might cleanse us from the sin of the first. Thus cleansed we are; but alas, we no sooner come to able years, than we gather new stains. "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?" Psal. cxix. 9. The youngest man needs cleansing. But can he do it himself? So it seems by the prophet; Cleanse thy heart, O Jerusalem, Jer. iv. 14: and by the apostle too; "Every man that hath this hope purifieth himself," 1 John iii. 3. Ezekiel indeed seems to speak otherwise; "I will sprinkle clean water upon you," saith the Lord, "and ye shall be clean," Ezek. xxxvi. 25. Joel saith, Turn ye to the Lord, Joel ii. 12; but Jeremiah says, Lord, do thou turn me, and I shall be turned, Jer. xxxi. 18. Doth not that of Joel cross that of Jeremiah? Is there prophet against prophet? No; Cleanse your hands, ye sinners, and, Lord, do thou cleanse us, and we shall be clean, Psal. li. 7, may both well stand together. Indeed God only and freely does it: when the filthy sinner is condemned, the righteousness of God is unblamable; when another is purified and cleansed, the grace of God is indescribable. (August.) As it is in generation, so in regeneration. The former is not to make him that was an imperfect man before to become perfect, but to make him a man; so the latter is not to help one that desires to be good, but to make him righteous. All is from above nature. That grace which to man in his primitive state was natural, in his fallen state is supernatural to him. "I will take away your stony heart, and give you a heart of flesh," Ezek. xxxvi. 26. There is no more pliability in a man's nature to be pure and holy, than there is aptitude in a stone to be soft. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots?" Jer. xiii. 23. "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" Job xiv. 4. No man; only the Lord washeth away the filth of Zion, and purgeth out the blood of Jerusalem, Isa. iv. 4.

Christ was long knocking at the church's door, but she could not open; at last he put in his hand, and removes the bar; so then she could rise and open to him, Cant. v. 4. 5. *Accedat gratia, et fiunt omnia*; i. e. Let grace come in, and all is done. "By the grace

of God I am what I am," 1 Cor. xv. 10. In the first act of regeneration, the will is so cleansed, that it wills its own cleansing. For it is not like to a piece of wax, merely passive; which without any act of its own, only receives and suffers an impression: but rather like to fire, which as soon as it is fire, burneth; and as soon as it burneth, is fire. So the will of man, in the same instant that it is converted, moveth itself to conversion. "I laboured more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." Betwixt "not I" and "with me," comes in "the grace of God" in the midst; that grace which is "not I," but "with me." He might well say, "with me," that had first said, "not I." In the commandment it is manifest what we ought to do; in the punishment, what we have not done; in our not doing it, what we deserve; in faith and prayer, whence grace is to be had; in our conversation and cleansing, by whom it has been received; in our perseverance, through whom it has been retained. Still neither young man, nor old man, nor any man can cleanse away his own spots; only the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all our sins, 1 John i. 7; but in every sin, besides the guiltiness, there is filthiness; and when the guilt is remitted, the stain remains. These we daily contract, and there is no hour added to our lives, wherein some uncleanness is not added to our souls. These stains God leaves to our own cleansing: here is work for repentance. And thus must those scriptures and fathers be understood, that say, repentance doth wash away sins; they mean not in respect to the guilt, but in respect to the filth. The blood of Christ gives us all the right tincture: that dyes us into the colour of righteousness; and this colour is in grain, it will never wear out. If we be thoroughly dipped in his blood, that tincture shall last with us; both to justify us on earth, and to glorify us in heaven. But the garment thus heavenly coloured may get some stains, and those must be daily washed off with our penitent tears. For this cleansing of our spots, three acts are required: first, to perceive them; then, to hate them; and lastly, to cast them off.

1. Our first care must be to discern them; for we may have spots, and not be aware of them. A man may have a mole upon his back, and yet, because he never saw it, think his skin clear. Polygamy was a sin, and therefore a blemish; yet because it could plead age and example, it was admitted by those elder saints; and even good Elkanah was tainted with that sin of Lamech. As fashions of attire, at their first coming forth, are disliked for uncommonly; but when through custom they are grown common, they are taken up of the gravest: *Licitaque solita*; i. e. Habitual things become lawful. The continuance of an unknown sin, current with the time, doth not hinder the uprightness of a man's heart with God: the least touch of knowledge or wilfulness mars his sincerity. "Who can understand all his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret sins," Psal. xix. 12. We have many spots which God does not hear from us, because we see them not in ourselves. Who will acknowledge that error, whereof he does not know himself guilty? The sight of sins is a great happiness; for it causeth an ingenuous confession. Then, I have sinned, we cry; and that our sins are wide; what place have we been in, and not left behind us some witness or monument of our wickedness? Long; even from our mothers' breasts; yea, from her womb we were conceived in sin, Psal. li. 5; and we have done wickedly even unto this day. Many, Jer. xxx. 15; more innumerable than the hairs of our head. Great; great in quantity: "Pardon mine iniquity, for it is great," Psal. cxv. 11. High; "Our tres-

pass is grown up unto the heavens," Ezra ix. 6. Deep; "They have deeply corrupted themselves," Hos. ix. 9. Heavy; they are a burden too heavy for us to bear, Psal. xxxviii. 4. Gross; we have hid them on with cords and cart-ropes, Isa. v. 18; as if they could not come fast enough without a violent attraction. They "have given themselves over to lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness," Eph. iv. 19. Most bad; both because they are committed with a whore's forehead, that refuseth to be ashamed, Jer. iii. 3; and done for no profit: "What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed?" Rom. vi. 21. No fruit doth appear, but rather we have served Satan for nothing.

This liberal confession is a degree to our purifying. In the courts of men, confess and be punished; before the throne of grace, confess and be acquitted. Being charged with a fame of uncleanness here, we answer, Not guilty: and that is a kind of cleansing. There we charge ourselves, Guilty, O Lord; I am unclean; and that is the way to be cleansed, and pronounced clean. This benefit comes by the sight of our sins; for first there must be knowledge, before there will be an acknowledgment. God's law is the glass that shows us all our spots; let us hold it right to our intellectual eye. Not behind us, as the wicked do; they cast God's words behind them, Psal. l. 17. This is to stand in our own light: can a man see the spots on his face, by setting the glass behind his back? He that rejects this glass, the sacred word, cannot but have a leprous soul. Not beside us. There was a rich worldling that called to Christ for this glass; and when it was showed him, he thought himself well favoured, a very honest man: All this have I kept from my youth up, Matt. xix. 20. Surely he held the glass to the wrong side; that part of him which was spotted with filthy worldliness, he could not see. So Paul, while he was a Pharisee, thought himself concerning the righteousness of the law, blameless, Phil. iii. 6; but then the glass was on the wrong side of him. Afterward, "I had not known sin, but by the law," Rom. vii. 7; there he held it right. Neither let us turn the back side of the glass toward us; which is the trick of hypocrites. "I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican," Luke xviii. 11. Cunning dissembler! he kept the back of the glass to him; so that he could see no reflection of himself at all. If he had held it right, he should have discerned a deformed and polluted creature. As one of the persecutors in Queen Mary's days, pursuing a poor protestant, and searching the house for him, charged an old woman to show him the heretic. She points to a great chest of linen, on the top whereof lay a fair looking-glass. He opens the chest, and asks where the heretic was. She suddenly replied, Do you not see one? Meaning that he was the heretic, and that he might easily see himself in the glass. So, rightly if he had looked, that Pharisee might have seen the resemblance of a hypocrite. Nor (lastly) let us look upon ourselves in this glass, when we are muffled, masked, or eased; for under those veils we cannot discern our own complexions. But let us set the clear glass before our face, and our open face to the glass: the sight of our filthiness is the first step toward cleanness.

2. Next, we must learn to detest our spots. The leopard is full of spots, but he does not dislike them, because they are rather an ornament to him; but shall men think so of their sins? There be some that do; even glory in their shame; but mark their end; it is no better than destruction, Phil. iii. 19. "Were they ashamed when they had committed abominations,"

tion?" Jer. viii. 12. Did they blush at their blemishes? When the proud dame hath a scar or blemish upon her skin, if with artificial colours and medicines she cannot remove it, yet she will carefully hide it; by her good will she would rather have a foul soul than a foul face. She hath a glass that tells her all her defects; and she studies by it the art of pride, even to the placing of a pin, and ordering of a hair; all which diligence is not worth a pin or hair. Do sinners hate their spots? Do they not rather take a pride in them, and count them an honour? Did you never hear men swear in a bravery? Can there be fouler spots upon the conscience, than vain and outrageous oaths? And yet is not this esteemed a grace among our gallants? What say you to a long extravagant lock at the ear, a bush for the sign of a fantastical head? Would any men wear this but for pride? And is not pride the spot of the soul? Is the nature of it so changed since it came to hell, or from hell, that that which made devils should be thought to become Christians? Alas, for the mercitricious foreheads of sinners, that they should glory in the foulness of their spots! Did you ever read of a leper, that took pleasure in his sores and ulcers? Would not Naaman have given all his wealth and glory for the cure of his leprosy? If we could perceive the loathsomeness of our impieties, it were not possible not to abhor them, not to abhor ourselves for them. Shall we love our own filthiness, as the Ethiopians do their own swartheness? No, but rather let us hate "the garment spotted by the flesh," Jude 23. Be thy sin never so dear to thee, it should not be so dear as thy soul. How well soever thou thinkest it becomes thee, it is a spot, that makes thee odious to God, to saints, and angels. Away with it, though it lies in thy bosom; mortify it, though it stick on thy skin. Will any beautiful woman drink that potion, which she knows will turn her fair body into a leprosy, though it be pleasant to the taste of her palate? "Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life," Job ii. 4. If a man will give skin for skin to save his life, will he not give spot for spot to save his soul?

3. Lastly, we must cleanse them: when we come to behold the number of our spots, we easily see the necessity of our tears. To pollute, or stain, that is the work of sin: to dilute, or wash away, that is the work of repentance. It is true, that Christ's righteousness is a garment, so covering our spots that they cannot be seen; and his blood a medicine, so curing our spots that they shall not be. But Christ never shed his blood for that man's sins, that for his own sins will not shed so much as tears. "One soweth, and another reapeth," John iv. 37. Indeed Christ sowed and we reap; he sowed in tears, and we reap in joy; yea, he sowed in blood and death, and we reap in peace and life: yet we must sow in tears too, that we may reap in joy. Psal. cxvii. 5. Must not we also have a wet seed-time, that look for so glorious a harvest? That Lamb "taketh away the sin of the world," John i. 29: he did not die to take away our sorrow, but our sin; not to free us from a seasonable contrition, but to save us from everlasting destruction. From the sole of the foot to the head there was no soundness in us; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores, Isa. i. 6: as there was no whole part in us by reason of sin, so nor in him by reason of sorrow. His head was full of thorns, his back full of scourges, his eyes full of tears, his body full of wounds, his soul full of sorrows; and all because we were full of sins. And shall not this fulness of sin work in us a fulness of remorse? shall not our eyes also be full of tears, our bosom full of sighs, our mouths full of cries, our hearts full of sorrows? Did he weep for us, that we

should spend our days in laughter? Still whilst we are sinful, he is sorrowful; and shall we not be grieved for thus grieving him? Our griefs are not meant to requite him; but they are the echoes of thankfulness to him.

What was it that did put him to so much pains, but our sins; and shall we not mourn for them? If we do not weep for them as they are our spots, yet in reason we should, as they were his torments. They were his torture, they are still his displeasure. As the disciples in that tempest to him, "Master, carest thou not that we perish?" Mark iv. 38; so he to us, "Care you not that I did perish for your sakes? He did not with Job curse his nativity, nor with David cry out on his sufferings; but "is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?" Lam. i. 12; have ye no regard? Our carelessness of what he suffered, this was his grief. Have we not so much as the oil of tears to pour into his wounds? The end of all he suffered, was to save us: no marvel if the disrespect of that grieved him. Justly therefore should that cost us tears, which cost him blood; especially let us weep for putting him to such charges. His bleeding does not take away our weeping: no soul is justified by his death, that does not daily die unto sin, Rom. vi. 10. And death cannot be without pain. Thou swearest, and that oath is a spot upon thy heart: weep for that. Thou liest, and that falsehood is a spot upon thy conscience: weep for that. Thou lustest, and that filthy desire is a spot on thy soul: weep for that too; weep for all. How many are our blemishes, yet how few our tears! The beloved of Christ are all fair, and have no spot in them. How got they this fairness? Like a flock of sheep, they came up from the washing, Cant. iv. 2. 7. The martyr upon the wheel could smile in the midst of his torture; which being wondered at, he told his friend, that there was a young man whom they saw not, (some angel, sure,) who by continual pouring of cool water upon his distorted limbs, so mitigated his pains, that he could smile at them. We see pious and devout men, militant saints, falling into divers infirmities: they have their spots; but repentance is the good angel that pours upon them cool water, continual tears to wash them away. This is the bath that renders us without spot.

What is there which they used not to cleanse under the law? their cities, their gates, garments, their very altars. We have our cities also to cleanse, the corporation of our affections: our gates, which be our eyes, ears, and senses, those doors, windows, and inlets of the soul: our garments, our lives and conversations, which are the visible apparel of our spirits: our very altars, our hearts, upon which we offer all our sacrifices. Our hands must not escape, those instruments of lust and rapine: "Cleanse your hands, ye sinners," Jam. iv. 8. For his eyes, Job had made a covenant, as if he had bound them to good behaviour. Especially our hearts: it can be neither time nor labour lost, that is spent in cleansing of the fountain. Should any now make it their work, God would look graciously down from heaven upon such labourers, to whom his own Son hath given that benediction, "Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God," Matt. v. 8. Man's heart is like Moses' rod: so long as he held it in his hand, it was a rod; but when he threw it to the ground, it turned to be a serpent. All the while that we hold our heart in the continual awe and love of God, it shall remain pure and clean; but if our boisterous and unruly sins once throw it to the earth, it changeth presently, and becomes a foul serpent. If there be any, whose conscience tells them, that their hearts are now turned into serpents, crawling upon the

earth, living upon riches, that better esteemed muck of the world; let them be persuaded, by stretching forth a hand of sorrow and true repentance, to take them up again, in what shape soever they appear; for then He that was exalted on the cross, as the serpent in the wilderness, will turn those serpents into hearts again, their venom into innocency, and wash them clean in his own immaculate blood.

The sum of this consideration presseth us with the necessity of repentance: for seeing we gather aspersions every day, how should we be found without spots at the last day, unless we wash them off with repentance? Oh that our sorrows were but as manifest as our spots! Do we spend the night in weeping, that have wasted the day in sinning? Our neighbours of Rome tell us of a purgatory hereafter; but by this trick they make a shift to purge men's purses here. They have many strange devices; as, The church's treasury is the alms of purgatory. They might better say, the wealth they get by purgatory maintains the church's treasury. They all refer to this common term, money. All Christendom they would have to be the pope's kingdom: Rome is his court, France his garden, Spain his shambles or slaughter-house by their Inquisition. England was once his brew-house, Italy his kitchen, but purgatory his larder: from thence he fetcheth all his dainties. In purgatory is nothing but extreme pain; and the pope (they say) can free all at his pleasure: but why then are any detained there? doth he want power, or will? If he want power, he is weak; if will, he is wicked. If he would and cannot, he is unable; if he can and will not, he is uncharitable. But I will be more favourable, and quite deliver you out of purgatory: I mean, from the tedious trouble of further discourse of it. Keep yourselves from hell, and never fear purgatory.

All men depart this life either clean or unclean; none hereafter to be cleansed. In this life there is a double purgatory; the blood of the Redeemer, and the tears of the redeemed: without the former we have no cleanness of justification; no justification of our cleanness without the latter. They "have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb," Rev. vii. 14: therein consists our pureness. "And every man that hath this hope, purifieth himself," 1 John iii. 3: thereby we have the knowledge of it. The sun draws up vapours from the earth, not for itself, but to restore them back to the earth in showers and dews, to moisten and cleanse it. Christ, that Sun of justice, exhales tears from our eyes, not for his own, but our benefit, even to wash and cleanse our souls.

And this cleansing must be done in time; forget not that. Let us be failing to our lustful desires, before desire fails us, Eccl. xii. 5. It is hard for a man grown old in evil, to lay aside his childish disposition: it is still childhood with him, and what is more grievous, childishness remains in him. (Sen.) They may have the authority of ancients, but without the vanity of children. Satan in youth casts in those suggestions, which he would have kept in the soul for breeding. Give no place to the devil, Eph. iv. 27. What, not in youth? No, no place, at no time. Where uncleanness hath gotten a haunt, it will be busily frequent; out of long possession, it will plead prescription. "How long is it ago since this came unto him? Of a child," Mark ix. 21. O then hard to be helped. It was the beggar woman's praise of her son, whom she had brought up to her own trade: While he was young, I begged for him; now he is grown towardsly, and able to beg for himself. At first concupiscence was an advocate for sin, now sin is become an advocate for concupiscence. But as

Hannibal was wont to say of the Romans, that they could not be overcome but in their own country; so let us fight against our sin in the very heart, the country where it breeds. It was St. Bernard's exposition of that passage, "He shall bruise thy head;" that the head of the serpent is then truly said to be bruised, when sin is there stifled where it was first born; as malefactors, wheresoever they be taken, are sent to the country where they did the mischief, for execution. He is a religious Herod, that kills such infants; nor shall he want the name of happy, that dasheth these little ones against the stones, Psal. cxxxvii. 9. The more we do to get out our spots at first, the less work we find afterwards. I know that continual blemishes will come; every day we wash our hands; every hour let us wash our hearts, in the blood of Christ by faith, in our own tears by repentance. This is the way to be without spot.

Next, all this cleansing is not enough unless we continue so. This the text requires of our diligence, that we be found without spot. We cannot be found such, unless we die such; and we cannot die such, unless we live such. It is something to undertake a journey, but the matter is to hold out. To keep ourselves clean a good way, and then to fall into a puddle, is a foul unhappiness. So Asa, who in the prosperous reign of forty years long, sought unto God; in his old age, passing by God, seeks to physicians. The latter end of a horse-race is by some called the sob: so the last conflict of a Christian is the sorest; if we can hold out that Brunt, there is prize and victory for us. The old experienced soldier fears not the rain and storms above him, nor the numbers falling before him, nor the troops of enemies against him, nor the shot of thundering ordnance about him; but looks to the honourable reward promised him. But the delicate soldier only thinks of flying; and, instead of glory, brings home ignominy. If either the reproaches cast upon us, or the adversaries' rage against us, or the example of sinners before us, or the temptations of the world about us, or the pleasure of our own lusts within us, can make us, with Ephraim, turn our backs in the day of the Lord's battle, our spiritual warfare, we shall not be found without spot in the day of remuneration. Abraham did not give over his sacrifice, because the fowls were busy about him. Christ had compassion on the multitude, that continued with him three days without meat, Mark viii. 2: they did not leave him without audience, nor he them without comfort. Our pilgrimage hath three days in this desert. The first day is the fear of God, which takes up the beginning of our conversion. 2. The love of God, which is spent in contemplating the sweetness of his mercy. 3. Our actual and constant obedience to his commandments: if in this day we be found unspotted, we shall find an estate for ever blessed. (Bern. Ser. I. de Evang. 7. Panum.) It is not enough to get off the present, but to keep ourselves from future spotting. That is true religion, and undefiled before God, which keeps us unspotted from the world, Jam. i. 27. To do this, there must be a desire, then an endeavour.

(1.) The desire of pureness is the first step towards it; an honest purpose bears out many errors in the eye of mercy. King Asa had divers (no small) faults; yet with one breath doth God report both these: "The high places were not taken away," and, "Nevertheless Asa's heart was perfect," 1 Kings xv. 14. It were pity that the best man should be judged by every of his actions, and not by all. It is the main course of our life, that must either allow or condemn us, not some sudden and particular eruptions. How pleasing a thing is the sincerity of

heart, that in favour thereof our just God digests many an error! He will not see weaknesses where he sees truth. If our whole desire be set upon holiness, though we have many spots, yet we shall be found without them. O God, let our hearts go upright, though our feet slide: the fall or blemish may shame us, may pain us; but through thy grace it shall not condemn us.

The first thing that takes the fire of holiness in us, is the will; the desire of grace must be grace of desire. What we would be, we are; yea, and what we would have done, shall be reckoned to us as done. We do it as far as endeavour, though not as far as effect. As the wicked sin more than they sin, in their desire; so the righteous do more good than they do, in their will to do it. God esteems our charitable beneficence, not only according to what we have, but according to what we would give. Yea, the highest way of serving God, which is by martyrdom, hath a name and acceptance in heaven, though it have no real being upon earth. If there be a prepared heart, though there be not a pierced one, a proffer of blood, though no expense of blood, for the honour of Christ, it is taken for martyrdom. As Origen testified of one, He wanted martyrdom, but martyrdom did not want him. "I know thy poverty, but thou art rich," saith the Spirit to the church of Smyrna, Rev. ii. 9; poor in thy condition, rich in thy affection to goodness. "Ye shall drink of my cup," Matt. xx. 23; shall, because you are willing. The vehement desire of godly sorrow, is godly sorrow. We are charged to forsake all, houses, lands, friends, liberties, lives, for Christ; yet many die with houses, lands, and riches in their possession, whom Christ receives, and crowns in heaven, because they did part with all according to the readiness of their minds. If our heart be set upon holiness, more than half our work is done; the rest will be easy. In sin it is so. "Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery in his heart," Matt. v. 28; that very lust is a deed of the heart. As the deed of the hand is the outward action, so the deed of the heart is the thought. The heart conceives a sinful purpose, which is never born into action; yet it hath done what it could, and is accounted guilty. So in righteousness, the heart desires to do some holy act, which it cannot accomplish; yet because it hath done what it could, it shall be rewarded as if it had done what it wished.

(2.) This is some comfort for us, that our very desire to lead a holy life, shall find a merciful acceptance. But this is not enough, our endeavour must second our desire. As grace is that first mover, so will is the first moved: endeavour hath the motion from desire, as desire hath hers from God. There may be an endeavour without a desire, as the slave is compelled to labour; and there may be a desire without an endeavour, as the slothful would be rich, but he will take no pains for it. Action is the soul of desire, the very life of purpose, without which they both die abortive. Thoughts are not always determined in resolutions: we cannot evermore say, This was concluded. Actions are always determined in effects; we can say, This was done. Then are laws in their full state and majesty, when the bench is witness of their execution. Then have councils of war their honour, when we see the seal of an army set to them. Then purposes of goodness shine in their lustre, when they are crowned with actual performance. So the intentions of goodness are not intentions, but transient motions and mere illusions, where the practice is negligently suspended. The orb and sphere of all arts is said to be the head; yet two of them are referred to the

hand: logic, the art of proving; and rhetoric, the art of persuading, are expressed, the one by a hand contracted, the other by a hand enlarged. Our desire of holiness lies in the heart; but what evidence, what demonstration, can be taken from that? Who searches these rolls? The proof of all lies in the hand. The head and the hand too are required to a perfect natural man: counsel and action too, to a perfect civil man: faith and works too, to a perfect spiritual man. The very truth, whether of grace or corruption, that is in the heart, may be dissembled in the mouth, but it will visibly appear in the hand. It is true, that God principally looks to the heart; but he does not take off his eye, till he come to the hand; he regards that also.

First, therefore, keep thy heart with all diligence: it is best to begin there, but he that ends there, that comes not to the hand, never began at all. The heart is seated in man with all advantage of intelligence; almost in the very centre, with a curious net of veins spread over it: like the spider in the midst of her web; which feeling the least touch that shakes her work, retires instantly from the danger. If thou wouldst keep thy heart from spots, let it avoid the very compliment and first address of sin; shrink at the least noise, murmur, or whispering of it; and be sensible of peril at the least glimpse of a temptation. There is a world of foul thoughts busy about the door of the heart; their very assaults will give a dash, but their entertainment sticks a hateful blot on the soul. Ill thoughts are the ushers to ill actions, and ill actions bring sinners back again in a circle to ill thoughts; for they walk the round. First, they act a sin, because the thought hath pleased them; and then they think that sin over again, because the act hath pleased them: so by a damnable arithmetic multiplying one sin to a thousand.

First, then, look to thy heart; keep out sin there: as physicians do in a dangerous sickness, by cordials to drive it from the heart. Into the other parts it must not be admitted neither; in any place it is a spot of filthiness. If it get into the eyes, there it is envy, covetousness, or adultery; if into the mouth, there it is scurrility or blasphemy; if into the ears, there it is an itching petulancy; if into the stomach, there it is excess and gluttony; if into the knees, there it is superstition and idolatry; if into the hair or garments, there it is pride and vanity: whosoever it comes, it is a spot of impiety. If we do not guard every one, we are in danger to lose all. And as we find the slippery condition of man in his highest mortal happiness, that the defect of any one thing conducing to this happiness, may ruin it; but it must have all the pieces together to make it up: so all places and parts of us must be guarded, to secure our safety; but the neglect of any one may be the loss of all. Yet alas, when all is done we have abundance of spots, and where is there water enough to wash them away? Our sins are an ocean, and yet there is a red sea greater than this ocean, and there is a little spring, through which this ocean may pour itself into that red sea. Christ's blood is the red sea, our eyes are the spring. If by the spirit of true repentance, we can pass all our sins through our eyes in tears, into the wounds of Christ, we shall be clean, and presented to him without spot, in that great day of retribution.

"And blameless." The former might be an inward, this is an external righteousness. There be two things dear to man's body, life and health; we would all live, and live happy. So there is a double life: Real; "Oh that Ishmael might live before thee!" Gen. xvii. 18. Metaphorical; as, Let the king live, that is, free from misery; which indeed is a vital life. We all desire life; and though,

with St. Paul, we desire to be dissolved; yet we seek death that we may live: it is not to be unclothed, but clothed upon. So there be two things precious to the soul: to be good, which is the comfort of our conscience at home; and to be reputed good, which is the testimony of the world abroad. There is spotlessness in the one, unblamableness in the other. Some care neither to be, nor to be thought holy: such are our dissolute ruffians, and penurious misers. Some care for the latter, to seem good; no matter for the former, whether they be so or not: these are dissembling hypocrites. Some look to the former, but are not so respectful of the latter; which may be good men, but are not good patterns: they will make no show of purity before others, yet are diligent to keep it in their own hearts. These are Christians, but cowardly ones; sons indeed, like Reuben, but not excellent sons. Others regard both the one and the other; they will be as good as they seem, and they will strive to appear as good as they are. As they have light, so it shall shine; that not only themselves, but others, shall be the better for it. In the one they are spotless, blameless in the other; holy within, righteous without, blessed in all, through the merits of him that blesteth all, Jesus Christ.

That we may lead a blameless life, many cautions are required.

1. The abstaining from gross and scandalous sins; for they (of all other) deserve blame. There be some that discommunion communities; mere murderers. Men think there is no murder, but where the hands are besmeared with blood; yea, there be pretences for man's slaughter: God's word never knew any such distinction: but, as it is said, *Si non parvisti, occidisti*; i. e. If thou hast not fed thy neighbour, thou hast killed him. The engrosser's arguments are forced in hell. Homicide finds the patronage of valour; reputation is dearer than life. This is the devil's sophistry, whereby he provides dishes for his own table before they be cold. But he that maliciously strikes another's body, is first stricken in soul; and indeed is dead before he kills. These be notorious crimes; no man thinks they should pass without blame. The usurer that desires to live with less faith and more security, hath some reasons for his legal theft; but he took them all out of Satan's lectures: he is not without evident blame. Drunkenness is such a scandalous fault: reason is the essential difference between man and beast; and this drunkenness takes away. It is a coupling and combining sin; therefore more pernicious. The usurer and adulterer desire to enjoy their sins alone; but the chief delight of a drunkard is to infect others. This is the dragon's special venom; wherewith his elves, being intoxicated, strive to make others more beasts than themselves. The alchouse is the study, the circle the pot, the drunkard the conjurer, good fellowship the charm, the characters healths, the ghost raised is the goblet or spirit of the buttry; and to empty the purse of money, the head of reason, and the pot of liquor, is all the business. There is a cup of love; and there is a love to the cup. These and such like be monstrous sins; the doers of them shall be more than blamed.

2. The avoidance of injurious sins, such as bring detriment to others. If a man makes me smart, I may charge him with blame. The generation of one man's riches, is not seldom the corruption of another's. There is no blame in gaining of that, whereby our neighbour is no loser. But he that hasteth to be rich, shall not be innocent; he is sure of blame. This toucheth some of those, that have now (let them consider by what means) more plate than their fathers had pewter. If they did not prefer opulency before innocency, and cared more to be wealthy than worthy, they

would rather have eaten their meat in a wooden dish. "The hire of labourers kept back by fraud," crieth; and that cry is "entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth," Jam. v. 4. They would never cry against you, if ye were not to blame. Such worldlings consult shame to their house, and sin against their own soul. He that oppresseth another, sins against his own soul. "The stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it," Hab. ii. 10, 11. The senseless walls and stones shall cry them down guilty. Do our church robbers quit themselves from blame-worthiness? Sacrilege is plain idolatry; or if they be not both one, yet St. Paul puts them both in a bag, Rom. ii. 22. Let Achan's pillage assure them, that they are not free from blame. He was stoned, with all his family, Josh. vii. 25; they shall not only smart themselves, but enwrap all they have in the judgment. They that defile themselves with holy goods, are enemies to their own flesh and blood, even to all their posterity. It hath been proverbially spoken of him that desires to be soon rich, that he must have two mughs, and two littles; much greediness and much diligence; little shame and little conscience: blame enough he cannot miss of.

3. Cold negligence and carelessness in the worship of God must be abandoned. Even Peter might deserve blame, and Paul tells him "he was to be blamed," Gal. ii. 11. Outward adoration is a part of God's worship; though he chiefly requires the heart, yet the body is not privileged from his service. Christ that could bow the heavens, did yet in prayer bow his knees. If both our body and soul be cleansed from their leprosy, and but one of them return to give thanks, it is plain ingratitude. We have some that hold kneeling at the communion to be popish and idolatrous, because it was once abused. Hezekiah brake down the brasen serpent, because there was no further use of it. But did Lyeurgus well to cut down all the vines, because some were made drunk with the grapes? We continue this laudable custom of kneeling for divers reasons. First, to withstand profaneness: atheism is more to be feared than popism, contempt than superstition. Secondly, to stir us up to a reverent estimation of these holy and dreadful mysteries. Thirdly, to put a difference between this and other common bread and wine. Fourthly, to excite us to prayer, that we may receive Christ in humility. They therefore that refuse to submit themselves to this and other seemly gestures in the church, are duly to be blamed. Our irreverent behaviour in these holy places, is most intolerable. Servants in their master's house and presence, especially in their solemn attendance, will not presume to be covered; nor courtiers or nobles in the king's presence-chamber. Yet when we appear before our heavenly Master, the King of kings, in his own temple, on go our hats young and old; as if we were too good to be uncovered in his sight, that is able to cover us with confusion. Jacob had another thought; "How dreadful is this place! This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven," Gen. xxviii. 16. Pretend what peevish reasons they can, without all question they will not be found blameless.

4. We must give no occasion of evil: though we do not commit sin ourselves, yet if we occasion sin in others, we are not blameless. We know evil by our neighbour, and report it with a desire to slander: it is true what we speak, we are no liars: it is malicious what we speak, and we are depravers. A rumour is like a spark of fire that is thrown abroad; which, lighting upon such fit matter as catching ears, increases to a flame, whereby not only guiltiness

is scorched, but even innocency itself is singed. Such occasion is sometimes given by the very behaviour of men and women, that there follows a generation of sins. We may well esteem a painted woman a sorceress; one that tempts under Satan's visible colours. Who can suppose but she minds temptation, that dresseth herself like a tempter? She that so attires herself, as to draw men to folly, though she prevail not, is more guilty than another that falls into sin upon weakness. Her carriage is blame-worthy, that hath given the occasion to be tried. True chastity seems to have it ever come to this, that she must deny; but rather wears a deportment which keeps lost at such a distance, that it can have no hope. But she that baits her desires with prostituted looks, whose gestures and very countenance are enticements, shall not be free from blame. Many Israelites offended by reason of the high places left in Judah: King Asa worshipped not there; he escaped sin in the one, not blame in the other. That Joseph was fair, it was not his fault; that his mistress inordinately loved him, it was his unhappiness; but if he had still continued in her presence, he could not have been excused from blame. Some divines have fetched dancing within this compass, of giving the occasion of foul thoughts; and there is some kind of it that cannot be defended. One spake smartly, That a fool and a dancer differed but in this; a fool is a fool all his life, and a dancer while he is dancing. But if we would be free from blame, we must give no occasion of sin.

5. Lastly, to be blameless, we must "abstain from all appearance of evil," 1 Thess. v. 22. Our first rule debarreth gross sins; such as was David's uncleanness, Peter's denial of his Lord, and cursing himself to get credit amongst a cursed crew. The second forbids injurious sins, albeit glossed over with fair pretences; as monopolies, which do a common mischief, yet bear the show of a common good. Not unlike to some executioners of the Inquisition, who have been so kind in their cruelties, that when Christians were to be strangled for religion, they have greased the halters, to despatch them quickly. The third forbids all disorderly sins, by suffering that evil to be done which we do not ourselves. For this the Holy Ghost blamed the church of Thyatira; because they suffered the woman Jezebel to teach and seduce God's servants, Rev. ii. 20: contrary to that express canon of the apostle, "I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man," 1 Tim. ii. 12. At home she may have authority with the man, by persuasion, not authority over the man, by dominion: but for her to minister in the church is most intolerable. We read but of one woman-preacher throughout the whole Bible, and she was a harlot, Rev. ii. 21. That one act of Zipporah in circumcising her son, is neither warrant nor argument that women may administer the sacrament of baptism. The fourth rule excludes all occasional inducements to sin; as the erecting of licentious places, which may be the nests of unclean birds, and refuges of excess. The last forbids all show and semblance of sin. The three former are sins, these two latter may turn to sins; there we cannot escape blame, here we may incur it. Even lawful actions perverted, become damnable sins; as eating to provoke or maintain lust, drinking to seurrility or wantonness. David danced before the ark, without sin: the Israelites danced before their calf, and it was idolatry; as appears by that which Paul quotes: "Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play," 1 Cor. x. 7: Exod. xxxii. 6. As a fair virgin espoused, and shortly to be married

to some noble prince, whom she dearly loves, will not touch the thing which (she but doubts) may degrade her, and make her unworthy of his regard; so the good soul detests the very appearance of that evil, which may make her unfit for the embraces of Christ.

To be found blameless. That is the main matter; the crown of all is perseverance. To be found we are sure enough; all our care should be to be found blameless. Of the ten lepers that came to Christ, after their healing, nine left him; only one stayed with him. Many begin well, but few continue; because "many are called, but few chosen." You shall see a tree in the spring making a glorious show, with her leaves and blossoms; but in autumn where are the fruits? Rivers, the farther they run, the fairer streams they bear: the righteous have an eternal spring of grace that feeds them, and in their running they gather in many waters; they flow with good works; till at their end, they empty themselves into the ocean of mercy.

God will take men as he finds them; not what they have been, but what they are, so he accounts them. When a man turns from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, the righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned; but in the sin that he hath sinned he shall die, Ezek. xviii. 24. Were his head of gold, in his first profession; his arms of silver, somewhat debased in his progression; yet if his feet prove of clay, if his latter end be dirty, fouled with earthly cares, in that state shall he be found, and according to that state judged. Such are not unlike the Philistine kine, that brought the ark to the land of Israel; and then turned back again to their calves at home. St. Augustine in every petition of the Pater-noster, hath found out our prayer for perseverance: (Lib. de Bono Persev. cap. 2.) I may not stand to amplify it. The leopard doth not run after his prey like other beasts, but pursues it by leaping; and if at three or four jumps he cannot seize it, for very indignation he gives over the chase. There be some, that if they cannot leap into heaven, by a few good works, they will even let it alone; as if it were to be ascended by leaping, not by climbing. But they are more unwise, that having got up many rounds of Jacob's ladder, and finding difficulties in some of the uppermost; whether wrestling with assaults and troubles, or looking down upon their old allurements; even fairly descend with Demas, and allow others to take heaven.

But it will be unhappy to be found so: when the Lord found a guest without his wedding-garment, he questioned his entrance; and receiving no answer, he pronounced his sentence; Take him, and bind him hand and foot, and throw him in outer darkness. Matt. xxii. 11, 13. He was found in a miserable case, and cast into a miserable place. But Paul desired to be found in Christ, and in the clothing of his righteousness, Phil. iii. 9. We are all sure to be found of him; oh happy are we, if we are found in him! We are in him by faith, in him by love, in him by renovation, in him by sanctification, 2 Cor. v. 17: Rom. viii. 1: but if our faith fails, if our love fails, if our newness decays, if our holiness corrupts, if we be not found in him, all will go wrong with us. There will be a universal day of finding; many labour to find out the day of judgment: in all sober judgment they might save that labour; for, as Augustine hath it, Thou wilt not find out the time of the general judgment, but the particular judgment will find out thee. To be found, there is no doubt; but to be found without spot and blameless, there is the comfort. This is our time of finding Christ; that his time of finding us. "For this cause shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when

then mayest be found," Psal. xxxii. 6: this belongs to us. In that day God shall judge the secrets of all hearts by Jesus Christ, Rom. ii. 16: that belongs to him.

If we do not seek him while he may be found, he will meet with us when we would not be found. It is his complaint, "Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life," John v. 40: they will not seek him. At last they shall cry "to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb," Rev. vi. 16: so loth are they to be found of him. Ahab will not seek after Elijah, to make his peace; Elijah shall find out Ahab, and that with a woeful message. Our only way to get favour of Christ, in that his last office of a Judge, is now wholly to rely upon him, in his present office of a Mediator. If we take other refuges here, we shall have to seek there. The papists promise themselves divers sanctuaries: they have their choice of saints, and above all the blessed Virgin, to whom they direct their prayers. But as the Jews might not offer sacrifice but at the altar, so nor may we offer up our prayers but in Christ. And if we must not pray but in his name, shall we in his name pray to creatures, and make him our Mediator to his servants, while we intend to make them our mediators to him? No; but, as Euphrosinus writes of some of the Jews, that coming to a dying man, they will say, If Jesus be the Messiah, he deliver thee from all thy sins; though in life their hard hearts will not let them believe it, yet in death they are glad to make some doubtful use of it. So whatsoever the Romists tell us while they live, I am persuaded, this is the only refuge they cleave unto when they die; Christ, and none but Christ. In those legal or typical sacrifices, the people were to lay their hands on the head of the beast; testifying all their shares to be there, both in respect of the sin, and the deserved punishment. In like manner let us transfer all our sins upon our Head Christ, who was once sacrificed for us: so shall we be found of him blameless, because he hath taken all our blame from us; and he will never condemn us to die for that, for which himself hath died already.

"In peace." So to be found is the consummation of happiness. Peace to righteousness is the sister of a queen, the daughter of a queen, and a queen herself. "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace," Luke ii. 14: there let her stand for a queen, and be righteousness her king, both married together in Christ. "Righteousness and peace have kissed each other," Psal. lxxxv. 10: there they kiss and brace like man and wife. "Love the truth and peace," Zech. viii. 19: there let her be the sister of truth and righteousness; twin sisters of that heavenly parentage, never to be parted. Here in my text, let her be the daughter of righteousness; for if we maintain holiness in heart and life, without spot and blameless, we shall be found in peace. "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace," Psal. xxxvii. 37. If it be long before she comes to the crown, yet she is born to be a queen, and in the end she shall have it. Yea, besides all these relations of spouse, sister, daughter, she may also be called the mother of righteousness. "Follow peace and holiness, without which no man shall see God," Heb. xii. 14: the mother is placed before the daughter. First be reconciled to thy brother, before thou offer thy gift at the altar, Matt. v. 24: Christ himself gives it the precedency, and sets party after peace. And indeed peace prepares the way for righteousness, and helps to prosper religion. Turbulent spirits have neither time nor means to be holy: but peace makes us both capable

of holiness, and acceptable to God in our holiness. However, let us not part them: such inseparable companions doth our apostle wish them to us, that he would not have us found without them. Peace in this world is a precious earnest, a fair and lovely type of that everlasting peace of the world to come; and war in this world is a shrewd and fearful emblem of the everlasting discord, tumult, and torment of hell. Therefore our blessed God bless us with external and internal peace, and make them both lead us to eternal peace.

If therefore we desire to be found in peace at that day there, let us live in peace all our days here. Why should they find peace above, that fly peace below? I know no surer or surer way to prepare you for the one, than by persuading you to the other. There may be many opposers of our peace; the peace of doctrine is opposed by sectaries, the peace of tranquillity is opposed by the contentious, and the peace of plenty is opposed by the oppressors: against all these let us maintain peace; and that in respect of the church, of the state, and of our own private carriage.

1. Let us begin at home, and keep peaceable bosoms: "Be at peace among yourselves," 1 Thess. v. 13. Love is the fuel of peace, the vessel that contains the treasure of peace: if the vessel once breaks, peace instantly runs out. Love is opposed to malice, so it covers offences with the mantle of peace: to churlishness, and so it is liberal in giving, the work of love: to hard-heartedness, and so it is the love of the work. There is one possessive, *meum*, which is a general peace-breaker, a common wrangler that sets us all together by the ears. If men would yield a little of their own right, with a small loss of riches they should purchase abundance of peace. Abraham, to avoid contention with his cousin Lot, gave him free choice of the ground. Though he were the elder, and every way the better, and had the better cause too, yet he goes to his nephew to deprecate strife. He that doth so now, that will follow the practice of our father Abraham, must not acquaint a lawyer with the matter; for if he consult him, there is nothing but law in his mouth.

Nor must this desire of peace be straitened: but, "Live peaceably with all men," Rom. xii. 18: not only with our friends, and such as love us; but even with our enemies, and such as hate us. Some mistaking that of St. Paul, "Follow peace with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart," 2 Tim. ii. 22, abridge our peace, denying it the full extent and latitude. Thus out of a surly singularity, they will have peace with none but the pure, and the pure in their own sense. As for others that are not of their pure strain, they are out of all peace with them. They will not so much as afford them the common duties of humanity: not show him the way, that goes not the same way with them. But though we must have peace with the saints especially, yet not only; but with all men. I know that some are given to contention, 1 Cor. xi. 16, and we may dwell among them that hate peace, Psal. cxx. 6: in this case it is enough for us to seek peace with them, to speak peace to them, and to be peaceably affected towards them; and if they will not have peace with us, yet our peace shall return into our own bosoms. We shall have the comfort of it in ourselves, and the reward of it with God, though we have not the fruit or effect of it with men. Still, therefore, "seek peace, and pursue it," Psal. xxxiv. 14: run after it, follow it with no slow pace, but with an earnest and eager pursuit. We are not to stay till peace comes to us, or think it enough to accept peace when it is offered; but go thy way to thy brother, Matt. v. 24; tarry not till he

come to thee, but go thou to him with an olive branch of peace in thy mouth. Though it be unwilling to come, sue for it; though it turn from thee, follow after it; at the gates of heaven be sure thou shalt overtake it.

2. The peace of the state wherein we live would not be disturbed neither. We see a fearful confusion all over the Christian world, wars in some places, rumours of war in all places; we therefore, if we love peace, have cause to fall to our prayers for peace, that God would so rule the rulers of nations and kingdoms, that their hearts may be disposed to peace. So our church hath taught us to pray, "Give peace in our time, O Lord;" and that he "would give unto all nations unity, peace, and concord." For ourselves at home, blessed be the God of peace for it, we have abundance of peace: we dwell in the tabernacles of peace; we lie down and rise up in peace; we go to our temples in peace; we go to our graves in peace. Yet the quietest waters may be moved by the winds; and we are not without some such tempestuous spirits, that, as if they had fed so long upon the sweet plenty of peace, till they had taken a surfeit, are loud advocates for war. "Fear the Lord and the king, and meddle not with them that are given to change," Prov. xxiv. 21. The desire of change is the mother of murmuring, which breeds a whispering and buzzing of false rumours into others' ears. They speak out of the ground, and whisper out of the dust, Isa. xxix. 4. These whispers and murmurings, like vapours rising out of the earth, multiply into the storms of sedition, sedition grows into mutiny, and mutiny ends in confusion. They that are troubled with desire for innovation, will be troubling Majesty itself; and had rather than do nothing, undo all. Out of their popular and vain-glorious humour, they would be counted angels, though it be but for troubling the waters. Be the garden never so fair, they would make the world believe that there is a snake under every leaf. Be the intention never so sincere, they will prognosticate and divine sinister and mischievous effects from it. Such men have little hope to be found of Christ in peace, for "the way of peace they have not known," Rom. iii. 17. A troubled spirit is a sacrifice to God, Psal. li. 17; but a troublesome spirit is far from it; it is rather a sacrifice to Satan.

3. But woe to them that break the peace of the church; that blend religion with contention, and put those asunder, which God hath joined together, truth and peace! With what violent passions do many men bandy controversies! How do they wrangle in print, and fight with their pens, as soldiers with their pikes, all wounding the peace of the church! With what bitterness of spirit do they defy one another! I would to God we had less of the polemical, and more of the positive divinity. I deny not but wisdom ought to be justified of her children: an indifference to contrary opinions in fundamental doctrines, a shuffling of religions together in the bag, and making it all one which they choose, is a cursed stupidity. So a Turk might say in scorn of us both, protestants and papists. They call you heretics, you call them idolaters; why may not idolaters and heretics agree well enough together? But a true Christian will never make contraries in fundamental things indifferent, nor the word of God and traditions of men all one. But what needs this frequency of disputations, this multiplying of volumes? Why should we answer every dog that barks with barking again? Why should we think the truth utterly lost, unless we weary the press with vindications of it? "The tongue is a fire," Jam. iii. 6; but the pen goes further, adds fuel to

this fire, and shoots it abroad where the tongue cannot reach. Of all which, being of so peace-breaking a nature, like those books of curious arts, Acts xix. 19, if there were a good fire made, the church might well endure to warm her hands at it. For it were certainly better for us to want some truth, than to have no peace; and a man that never studied controversies, may without controversy be saved. "Strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers," 2 Tim. ii. 14; for thereby the whole are often wounded, but the weak are seldom strengthened. "If any seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God," 1 Cor. xi. 16. The custom of the church is to follow peace, to fly contention.

Seek peace, when she is hidden; pursue her, when she is flying; they know not the value of peace, that lose her so easily, or so faintly follow her. There are some indeed that follow peace, but in a wrong sense; they turn prosecution into persecution, and do not overtake her, but overturn her. But if we desire to be found in peace then, let peace be found in us now: and if we have no other means to obtain it, our prayers we have; by lifting up of our eyes, hands, and hearts to the God of peace, and bowing our knees to the Prince of peace. And that our prayers may speed the better, let us seek peace with God by our repentance, that God may make peace with us by his forgiveness. "And the work of righteousness shall be peace," Isa. xxxii. 17. This preparation is necessary for all them that desire to be found in peace: let us keep the peace, as we would have the peace to keep us. "Follow peace with all men," Heb. xii. 14; there is the one: "I will lay me down in peace and sleep; for thou, O Lord, makest me dwell in safety," Psal. iv. 8; there is the other.

Let us consider the blessedness of that peace there, by the sweetness of the peace we have here. There is no peace, that is not separated from righteousness, but it is most delectable. Peace is the breviary and abridgement of all that is good. Peace or nothing; peace and every thing. The Jews had such a saying, Where there is no peace, there is nothing; as if all were nothing, or nothing worth, without peace. They included all good, plenty, prosperity, (and what not?) under the name of peace. It is the chiefest and the choicest good, a fundamental happiness, a mother-blessing; that which blesseth all other blessings to us, and without which they are no blessings. Whether it be a peace between nations; such as was at the birth of Christ; and it was a blessed fruit of his birth when the temple of Janus was shut up. "There shall be a high-way out of Egypt to Assyria," Isa. xix. 23; freeness of traffic, and the peace of commerce; and that not without a blessing; for the Lord shall bless him, ver. 25. This is Augustus's peace. Or peace in our own land; which is so good, that David cannot tell how to express the goodness of it; so sweet, that he cannot sufficiently magnify the sweetness, otherwise than by breaking into a kind of admiration of it: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" Psal. cxxxiii. 1. For profit, it is as the dew of heaven, that makes all fat and fruitful where it falls. In what land soever peace sets her foot, her steps drop fitness. For pleasure, it is like to Aaron's ointment, running down from his head to his skirts: filling and refreshing both prince and people with the sweet comfort of it. This is Solomon's peace, and may be called the king's peace.

Or whether it be the taking down of that partition wall, which was set up between the Jew and the

Gentile; reconciling them, and making them both one in himself; so making peace: this is St. Paul's peace, Eph. ii. 14, 15. Or whether it be a peace with heaven: "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God," Rom. v. 1. The peace that belongs to the earth, the earth can give, though sometimes it will not. But Christ speaketh of a peace which the world cannot give, John xiv. 27; nor can the world take away. Not Isaiah's bridge, reaching from Egypt to Ashur; but Jacob's ladder, reaching from Bethel to heaven. This is Christ's peace. Or peace at home, tranquillity in our own bosoms; whereby we escape that sobbing of the heart, and have the sweet feeling of the forgiveness of our sins; so that our holy conscience is quiet within us; and we sing, "Return unto thy rest, O my soul," Psal. cxvi. 7. This is David's peace. Or lastly, peace at our departing; which is worth all; when, in a time of peace, and in a state of peace, and from a place of peace, we breathe out our souls into the arms of peace; and so enter into everlasting peace: and this is Simeon's peace.

Such is the excellency of peace, so good, that nothing is good without it. It is the earth's portion, by the angel's wish, Luke ii. 14; and a fair portion is peace. All the earth calls for it, and the very heavens cannot be without it. It is the glory of heaven, and joy of the whole earth. And for the credit of it, it is there a military wish: it comes here from the mouth of soldiers, that were then in their military habit; Peace on earth. Even they sing of peace, and praise it, and wish it, and know not what better thing to wish to the earth than it. Yea, it is an angelic wish: they being heavenly spirits, wish not any thing at any time but heavenly. Such a heavenly thing is peace: no broils, no clamours in heaven; nothing but peace there: and a kind of heaven there is upon earth, when upon earth there is peace. Peace is every way lovely; to the eye it is beauty, to the ear melody, to the taste sweeter than honey; it is integrity in the hand, it is wisdom in the head, it is heaven in the heart.

Yet such is the quarrelling disposition of too many, that St. Paul is fain to take the peace of them, and to bind them to the good behaviour: "Follow peace with all men." "Mark them which cause division," Rom. xvi. 17, which break the peace; how pure soever they look, how holy soever they profess themselves. That is a dangerous holiness, which breaks the church's peace. The prophets preached against the sins of Israel, they departed not from the church of Israel, they disturbed not the peace of Israel. (August.) We denounce war against your sins, we wish peace to your souls. It is every good man's desire in himself, and his wish to others: Peace be to you. St. Paul in none of his salutations leaves out peace. "Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and Christ Jesus our Lord," 1 Tim. i. 2. Grace, that a man offend not God; mercy, that he offend not his neighbour; and peace, that he offend not himself. Now as one saith, Nothing is fairer, than that for what a man prays, for that he should strive. Let us wish and work peace; not being only *pacifici*, peace-speakers, but *pacifeci*, peace-makers. And blessed are they that labour in the work of peace. This though we reap not in the sight of men, and so lose our thanks; yet we cannot go out of the sight of God, and there we never lose our reward. In peace they that seek Christ now, shall be found of him in peace then. Thus as we begun this verse with love, so we end it with peace. And where should we better end, than with that peace which shall never end? When we shall appear before the supreme Judge, and he shall have no quarrel against us, ne-

thing wherewith to charge us, oh unconceivable sweetness! He will not give us a dismission, Depart in peace; but an admission, Enter into peace. Thou hast lived spotless; well done, good servant; thou art rewarded with peace; enter into thy Lord's joy.

VERSE 15.

And account that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you.

Among the many disputes and opinions, what became of the soul of Lazarus all the time of those four days that his body lay in the grave, Isidore Pelusiota thinks that it was in heaven; and he proves it by this reason, because Jesus wept at his raising. Why wept he? Life is good, and Lazarus was his friend; and to raise up his friend to life was a good work. Here was no cause of tears; why then wept Christ? What, did He weep for company? Because Mary wept, and Martha wept, and the people wept, therefore also Jesus wept; was this the cause of those tears? Did he weep for company? or was it for affection? As the Jews interpreted his tears; "Behold how he loved him." But we weep for fear to lose a friend, when sickness hath so far prevailed upon him, that we give him for dead; and not for his reviving: at his recovery we rather rejoice. Or was it for the hardness of the work, as Martha conceived it? "Lord, by this time he stinketh, for he hath been dead four days," John xi. 39. Not so certainly: even the blind Jews could confute that opinion; "Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?" ver. 37. They might conclude, He can raise him with a word; and to speak a word is no such hard work; he did not then weep for the difficulty. Or was it in a mystery? Shall we understand by Lazarus lying four days in his grave, a sinner many years buried in the custom of sins and hardness of heart? Indeed there is some difficulty in raising up of such a dead soul: Jesus himself weeps; he spends not only blood, but tears about it. Was it for any of these reasons; for compassion, for affection, for difficulty, or for a mystery, that Jesus wept?

Yet another (and some think) a better reason may be given for his weeping; it is this: Lazarus's soul had now left her mortal tabernacle, and was delivered out of prison; from all the pains, and sins, and assaults, and troubles which she endured in the body; she was taken up by angels into rest, peace, and glory. Now at this raising up of Lazarus, she must be called down again to her old dwelling; and for this Jesus wept. That a soul in triumph should be brought back to warfare; from that mount of infinite joys, to descend into the valley of tears; from the place of peace, to return to the region of trouble; from Abraham's bosom, to Adam's pilgrimage; for Lazarus again to be made mortal, necessitated again, besides all sorrows, to death; this was a change that might well ask tears: for this revocation Jesus wept. I deny not, but this was for the glory of God; and in effect no more than happened to Moses after that glorious speculation, to the three apostles after Christ's transfiguration, to Paul after his rapture, and to John after his vision. Yet for this Jesus wept. *Hinc illa lachryma.*

But what have we to do with Lazarus's soul? what matter is it where it was? Yes, if we mark it, it is to some purpose. For all this while we have been

in heaven too; during the discourse and meditation upon the former verses, our transported souls, if any flame of holy grace have taken hold of them, upon the wings of contemplation have been borne up into that place of glorious rest: we have with speculative minds viewed those new heavens, wherein dwelleth righteousness; we have conversed with the peace, and joy, and blessedness of that upper world; our spirit have tasted the sweetness of those unspeakable pleasures; we were in desire, together with Lazarus in those eternal mansions. Yet now, alas, as if we had all this time been in a happy dream, we waken in this verse, and find ourselves below, upon earth, in a wilderness of sin, in a region of trouble: so far from the felicity of that kingdom, and fruition of that freedom, that we have still an apprenticeship to serve; our souls must wait till our particular dissolution, our bodies till the general resurrection. There is no remedy, but we must tarry till Christ come to judge this world, before we can completely come to the honour of that world.

Now lest this consideration should affect us with too deep a melancholy, and put us beyond our patience, our apostle comes in here with a seasonable antidote, and bids us be of good cheer; for God doth not forget his promise by his long-suffering, but his long-suffering rather condueth to the performance of his promise. All this forbearance has reference to our salvation. In this delay of his coming we must find God's clear intentment of our salvation. His dilatory is not his slackness, but his sweetness; his mercy rather than neglect. As a learned and skilful physician can make a wholesome medicine of rank poison; and so order a mineral, dangerous in itself, that that which in nature, simply, would kill, by his composition shall be of sovereign virtue to recover health: so the deferring of hope, which is to some the breaking of the heart, our apostle takes to another use, and makes a cordial of it, to heal the heart when it is broken. The natural man reasons thus: While the grass is a growing, the beast starves: that which is so long a coming, will scarce ever come: give me the present, take you the future. But the gracious heart resolves the contrary: Give me the futurity of those infinite comforts, take you these present, transient toys. The bad servant says, "My lord delayeth his coming," therefore I may be unruly, Luke xii. 45. But the good one says, "Yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry," Heb. x. 37: therefore I will watch for his coming, that when he does come he may not find me sleeping. If he comes, it is to receive me; if he stays, it is to try me: howsoever, his purpose is to save me.

Therefore "account that the long-suffering of the Lord is salvation." There be two general points in the verse. 1. A comfortable truth delivered, this long-suffering is salvation. 2. And a witness whereby it is confirmed, Even as our beloved brother Paul hath written. Out of the former part naturally arise three conclusions. 1. That God is not rash, sudden, and violent against us, but long-suffering. 2. That this patience does not tend to our perdition; but to our good, our best good, even salvation. 3. That without all misconception, we ought so to esteem it: Account that the Lord's long-suffering is salvation. Concerning the testimony, hereafter, in due place.

1. That God is patient, is a manifest and allowed truth; we need not rack our faith to believe it, for we are sensible of it: it is not matter of faith, so much as of feeling. Which of us here had not long ago been in hell, but that he hath long suffered us upon earth, with means to bring us to heaven? We for-

feit our lives, we forfeit our souls, every moment to his justice; how are we relieved but by his patience? We are rebels; why does he not execute martial law against us? "My spirit shall not always strive with man," Gen. vi. 3. He might cut us off sooner; yet there is a fair time left us. The poets' fiction hath a grave moral. They fain Vulcan to be the cutler of heaven, and armour-maker to their gods. Now Vulcan was lame, and therefore could not hastily bring home their weapons. The true God is slow to wrath, and unwilling to punish, proroguing his judgments, and expecting our repentance; yet so as, by delaying, he brings to pass his own purposes. There is no one title more frequently attributed to God in the Scripture, than the Lord of hosts; yet this Lord of hosts and armies is long-suffering.

Two things, one would think, should much trouble his patience; idolatry, and blasphemy; because they both nearly trench upon his honour, whereof he is most tender. There is no sense for the one, no pretence for the other. Was it not madness in the Israelites, to worship the gods of the Canaanites, who (they knew by experience) could not defend their land from them? Would it not anger a man to see his child, passing by himself, to ask blessing of his slave? We all live at God's charges, and shall we pay a block or stone our service? What sense is there in this? who would endure it? Why do we tear in pieces God's dreadful name, forborne? A waterman, that will undertake to swear with Satan himself, and give him odds; that let but oaths and blasphemies be the wherry, will row with him for a wager, which shall be at hell first; yet even this man is long suffered. Though he spends his life, and gets his living, within less than two inches of death every day; yet this man sins, and is spared. Oh the infinite long-suffering of our gracious God, even in the midst of these sins that press upon him for vengeance, and incessantly sollicit his justice! For every wicked oath is a kind of prayer for judgment; and they that know not how to pray as they ought, know yet familiarly how to swear as they ought not.

There is not the least punctilio of honour, but your gallant stands upon it; and with streams of another's, or of his own blood, he will wash off that imaginary stain. He calls you into the field, to do him right, and to answer him like a gentleman: but that right is manifest wrong; and you must answer him like a gentleman, not like a Christian. What is the ground of all this? His honour forsooth: he cannot put up such an injury with his honour. But all this while he forgets the honour of God, thus disparaged by his bloody combat. He cannot brook a slight offence done him by his equal, without revenge; yet looks that the Lord of heaven and earth should digest his monstrous wickedness with patience.

How far distant be the thoughts of God and man! Every little that we suffer from God or man, we think too much; all the wrongs that God or man suffer from us, we account but little. God suffers long, and much: he hath not dealt so with us. Even where he tells us that we "have need of patience," because we must suffer, Heb. x. 36: he presently qualifies it, "Yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry," ver. 37. *Gravitas miseria brevitate levatur*, says Seneca; i. e. The weight of misery is lightened by its shortness. His merciful wisdom hath so tempered our sorrows, that if we suffer much, it shall not be long; if we suffer long, it shall not be much. Some misery is like a consumption, gentle, but of long continuance; other like a fever, violent, but soon over. If our sorrow be long, the lighter; if sharper, the shorter. It is but the body that commonly suffers, and that cannot hold out long. Say

it falls in pieces, there is but a pitcher broken. It is but the instrument of the soul; and why should a good musician think his skill lost by the hurt of his lute? or a valiant soldier think his honour lost by the breach of his sword? or a rich man think himself undone by the rent of his garment? All our sorrow is either tolerable, or short. Upon which assurance, a man may well endure to have his hopes adjourned to a new day.

But the grievance we put God to, is neither easy nor short: he must suffer much, and he must suffer long too; much in burden, and long in continuance. And we are so far from easing him of it by repentance, that he is fain to ease himself of it in our just vengeance. For though he suffer long, in mercy, there is no reason that he should suffer always, in justice. All the while that David lay in his sins without compunction, the burden of them lay upon God: so long he suffered. But when David cried, I have sinned, and melted into repentance, he took the burden off from God, and laid it where it should be, upon himself; and so they were both eased. We commit sins without fear, and persist in them without remorse; thus far we make Christ to suffer, thus long the whole load lies upon him. "I am pressed under you," so he complains, "as a cart that is full of sheaves," Amos ii. 13. But when we shall humble ourselves by repentance, and break our hearts with contrition; we do then take off the weight from Christ, where it is, and lay it upon our own hearts, where it should be. "Grieve not the holy Spirit of God," Eph. iv. 30. Till we come to repentance, he is in grievance: so long he suffers for us, as we forbear to suffer for ourselves. But by our penitent humiliation, we stoop our shoulders to our own burden; under which when we have lain drooping, and weeping, and crying, and praying for a time, the Lord is mercifully pleased to take it off again from us, and to transfer it upon the cross of his own Son. This easeth us both, this discharge us of all for ever. This is the first conclusion; whereof we may make a threefold use.

1. Here is matter of consolation; we have to do with the God of patience. The gods of the heathen used to come in tempests: indeed they were no gods, but men; and none of the best men, neither; but subject to sensual lusts and violent passions. But our God gives innumerable testimonies of his slowness to wrath, and invincible patience. It is well that we fall not into the hands of men; they would not give us so much as a breathing time, betwixt our fault and our death. When Saul said to Doeg, Fall thou upon the priests, he slew that day fourscore and five that were a linen ephod, 1 Sam. xxii. 18. A tyrant dooms innocents to death; and without any pause, execution follows. From God, out of heaven, lightning and thunder come together; sometimes we have lightning without thunder, but thunder without lightning never. It is some mercy in cruel man, if the lightning of anger in his eyes give warning of the thunderbolt in his hand; but too often he kills before he threatens, which is thunder without lightning. If we should defile his bed, and dishonour him in his wife, would man endure it? If we should strike and misuse his children, would man endure it? If we should violate and rob him of his goods, would man endure it? If we should stick the aspersions of scandal upon his credit, would man endure it? We do all these wrongs to God, and yet he endures. We lodge that filthy adulteress, sin or lust, in the marriage-bed of our hearts; we persecute and kill his children, those holy images of himself; we rob him of his goods, in purloining his tithes and offering; we swear, and blaspheme his honour all the day

long; yet still he endures it. O God, what should become of us, but for thy wonderful patience? But here is the comfort that keeps us from the gulf of despair, in the deep consideration of our own wickedness; The Lord is long-suffering.

2. Here is matter of caution; the Lord's long-suffering would not be abused. Shall we persist in evil, because he continues to be good? My father is full of lenity, therefore I may go on in levity, and follow my wanton courses; surely, he will forgive all at the last. What ingenuous son will reason so? Thou art good to the well-deserving; thou art gracious to the undeserving; thou art merciful to the ill-deserving. What then? because he suffers long, shall I therefore put him to it, and try how long he will suffer? Because he suffers much, shall I therefore lay more weight upon him? This is indeed the way of the world; bear one injury, and invite more; put up this offence, and you shall be filled with them. But you must say in reason, This is no fair dealing in the world, and shall we deal so with the Lord? They write of the palm-tree, that the more it is pressed with weight, the higher and stronger it grows, and the more fruit it yields. But let us not have such a conceit of God; that the more we operate him with our sins, the more abundant fruits of his mercy he will afford us. Never think so, for you shall not find it so. He that began in kindness, and went on in patience, may end in fury. There is a long-suffering that does not tend to salvation: so sinners are suffered, like fishes, to swim merrily down the stream of their own sensuality, till they come to the sea of death.

3. Here is matter of imitation; God's patience calls for ours: it is but reason for us to suffer long, towards whom he is so long-suffering. St. Paul describing the Christian's armour, Eph. vi., puts not in patience for any piece of it; and yet tells us in another place, that we have need of patience, Heb. x. 36. Good reason; for it is not a piece, but the whole panoply itself. There is a plate for the breast, a helmet for the head, a sword for the hand, a girdle for the loins, greaves for the feet, and a shield for the vital parts; every piece arms a part, but patience covers all. Which way soever the blow comes, patience receives it. Besides, if the adversary's weapon be so sharp, that it pierceth any piece of this armour, yet patience is a coat of mail, a defence under these, that dulls the edge of all assaults. Ease can be found no where but in patience. If we look forward, it is not there; if backward, we cannot perceive it; on the left hand we behold it not, nor on the right can we see it, Job xxiii. 8, 9. Trouble is on our right hand, and on our left hand trouble; trouble before us, trouble behind us, and trouble round about us; but if patience be within us, all is safe. If this be within thee, no matter who is against thee. Our trouble may be excessive, both for the measure, and for the time: this armour of patience must be answerable to it.

Long; for from morning to morning, by day and by night, there will be a vexation, Isa. xxviii. 19. Sorrow commonly comes on horseback, but goes away on foot. It runs like Cush to David with ill news, 2 Sam. xviii. 32, so fast that it is out of breath; but when it is come, it tarries with us, it does not run back again. It breaketh us "with breach upon breach," Job xvi. 14. "We are killed all the day long," Rom. viii. 36; not a forenoon, nor an hour, but all the day long. Now patience must not be an inch shorter than affliction. If the bridge reach but half way over the brook, we shall have but an ill-favoured passage. When "the bed is shorter than a man can stretch himself on it, and the covering nar-

rower than he can wrap himself in it," Isa. xxviii. 20, he shall lie but uneasily. Patience is the bed of the soul; it must not be too short; it is the covering of the soul; it should not be too narrow. Therefore Christ instructs us for the length of our patience; "He that will come after me, let him take up his cross daily, and follow me," Luke ix. 23. Daily; for we must learn to suffer. Few and evil have been my days, Gen. xlvii. 9: that patriarch spake of never a good one. Let us praise patience, as we do a fair day, at night. That light is despised, which holds not in till we go to bed. He that endureth to the end, shall be saved, Matt. xxiv. 13.

Large; as great in quantity, as afflictions are in number. What king going to war, considereth not "whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand?" Luke xiv. 31. What is a little sufferance, to a great deal of sorrow? We have "five loaves and two fishes; but what are they among so many?" John vi. 9. Some men may be stored with two or three acts of patience; but what are they among so many troubles? If the plaster be too narrow for the sore, it will not keep it from festering. By patience let us possess our souls; for impatience dispossessioneth a man of himself. Yea, let us keep this possession given us by Christ. Though Satan find many tricks in law to disturb us, and many assaults against law to displace us; yet let us keep our possession of patience, and all is safe. As a wise physician makes a medicine of many sharp ingredients, in their own nature dangerous; but then adds a corrective to them, whereby they become proper physic for the patient: so when the Lord doth minister to us many sorrows, bitter ingredients, with the one hand; let us beseech him to put in with the other hand as much patience, that they may be at least quantity for quantity. Then though we smart for the time, we shall be the better after it; and the end will be our health and everlasting comfort in Jesus Christ.

His long-suffering is salvation: that is the second conclusion. This seems to be a strange kind of speaking. Is salvation? If he had said, it is a means of salvation, a help to salvation, a preparative for salvation, or any thing that conduceth toward salvation, it had been somewhat intelligible. But that it is salvation, appears a difficult saying. What do we find in our pilgrimage but weariness? what fruit doth all the vanity of this earth yield, but bitterness? what can be looked for in this valley of tears, but sorrows? And do you call these salvation? But here it is put for the effect: it is salvation; that is, it is for salvation, the way to it, the means of it, and an argument for it. In two respects.

1. In regard of them that are already called and put into the army of God's militant servants; that are of his train-band, in the continual exercise of their spiritual arms. Secondly, in regard of them whose names are in God's muster-book, but not yet called, and pressed forth to the wars. In relation to both these, this long-suffering conduceth to salvation. The former God suffers long to suffer much at the hands of his and their enemies. They must strive, and fight, and bleed, and conquer, before they receive that victorious wreath of glory. First Paul fights a good fight, then he takes the crown, 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8. For the other, some of them are not yet called, some of them are not yet born, that have their names written in heaven. Therefore Christ delays his coming, that these might also have their day; and but for the filling up of the number of the elect, the world should not stand one moment. This then is the intent of his long-suffering, salvation to us, salvation to them; to all salvation. If those souls were charged to stay

for the accomplishment of their brethren, that were already sacrificed, and under the altar, Rev. vi. 11: much more we that are yet to be sacrificed upon the altar. God suffers this for three reasons.

(1.) Our affliction prepares us for salvation; as grapes must be pressed before they become wine, and corn threshed and ground ere it make bread. This is indeed a mere paradox to the children of the world, who run in a circle of sin and pleasure; till, as Seneca expresses it, *Fini alterius mali, gradus futuri*; i. e. The end of one evil is a step into that which is to come. But that there should be safety from wounds, health from disease, joy from sorrow, strength from weakness, life from death; (Bernard.) this is a harder riddle than Samson's to these Philistines. It is true that "no chastening for the present is joyous, but grievous," Heb. xii. 11; yet it hath another relish besides the bitterness. The manna in the wilderness was so conditioned, so qualified, that it tasted to every man like that which that man liked best. Even correction is our manna, part of our daily bread: let us desire God to make it so taste to us, not as we would, but as he would have it taste; and to make our taste agreeable to his will, not his will to our taste. As his corrections taste of humiliation, so they taste of consolation too; as they have a relish of danger, so of assurance too. God hath imprinted in all his elements, whereof our bodies consist, two manifest qualities. The fire is hot and dry, the water cold and moist; therefore as the fire dries, so it heats too; and as the water moistens, so it cools too. In like manner his afflictions, which be the elements of our mortification, by which our souls are brought home to him, have two qualities and operations: as they scourge us, so they scourge us into the way to him; and when they have showed us that we are nothing in ourselves, they also show us that Christ is all things to us. And though they should remove us out of the world, yet they assure us, that no extremity of sickness, no temptation of Satan, no guiltiness of sin, no horror of death, shall remove us from him: but that when we die, we shall die in him, and by that death be united unto him, that died for us. Thus are we "chastened of the Lord, that we might not be condemned with the world," 1 Cor. xi. 32. Therefore doth he suffer us to be afflicted, because he will not suffer us to be condemned. All shall prepare us for him, and help to gather us to him. Therefore we may well account his long-suffering salvation.

(2.) Our afflictions are an argument of our salvation: "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth," Heb. xii. 6. Therefore he suffers us to feel the more stripes, that we might have the more assurances of his paternal love. Physicians not seldom let us blood before we be sick; and we lop off our superfluous branches, that the vine may yield better fruit. Sin is the strength of death, and the death of strength; by what means soever the Lord makes that weaker, we grow stronger. It was the ground of that long disputation between Job and his friends, whether that woeful calamity was a sign of God's love or of his hatred to him. God himself was the moderator, and decided the question, that all this tended to his salvation. "If the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us?" was Gideon's expostulation with the angel, Judg. vi. 13. Others persecute, we suffer; which of us is likeliest to be in God's favour? Cyrian resolves it in that instance of Judas and Christ. Judas betrays, Christ dies; yet which of us had not rather be like Christ, than like Judas? Like Christ, who prayed for his enemies, that they might be saved through the blood which they shed; than like Judas, who by the sign of peace,

broke the sacrament of peace? This was Mary's message to Christ, "Lord, he whom thou lovest is sick," John xi. 3: if he is loved, how is it he is sick? As if none could be sick whom God loves. Yes, even therefore are we sick, because he loves us. The fever does not more burn up our blood, than our lust; and together with sweating out the surfeits of nature at the pores of the body, we weep out the sinful corruption of our nature at the pores of the conscience. So that as the breaking of the clouds gives way to the clearer light of the sun, the grace of our soul shines fairer forth at these breaches of our sick body. Much fruit breaks the tree, much rankness lays the corn. Those evils are the heavier, which are the sweeter; I regard thee as wretched, because thou hast not been wretched: so one. God sees that men are most miserable in not being miserable; therefore he lets those that he cares not for swim in pleasures; but they shall be sure of woe upon earth, to whom he means joy in heaven. Therefore in our sufferings, let us account his long-suffering no less than salvation.

(3.) Afflictions are our passage to salvation, our thoroughfare to the land of promise. Through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of heaven, Acts xiv. 22. If we do not find such rough passages, we are out of our way. Show me the man that hath found a fairer way than sorrow. I am sure that Christ did not, that knew the way most perfectly. This way he went, and this way he directed us to follow him. "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" Luke xxiv. 26. He had first his ought to suffer, before he could be allowed his thus to enter. Suffer first, and there is an ought set upon the head of that; enter last, and there is a thus or so that is the usher to it. The patriarchs went this way, the prophets this way, the apostles this way, the martyrs this way; this way went all the saints, and do we look for an easier way? A Christian's life can no more be *sine luctibus*, i. e. without sorrows, than the sea *sine fluctibus*, i. e. without waves. You will say that God's legacies by his first will, in the Old Testament were plenty and victory: Canaan was a land of wine and oil, milk and honey; and by those galleries he brought them into his bed-chamber; by those glories and joys, to the joys and glories of heaven. Why hath he changed his will? why left his old way? why doth he now carry us by the severe path of discipline and mortification; by the melancholy way of mourning and lamentation; by the thorny way of misery and tribulation? Is the joy and glory of heaven no more than a comparative joy, a comparative glory? not such in itself, but only such in comparison of the baseness of this world? No; for as God himself, who is all, is made of no substances; so the joy and glory with him is made of no circumstances: essential joy, essential glory, all there. But why does he not begin them here? What needs this rough way of calamity thither? Beloved, shall not he that made the kingdom appoint the way? He thought it the best, and shall we think we could have devised a better? Surely, he would never so long have suffered his enemies to tyrannize over his friends, but that he knows it most conducing to his glory and our good; for so we are charged to account it, that his long-suffering is salvation. Nor yet in all this present misery does he leave us destitute of comfort; for even here we have the beginnings of heaven, the peace of conscience, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Thus as in the midst of life we be in death, so in the midst of death we be in life; even in that life which shall never die, Jesus Christ.

2. Thus is the Lord's long-suffering salvation, to such as are called: it is so also to such as are to be

called: to these for their entrance into the church militant, to the other for their passage into the church triumphant. For God, by letting the world stand, allows them both a time, when to come in, and a place, where to come in, and a light, how to come in: all which would be taken away with the taking away of the world. For this cause doth Christ forbear his last coming, and delay this universal conflagration; that the number of his chosen might be made up; and the book of grace be the counterpart, punctually answerable to the book of life, not a name differing between them. Now a second birth presupposeth a first: generation must necessarily precede regeneration: born once they must be, or born twice they cannot be. The great clock of time is kept going for this; otherwise the motion of all his wheels should be stayed for ever, and the angel's oath should come in force, that time shall be no more. God hath his determined number, known only to himself, no part of the earth debarred from them. The earth should burn, the elements melt, the heavens flame, the devils and reprobates be laid up in hell, the elect men and angels be imparadised in heaven, all but for this: God's number is not yet full. Till this be done, Satan may range abroad, the wicked domineer, the righteous suffer; misery and sin walk their round, the heavens move, the seas ebb and flow, the world stand; and the Lord suffers all this. Well, let us yield to God the election of his own times; especially seeing that all tends to salvation. Shall we wish the world at an end with ourselves; and when we go out, that no more might come in? Far be it from us to grudge others that mercy we have found ourselves, and which our gracious God is pleased to show them in Jesus Christ.

The sum of this point is this: All the actions of God toward man, tend to his good, and that to his best good, even salvation. In the creation it was plain; when the Maker, upon the review of his works, saw that every thing in particular, and all things in general, were exceeding good. In the redemption it was as plain: He hath done all things well; a true confession and applause! Here were all things good indeed, all things well: but for whom was this well intended? who shall have the benefit of this? Who but man? It was fit indeed that the honour should be God's, but the profit is man's. In that anthem of the angels there are three notes, which are the compendium of the Christian religion. Glory to God on high, peace on earth, good will towards men, Luke ii. 14. As one reverend prelate quotes the saying of another (Bradward. by B. Andr.) Let that be the religion, let that prevail, as the best and most true of all other, that brings more honour to God, is the best friend to peace, and is most favourable to man; as showing God better affected to us, and making us better affected to God, better one to another. They blasphemously wrong the goodness of God, that think he had rather honour himself in our ruin, than in our salvation. What mean all those protestations; I will not the death of a sinner; and, I will have all men to be saved? Be they cursory speeches? Sure, the God of truth seems to use compliments. That is for such dissembling politicians, as salute one another with God save you, at their meeting, and wish one another hanged after their parting. But God wills good, speaks good, does good to us; nothing but good comes from that infinite Fountain of goodness. Christ spent the days of his humiliation in doing us good: his miracles did good to the bodies of men, his oracles to their souls, his sufferings both to their souls and bodies; all tended to our salvation.

Look upon his miracles, (and every miracle is a new creation,) and we shall find he would do no-

thing which breathed not towards man favour and bounty. Moses wrought miracles, but they were scourges, plagues to the Egyptians. Elijah wrought miracles, but it was to the hurt of the earth, by withholding rain from heaven; and he brought down fire from heaven, but it was to consume men upon the earth. Elisha called for bears, but it was to punish unmannerly children. Peter struck Ananias, that sacrilegious hypocrite, with present death; and St. Paul smote Elymas the sorcerer with blindness. But no such thing was done by Jesus. Those servants of God were the oxen, to tread out the corn, and trample down the straw: Christ was the Lamb of God, full of meekness. When he drew multitudes of fishes to their nets, it was to give them a more liberal provision. When he turned water into wine, it was to glad their hearts. When he multiplied those five loaves, it was to victual a host of people. If he rebuked the winds, it was because they threatened destruction to his servants by their fury. If he cursed the fig-tree, it was for not doing the duty to which he had ordained it, in bearing fruits for man. He restored motion to the lame, sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, speech to the dumb, to the sick health, to the dead life. We can find no miracle of his spent upon revenge and judgment; all relish of sweetness and mercy.

His oracles did no less good to the soul: not a sermon did he preach, wherein he did not breathe heaven into their hearts, Luke xxiv. 32. From the occasion of Jacob's well, he drew forth a sermon of the living waters, John iv. By their natural appetite to those material loaves, he persuades them to a spiritual hunger after the bread of life, John iv. He did let slip no opportunity of winning our souls.

His sufferings crowned all the rest; he did not only do for us, but die for us. All his sayings and doings conduced to our salvation, but his death was our salvation indeed. He did wondrous things, but he suffered direful things. St. Luke offered to write of all that Jesus did, and taught, Acts i. 1; but who did ever attempt to write of all that he suffered? In every thing the goodness of God to man shines in the beams of salvation. If he comes to us, it is with salvation: "This day is salvation come to this house," Luke xix. 9. If he defers his coming, it is for salvation; that we might work out our salvation with fear and trembling, Phil. ii. 12. If he honours us with peace, it is but to give us a taste of salvation. If he scourges us with chastisements, it is still an argument of our salvation. His smiles are the reflections of salvation; his very frowns are not without the look of salvation. His speedier approaches towards us are to bring us to salvation; his long-suffering is to prepare us for salvation. The breath of his mouth, the works of his hands, the desires of his heart, they all determine in this, our salvation. Now as Elisha said to the Shunammite, "Behold, thou hast been thus careful for us, what is to be done for thee?" 2 Kings iv. 13; so, Lord, thou hast done all this for us men, and for our salvation; what shall we return thee for all? Surely we can do no more, nor will we do less, than give thee all honour, and thanks, and praise for ever, Psal. cxvi. 13.

Account that his long-suffering is salvation: this is the third conclusion; we are so bound to account it. It is a principle granted in philosophy, and not contradicted in divinity, that there be four elements, fire, air, water, earth; and that they have their proper qualities, hot, moist, cold, and dry; and that of these four all mixed bodies are composed. Grant then these four concurring to the constitution of man's body; yet so as man's body is a fifth substance, distinct from them all. The heat of it does not make it

fire; nor doth the cold make it water: there is moisture in it, yet it is not air: earth it is, but not without a commixion of the other elements. In the natural mind of man, while it is exercised upon problematical or disputable questions, there be four tempers or ingredients, as his body consists of four humours; ignorance, knowledge, doubt, and persuasion; and there is no mind of man in this world, without all these; though the measure be different; and in some than other one of them may be more predominant. Ignorance is like the earth, dry and barren; persuasion like the fire, lightsome, active, and working; doubt like the water, cold and running; knowledge like the air, clouded and uncertain. Albeit the brighter the sun shines the clearer the air is, yet you never find it without some clouds. Now there is a fifth thing, which indeed comes from another cause, and is infused from above; yet being in the mind, it is forced to partake of the other four: this is a fifth being, the quintessence of them all; and we call it faith, or assurance. This hath in it so much of knowledge, as to understand the principal in part; and yet so much of ignorance, as in part to be shallow, and to come short of the full comprehension of it. It hath so much of persuasion, as to assent unto the truth of it; and yet so much of doubt, as to make many scruples and questions about it. If we rightly examine it, so weak is the faith of many Christians, even in this high point of their own salvation, that the happy building of "Lord, I believe," cannot stand without that column to underprop it, "help thou my unbelief."

The fire of our knowledge descends from heaven; the earth of our ignorance ariseth from beneath; our persuasion is the grace of God; our doubt is from flesh and blood. Yet what man upon earth hath a faith so full of knowledge that it is free from all ignorance? or so strong a persuasion of his own future happiness, such a certainty to be saved, that he never doubted of it? There is therefore a higher degree of faith required of us; even an assurance, that this long-suffering of God is meant for our salvation. And this cannot be a floating opinion of the brain, an airy speculation, driven to and fro, like the clouds with every wind, with every tempest of afflictions. Nor an episcene, equivocating, doubtful apprehension, ebbing and flowing like the inconstant water. But as the less melancholy earth and hydropical water there is in the body, the more sprightly and active it is; so the less doubt and ignorance in our faith, the more holy and heavenly. This then must be a firm persuasion of the heart, the ground whereof is the will of God, the builder whereof is the Spirit of God, the pillars whereof are the word and grace of God, the light whereof is the knowledge of God, and the roof whereof is the glory of God.

That the Divine patience is salvation, is here put upon our account; and if we do not so account it, we shall be accountable for it. It is certainly so in itself, whether we account it so or not, even salvation; but it is not salvation to us unless we so account it. Our faith must come in to make up the match. When Christ hath wrought all this for our salvation, he hath done his part: we must believe that our salvation is thus accomplished, or else we fail in our part. This account therefore is of no small moment, how small account soever we make of it.

It ariseth in full strength against four sorts of sinners. 1. Against those that think God's suffering them to lie long under the rod, is an argument of his disfavour: they do not account it salvation. 2. Against those that are impatient of God's delay, and will needs urge him to mend his pace: these do not account his long-suffering salvation. 3. Against

them that will not make use of this pause of judgment, and reprieve of the world, thereby to lay timely hold on repentance; without which they cannot account it their salvation. 4. Against those that do not proceed in God's steps, rather by lenity to spare, than readily to execute. All these must be called to account by this charge: Account that the long-suffering of God is salvation.

1. There be some that take every heavy cross for a sign of God's implacable anger; and make that an argument of rejection, which our apostle makes an argument of salvation. There is an indolence, to be without pain at all; and there is a condolence, or grieving for the pains of others; and there is a decedence, to be in pain and not to feel it; and there is a superdolence, an over-sensibleness, that takes every scratch for a wound, and every wound for death. God would not have men make themselves more miserable than they need, than they should, by looking upon their miseries through a multiplying glass. "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth," Heb. xii. 6; that is orthodox truth. But that, Whom he scourgeth he hateth; what strange divinity is this? when did the Scripture ever speak so? The Lord writes his mind to us in the characters of correction, that he means to do us good; and we make a false construction of it, as if he meant us ruin. Is affliction such a strange language, that we cannot read it? or is it expressed in so hard a dialect, that we must needs misinterpret it to God's dishonour and our own bane? These are the men, that turn every probation into reprobation, every dejection into a rejection; and if they be cast down, they cry out presently that they are cast away. Lift up thyself, thou timorous, fainting heart, and do not suspect every spot for a plague-token; do not die of a mere conceit. Heaviness may endure for a night; but as sure as the morning sun comes, the morning joy comes: "joy cometh in the morning," Psal. xxx. 5. As the end of all motion is rest, so the end of all thy troubles shall be peace; where the days are perpetual sabbaths, and the diet undisturbed feasts. Thy pacified soul shall become a paradise without a flaming sword, the temple of Solomon without a hammer. Lord, speak music to the wounded conscience, thunder to the seared; that thy justice may reclaim the one, thy mercy relieve the other, and thy favour comfort us all with peace and salvation.

2. There be some that are over-solicitous with God to mend his pace; as if they would not give him leave to take his own leisure, for the execution of his holy purposes. I know there is a sober and modest importunity of the saints, earnest with God to make an end of the days of sin, and to set his glory in the full lustre. The desire of the soul is never satisfied, till it come to the end it aimeth at (which is a main argument for the resurrection); now this cannot be until Christ's second coming. The creatures have a groaning desire of this, they wait "for the manifestation of the sons of God," Rom. viii. 19. The militant saints pray for this; "Thy kingdom come," St. Paul was not without his "I desire to be dissolved." The bride, the church on earth, cries for this; "Even so, come, Lord Jesus," Rev. xxii. 20. Even that church in heaven prays for this: "How long, O Lord, holy and true?" Rev. vi. 10. Sanctified eyes that have but a glimpse of those new heavens by faith, so scorn the contentments of this old world, that did the spheres join with the elements, the sun and stars confederate with the earth and waters, to make them happy, it would be held unacceptable vanity. Yea, did heaven itself proffer them all its glory and pleasure, it would not satisfy them without Christ. *Immo, ne Christus ipse*

sufficeret, nisi seipsum dederit, Nay, not even Christ himself would have been sufficient, had he not given himself. The best of this world is but vanity; the worst, vexation. Beauty a flower; to-day flourishing and worn in the bosom, to-morrow withering and swept out with the besom. Health is not ague-proof; and where is the strength that can stand a fever? Wealth is a fugitive; either it will leave us or we must leave it; and this comes all to one pass. Honour is beholden to vulgar spectacles, fain to borrow poor men's eyes to give it a lustre. And lo, this is all the best of the world.

The worst of it we all know too sensibly: the wicked man's injury is the good man's patrimony. There was joy in the bridegroom's presence, Matt. ix. 15; but sorrow followed immediately upon his absence. It was the politic malice of the world, that aimed by the death of the General to disband the army. So long as Christ lived on earth, we read of no persecution against his disciples; but let him be once removed, and then there is havoc made of the church: Stephen is stoned, Peter crucified, Paul beheaded; some strangled, some burned, some broiled, some brained; all, but only St. John, murdered. The spouse lovingly invites her Beloved to her arms, to her bed; and he summons her to arms, to warfare, as Bernard saith. In her garden grow both lilies and roses; because she is both *operibus candida, et cruce purpurea*; i. e. white with good works, and red with blood. (Cyp. Ep. 9.) Her lot is to do good, and to suffer evil. Untouched fortunes, and untouched consciences, seldom dwell together. And it is usual for them that know no sorrows, to know no God. It is opposition that gives the trial, and causeth argent to seem more bright in a sable field, as the sun is more pleasing when it breaks from a cloud. No marvel if all these considerations make us importunate with God to hasten his kingdom; thinking the time long, till the tyranny of sorrow, and usurpation of sin, give place to righteousness and peace.

Importunate we may be in this desire; we may not be impatient. Hope deferred is the fainting of the soul; but against that fainting, God hath provided cordials for us. As he hath imprinted all the medicinal virtues, that are in all creatures, and made even the flesh of vipers to assist in cordials; so he can raise strength out of weakness, and make sickness itself a medicine to procure everlasting health. As the children of vanity find, that in the midst of laughter there is heaviness; so the sons of patience find, that in the midst of heaviness there is comfort. Christ himself had a sadness in his soul, even unto death; not without a repugnance, a deprecation of death, in the approaches of it: yet he had his cordial too; "Not my will, but thine be done." When he cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" his Father did then reach out his hand to him; but not to deliver his sad soul, but to receive his holy soul. Neither did he longer desire to hold it of him, but to recommend it to him. Whether the good we hope for be deferred, or the evil we fear be inflicted, still patience is a cordial: a silent and absolute obedience to the will of God, is a sovereign cordial; which if God preserve to us, will certainly preserve us to him. And from this lower form of a gentle catechism, in the school of patience, we shall take a greater degree, in a higher place, and joyfully serve him in his kingdom of glory.

3. There be some that grow the more wanton by God's forbearance; and the more long-suffering he is toward them, the more bold they are to offend him. They do what they list, and the Lord lets them alone; therefore they think he is pleased with them, and with what they do; and that which way soever

they take, the end of their journey must needs be salvation. Such men may think it so, but they shall not find it so; for between these two, "long-suffering" and "salvation," there is a breathing-place, an "account ye." This is no light opinion, or fond imagination; that though they spend their days in vanity, they shall end their days in mercy. You have read of some, that spend their days in good things; so they go on; and suddenly to hell; so they go out. They presume that they are in God's favour, and that all his patience doth but further and accomplish their salvation; yet they bring forth nothing but the fruits of perdition. With this conceit they pass their lives, and with this conceit they pass out of their lives. As if they resolved to put their souls in a venture; and to come to heaven their own way, or not to come thither at all. Turn to the Lord with weeping and mourning, saith the prophet Joel, chap. ii. 12. But these will change Joel into Jael: instead of tears, they bring milk, Judg. iv. 19; and for contrition, warm covering: and so lay them down, and never rise more. They will not shed a tear, nor lose a meal, all the year long; but spend their days in a pleasant dream, not interrupted by sorrow; and yet think that all this makes for their salvation. This is a fantastical conceit; our apostle chargeth us here with a well-grounded persuasion, that the Lord's long-suffering is salvation.

Now this persuasion cannot be in our hearts, unless we apprehend the means of salvation, faith and repentance. For what man that continually steers his course westward, can flatter himself that he is travelling towards the east. The long-suffering of God leads us to repentance, Rom. ii. 4. Except his patience work repentance in us, it will not work salvation for us. The meaning of his forbearance, is to bring us to repentance; and repentance is the earnest of salvation. If we do not take God's time, to God's intent; and while he delays his coming, lay hold on conversion; we may count and reckon long enough, but we reckon without our host. For howsoever this proposition is true in the thesis, or foundation; yet it may prove otherwise in the hypothesis, or supposition. God's long-suffering is salvation, that is infallible truth; but it will never be salvation to us, without our hearty and timely repentance. Repentance then is the grace we call upon you for, as you call upon God for salvation. I wait, O Lord, for thy salvation; that is the prayer of my soul to God. I wait, O sinner, for thy conversion; that is the answer of God to my soul. How can we be saved without repentance? and how could we have space to repent, but by God's forbearance? Sin is a wrong to the Divine goodness; and no wrong to that must escape unrevenge. There be two times or places for the revenge upon sin; this mortal life upon earth, or that other immortal death in hell. In that infernal torture, it is God's time for vengeance; then and there he will plague all offences with insufferable pains. While we live in this world, this is our time of vengeance; here, and now, we ought to punish ourselves with bitter sorrows, that we may prevent the future. And this is truly the office of repentance, to afflict our hearts with grief, for that we have committed with folly. This is imposed upon the sinner, That he should always punish by avenging what he hath committed by sinning. (August.) All those injuries to his infinite Majesty, will God revenge upon us in hell, which he hath not found us to revenge upon ourselves on earth. He will be just, whatsoever we are.

Ask thy conscience, thou secure offender, what punishment thou hast inflicted upon thyself for thy sins? Intolerable have been thy wicked actions, execrable thy oaths and blasphemies, innumera-

ble thy foul thoughts and desires. Here is the guiltiness, but where is the penalty? Let us think: have our cries been as loud as our sins? Have our tears been as thick sown as our tares, as our weeds, our trespasses? Have we taken pills of gall and wormwood, for our surfeits of excess and wantonness? What proportion hath our sorrow held with our offences? As Cyprian saith, Let not repentance be less than the sin. There is no deep valley but near to some great hill. From the mountain of our sins, let us descend into the valley of tears. There is a necessity of sorrow for sin, to them that expect pardon of sin. We have sinned for very anger that we could sin no more; and shall we not weep for very sorrow that we can weep no more? Let us rejoice that we can sorrow a little, for we have sorrowed that we could not rejoice enough. Our sorrow was for the absence of worldly joy; let us be glad for the presence of penitent and godly sorrow.

Nor must our grief be vented with impatience, but exercised with desire. I know that the validity of repentance does not so much consist in the length of time, as in the sincerity of heart: and even in the approach of death, when the soul is now ceasing to inform the body, and longing for her deliverance out of prison, God then hears the groans, and the very inarticulate sighs, of repentance. I know, that as there is no sin so great, but it may be pardoned; so no time so late, but it may be accepted. I know, that neither the greatness of the crime, nor the shortness of the time, can bar true conversion from forgiveness. Repentance is a supersedeas which discharge sin; moving God to be merciful, the angels to be joyful, man to be acceptable, and only Satan melancholy. But I know withal that it is not safe to put off that business till late in the evening, which cannot be despatched too early in the morning. I know that it is unthankful to abuse God's long-suffering, and to take advantage by his gracious forbearance to be ungraciously impious. But as Pliny writes of a stone, called theamides, which is of a contrary nature to the loadstone; it drives back iron; so whereas some hearts draw iron to them, even the hardest afflictions, magnetically, and make profitable use of them; other hearts are a theamides, repelling sorrow, resisting the means of repentance, and fighting against their own salvation.

Idle wantons make no other use of a fair day, than to wander abroad, and follow their pleasures: the good husband takes that time to do his work, and thereby to better his estate. The Lord's long-suffering is to carnal men but a fair day to play in, and to ramble after their lascivious vanities: the Christian knows it to be his time, wherein to work out his own salvation; and that not without fear and trembling, Phil. ii. 12. There is a time, and a time; a time to weep, and a time to rejoice, Eccl. iii. 4; and this distinction of time argues a vicissitude of occasions. But that one and the same time, to one and the same man, should be both for mourning and rejoicing, is incompatible. Doubtless, this is the time for tears; and they that spend it in jollity, quite mistake the season. Sensual pleasure hath no time allowed it; what it gets, is by usurpation; and if it be not tempered with the sorrow of repentance, it will be drowned in the sorrow of vengeance. But as one spake wittily of wine, that it had two discommodities; if a man puts water into it, he mars the wine; if he puts no water into it, he mars himself: so we may say of earthly pleasure; if we mingle it with penitent sorrow, we spoil the pleasure; if we do not thus mingle it, we spoil ourselves. "When he slew them, they sought him," Psal. lxxviii. 34: when he slew them! it had been a better report,

when he saved them. Good men cleave to God in a calm; the worst sinners will seek him in a storm. In this gracious sunshine of his long-suffering, while he forbears and defers the coming of his day, let us so repent, that we may be found blameless in the day of his coming. This is the only blessed use of it.

4. There be some that approve well enough of God's long-suffering toward themselves, but they have no mind to follow his example in the forbearing of others. Infinite are our offences against him, and yet we look that he should spare us: few and trivial are the wrongs done to us, and yet they stir us to impatience. Three things we do well commit to God; our injuries, our losses, and our griefs; for he is only able to cure our griefs, to restore our losses, and to redress our injuries. Vengeance is God's own weapon; so appropriated to his hand, that no creature may meddle with it. "I forgave thee all the debt," Matt. xviii. 32; such was the mercy of God's patience: Thou wouldst not have compassion on thy fellow; such was the cruelty of man's impatience. He had much forgiven him, even ten thousand talents; yet he would not forgive a little, no, not a hundred pence. A talent is esteemed at above a hundred and seventeen pounds; the Roman penny was under our shilling: so that the sum, according to our account, which was owing to him by his neighbour, was not full three pounds; the debt which he owed to his master, was far above ten hundred thousand pounds: yet he had neither so much mercy as to quit scores, and cancel the debt, nor so much patience as to allow a day of payment; but presently, from his Lord's arms, he falls upon his fellow's throat.

There is nothing that makes a man so unlike to God, as a hard heart; without pity, without patience. In the tabernacle, the doors of the *sanctum sanctorum* were of olive-tree, 1 Kings vi. 31; which is the hieroglyphic of mercy: but the gates of that fearful dungeon, which is hell, are said to be of brass and iron; "He hath broken the gates of brass, and cut the bars of iron in sunder," Psal. cvii. 16; the signs of hard hearts and instruments of destruction. Which serves to show, that the way to hell is by inhumanity; to heaven, by pity. Of all the passions in us, compassion is the best; and a man without this tenderness, is but the statue of a man; a mere stone in a human figure. The very stones will seem to weep, when foul weather is a coming; and as if they had been once so full of sorrow for Christ's sufferings, that their solid breasts could no longer contain it, they brake in pieces. There be men harder than stones, that have hearts more impenetrable, obdurate, and unrelenting, and less capable of remorse: nay, instead of pitying the wounds of the miserable, they make those miserable wounds.

It was held a shame to an Athenian, (it is worse in a Christian,) never to have been in the philosophers' academy, nor in the temple of mercy. If we cannot, through disability, relieve others with our goods, which is the mercy of contribution; yet what can hinder our comfortable words to them, which is the mercy of consolation? or our tears and prayers for them, which is the mercy of intercession? or our pity and sensible sympathy of their griefs, which is the mercy of compassion? It was an act of Icyminius the tyrant, I know not whether more cruel or foolish, that when Christians were put to their torture, he forbade all the lookers-on to show the least pity toward them; threatening the same pains to them that did show it which the martyrs then suffered. His malice was greater than his power; for he could not hinder those from suffering with them, that daily suffer in them.

But alas! where now is mercy to forgive? nay, where is patience to forbear? witness our daily homicides, duels, and quarrels, that we have no patience. Witness that monstrous number of thriving lawyers, to justify sacrilege and oppression, that we have no mercy. The Lord may suffer us as long as he please; year after year, to the end of our lives: one term, one month, one hour, we think too much to bear with our brother. Patience is dead, but how we know not. We have our weekly bills that inform us the particular diseases whereof men die; but of what disease died patience? Sure it was some violent death, and we may justly indite pride and malice for her murderers. Where she lives, she will keep the hands from striking, and the mouth from traducing, and the heart from envying: she makes the brow smooth, the eye modest, the foot slow, the speech courteous. But where she is dead, fury lightens in the eyes, frowns dwell in the forehead, scandal in the tongue, blood besmears the hand, wickedness infects the whole man. Though she be dead in the world, yet let us pray the God of patience to revive her in our hearts; that we may possess our souls in patience while we live, and return our souls in peace, when we die, into the arms of Jesus Christ.

"Account that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation." As a man that sees the model of a church, in a perspective piece, thinks at first that he may soon survey it all, without leaving any thing unobserved; but when the glass is given him, made for the purpose, through which he is to look upon it, both his eyes and mind are taken up with a longer time of speculation, and he finds it work enough for a pair of hours, to note every part of that curious fabric: many a pillar and many a posture is presented to him, worth his sight, which at the first blush he would have passed over as not remarkable. So at my first entrance into this short argument, (little in show, infinite in sense,) I promised myself a quick despatch, and thought it but one day's journey at the most; but the farther I passed into this magnificent and beauteous structure, the busier my thoughts grew, and the more work I found: many a column of comfort, many a door of hope, many a window of light, is espied, and would not be left undiscovered; that the weak might have instruction, the stronger satisfaction, all consolation; and in all, God might have the glory of his wisdom. Four conclusions, like so many corollaries, I desire not to leave unmentioned.

1. If God should take us away in the midst of our sins, we cannot tax him of injustice; but that his long-suffering affords us space of repentance, is the great praise of his mercy. "I gave her space to repent of her fornication, and she repented not," Rev. ii. 21. That she had space, this was God's fair allowance: that she repented not, this was her foul miscarriage. We all know that our days are few: and we should know that our sins are many. "Cease, and let me alone, that I may take comfort a little," Job x. 20. Cease, O Lord, from punishing, that I may take comfort; so prays man. Yea, O man, cease from sinning, for there is no other way to find comfort; so answers God. The cloth that hath many stains, must pass through many larders. Our godly sorrows are put in one scale, our ungodly sins in another; the Lord will try one day, which of them weighs heaviest. Let us try them both first; and if we perceive the balance of our sins to overpoise, let us put in groans and sighs, and prayers and tears, into the other balance, to make it up. It is true that nothing but Christ's blood can hold weight with sin, in respect of satisfaction; yet our repentance must

strive to do it, in respect of deprecation. Repentance and good works have their several acts and offices in this business. Repentance doth empty the scale of our sins, and good works help to fill up the scale of our righteousness.

Indeed, of the members from the Head, there can be no separation; and the peace once made in heaven, can never be broken; yet the more confirmation, the more comfort. In Christ, our salvation is sure; but that it is at all times sure in our particular feeling, what militant saint dares affirm? Upon sin will follow doubt, upon doubt terror, upon terror remorse, upon remorse deprecation, upon that pardon, and after pardon, peace: so after sin admitted, the more time of forbearance, the better means of repentance; the better means, the stronger hope; the stronger hope, the sweeter comfort; the sweeter comfort to man, the nobler mercy of God. Therefore his long-suffering well deserves the name of salvation. It is truly said, that time makes every thing aged, yet itself was never above a minute old. But if time, which makes us old in years, shall make us also old in grace and good works, for such a time let us bless the Lord's long-suffering. Why is he that opens his mouth in blasphemy, ever suffered to open it again in prayer? or he that profanes the Lord's day, to breathe out that night? or he that sleeps drunk, to wake sober? or he that oppresseth the poor, to live one hour rich? Surely nothing can be said but this; it is the goodness of God, and that goodness is long-suffering, and that long-suffering is mercy, and that mercy is salvation.

The Lord's long-suffering is misinterpreted, if it bring us not to salvation; and to salvation it cannot bring us without repentance. It is manifest, that he willett not the death of a sinner; for then he would not afford him such liberty of conversion. All afflictions are his messengers, and he gives all those messengers their errands, with a gracious qualification, as David to his captains concerning Absalom; For my sake deal gently with him, 2 Sam. xvii. 5. Yet we requite this favour like the unthankful earth; which for the sun's radiant beams and influence shed upon it, returns him mists, and fogs, and filthy vapours, to dishonour him. God's end in this is our repentance, as our end is salvation; let not him lose his hope, and we shall not lose ours. So will he take away our iniquity, which otherwise would take us from his mercy, and pass by our transgressions as a stranger, which otherwise would make us strangers to him for ever. Yea, such is his long-suffering, that he doth not long retain his anger, though we retain the cause of his anger; but turns to us with indulgence, before we turn to him by repentance; and hath compassion upon us, that have none upon our own souls; and drowns our sins in the bottom of the sea, that would drown us in the bottom of hell.

The fruit of God's long-suffering is our salvation: the fruit is on the tree, but without the hand of faith we cannot gather it; and without gathering it is none of ours. The benefit of a good thing is in the use: wisdom is good, but not to us, if it be not exercised: cloth is good, but not to us, except it be worn: the light is comfortable, but not to him that will live in darkness: Christ himself, that chief good, does us no good, except he be applied. So time is good, and repentance is good; yet neither of them good to us, unless we couple them together, and in time fall to repentance. "Despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?" Rom. ii. 4. The unthankful and dissolute sinner is so far from rightly valuing and justly requiring this favour, that he despiseth it: and what

doth he despise? Goodness; a nature of such beauty and sweetness, that every man loves it. And in what degree stands this goodness? It is not common, but extraordinary; not penurious, but bountiful; so far from poverty, that it is the riches of his goodness. And what is this riches? Even God's long-suffering and forbearance. So this allotment of time to repent in, is a favour; and not a man's favour, but the Lord's; and not a common grace, but one special fruit of his goodness: and that not in a small measure, but the riches of his goodness; and shall any sinner despise all this? But whither tends this goodness? It leads us to repentance; therefore to neglect this time of repentance, is to despise his goodness.

It is remarkable enough, that long-suffering leads us to repentance. Why do not menaces humble us, with Ahab? or why do not judgments break us, with Pharaoh? Why doth not the plague empty our streets of people, or war fill them with blood? Why doth not God speak to us in fire, and thunder, and earthquakes, as he passed by Elijah? why in that still voice of mercy and forbearance? Why does he not come to us in the rough way of vengeance? Why rather lead us, than draw or drive us to repentance? There is no cause to be found of it, but in his goodness. His sheep follow him, John x. 27: Christ had rather lead than draw. Yet would he not have his patience abused. Say that repentance could be as easily obtained after sin, as mercy may be obtained after repentance; yet will any gracious son mock the kindness of his indulgent father? "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," 1 Tim. i. 15. A sweet and universal truth: but what kind of sinners? the obstinate and impenitent sinners? No, he never came to save them: but the relenting, repenting, broken-hearted sinners; these he will as surely save, as he came to be a Saviour. This is that faithful saying; this is worthy of all acceptance. That he can forgive more than we can offend, is another granted truth; but that he will forgive all that we shall wilfully commit, and persevere in, is a fearful question. A malefactor is reprieved after judgment, suffered to go abroad; upon his amendment and future good behaviour, the king hath a purpose to pardon him: he falls to his former outrages, building on his prince's favour; on a sudden he is caught, and fairly executed. Man sins, and God spares; this prorogation of judgment he takes for a plenary pardon: he multiplies his crimes, and builds upon favour: the works of iniquity fill his hands, while the voice of mercy fills his mouth; and so with mercy in his mouth he runs to hell. The oppressor increaseth his wealth by violence and rapine, yet flatters himself that at the last pinch he can lay all his load on the back of mercy, and go lightly and nimbly to heaven. The swearer makes his soul hot with oaths and blasphemies, yet presumes that one short prayer for mercy shall cool him. The homicide kills, and makes mercy his sanctuary; as if the crying blood of Abel could be stilled or silenced with one psalm of mercy. The adulterer makes a lazar of his conscience, with the aspersions of uncleanness; and yet looks to cleanse and whiten it again with one drop of mercy. The thief steals, and makes mercy his receiver: the epicure riots, and makes mercy his caterer; the worldling forgeth, and makes mercy his purveyor. Profane sinners persist in wickedness, and upon the least twitch of conscience, run to mercy, as to the horns of the altar. Mercy hath all the work, as if justice had nothing to do among the sons of men. But this is a false gloss upon the text, a wrong comment and interpretation of the Lord's long-suffering; he meant it

for our salvation, and we pervert it to our destruction. No marvel if before these men seek for mercy, they stumble upon vengeance. For they that will sin that grace might abound, shall pass from the abundance of neglected grace, to the abundance of endless woe. But while God suffers, let us repent, and then it is salvation.

3. The goodness of God may be abused; and then where the sentence of mercy fails of the effect, the sentence of judgment will take place. The Divine patience leads us to repentance, saith St. Paul; it is salvation, saith St. Peter: yet some it leads to hardness of heart, (as we find by experience,) and so to some it is damnation. But where is the fault? Not in God's patience, but in man's perverseness. What debtor blames his creditor for giving him a day; especially seeing that with God acknowledgment stands for payment; and a sorrow that we cannot satisfy, is a current satisfaction? But there be some places of Scripture that may seem to cross this. "My fury shall depart from thee; I will be quiet, and no more angry," Ezek. xvi. 42: not to be angry, is the greatest anger. Whom the Lord loveth, he scourgeth, Heb. xii. 6. Is it his love, to strike? and to forbear, is that his love too? Why not? To withhold confusion, is his favour; and yet it is his favour also, not to withhold correction. "For my name's sake will I defer mine anger, that I cut thee not off," Isa. xlviii. 9. He will take away his destroying anger, for his name's sake; but not his paternal anger, for his child's sake. It is his mercy that we are not consumed, Lam. iii. 22; and it is his mercy too, that we are chastised. His threatenings are his mercies, and his corrections are his mercies; otherwise, he would neither threaten nor correct. Certainly he would not warn them that never will repent, if he meant not to pardon those that do repent. And this is one argument to satisfy our conscience, that God intends his long-suffering for our salvation; if he spare us from ruin, but not from the rod; if he scourge us, though we bleed not; or till we bleed, though we faint not; or till we even faint, though we perish not. If the Lord prunes his vine, he means not to root it up; if he ministers physic to our souls, he would not have us die in our sins; all is for salvation.

4. This binds us to wait his leisure, with patience and thankfulness. Faith, love, and patience, are three of a Christian's rarest jewels. By faith we possess Christ, and all his riches; by love we possess others, and all their comforts; by patience we possess ourselves, and all quietness. He that hath not faith, is without the head; he that hath not love, is without the body; and he that hath not patience, is without himself. Faith and patience are the two miracles in a Christian: I do not mean that miraculous faith, which could remove mountains. But, as Augustine saith, faith itself is a miracle: to believe things so far above reason and nature, is miraculous. Patience is a miracle too, if we compare the frailty of the flesh with the victory of the Spirit. Cassianus reports, that when a martyr was tormented by the infidels, and asked by way of reproach, Tell us, what miracle thy Christ hath done; he answered, He hath done what you now behold, that I am not moved with your contumelies, but patient under all these tortures: this miracle he hath wrought. It was proverbially spoken, *Magistratus indicat virum*; i. e. Office points out the man; and as truly, *Patientia indicat Christianum*; i. e. Patience points out the Christian. Two virtues are necessary to a quiet life; wisdom in words, and patience under blows. Christ does not say, Luke xxi. 19, In patience possess your hands, or your mouths; for a natural man may forbear ill lan-

guage, when he is affronted; or refrain from blows, when he is provoked; and yet still have revenge boiling in his heart. But all faculties of man are subject to the soul, and under her command; if we can possess our soul in patience, she will in patience possess all the rest. "I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because thou didst it," Psal. xxxix. 9. For that I did I was not dumb, but opened my mouth in the confession of my sin. But for that thou, O Lord, hast done, I was dumb, and durst not open my mouth against thy punishment. If more thy strokes, yea, and my strokes, from me; they are thine, for thou didst send them; and mine, for I suffer them; thine, because they come from thy justice; and mine, because they come from my demerits. Remit what I have done, and remove what thou hast done; or if thou wilt further exercise me with the cross, still further fortify me with patience. I am not forced to suffer more than I have deserved, as Isidore saith. I complain of no wrong thou hast done to me; of the wrong I have done to thee, I have great cause to complain. He who murmurs under the stroke accuseth the justice of the striker.

So soon as ever Christ's disciples had received him into the ship, "immediately the ship was at the land whither they went," John vi. 21. Why have not we so quick a despatch? Why are we not past all the swelling billows of afflictions, so soon as we have taken in Christ by our prayers? The purpose of God terminates every action; and that is immediately done, which is done when he would have it done. If it be not done yet, I perceive that it was his purpose not to have it done so soon. Shall the deferment of it either slacken my hope, or weaken my patience? No; "It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord," Lam. iii. 26. The worst men pass this life at most ease; their judgments are put off to the last day; and shall not we endure the putting off of comfort for one day? And yet our gracious Father puts us not to that; for even the assurance of future mercy is present mercy. To be certain that we shall have ease in the end, is ease before the end. Let us neither be weary of God's peace, nor of our own patience. We should not provoke him with a prayer, not with a wish, not with a hope, to more haste than consists with his purpose; nor look that any other thing should have entered into his purpose, than his glory. To hear his steps coming toward us, is the same comfort as to see his face present with us; although not the same measure and degree of comfort. Heaven itself is but an extension of the same joy; and for God to proceed at his leisure, in the way of mercy and comfort, is a manifestation of heaven to us here upon earth. Blessings are not denied, though they be not presently granted. Some while God is not fit to give; the time for his greater glory is not yet come. Another while we are not fit to receive; the time of our capacity and preparedness is not yet come. The Lord looks to be waited on: "Wait on the Lord, and he shall strengthen thy heart," Psal. xxv. 14: wait on him with patience; this quiets all.

The censors of the world, by way of apology, being met together, consulted about the redress of divers enormities. One, with the countenance of Heraclitus, was ever weeping for the disorders; another, with the face of Democritus, was ever laughing at the absurdities; a third, of a more pragmatical and stirring spirit, was ever busy where he had no thanks; one that would thrust himself into other men's quarrels, and meddle with impertinent matters. They all studied and plotted how to reform the confusion of things, and to bring the world into some peace and order. Princes were implored, philoso-

phers consulted, physicians, soldiers, the eminent in all professions, were convened; many stratagems were devised. Still the more they projected to quiet the world's troubles, the more troublesome they made it. One would have it this way, another that, the next differs from them both, a fourth opposeth them three, a fifth contradicts them all. So that here was nothing but crossing one another: an image of that mischief which they met to remedy. Physicians with their *recipes*, commanders with the *precipes*, Jesuits with their *decipes*, all the rest with their *perceipes*, could do no good. At last, a grand father, in a religious habit, presented them an herb of such sovereign virtue, that when every one had tasted of it, they were all calm and quiet presently. The herb's name he called *bulbophthum*, the herb patience. Let this be our diet continually, and we shall find a strange alteration in ourselves. No troubles abroad can break our peace at home; for peace is the daughter of patience. So shall there be joy in heaven for the peace on earth; and this peace on earth shall bring us to the joy of heaven.

"Even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you." This is the testimony. In the creation of the world, God made but one sun; but he made many bodies that receive and give light. The Romans began with one king, then they came to two consuls, not without many senators. It is no diminution to the greatness and dignity of a monarch, to have divers counsellors, and to devolve part of his care upon others. That state is safest, where affairs are carried by more counsels than can be in one breast. In our sickness, we admit more physicians than one: the providence is the more, the danger is not the more by it. There is one sun, many stars; one king, many magistrates; one truth, many witnesses; one word of God, many preachers. Howsoever that sacred word is called the testimony, because it can sufficiently bear witness to itself; yet is God pleased to take in that same "Out of the mouth of two," &c. for the better state and credit of a truth. And Christ himself, that eternal Word, and Truth itself, took in the witness of the twelve; Matthias supplying the room of Judas. "Ye shall be witnesses unto me," Acts i. 8. John Baptist in the wilderness seemed to be a witness alone; "He was sent to bear witness of that Light," John i. 8. He then, and none but he. He was to witness but to a few, there; and those few had fewer temptations, fewer businesses, fewer worldly allurements, to withdraw them from his witness, there. But in places inhabited, the world hath many allegations, and pretences, to cross the testimony of truth. Here, all those excuses meet, Luke xiv. 18: some have purchased lands, and they must state them; some have bought commodities, and they must enter them; some have married wives, and they must study them. One witness was enough for the wilderness; but Christ sends all his apostles to Jerusalem and Samaria, to city and country: and all little enough. Here, St. Peter calls in St. Paul, for a co-witness to his doctrine; so to one verity there is a double testimony.

In the testimony we have three notes of excellency. First, the worth of the witness, As our brother Paul. Secondly, the clearness of the thing witnessed; not only said, but written, for a more certain manifestation. Thirdly, the authority of them both, According to the wisdom given him: all is from above, by the inspiration of God. In the first note there are three circumstances. First, in regard to the person cited; Paul's truth of honour, he is worthy to be cited; and the honour of his truth, it is worthy to be received. Secondly, in regard to the

person cited; Peter's humility, in that he deigns to quote Paul; and his charity, in calling him beloved brother. Thirdly, in regard to both: first, the apostles uniting their forces, to maintain one another's doctrine. Next, the strong assurance we have of the gospel, whereof we have more than a single testimony.

I. Here is commended to us our apostle's humility. He does not, in pride of heart, say, Why not I as well as Paul? why is not my word as credible as his? But without any self-respect, he appeals to Paul, he honours Paul, he fetcheth in Paul for the warrant of his writings. Paul once cited Peter, Gal. ii. 11; Peter commends Paul. It was well done of Paul, to reprove Peter to his face; and it is well done of Peter, to praise Paul in his absence. Paul's censure of Peter behind his back, had been calumny; and Peter's commendation of Paul to his face, had been flattery; both being done in their due time and place, are proofs of their sincerity.

Pride is odious in all men, intolerable in churchmen. Paul was rapt up to the third heaven; yet calls himself the least of the apostles. Peter was first called, first named, he first preached after his Lord's departure; yet he subscribes to Paul, and, in the former epistle, ranked himself with the meanest saint living. Paul was in danger to be puffed up with revelations: many have no such revelations at all, and yet they are puffed up.

Some reasons may be given, why Peter thus exalted Paul. First, to vindicate his authority: for some might haply not think him an apostle, because he was none of the twelve, nor chosen with the rest; but Peter acknowledgeth him for an apostle. Secondly, to justify his doctrine: some of the faithful, among them of the circumcision, opposed him, and wrangled against his teaching; Peter clears him from all suspicion of error. Thirdly, to quit himself from all mistrust of envy; that it might appear, notwithstanding the jar between them at Antioch, yet there was no ill opinion, no grudge, no sinister thought in the breast of Peter, concerning Paul. Fourthly, to manifest the sincerity of his love; Paul had resisted Peter, and set that down in writing, publishing it to the church of the Galatians, and thereby to all Christians; yet Peter praiseth Paul, and puts that in writing too, that all the world might read it. This sheweth him more a friend to sacred truth, than to his own glory. A good man loves his own credit well, but the truth better; it is but weakness to err; to persist in error, is the ignoble wilfulness. Therefore, though Peter, saith Gregory, was first in the rank of apostleship, yet he was first in humility also. Paul taxed Peter of infirmity, Peter commends Paul for wisdom.

Oh for such a spirit of meekness in the ministers of the gospel! We are so far from admiring others, that we would have none admired but ourselves. Why doth one divine disparage the worth of another? Is it not pride? Why do repeaters play the critics, and turn the contractions of sermons into the detractions of persons? Is it not pride? If mere shame, or awe of the associates, or secret conscience of a man's deserts, compel them to say something in his praise, yet it goes off with a *but*; but such or such a thing is amiss in him. One compared such a commander to an ill farrier, that never shod a horse but he pricked him; so all the good he speaks of men, he still concludes with an exception. If there must be strife among us, let it appear in this, who shall be foremost, not in taking honour from another, but in giving honour to another. If there must be emulation, let it consist in this, who shall win most souls to Christ. The way for a man to be esteemed the greatest, is to esteem himself the least. Let not him

that joins the frame, despise him that hewed the timber; nor he that draws the knot, scorn him that digged the ground. If a man have more excellent gifts, let him use his own, not contemn others'; for both may be good, and they come from the same fountain of goodness. All men have not Peter's ability; all men ought to have Peter's humility. If we cannot come near him in other graces, yet let us be equal to him in this, a humble mind. If we cannot be so high as he, yet let us be as lowly as he.

The apostles themselves, in the infancy of their calling, were not without pride. While the Master was upon the point of dying, the servants contended which of them should be greatest. They strive for their Father's goods, before himself was dead, and in his sight. And, by the papists' leave, Peter thought himself most touched, as being more especially singled out by his Lord's scrutiny: Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to winnow thee, Luke xxii. 31. The proverb says, (and proverbs are the extracts of experience.) When pride comes, shame comes: they both shoot out together, one will not tarry behind the other. There is no eclipse of the moon but in the full; when our glory is in the full, it will be darkened with shame. "By the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my wisdom; for I am prudent," boasts the king of Assyria, Isa. x. 13; but, I will pull down his high looks, says the King of heaven. So for Herod, when the people deified him, "immediately the angel of the Lord smote him," Acts xii. 23. Pride even in good men hath been punished. Hezekiah did but gratify the ambassadors with the sight of his treasures, and he had a shrewd nip for it. David does but number his people, and, besides the remorse of his own heart, thousands of them died for it. They that will be aloft, are subject to most tempests; but the plants that root lowest, grow highest. Look not upon tall Eliab, or Shammah, but upon little David. All the sons of Jesse were likely, but God would have the holy oil only poured upon David. Humility is the way to glory, Matt. xviii. 3. A man may be miserable, and yet honourable; but when, by pride, he comes once to be in disgrace with God, farewell honour. Adam was placed in Paradise, he did not intrude himself: humility will stay for honour, until authority place it there. I am not worthy, is still found in the mouth of all the saints. Not every one that is exalted shall be brought low; but he that hath exalted himself. So, nor every one that is humbled shall be exalted, but he that hath humbled himself. Therefore in humility is wisdom, saith the proverb. If a man would be noble, let him be humble. A puffed-up soul is like waxen-winged learn, sure of a fall.

To think to gain honour by pride, is mere folly: the wise man knows that by humility he cannot miss it. In giving honour, go one before another; but this is not the world's opinion: we would all go before one another; but it shall be in taking, not in giving honour. Peter sat in his apostolical chair, but with a humble spirit: when one of his supposed successors is advanced to his chair, oh how scornfully does he look upon his inferior ministers! We all tax the pope for this; but it is no harm to wish that no prelate among us, howsoever orthodox in faith, were in respect of manners thus popish. No sin begins sooner on us, no sin later leaves us, than pride. It is like the heart, the first thing that lives, and the last thing that dies in us. But it is better to be humbled under a foul sin, than to be proud of any grace. And St. Augustine is peremptory: venturing to say, that it had been profitable for proud men to fill into some gross offence; for they have not lost

so much by their fall, as they have got by being down. Honour is the fruit of birth, of wisdom, of valour, of riches, of place and authority, or of the royal favour: but it is never the fruit of grace, nor the blessing of God, without humility. We have not the sign of a star in our foreheads, but the sign of the cross; still humility is our way to glory. This way went all the saints of God; this way went even the God of saints: He humbled himself; therefore God hath exalted him, Phil. ii. 8, 9.

2. The next star that shines in this orb of goodness, is our apostle's charity: which hath two rays, illustrated in two terms, brother, and beloved. One of these were enough; the other might seem superfluous. Brother, is fair; for that naturally includes love: beloved, is more; for that is able to adopt a brother, yea, a son. But there may be a beloved who is not a brother; yea, worse, there may be a brother who is not beloved. Nature too often runs retrograde, and there is more respect of a stranger than of a brother. In that first pair of brothers, there was hatred on one side, even unto blood and death. Ishmael derides Isaac, though he were his brother. Esau vows the death of Jacob, though his twin-brother. Abimelech climbs to the throne by the blood of seventy men, and yet they were all his brethren. It is no more wonder to see brothers at variance for a legacy or portion, than to see beggars wrangle for an alms, or dogs fight for a bone. Brother and beloved, are not convertible terms; they may be separated, and too often they are found asunder. Among those ten brethren, there was but one Reuben, that spoke in the behalf of poor Joseph; Let us not kill him, for he is our brother. There was once a whole church called Philadelphia, or brotherly love; but we know not what is become of it.

But how was Paul Peter's brother? Surely not by blood. They were brothers by nature, as they were men; brothers by nation, as they were countrymen; brothers by adoption and grace, as they were Christians; brothers by office, as they were apostles; and by all these respects, they were brothers in love and affection, as being saints. Love is the comfort of natural men; the comfort and bond of Christian men; the comfort, bond, and ornament too, of ministers. Love hath laid more obligations upon us than upon others, and requires a stricter account of us.

First, we teach love: it is the abridgement of the law, the tenor of the gospel, and so the sum and main scope of all our sermons. Faith is the centre, and love the circle: all our doctrines and conclusions are but lines drawn from the centre to the circumference. Therefore he that preaches all faith and no charity, comes into the pulpit without his compass; he sticks in the centre, without minding the circle; or lays a foundation, and never rears any building. Now, shall we commend love to others, and not embrace it ourselves? Bilhah and Zilpah brought forth children to Jacob, and they were free, yet the mothers still remained bond-women. Shall we enfranchise you in the liberties of love, and suffer our own hearts to be bound with the shackles of uncharitableness? No, certainly, we that preach love, and profess love, and pray for love, will never shut our doors against love. We do not persuade you to other cheer than we wish ourselves. You shall never say, that we commended a way to you, which we refused to walk. Howsoever we come behind you in riches, in honours, and prosperity, we will make bold to go before you in charity.

Next, we practise love: we are set up as lights, and love is one of those lamps, always burning in

our breasts. We are not like mercenary soldiers, that put themselves into unwarrantable wars: such men forget charity, and fight only for money. The exercise of our love is rather to make peace, though we have small thanks for our labour. We reprehend your sins; is not this love? We would save your souls; and is not this love? You may object, that all this is but our duty; and God will not take that for a free-will offering, which should be our daily sacrifice. Grant that it is a debt of love; yet you cannot deny but that it is also a work of love; and love is no ways better discerned than by the works and fruits of charity.

Lastly, we have great reason to love one another, minister to regard minister: for few love us besides. The external coldness of the air abroad, teacheth nature to fortify her heat within: the world hates us; we had need to love one another. But do all so? I would they did: it is pity they do not. For a miserly worldling, or a lewd companion, to speak ill of their pastor, is no great matter; their dispraise is his honour, their praise his dishonour. As when a man was commended for dancing well, another replied, The better, the worse; so when unholty persons speak ill of their minister, the worse, the better. But if Peter should traduce Paul, and one divine inveigh against another, I am sure this is not divinely spoken. A little spice of self-love imbitters the whole cup of charity. This is that proud affection, which makes a censure of a re-censure (review); when a man toucheth his brother's reputation with dirty hands, and defiles it in sport. But that man pays too dear for a jest, who sells his honesty for it. Preachers are called angels, and should, like the cherubims, look graciously one upon another: they are oxen, that should draw Christ's yoke quietly, laboriously, and lovingly together. They are like men of war, with letters of marque from the King of heaven, to let fly upon his enemies. But if they shoot one against another, with the artillery of their tongues; or, like vessels at sea, fall foul one upon another; howsoever they may keep their faith, I am sure they have lost their charity. The precise lecturer covertly disgraceth the honest pastor, and steals the hearts of the parish from him. They that call themselves the holy brotherhood, how do they scorn and censure those that are conformable to order and discipline! forgetting that we are their brethren in function, though not in faction; and labour in the same work, though perhaps not with the same tools. But sermons that tickle the people's ears with invectives against learning, wherein tautology and rusticity of speech is called the evidence of the Spirit, these bring them in throngs and tumults to such churches. I will not censure them, but pray for them; the God of wisdom and peace abate of their pride, peevishness, and ignorance, and send them more charity.

To conclude: Peter loves Paul, Paul loves Peter, every good pastor loves his brother; they all love you, why should not you love us all? Love us? so you do; who doubts of that? Yes, beloved, give us leave to doubt it, till we find it, or at least some likelihood of it. Two things would make you love us: first, if we would preach as you would have us; next, if we would refuse our right for a benevolence. Especially this latter sticks in your stomachs: men would give something, but they will pay nothing to the church. If we remit of our own, you are beholden to us; but if we had nothing of our own, and stood at your courtesy, then we must be beholden to you. Tithes have been always due. 1. From the promise: Bring your tithes into my storehouse, and prove me if I will not give you a blessing, Mal. iii. 10: a

blessing is entailed to it. 2. From the danger: Ye are cursed, because ye have have robbed me of them, ver. 9: there is a curse threatened for it. 3. From contraries: He that giveth a cup of cold water to a disciple, shall not lose his reward, Matt. x. 42: therefore it follows, that if he take away, though but a cup of cold water, from a disciple, he shall lose the reward. 4. From the benefit: by your maintaining your pastor's body, he is enabled the better to feed your souls. When the lamp is not fed with oil, there will be a dark house. 5. From example: all good men ever did it. Abraham paid tithes to Melchisedek; and Joseph excepted the land of the priests, even in idolatrous Egypt. 6. From equity: he that works with us by the day, we say, is worthy of his wages; we do not call it a benevolence. Oh but we must not be too strict in requiring our own; for then you cannot love us. And yet to call for your own, of your debtors, you think no breach either of justice or charity. If you would have us cede from our right, learn you also to give us our right. Sometimes, and in some cases, a minister must not wilfully lose his right. 1. In respect of other pastors that live about him; to whom the example of his indulgence may do much prejudice. 2. In regard of his successors: for by making a custom, he may endamage those that come after him. This is one impediment of your loves: still you think we have too much. I know that other colourable exceptions be taken against us; and you have bills and clamours against scandalous ministers: but if the truth were known, it is not our lives, but our livings, that is your eyesore. Let those critical and hypocritical censurers pretend what they please, they that had rather be rich than good, care not how evil we were: so we be poor. And poor enough they have made us; even to a proverb, as Job was. Scarcely one of a hundred is called by any other title or attribute, but a poor minister. Is thousands but sufficient for a tradesman, and an alms enough for a priest? If they could impropriate all the rest of the church's revenues, as they have done well toward it already; then would they choose priests according to their own hearts, and give them exhibitions out of their own purses; then would they pull down the churches of state, and build themselves chapels of ease. Such a one we have heard of, that in King Henry the Eighth's days had gotten much by the fall of the abbeyes, and in Queen Mary's days built himself a pretty chapel; which was not unfitly likened to a man, that having first ravished the mother, would afterward pay for the nursing of the child.

For that other requisite, of adapting our sermons to their humours, there is such a curse set upon it, that we durst not climb up into the pulpit, for fear lest thunder should strike us down, if we should so abuse the Lord's message. Yet these are the two common invitations of your love: if we would preach to your liking, and live at your finding, all would be well. But you are mistaken, for then would nothing be well: neither we could be well satisfied, nor you well edified, nor God well pleased. But seeing it can be no better, God be praised that it is no worse. And though we cannot have your pleasures, nor your riches, nor your honours, yet let us have your loves. As Peter was to Paul, and Paul to Peter; so you are our beloved, let us be your beloved, that we may all be the beloved of God in Jesus Christ.

"As our beloved brother Paul also," &c. As a man that hath seen a goodly statue, the monument of some famous warrior and deliverer of his country: though he hath long gazed on it, and is wonderfully taken with it; yet being told of another comparable to it, or rather transcending it, doth not suffer his

eyes and thoughts so to dwell on the former, but he will remove to take a view of the other. This Epistle is one sacred statue or monument of St. Peter, wherein we have beheld many rare figures and sweet lineaments, making up the representation of so divine a soul. If we be not stocks, insensate and dead to all apprehension of goodness, we cannot but be enamoured of so gracious a saint, Christ's special servant, the living instrument of building up his church, the doctor of the Jews, the first preacher to the Gentiles, the instructor and comforter of all our hearts; a fundamental pillar of the church on earth, and now a triumphant soul in heaven. Yet lest our minds should be fixed upon him only, he modestly takes us off from himself, and sends us to his fellow-peer, his beloved brother Paul; there he would have our contemplations rest another while. To him he refers us, him he commends to us, and his epistles, those blessed trophies of his immortal honour. Now being told of some valiant champion, renowned for his achievements and conquests, whose fame is spread over all the world, we are inflamed with a desire to see him. His death debars us of that: see him we cannot; yet we desire to see some picture or resemblance of him: by which shadow we may guess at the substance. Paul is that great conqueror, whom we would behold; that champion of the truth, that demolisher of the strong-holds of sin, and kingdom of Satan: we cannot see him upon earth, for he is in heaven. Yet he hath left a testimony behind him, enough to ennoble his memory, and to satisfy our capacity, his heavenly doctrine: upon that let us meditate, in that let us be conversant; there we shall read him; and if we follow the direction of that, in heaven we shall see him. Thus Peter sends us to Paul, and both of them send us to their and our Lord Jesus Christ.

1. Great was the honour of Paul, or else Peter would not have referred us to him. They were both princely doctors of the faith, and had the whole earth under their pastoral jurisdiction. It shall exalt the glory of either, and not eclipse it, by being compared. First, Peter was first called, and Paul confesseth himself an abortive, 1 Cor. xv. 8: yet Peter was called by Christ on earth, and Paul by Christ in heaven. Peter was called with a calm voice, Paul with a thunder-clap. The one from the boat of his vocation, the other stricken from his horse in the career of his persecution. Peter taken from his nets, Paul from his bloody letters. Peter was called before Paul, yet Paul overtook Peter: he was in labours more abundant than they all, ver. 10: therefore more than Peter. Secondly, Peter received his instructions from the mouth of Christ, and Paul his inspirations from the Spirit of Christ. The same Holy Ghost came upon Paul and Peter; and though upon Peter in a visible form, yet upon Paul by an invisible power, in no less measure. Thirdly, Christ changed the name of Peter; and did not the same Christ change the name of Paul? Peter was but added to Simon, but Saul was wholly turned into Paul. Fourthly, they both wrought miracles alike: Peter with his shadow, Paul with his handkerchief. If Peter cured a cripple, Paul raised the dead; yea, both: Peter raised Dorcas, and Paul Eutychus. Fifthly, Peter wrote two epistles, Paul fourteen: he had a larger parish than Peter, as being doctor of the Gentiles. Sixthly, Peter saw Christ in that glorious transfiguration, but Paul saw him in his glorious habitation: Peter on Mount Tabor, Paul in paradise or the third heaven: Peter in the company of Moses and Elias, Paul saw him waited on with thousands of angels. Is Peter then the highest of the apostles? Yet during his mortal life, he never

was advanced so high as Paul. But I stand upon thorns while I stand upon comparisons.

Nor do I intend any way to derogate from St. Peter, but somewhat to abate the pride of his usurping successor. Peter was in admiration of Paul; now all the world must worship the idol which boasts to sit in his chair. That Paul was at Rome it is manifest; but what proof have we in the Scripture that Peter was ever there? If he were, yet what canon of his appears upon record, that the pope should be advanced to a prince? Was the founder of that hierarchy ever so brave? Nay, was there such regality apparent in the founder's Lord and Master? Did Christ wear a crown of thorns that the bishop of Rome should wear a crown of pearls? Ask the pope, and the cardinals his sons, (and too commonly they are indeed his sons,) whether they ever read of such pomp and magnificence in the apostles? It is the opulence and glorious sovereignty of that see, which makes men so ambitious of it; not the sanctity. Our English cardinal, when he was chosen pope, thought now he should surely have some strange revelation from heaven; some extraordinary wisdom inspired, and grace infused into him. But, good honest soul, he was deceived, he found no such matter; but bribery, corruption, flattery, were his continual solicitations: for the hierarchy, and for the world, he had a world of business; whereupon he concluded, As popes made thus? and so quit the place. What would he say of it now? If Peter ever sat in that seat, sure he did not so leave it as now we find it. Peter and Paul were both blessed apostles, painful preachers, patient martyrs, gracious saints on earth, and now shine glorious stars in heaven.

2. Thus for the truth of Paul's honour, which was much; now for the honour of his truth, which is more. For Peter does not only commend Paul's person, but in a higher degree his doctrine. This is the charter we hold by; the word of God, the gospel of Christ, inspired by the Holy Ghost, and recorded by Paul and Peter; for they both wrote from one and the same Spirit. No faithful messenger of God can either come but by his mission, or speak but by his direction. For the former, Paul would have gone to Asia, but he could not; to Bithynia, but the Spirit suffered him not, Acts xvi. 6, 7. Why? God had intended good to Philippi. There stood a man of Macedonia by Paul in the night, ver. 9: that man of Macedonia was either an angel, that spake to him in the language of Macedonia; or a man in the habit of Macedonia: this man diverts Paul from his own purpose to God's purpose. "How shall they preach, except they be sent?" Rom. x. 15. Now if they cannot come without God's sending, so nor speak but by his inspiring: "I have received of the Lord that which I delivered unto you," 1 Cor. xi. 23. To this word of our gracious God, delivered by his servant Paul, doth Peter refer us. Though it be conveyed to us by several pipes, it is still the same water of life. In the writings of Paul and Peter there is no contradiction; such is the sweet harmony of the sacred Scriptures, and consent of God's public notaries. Physicians may differ in their opinions and precepts; lawyers may vary in their counsels and judgments, according to the proportion of their capacities or fees; historians differ not only in circumstances, but in substantial matters; but in God's book, written by so many penmen, in so many places, at so many times, we find no contrariety. What Moses teacheth, that do the prophets; what they teach, that did Christ; what Christ taught, that did his apostles; what they all taught, we have received, and you have believed, that thereby we might all be

saved. Thus prays one, Grant, O Lord, that as the Word was made flesh, so my heart may become fleshy. Oh with what delight and reverence ought we to read the epistles of St. Paul, which are so highly commended to us by St. Peter! His epistles are gospel. "God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel," Rom. ii. 16. In the Acts of the Apostles, there are reckoned two and twenty sermons of theirs; besides those that are not mentioned, for in every place they preached; and yet that book is not called the preaching, but the practice; not the words, but the Acts of the Apostles. All Paul's epistles are (in effect) sermons; the arguments and text whereof is the gospel; the scope of all is to bring us to Jesus Christ; yet they are called his epistles, not his gospel. With the same faith we receive both; with the same love we embrace both; to them all we yield obedience, for them all we render thanks, and in them all we look for salvation, through the substance of them all, Jesus Christ.

"According to the wisdom given unto him." This is authority: wherein we have two things to observe.

1. It is wisdom; not a common knowledge. There is a wisdom which is the gift of nature: "The children of this world are wise in their generation," Luke xvi. 8. And there is a wisdom which is the gift of grace: "The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable," Jam. iii. 17. And that which is the fountain of all wisdom: "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way," Prov. viii. 22. Albeit there was a gross mistake in the translation, whether by reason of the scribe's ignorance, or near affinity of the words; in the Septuagint it is, *ἐκρησε*, he created; whereas the original signifies, *ἐκρησε*, he possessed. Christ is Wisdom itself; because he was for his nature, in respect of the Father, and for his office, in respect of us, *ὁ λόγος*, the Word: in him "are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge," Col. ii. 3. But in an inferior place, subordinately under Christ, and derivatively from Christ, the dispensation of the gospel is called wisdom. Both in respect of the instruments; so God's public notaries, the canonical writers of the Scriptures, were all the children of wisdom, and "spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," 2 Pet. i. 21. And in regard of the effect, which is to make us "wise unto salvation," 2 Tim. iii. 15. This wisdom is only happy; for it made Paul wise to know good, wise to teach good, wise to do good, and wise to be thankful for the good he had received.

2. It is given: it came not into the world with him; he had it not by tradition, or by inheritance from his parents: so it was not innate. Nor was it acquired, wrought out by his own industry; not the fruit of time and study. But given; he had it from somewhere: not from man, sure; flesh and blood could never teach it him: though Plato and Aristotle, those great clerks of nature, had been his school-masters. Nay, grant that Gamaliel was his tutor, a famous doctor of the law; yet his wisdom was not so much above a Samaritan's, as it came short of Paul's a Christian's. Bought it was not: no man thinks so. Let his money perish with him, that thinks the gift of God may be purchased with money, Acts viii. 20. Given then it must be; and from above too: no library on earth could furnish him with such knowledge. It is a breath from heaven, a beam of that Sun of righteousness, a stream of that crystal river of life, a fruit of that eternal tree, a bright irradiation of the Holy Ghost. "Given;" Paul is beholden to God for it. If we can but glean after his full sheaves, if we have any heavenly wisdom, let us not reflect upon ourselves, or look, like the swans, into our own bosoms. It grows not there; we must have it from

some better garden. "Every good gift is from above," Jam. i. 17. Wisdom, as promotion, comes neither from east nor west: it is not on our right hand, nor on our left: it is not within us, nor about us, but above us. What good thing can a man have, "except it be given him from heaven?" John iii. 27. From the puddle of our own hearts, ariseth nothing but muddy cogitations. "Why do thoughts arise in your hearts?" Luke xxiv. 38. If they arise there, if that be their original, they are not good. Right wisdom is a thing descendant; an influence, no vapour; an inspiration, not an exhalation; it comes from above, from below it rises not. For use of it:

1. Let us be thankful to God for Paul's wisdom; for if we be true Christians, we are both the wiser and the better by it. Some antichristian spirit it was sure, that blasphemously affirmed, It had been better for the church if St. Paul had never written. It seems, that Paul's doctrine of justification by faith only, hath much crossed their opinion of justification by works; and this vexed him. But if we do not bless God for instruments of our salvation, for whom will we praise him? The people glorified God, that he had given such gifts unto men, Matt. ix. 8: we are none of his people, if for these gifts we do not glorify him.

Which of the fathers was not in love with the wisdom of Paul? Who, asks Hilary, was a more faithful interpreter of the prophetic writings? who more unfolded the sacraments of heavenly mysteries? Chrysostom sticks not to prefer him before all the rest in learning, and to call him a master of all wisdom; and confesseth that he could not take off his eyes from reading Paul. Augustine acknowledgeth, that he read Paul more than all the rest of the apostles; and says, None more known to us than that man, none more sweet, none more familiar in the Scriptures. Ambrose compares him with Benjamin; whose mess was five times as much as any of the others, Gen. xliii. 34. Hierome says that as often as he read Paul he thought he heard not so many words as wonders, yea, thunders. Though for the time of his calling, he was the fishermen's scholar; yet for the improvement of his preaching, he might be the fishermen's master. And in regard of his rapture to heaven, and revelations there, learning his divinity among the angels, he was not unworthy to teach even the apostles. Some others, as Dionysius, have called him a second sun, and the wisest of intelligencies. But I will check myself; some of the Romists may hap to grudge at this commendation of Paul, as suspecting thereby an undervaluing of Peter; but both their honours may well stand together; especially seeing we honour them for Christ's sake, and honour Christ in them. Let them be honoured as stars, he as the Sun. When we have cast up the particulars of all the wisdom in them, of all the wisdom we get by them, we are far from giving the glory to them. But this is the sum: Not to us, O Lord, because not from us; though it be high wisdom, even the wisdom of God, yet it comes from on high, from the God of wisdom: all is his. *Non omni nostro, sed nomini tuo*; i. e. Not to our wit, nor to our luck, nor to our industry, but to thine own name, Lord, give the glory.

2. Let us seek for Paul's wisdom out of Paul's writings; we may be made wise by it, unwise we must needs continue without. "They have rejected the word of the Lord; and what wisdom is in them?" Jer. viii. 9. They that are not conversant with the book and language of wisdom, in the study and exercise of wisdom, in the house and company of wisdom, shall never attain to so much wisdom as to see their own folly. Augustine says, Fools cannot live

more happily, than while they are slaves to the wise. But alas, too many come to church, that school of wisdom, as Pythagoras said they came to the Olympian games: Some came to win the prizes, some to sell their commodities, for it became the mart of all Greece; some to meet their friends, and to be merry, for there were companions of all sorts; others only to look on. Men make of a sermon, as it is said of a meadow: The ox looks for grass, the bird for a worm, the dog for a hare. Some would have controversies, and they search for worms; some listen for quick conceits, and these come to pick up salads, or catch butterflies; some seek for matter of exception, and these come to find a knot in a bulrush; all these in the school of wisdom, and yet never the wiser. Only they that have no other end, but with an honest heart to receive the food of life, are made wise unto salvation.

"Hath written unto you." This is the evidence of his testimony; which affords us three considerations.

1. "Written;" but what? and where? First, what? Our apostle's argument here, is the Divine patience, the Lord's gracious forbearance of sinners, and desire of their conversion. Secondly, where doth Paul touch upon that string, and make a unison with Peter? We are referred to two places, principally; though we find it all over his epistles. The former, Rom. ii. 4: where we have a copious amplification of God's long-suffering; and so Paul and Peter agree for the matter. Paul says, this long-suffering leads to repentance; Peter, that it brings to salvation: and so they agree in the end. This is clear as day. The other, Heb. x. 35, and from thence to the end of that Epistle; where he doth both persuade us to patience, upon the expectation of God's promises, and commend his patience, in so long sparing of sinners. There is great probability, that Peter here alludes to that Epistle, because it was written to the same persons, the Hebrews, or converted Jews. Which is one pregnant argument, that Paul was the author of that Epistle to the Hebrews. To them writes Peter here, to them wrote Paul there: therefore doth Peter cite Paul's testimony as a thing familiar and well known to that afflicted company.

2. "Hath written." It was God's good pleasure, that his word should be written. He showed the way himself, and wrote his own law with his own finger. He taught man the way to write, as by other direction, so by his own example. There be some atheistical naturians, that would disparage Moses, and therein discredit the Divine truth, by affirming that Trismegistus wrote before him, and that Moses learned of Hermes. And other antiquaries derive it from an age before them both; saying, that the reed was used for a pen, and the canes that grew on the banks of Nilus ministered matter for paper. But certainly, the faculty of writing came from a better invention, and was taught by a higher Master. When man was fallen, and naked, God clothed him; he made him a leather garment: there God descended to one occupation. When the time of man's redemption was come, then God, as it were to build a house for man, became reputed a carpenter's son: there he descended to another occupation. When he meant to overflow the world with a deluge, that he might preserve some from perishing, he devised an ark for man; he gave him the model of a ship, a means of transportation; which, in all likelihood, man would never have thought on: there God descended to a third occupation, to be man's shipwright. Considering the fickleness of man's memory, how unretentive it is, he thought good to set down his will in writing; and so God descended to another art and profession, teaching man to express his own

mind in characters. Naturally man would have been his own tailor, and his own carpenter: necessity would have taught him some ways to clothe and house himself. Invention would have done something in the other kinds too, though God had given him no such pattern. But the nearness and perfection of the way, was of God's teaching. All these sciences, as he ordained for our use, so for his own glory: in a special manner writing; that what the ear hath lost in defect of hearing, or the mind in the want of remembering, may be restored to the soul by reading. All that is written is for our learning, Rom. xv. 4: it could not be Scripture, if it were not written; and for our sakes it is written. So many ways hath God contrived to save us, let us take all occasions to glorify him.

3. "Hath written unto you." What was the matter of his writing? The long-suffering of a merciful God toward sinful men. This was the argument of both those divine pens; for the testification of this, Paul is cited by Peter. Sure, it must be a point of great importance, which both of them so labour to prove. An important matter indeed, and exceedingly beneficial to us, even so much as our salvation comes, too, if we make the right use of it; which consists in the observation of those four rules formerly taught us. First, that we take the advantage of repentance by it. Secondly, that we acknowledge God's unspeakable goodness in it. Thirdly, that we express a hearty thankfulness for it. Fourthly, and lastly, that we apply ourselves to the imitation of it: with which I conclude.

It is just that God's patience should call for ours, especially considering the infinite disproportion between us. It is one of those graces, that is not seen but in distress; as the stars that are hidden all day, and only shine in the night. Beneficence, the fruit of a charitable heart, is not exercised but in want. If no man was in misery, there were no object for our eleemosynary charity. Repentance, the humble sorrow of a relenting heart, is not discerned till after sin. If we never had sinned, nor offended our gracious God, there were no use of repentance. So patience, the composedness of a resolute heart, could not appear but in crosses and perturbations. If there was no evil to suffer, there were no need of patience. But the tree of faith, the more it is shaken with the violent storms of trouble, the faster it becomes rooted by patience. Oh that this lesson would enter home into our hearts, before we go home to our houses! then should we live in peace, and die in peace, and receive the reward of patience.

We have considered these two famous and blessed apostles, severally and asunder: in Peter, his love and humility: in Paul, his faithfulness and excellency. Now, let us put these two beloved brothers together; and their conjunction will afford us two profitable observations.

1. Their fidelity, or mutual readiness to uphold one another's reputation. It may easily be gathered out of the Epistle to the Galatians, chap. in. 1, &c., that certain factious spirits wandered abroad, disturbing the peace of the churches, and labouring to weaken the credit of Paul; under this pretence, that his doctrine was not agreeable with the rest of the apostles. Therefore doth Peter make an honourable mention of Paul; both to justify his doctrine, and to testify his consent with the rest; that all suspicion and occasion of calumny might be utterly precluded, and the mouth of all wickedness stopped. Thus did they maintain each other's doctrine, against sectaries; each other's reputation, against slanderers. O blessed unity, which became the breasts of such a pair of noble saints! Many think themselves debased, if

any honour be done to others; all chronicles must be filled with their praises, all tongues become the trumpets of their worth: They, and who but they? There was another mind in these holy teachers: Peter honours Paul, and Paul Peter; either is humble in himself, and both strive to give all glory to Jesus Christ.

2. Their unanimity, and combining of all their forces, to beat down the bulwarks of sin, and to establish the kingdom of the gospel. For our better assurance, we have more than a single testimony of the saving truth. Peter is not alone; Paul goes along with him, in the verifying of the same doctrine. For the recovery of our bodily health, we admit as much help as we can. Divers physicians be not divers indications and symptoms of death, and so many assistants and proctors of life. Our imagination is not so much fed with the apprehension of danger, as our understanding is with comfort, in the multitude of succours. We may believe one witness, but from the mouth of two we take stronger ground of confidence. Such was the wisdom of Moses, that he was able alone to judge Israel; yet he refuseth not the counsel of his father-in-law, to divide the burden of the government with others, and to admit them for assistants in the judicature. "Why sittest thou thyself alone?" Exod. xviii. 14. Yea, God himself joined associates with Moses in that weighty business, Numb. xi. 16. Peter had endowments sufficient to preach the gospel; yet the Lord gave him Paul and more assistants. Two considerations here, then, we must not omit.

(1.) That God allows us many helps to salvation. There is abundant power of salvation in any one evangelist, yet our indulgent God thought good to afford us four. Christ himself is the chief Bishop of our souls, 1 Pet. ii. 25, the chief preacher of the gospel, Luke iv. 18; yet hath he ordained others under him, both bishops and preachers, Eph. iv. 11. The way of God (and he loves to walk in his own ways) was ever to multiply our helps. He that said, Let us make man; said also, Let us make for man a helper fit for him. The power of a single angel is wonderful; whether in destroying, which the army of Sennacherib felt, 2 Kings xix. 35; or in preserving and comforting, as Christ was strengthened, Luke xxii. 43; and to strengthen Christ in that agony, was no easy work. Yet for the better manifestation of God's plentiful goodness, and the relief of our diffident weakness, he employed many angels, in many of his remarkable works. Christ's birth was celebrated with a choir of angels, with an army of angels, Luke ii. 13. His resurrection, or second birth, was solemnized with angels, John xx. 12. They were plural, angels accompanied with angels. In Jacob's vision, they which ascended and descended that ladder, as it were maintaining a trade or commerce between heaven and earth, were many angels, Gen. xxviii. 12. They which hastened Lot out of Sodom, were in the plural, angels, Gen. xix. 15. They that are appointed to be the harvest-men, and to separate the tares from the good corn, after they are both grown up together in one field, are angels, Matt. xiii. 29, 41. They that have the charge to keep us in all our ways, while we live, are many angels, Psal. xxi. 11. They that have the commission to carry up our souls to heaven, when we die, are many angels, Luke xvi. 22. They who attend at the several gates of the new Jerusalem, to admit us into that blessed city, are many angels, Rev. xxi. 12. At the second coming of Christ, in the last day, when heaven and earth shall be all one, he shall appear in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, Matt. xxv. 31. In all their administrations to God's serv-

ants, from the first to the last, there are angels, in the plural number, many angels. The apostles, and their successors the ministers of the gospel, are honoured with the name of angels; and those come not single. We have not Paul alone, nor Peter alone; but are compassed about with a cloud of witnesses, Heb. xii. 1: witness with witness, witness upon witness; which way soever we turn, we are compassed with a cloud of witnesses. This whole cloud guides us to the celestial Canaan; being witnesses of the gospel, they bring to us the joyful news of salvation.

But why then did David expect good news from a single messenger? When the watchman told him of a man running alone, he concluded out of that circumstance, that if he came alone, he brought good news, 2 Sam. xviii. 25. It was contrary to Job; that same "alone," brought him bad news: woful tidings were in every messenger's mouth, that came to him with "I only am escaped alone to tell thee," Job i. 16. Why then should David take it for a presage of happiness? Indeed our translation reads it in a word of indifference, only news; "If he be alone, there is tidings in his mouth;" without any specification of good or bad. But all others interpret it good news. And why David should persuade himself of good news, because the messenger came alone, is to me a wonder. Neither yet was the messenger in all respects alone, for another came after him, that did set out before him. There is small comfort in solitude; and it was no less than a complaint of Paul to Timothy, "Only Luke is with me," 2 Tim. iv. 11; Luke, and nobody but Luke. Though Luke were able, and forward, and constant, in assisting Paul about that great work wherein he laboured; yet is St. Paul affected with this, that there was none but Luke to assist. Christ did not send his messengers single. "Lambs among wolves," Luke x. 3: he does not say one lamb among many wolves; that was his own peculiar lot; he was the only Lamb that came alone.

(2.) It is observable, that most commonly he disposed them to his work by pairs and couples; as Peter here doth join himself with Paul. "Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer," Acts iii. 1: Peter and John, a pair; so they went to praying. "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work wherunto I have called them," Acts xiii. 2: Barnabas and Saul, another pair; so they went to preaching. When those two parted, "Barnabas took Mark, and sailed into Cyprus; and Paul chose Silas," and went another way, Acts xv. 39, 40: still by pairs. Afterward, Silas and Timothy were coupled, and came together from Macedonia, Acts xviii. 5. So Paul inscribed divers of his epistles; his former to the Corinthians, with Paul and Sosthenes; his other, with Paul and Timothy. So to the Philippians, and Colossians, Paul and Timothy. His first to the Thessalonians, with "Paul, and Silvanus, and Timothy;" three; that to the Galatians, with many; "Paul, and all the brethren which are with me." As Peter here desires the testimony and consent of Paul, so Paul will have the partnership of Peter, or some other apostle. The ministry is Christ's yoke; and of all numbers in a yoke, two draw best together. "The Lord appointed other seventy, and sent them two and two before his face," Luke x. 1. Twelve apostles he sent first, then seventy disciples. At Elim, in their journey to Canaan, there "were twelve wells, and threescore and ten palm trees," Exod. xv. 27. The twelve apostles were as twelve fountains, out of whose sacred doctrines sinners might draw the water of life. The seventy disciples, like those seventy palm trees;

under whose cool shades, as travellers might refresh their scorched and weary limbs, so their worse than sun-burnt, even sin-burnt, souls might find comfort. And as God took of the spirit that was upon Moses, and put it upon those seventy elders, Numb. xi. 17; so he took of the Spirit of his Son, and put it on those seventy servants, toward the administration of his spiritual kingdom. The twelve were called apostles, the seventy, disciples; there was a plain distinction between them: answerable to the former, the church hath her prelates and bishops; to the other, her inferior priests, and subordinate ministers. But my observation is, that they were sent two and two. So sent, for divers reasons.

[1.] For the better facility. Two will more easily dispatch a work than one. Two oxen sooner plough the ground; two sowers sooner cast in the seed. Elijah himself fainted under this apprehension; "I am left alone, and they seek my life," 1 Kings xix. 14. And Martha complains of her burden; "Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone?" Luke x. 40. To bear the weight alone, to take all the care alone, which should be shared between two, is hard.

[2.] For the more commodiousness. If one err, the other may direct and reclaim him. In the deliberation about any act, two judgments are better than one. If one fall, the other may help him up; "but woe to him that is alone when he falleth!" Eccl. iv. 10. One may be cold alone, but two lying together have heat. If the devotion of the one was cold, the other's zeal may warm it. Besides, as two together may do the greater work, so they shall have the better reward. There is a more liberal promise to two, than to one; Where two or three of you be gathered together, I will be with you, Matt. xviii. 20. I deny not, but solitariness, and abandoning of society, sometimes disposeth us best for God, who accompanies us most when we are alone. Therefore Moses was commanded to come near to the Lord alone. Yea, and when we are alone, God comes near unto us; as he did to Elijah in the cave; and to Jacob, when he was left alone; yet he wrestled with him, and lamed him, Gen. xxxii. 24. But for our benefit, and comfort, we embrace a good associate.

[3.] For the better means of humbling them. The honour that is divided among two, is less than if it were wholly given to one; and so less endangers either of them to pride. In a work of great consequence, it argues the candour and modesty of a man, to desire a coadjutor. If the danger be great, he justifies his proceedings; for he disguiseth nothing, that calls in witnesses. If the danger be not great, yet it clears him from ambition; in that he is ready to divide the thanks and honour of the work with others, which by his achievement he could have had alone. This keeps us within the bounds of humility; that how well soever the vine prospers under our hands, yet Peter cannot say, I have wrought in the vineyard alone, but that Paul was with me.

[4.] For the advancement of their charity. Love divided among many, is less for each one; but when they are but two, how can they choose but love one another? Therefore the most perfect friendship is held to be between two. Such was between Damon and Pythias, among the Gentiles; between David and Jonathan, among the Israelites.

[5.] For the better society. Company begeth both way and work. The number two is a social number, and therein tends to perfection. "Two are better than one," Eccl. iv. 9. God, who saw that all he had made was exceeding good, came not so near seeing a defect in any of his works, as by seeing man solitary. Thus he acknowledged, "It is not good

that the man should be alone," Gen. ii. 18; therefore he made him a companion, a helper, and such a one as should help him to more company than her own; even a generation of associates, by their increase. How many a difficult work, how many a tedious journey, is overcome and digested by good society! While Peter looks to Paul, and Paul hath respect to Peter, in their travels, they are the better encouraged to the Lord's work.

[6.] For the better strength of defence. When thieves see a passenger alone, they boldly set upon him; but if there be two to two, they will be afraid to venture. Say these apostles were but two, and their enemies three, the flesh, the world, and the devil; yet were they three hundred, let but these two hold together, and they shall be conquerors. So the proverb hath it, Brother that holdeth with brother, is like a fortified city. *T'es unita fortior*; i. e. United strength is stronger. What bulwarks of error could stand against their assaults? Against these two, hell itself could not prevail.

[7.] For their better security, tranquillity, and composedness. Howsoever it was ordained for a blessing, and for a dignity to Israel, "The people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations," Numb. xxiii. 9; not among the cursed nations; not among them, but above them. "Israel shall dwell in safety alone," Deut. xxxiii. 28; free from the infestation of enemies. Yet for particular persons, there is great comfort in society. Our griefs are lessened, our joys enlarged, our cares lightened, by a friendly associate. It was a plague upon a plague to the leper, that he was condemned to live alone. It cannot but be the aggravation of any sickness, when a man is compelled to be sick alone; without any visitant, either to ease or pity him. In his deepest extremity, Job had some called comforters, though they were miserable ones; and miserable comforters are better than none at all. It was for that Almighty man, to tread the wine-press alone, and to have none of the people with him, Isa. lxiii. 3. Death takes a cruel advantage upon him that must die alone, without a comforter, nay, without a consolator. It was a sad entrance into Jeremiah's Lamentations, "How doth the city sit solitary, that was full of people!" Lam. i. 1. But in all heats of anguish, good assistance and society breathes some cool air of comfort. When Paul must answer before Nero, he complains that no man stood with him, but all men forsook him, 2 Tim. iv. 16: O then one Peter, one comforter, had been exceeding welcome to him.

[8.] Lastly and chiefly, for the greater credibility; (for you may take all this for a digression; yet pardon it, you have lost nothing by it, it is the main scope that led me into this meditation;) and to work a belief in men's hearts of that truth, which they have both delivered. Paul and Peter, those two are conjoined, that their testimony might be the more fairly received. For this cause Christ sent his apostles and disciples before him, by two and by two; that the one might witness for the other, and all bear witness to Christ, the only Witness, though seldom allowed. "If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true," John v. 31. And yet that mighty Prince might well write, I bear witness of myself; and so he does: "Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true," John viii. 14: of myself, and yet true. But commonly more witnesses are used than one. "There are three that bear record, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one," 1 John v. 7: so we have three witnesses in heaven. And there are three more, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: so we have three witnesses in earth; and these agree in one, ver. 8; there

is no discord among them. At the least two; "I will give power unto my two witnesses," Rev. xi. 3.

Christ called his apostles by pairs: Simon and Andrew, Matt. iv. 18; two, and those were brethren. Going a little farther, he calls James and John, ver. 21; two more, and those also brethren. So he sent them out by pairs: "He called to him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two," Mark vi. 7. To the two disciples going to Emmaus he showed himself on the day of his resurrection, Luke xxiv. 13. In this number John the Baptist sent his disciples to Christ; two together, Matt. xi. 2. God brought his people out of Egypt by two leaders; "By the hand of Moses and Aaron," Psal. lxxvii. 20: so he brings our souls out of spiritual bondage, by Peter and Paul, by James and John; by two and two. As the two spies brought the cluster of grapes between them from Canaan, Numb. xiii. 23, so he did appoint two disciples to bring us the wine of salvation, for the cheering of our hearts. The ark of God was borne between two: two were called to build the tabernacle, Bezaleel and Aholiab; so the messengers of the gospel were sent by twos, to bear Christ into the world, and to build up his church. There were two cherubims at each end of the mercy-seat; as at either end of Christ's grave, two angels. Hiram made two pillars, and two chapters for those pillars in the temple, 1 Kings vii. 15, 16. The church hath two wings, to fly from persecution, Rev. xii. 14. Her servants are clothed each with two garments, Prov. xxxi. 21. The principal members of our body are double, for the better mutual supply. We have two eyes, that if one miscarry, the other may guide us; two ears, two hands, two feet, that the one may relieve the weakness of the other. There were two tables of the law; two Testaments; and the Lord sent the ministers of them both by twos, pairs and couples. Two swords; and they are enough to kill those two enemies, sin and Satan.

There are but two principal relations in the world, and all men must fall under one of the combinations; husband and wife, father and son, king and subject, master and servant: some of these we must all be. By pairs are Christ's messengers sent, to teach all these pairs their duties. Therefore two, to explain two covenants, the law and the gospel; to keep enmity between the two seeds, of the woman and the serpent; to maintain war between those two foes, the flesh and the Spirit; to execute two offices, of preaching and baptizing; to preach two doctrines, of faith and good works; to set upon men those two seals, in the administration of the two sacraments; to exercise two jurisdictions, of binding and loosing; to unite two, Jews and Gentiles; to overcome two, sin and Satan; to reconcile two, God and man; to save two, body and soul. Let us be ready for these ambassadors, with two preparations, of our ears and hearts; meet them with two gratulations, of joy and reverence; welcome them with two entertainments, of faith and repentance; and return them with two satisfactions, of our thankfulness and obedience. So shall we depart this life with two comforts, peace and a good conscience; and rest in heaven with those two noble societies, of saints and angels; when those two parts of the church, the militant and triumphant, shall make but one parish, where Jesus Christ shall be all in all. Amen.

VERSE 16.

Is also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction.

WE read of "a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars," Rev. xii. 1. In heaven are many wonders; wondrous joy, wondrous sanctity, wondrous glory; all wondrous to us that live in this dark grove of mortality. But the heaven here spoken of, is upon the earth; and the woman is the church in her militant condition. This woman is clothed with the sun; that is a wonder: who can imagine a garment for any creature, to be cut out of the whole piece of the sun? Not only clothed with his beams, and rays, and light; for so men and plants, the earth and all things upon it, are clothed with the sun; in that sense, the sun clothes whatsoever it shines upon. But this woman is clothed with the sun itself: the very body of that great luminary is become her vesture. The proudest lady and the highest princess of the world, though the riches of nature be ravished into their wardrobes, and their silken garments be interwoven with gold, and embroidered with pearls and diamonds, cannot show such a suit. The sun is Christ: the garment wherewith this Sun clothes his spouse, is his own righteousness: thus covered, she appears just, pure, and amiable in the sight of God. The moon is under her feet; her location must needs be high, even above the moon. The moon governs the sea: there is nothing more inconstant than the sea and the moon; both are emblems of the world. This moon the church treads under her feet, despising the vanity of all transient things. Upon her head was a crown of twelve stars: a wonderful rare crown, that was made of stars. Gold is the principal material of a crown; but what needs she wear gold upon her head, that tramples it under her feet? The twelve stars are the twelve apostles: these are the arms of this glorious queen; but she bears them with a difference from her Lord and King. For Christ hath them in his hand, Rev. i. 16, as his servants; but his spouse on her head, as her chief ornaments.

To our purpose. The sun gives to the stars all the light they have; so the apostles receive all their illumination and wisdom from Christ, by the Holy Spirit; as a lantern hath no light of itself, but what is put into it. Of these stars, thus enlightened, some are fixed in the firmament, others wandering. The apostles were to range abroad, by their commission: not after St. Jude's meaning, who calls false teachers, "wandering stars," ver. 13: for in that sense, the planets themselves are not wandering, but keep a direct and constant course in their orbits. But those that Jude speaks of, are meteors, shooting or gliding stars; which can neither guide travellers by land, nor mariners by sea. But these stars of Christ are stable, bright, glorious; we acknowledge their light and influence; they are our faithful sea-marks, and directions to the port of blessedness. But in these stars, my text notes, there are some things hard to be understood; as the variety of their motions and magnitudes, but especially of their influences. In the doctrine of the apostles, some things are hard; therefore, as the astronomers have framed to their imagination, eccentrics, and epicycles, and a strange engine of orbs, out of the heavens; so the schoolmen have devised a world of paradoxes, problems, im-

proper positions and conclusions, out of the Scriptures; all to save the phenomenon of popery. Yea, which is worse, as astrologers have impiously gathered the prediction of futurities, the calculation of nativities, the alteration of states and kingdoms, and the event of all contingent fortunes, out of the stars; perverting the sober use of those heavenly bodies to magical purposes: so heretics have violently forced errors, and schisms, and factions, and hellish tenets, out of the sacred doctrine of the apostles; wresting the Scriptures to their own perdition. The full view of whose profane and sacrilegious proceedings, we have in this verse: "As also in all his epistles," &c.

Wherein there be two general occurrences; a virgin, and a rape. The virgin is fair truth, the Holy Scripture. The rape is a wresting of it, which is foul violence done unto it. For the former, three things commend a virgin; unsported beauty, uncorrupted virtue, and modest retiredness: answerable whereunto we find in the Scripture in general, and in this parcel of it, Paul's epistles in particular, first, for virtue, a sufficiency: in all, and every piece of all, there is full satisfaction. Secondly, for beauty, a harmony, and agreement: it speaks the same thing; there is no contradiction. Thirdly, for retiredness, a difficulty: some things are hard to be understood; they surpass our apprehension. For the other part, which is the rape; first, here is an indictment of the ravishers; and that under two titles, as it were their names. They are unlearned; their book cannot save them: they are unstable; no man will speak for them: who will plead for the inconstant? Secondly, here is the fact whereof they are indicted, and that is the rape of a virgin; wresting the Scripture, violation of the sacred truth. Thirdly, their execution follows: they shall die for it: they meant it for their own defence; it shall turn to their own destruction.

"In all his epistles." It was a material point which our apostle here urged, and in which he sends us unto Paul to be confirmed; even so great that our salvation lies upon it. Therefore it is not lightly or rarely touched, in some one epistle; but ponderously and frequently insisted upon in all his epistles. Out of which premises ariseth this conclusion: The fundamental points of religion are repeated often; the prophets did not more labour in the explanation of the law, than the apostles in the application of the gospel. There is no leaf, almost no line, which doth not inculcate this; and that without any wearisome tautology or needless repetition, but by a sweet way of amplification. How careful was St. Paul to speak home! "I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God," Acts xx. 27. He had rather write one thing twice, than have it pass unobserved, or vanish unremembered. "To write the same things to you, to me is not grievous, but for you safe," Phil. iii. 1. Such is the all-sufficiency of the Scriptures, without any need to be pieced up with traditions: it "is able to save your souls," Jam. i. 21; and who would ask more? They can make a man "wise unto salvation," 2 Tim. iii. 15; and I would never desire to be wiser. Paul calls it, "the counsel of God;" the Romish traditions then are none of the counsels of God. If they must challenge a corner, yea, half the room in our faith, why then do we entitle the New Testament, the gospel, whereas it were but a part of the gospel? or, the New Testament, whereas it were but a part of Christ's Testament, and traditions a schedule to be annexed to it?

Let no man presume above that which is written: that man's faith hath a drowsy, which the epistles of Paul cannot satisfy. The papists call the Scripture a dumb rule, because it hath no sound. How should a paper speak? Do they make it an idol,

that have a mouth and speaks not? Indeed, they are not willing to bear it speak: as Marius could not hear the laws, for the noise of arms; so they cannot hear the Scriptures, which are the laws of God, for the noise of traditions. But they shall hear it one day, when their awaked conscience shall convince them of wilful sacrilege; for the contempt done to the king's proclamation that cannot speak, redounds to the person of the king that can speak. The orb of Christian faith is the Scripture; if we be fixed stars, we content ourselves within our own orb. The Israelites took in unto them some of the heathens; but first they must be circumcised, and so become Israelites. We admit some traditions of the ancients, and make use of the very learning of pagans; but first we circumcise it, we do as it were christen it in the font of truth. And if any tradition shall grow saucy, and offer to confront the word of God, being so opposed by a sectary, we soon excommunicate it; as Ishmael must be turned out of doors, when he once falls to jeering of Isaac. Our God and Saviour hath written his will to us, by his evangelists and apostles: to them we adhere. There is light enough to inform our understandings, truth enough to satisfy our knowledge, a holy covenant and precious promises to exercise our faith, glory and eternal life to feed our hope, the rules of sanctimony to direct our life. What can we require more of God? What should be done more for us, but only this; to fill our hearts with his grace; that we may understand what he teacheth, and believe what he promiseth, and do what he commandeth? In every epistle God shows us the way, how we should serve him, how he will save us. Lord, we seek no further than to thy word, we ask no more than thyself; guide us by the one, and satisfy us with the other.

"Speaking of these things." The pontificians say the Scripture is a dumb rule; but sure St. Peter was of another mind; for making mention of Paul's epistles, which were his writings, he attributes the faculty of speaking to them. St. Paul writes; and yet St. Peter says he speaks. Their images have mouths, but they speak not; God's word doth speak, yet it hath no mouth. They speak, by signifying unto us what God hath spoken; and to take this honour from the canonical writing, is an injury done to the Author of that doctrine.

"These things." What are they? The mercy of God, that is; and the thankfulness of man, that should be: Christ dying for us, our faith believing on him; the one performed by him, the other required of us; the lenity of his patience, the necessity of our repentance. These things Paul speaks of, and in all his epistles he speaks of them. The same, not others; no foreign or wandering things; much less things thwart and opposite to the first principles: but the same; for matter and form, for weight and fashion, the same: like so many lines tending to one centre, the gospel of Christ.

The conclusion that ariseth from it is this: There is no repugnancy in the Divine Scriptures. Evangelist doth not cross prophet; nay, rather the history verifies the prophecy, with a Thus was fulfilled. Apostle doth not cross apostle; but Peter and Paul, James, and John, and Jude, they all preached, they all wrote the same truth. Some atheistical spirits have searched narrowly, to find contradictions in them; but the spirit of contradiction was in them that went about it. Oh that we could all as well agree with them, as they agree with themselves! But while they are at peace in the doctrine, we are at war in the interpretation. As he that tumbles in a calm bell, hath his tempest within; so they that pick quarrels out of the articles of peace, seek more

the praise of their wits than the profit of their souls. A father makes a will, and bequeaths divers legacies: the children come to demand their portions; but brawling lawyers find out unnecessary cavils; one interprets a clause of it to this sense, another to that: so the orphans' patrimony becomes the lawyers' booty. The gospel is Christ's will; and he hath left all his children blessed legacies: but heretics, like contentious advocates, misinterpret the terms, and wrangle about words: and though they get nothing by it, but the fame of singularity on earth, and the penalty of damnation in hell; yet they set the Christian world in an uproar; and the poor children by this means are cheated of their portions, even their patrimony in heaven. Let us acknowledge, that all the evangelists and apostles were but so many several engrossers of our Father's will; that they all write in the same tenor: let us humbly trust upon his riches, thankfully receive our portions, and carefully obey his rules and precepts, and we are blessed in Jesus Christ.

"In which are some things hard." *Difficilia que pulchra*; i. e. Things beautiful are hard. "What excellency is obtained without difficulty? Wisdom is an excellent grace; but it is no inheritance; we were not born wise. We may think ourselves wise betimes; (and he is no fool that doth not think so;) but God, time, and industry must concur to the making up of wisdom. The kingdom of heaven is a most excellent place, yet it will not be obtained without violence. The Scripture is divinely excellent, no flowers so sweet, no jewels so precious; no wonder then if it be understood with some difficulty. Yet the apostle here qualifies the matter; *some* things are hard, not *all*. If all the will of God were enigmatical, mystical, and abstruse, like the juggling oracles of false prophecy, there were some excuse for our ignorance, and by reason of that for our disobedience; but they are only some things.

From which we may infer this conclusion; that both in Paul's particular epistles, and in the general scope of the Scriptures, there is a plain and evident demonstration of God's good-will towards us. *Some* does not only oppose itself to *all*; some, therefore not all; but also to *many*; some, therefore not the most. Two of a thousand places are some, but scarce a number; yea, ten of a hundred are some, but comparatively very few. Some necessarily implies a less part: some hard; therefore the greater number are easy. The former are but some few hillocks in a large plain, some few strange herbs in a familiar garden. Herbs they are certainly, though we know not their names or their virtues. As children, well entered into reading, run away with the chapter currently; until they light upon a hard word, which puts them to their spelling: there they make a stop; and unless they skip it over, they must consult their master, ere they can go any further. We are all scholars, both catechumens, and catechists; and when we come to study St. Paul's writings, with many divine rules we go away roundly; in some fair measure we understand them, and much sweet comfort we find in them: but here and there we light upon a sentence that puzzleth our dull intellect; there we pause, we meditate, we ruminate; we ponder the sense; we compare the precedent with the subsequent words: and if the wings of our apprehension cannot soar so high as this reverend mystery, then with the wings of our zealous prayers we mount up to the throne of Majesty; we consult our great Master in heaven, that most Holy Spirit; there we have the ointment that clears our eyes, 1 John ii. 27; there we find a revelation of these deep secrets, 1 Cor. ii. 10.

They are but some things then that are in danger of this difficulty: and among multitudes of plain and facile rules, we may allow some to be hard; especially seeing that without these we may be saved. At some royal feast, among many dishes of delicate and easily digestible viands, there may be some solid and stronger meat: while a good stomach falls to that, the nicer and weaker appetites need not fast; for if the other be more nutritive, they are less digestive. "Strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age," Heb. v. 14. We are riding a journey, and there be divers monuments set up as marks for our direction, with inscriptions upon them: most of them tell us plainly and familiarly. This way you must take. Here and there we find a stately pillar, meant for a guide too; but the characters are in so curious a language, that though we can read them, we do not fully understand them: we fix not there, but pass by them with reverence, to the next of a plainer indication. Or in our travel we are driven to cross a river, as the Israelites did Jordan to their Canaan: this river in some places is very deep, but in most places fordable: they that, like elephants, are strong in understanding, may swim over; the feebler, like poor lambs, yet may wade over: it matters not, as from Paul's shipwrecked vessel, Acts xxvii. 44, which way; whether the skillful by swimming, or the rest by other helps, so they all get to shore. In the sacred writ there be depths, for the deeper judgments to sound; and for the weaker passengers there be shallows. There be mountains of learning, for the higher wits of the school; and there are pleasant valleys, for the walks of humbler souls. There is milk for babes, and harder meat for abler stomachs. If some things will not go down with us, yet there is choice enough among the rest to nourish us to everlasting life.

This truth then must be undeniably granted, maugre all the cavils of Rome; that the most places and passages of the Scripture are intelligible enough, and contain in them the manifest doctrine of our salvation. So Chrysostom: All those things that are necessary, in the Holy Scriptures are clear and plain. (In 2 Thess. ii. 15.) And, when we say any thing without the Scripture, the thoughts of our auditory are uncertain. (In Psal. xcv.) I deny not but there are some places of difficulty in St. Paul; as 1 Cor. xi. 10, and chap. xv. 28, 29. To be short in this enumeration, though Salmcron was long enough; (Tom. 13. Disp. 2.) for he pretends to have found out no less than fifty difficulties or obscurities in Paul's epistles. Captious critics scarce turn over those sacred leaves for any other ends. I confess, that I have not used to look upon God's book with such eyes; I desire not to feed my fancy with scruples, but my soul with comforts.

Some have ventured to allege reasons, why Paul is so full of difficulties. On account of the rapidity of his words, says Irenæus, lib. 3. cap. 7. On account of the impulse of the spirit, or perhaps the impetuosity of his own thoughts, he is less clear and explicit in his expressions: so Origen, in Epist. ad Rom. Princ. Hierome saith, He was not sufficiently skilled in the deep phrases of the Greek tongue. (Ep. 50.) He had his idiotisms and phrases peculiar to himself: whereof Nyssen, (Tract. in 1 Cor. xv.) with Hierome and Chrysostom, give some instances. Thomas Anglicus, quoted by Lorinus, hath a strange suspicion; that Paul wrote obscurely on purpose, to hide his doctrine from heretics; and that the simple might understand him, he sent his epistles by his disciples, that they might expound them to the churches. The principal cause was, according to Lorinus, (in loc.) *multitudo, et altitudo rerum quas*

tractat, the multitude and depth of the subjects which he treats of. Salmcron (Tom. 13. Disp. 7.) gives divers other reasons of his obscure writings, and prescribes certain rules for their explication. Some think that this difficulty ariseth from the multitude of interpreters upon St. Paul's writings; no author having such abundance of expositors as he.

But Paul was not more hard in his writings, than these men are in their censures of him. They would speak further, if they durst, to the disabling of so glorious a witness. Sure there is something wherein he hath galled them, or else they would not thus kick against him. We dare not be so bold with that blessed saint; for we know, he wrote nothing but what the Holy Ghost dictated to him: divine truth all. As David patiently bore all his afflictions, because it was the Lord's doing; so we faithfully and thankfully embrace all St. Paul's writings, because it was the Lord's saying. What if baptizing over the dead, 1 Cor. xv. 29, were a hard saying? yet that the dead shall rise again, this is a plain saying; that the dead in Christ shall rise to glory, this is both a plain and a comfortable saying. What if "It is impossible for those who were once enlightened," &c., "if they fall away, to renew them again by repentance," Heb. vi. 4—6, be a hard saying? yet that "Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners," 1 Tim. i. 15, this is a true saying. What if, Before the children had done either good or evil, the purpose of God upon them must stand, Rom. ix. 11, be hard to understand? yet that God would have all men to be saved, 1 Tim. ii. 4, this is easy to understand. If we know not the meaning of that, "God hath concluded them all in unbelief," Rom. xi. 32; yet "there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus," Rom. viii. 1; we know the meaning, the comfort, and the assurance too of that.

Beloved, we need care for no more than to be saved; and the means to that is plainly and punctually declared to us by the apostle Paul. If there be some things hard, yet these plain things are the most; though we do not reach the other, we cannot miss these. If profounder wits will venturously dive into this ocean, to fetch up deeper mysteries; yet we have enough to serve our turns. There is sufficient store of comforts afforded us to make us blessed, and who would ask more? Yea, we have a fair portion, a goodly heritage, and the lines are fallen unto us in plain and pleasant places. Let us content ourselves with it, and be thankful to him that gave it, that we may be saved by it.

"Hard to be understood." These words must be read in a complex sense. For if there was no fault in our understanding, there could be no difficulty in the word of God. It is a principle in nature, that whatever is received is received according to the capacity or measure of the receiver. Shall the little vial be angry, because it cannot contain all the water of the fountain? or a subject, being allowed to take his full burden out of the king's treasury, become pettish with himself that he cannot carry away all the gold? No sober guest at a banquet desires to eat more than his stomach will bear. Because we cannot devour all, will we fast? Pliny writes of the hedgehog, that when he hath laden himself with nuts and fruits, and is going to disburden them in his stor-house, if but the least filbert chance to fall off, he will fling down all the rest in a peevish humour, and beat the ground for anger. Many sweet and heavenly comforts we lay up in our consciences, derived out of the treasury of the Scriptures: perhaps there is some one jewel that we prize above all the rest, though we understand not the full value of it; some one sentence, like a mine of gold, too deep for

us to come at: shall we disesteem all the rest, because we cannot be the masters of this? Shall we fling down all the fruits we have, because there is one in some top branch too high for us to reach? Is our language so ambitious, as, All or none? The rules of our faith and life are manifest enough: oh that we would enough study them, enough practise them! The mystery which is above us, is not that one thing needful; let us not fear it; we may be saved without the knowledge of it. I fear the want of my diligence, to attain that I may know; I fear the want of my obedience, to follow that I do know; I do not fear the defect of my capacity, in not comprehending what I cannot know. My noscence in such things is pardonable, my curiosity may be dangerous.

Let this therefore be the conclusion: The mysteries of salvation be hard, but to our understanding; the difficulty is not in their own nature, but in our capacity. The word of God is like a lamp, no dim taper, but a bright shining light; exceeding the sun in his glory; but we are thick-sighted, and can receive this light but according to our own measure. The obscurity is not in the object, but in the organ. Shall the blind man blame the sun for shining no brighter? As some rural inhabitant, being admitted into a royal palace, admires the building, and is transported with the rareness and magnificence of it; and much of it he understands; when he comes into the hall, he knows that that is a place for feeding; when into the gallery, he knows that to be a place for walking; when into the bedchamber, he knows that to be a place for sleeping; but into some rooms he is brought, no whit inferior to the former, for state and pleasure, the use whereof he knows not: will he now censure the architect, for making of such unnecessary and superfluous places? or not rather lay the blame, where it is, upon his own ignorance? The Scripture is a goodly edifice, the Almighty King's palace; whereof Paul was one of the master-builders. When we read his epistles, we are surveying the rooms and receptacles; some whereof we easily apprehend; as that "Christ came into the world to save sinners," 1 Tim. i. 15; we know this for the common hall to all believers; or that "there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ," Rom. viii. 1; we conceive this to be a sweet repository or lodging chamber for the conscience; or that we must follow the things that are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report, Phil. iv. 8; this we take to be the gallery and walk of the saints; or that we must "pray without ceasing," 1 Thess. v. 17; we look upon this as the chapel, the oratory, or house of prayer. But searching further, we light upon some uncouth and curious rooms; bearing as much art and majesty in them as the rest, but more obscure and mystical, and veiled with the curtain of awful secrecy: such are certain doctrines of St. Paul; we are not forbidden to view them, and review them, to study, and meditate on them; but if we cannot perfectly understand them, far be it from us to tax St. Paul of obscurity; no, let us impute the fault to our own simplicity. "Oh the depth of the riches of the knowledge of God!" Rom. xi. 33. His wisdom must not come under the censure of man; but the folly of man must be submitted to the censure of his wisdom, that in all things he may be justified. Thus many things in the Scriptures, at the first blush, appear difficult; which being better considered, are easily reconciled. I will instance but in two, which now offer themselves to my memory; and two may give us the taste of all.

1. Christ's testimony of John the Baptist, recorded by St. Matthew, "This is Elias, which was for to

come," Matt. xi. 14; compared with the Baptist's open denial of this, recorded by St. John, "I am not Elias," John i. 21. Here appears not only difficulty, but even contrariety. But neither, indeed, as St. Augustine easily composeth it; John was Elias in spirit, not in person. "I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great day of the Lord," Mal. iv. 5; upon this promise the Jews depended; still looking that Elias should first come, Mark ix. 11, and not for the Messias without that precession. To satisfy this scruple, Christ calls John Elias; and so he was in divers resemblances. First, in regard of the corrupt times wherein either of them was born: Elias in the greatest declination of Israel; John Baptist, of Judah. Secondly, their coming into the world was sudden and unexpected: Elias, without mention of his parents; John, of parents superannuated, past expectation of a child. Thirdly, in regard of their habit and diet: of a singular austerity, both of them. Fourthly, in respect of their habitation, in deserts: they were no hermits, yet their general abode was in the wilderness. Fifthly, in respect of that burning zeal, and powerful spirit, wherewith they preached; both shining lamps. Sixthly, in their boldness to reprove kings and queens; which is incident to none but great prophets. Seventhly, in regard of persecution for the truth: so Herod was such another as Ahab, and Herodias very like to Jezebel, both in life and death. So then, when John says, I am not Elias, he speaks properly, in regard of the dimensions of his body, and individuality of his person; in that sense he was not Elias. And Christ speaks as truly, though figuratively, when he says that John is Elias: not in the person, but in the power and spirit of Elias; and so is the difficulty soon removed.

2. Take one instance more. Matthew and Mark say, that the thieves which were crucified with him, reviled him, Matt. xvii. 44; Mark xv. 32: the number was but two, and both of them are accused. Yet Luke says, that one of them rebuked his fellow for that contumely cast upon Christ, prayed, and was saved, Luke xxiii. 40. This is a difficulty: how shall we understand it? Some answer, that at first both the thieves railed on Christ; but one of them, observing the patience of the sufferer in his extremity, the wonderful miracles, and the compassion of nature itself; the sun's darkening, the earth's shaking, the stones rending; was converted, and did amend his former exprobration of Christ, with a humble confession of him, (Hieron. Chrysost.) But against this may be objected, first, these miracles were the effects of Christ's death, and begun when he ended; but the thief was then at the point of death, and could not be sensible of them. Secondly, when he reproved his fellow for reproaching of Christ, why did he not reply, Thou hast also reviled him? Thirdly, it is the custom of the sacred story, when it hath disgraced a man for sin, not to conceal the honour of his repentance, if ever he had remorse. St. Matthew therefore had done the malefactor some wrong, to set down his offence, and not his repentance. The most and best expositors fly to this, with Augustine; that it was an enallage of the number: as, The disciples are charged to say, Why is this waste? Matt. xxvi. 8, when St. John chargeth only Judas with it, John xii. 4. So, "The kings of the earth set themselves against" Christ, Psal. ii. 2; yet literally, no king but Herod: so Peter quotes it, and so expounds it, Herod and Pilate against Jesus, Acts iv. 26, 27; now Pilate was but a judge, no king. So, "They were stoned, sawn asunder, wandered about in skins;" and before, they "stopped the mouths of lions," Heb. xi. 33, 37: in the plural,

they; yet none stopped the lions' mouths but Daniel; none sawn but Isaiah, and that but by tradition; none wandered in skins but Elijah. So Beza observes upon that of John, "It is written in the prophets," John vi. 45; yet none expressly saith so but Isaiah, chap. liv. 13; albeit indeed Jeremiah hath something to the same sense, chap. xxxi. 34. When a gentleman fights among clowns, and receives some injury by one of them, he is ready to say, Look how these clowns abuse me; when one only did it. A father that is displeased with one of his children, will say, See how unadvised these children are; whereas but one only offended him. Indeed St. Matthew and Mark mind only Christ's humiliation, and look to that; St. Luke also intended the thief's conversion, and to show that miracle of mercy. By these two instances you may guess at the rest; for all of them fall under one of these kinds; doctrinal, as the former; or historical, as the latter.

Let us take this for one especial rule in the clearing of these difficulties, to supply Scripture with Scripture. For, as it has been said, The Scripture speaks not clearly and fully in every place, because it speaks in one and the other place. Howsoever the evangelists wrote the same story, yet some passages of that story are set down by one or two of them, not by all; and by some of them more obscurely, more clearly by the rest; that they might not seem to write by any compact or collusion, but merely by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. (Chrysost.) Let this consideration, that all things in the Scriptures are perspicuous in themselves, and some obscure to us only by the occasion of our own blindness, so far humble us, that we both admire the excellency of the Divine truth, and confess the baseness of our understanding. Sin at first was the cause of ignorance; now ignorance is the cause of sin. "You say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth," John ix. 41. So long as we think we see, we continue blind; when we once perceive our own blindness, then we begin to see. There be some that run away with the interpretation of Scripture, as fast as if they had been at the making of it; rare musicians, that can sing the hardest notes at the first sight. They no sooner read a text, but they have God's meaning by it straight; there is nothing hard to them; but I can hardly believe them. There may be some special reasons given of this great difficulty.

1. The imperfect knowledge which we have upon earth. Howsoever our justification may be perfect, our sanctification is not so. In the best militant saints, as their affections cannot be wholly regenerated, so nor is their understanding wholly enlightened. We see through a glass, and we know but in part, 1 Cor. xiii. 12. If we did not know in part, we were miserable strangers; if we did fully know, we were glorified saints. The man stark blind (in the Gospel) presents to us our state by nature; his eyes being opened so far as to see men walk like trees, is our state of grace; seeing clearly, our state of glory. In heaven we shall know as we are known; there shall be the fulness of knowledge, as well as the fulness of joy; yea, there could be no fulness of joy, without the fulness of knowledge. There all problems and questions shall be resolved, dissolved; and we shall perfectly understand the truth of those things, which strong wits so argue here below. Now our eyes are dazzled with looking upon the sun; there we shall see the Son of God face to face; and in that infinite Glass of the Deity, behold enough to satisfy us for ever.

2. The figures and metaphors of the Scripture may a little retard the pace of our understanding. There be such peregrinations to fetch in remote and sig-

nificant figures: such a heightening and elevation of style; such powerful hyperboles, such mystical allusions, such majestic imperatives; such spreadings and curtains of allegories, such third heavens of eloquence; such commanding persuasions, such persuading commandments, such pathetic abjurations; such sinews in God's milk, expressions of reservedness even in familiarity. All profane authors seem to be of the seed of the serpent, that creeps; the Holy Ghost is the Dove, that flies. No words but his own can express the texture and composition of his word. So doth he inform the weakest, that the highest judgments are rapt with admiration; so doth he exercise the strongest, that the weakest are filled with consolation. Hierome and Augustine confessed one to another in their mutual letters, that there are some places of Scripture which they thought they did not understand: and yet both those fathers call upon old women and young virgins to read the Scriptures, all the Scriptures, without confining them to some certain places; and yet they knew them to be of weaker judgment than themselves.

As the Lord gives us the same earth to labour on and to lie in, to be unto us both a house and a grave; so he gives us the same word, for our satisfaction, and for our inquisition; for our instruction, and for our admiration too. The argument that binds one man's faith to believe it, is the reverend simplicity of it; that which binds another, is the awful majesty of it. So that of two men, equally pious, meeting, the one wonders that all men should not understand it, and the other wonders as much that any man should understand it. When these mysteries fall into the way of wrangling wits, they suffer much injury; for every one is full of his own meaning or interpretation: which might be well, so long as they keep the analogy of faith, and impound their straying fancies within the bounds of sobriety. But when birds of sick feathers will emulate the sun in their soaring, soon do their wings flag, and witness to the earth the shame of their proud undertakings. Lord, where we do see, give us a humble knowledge; and where we cannot see, a contented ignorance; in all a believing patience, a patient faith. As it is said, God must be followed with the eyes shut. Our eyes must be shut to the world, lest it withdraw us; yea, shut to human reason, that though we cannot reach the *why* of God's command, to understand it, yet we may know the *what* of his command, and in sincerity of heart obey it. Take now some helps for our understanding.

(1.) Conference with others; especially with them whose lips preserve knowledge. It was the eunuch's reply to Philip, "How can I understand, except some man should guide me?" Acts viii. 31. But now we all think that we know the way to heaven so perfectly, that we need not ask. "I go my way," saith Christ, "and none of you asketh me, Whether goest thou?" John xvi. 5. Nay, we will scarce ask, Lord, which way shall we go after thee? How shall we come unto thee? "Exhort one another daily," saith the apostle, Heb. iii. 13. Edify one another in the holy faith. But we take these for superfluous counsels; every man knows enough to serve his own turn. While these two disciples "communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them," Luke xxiv. 15; while they were talking of Jesus, Jesus presented himself to them. Our talk is of vanity, and vanity is with us. If Christ could be kept in our mouths, we should always have him in our hearts.

(2.) Constant reading of the Scriptures, and meditation upon them. The good man doth meditate on the law of God day and night, Psal. i. 2. The pious

tificians beat off the people from this common treasury, by objecting this supposed difficulty. O, the Scriptures are hard to be understood; do not you trouble your heads about them; we will tell you the meaning of them. They might as well say, Heaven is a blessed place, but it is a hard way to hit; do not you trouble yourselves, we will go thither for you. Thus in the great day of trial, when they should be saved by their book, alas, they have no book to save them. Instead of the Scriptures they can present images; these are the laymen's books: as if they were to be tried by a jury of carvers and painters, and not by the twelve apostles. Be not you so cheated; but study the gospel, as you look for comfort by the gospel. He that hopes for the inheritance, will make much of the conveyance.

(3.) Humility and a devout reverence to those sacred monuments of truth. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will show them his covenant," Psal. xxv. 14: those leaves are too holy to be turned over with profane fingers. Pride is a barricado against all graces, therefore against knowledge; it makes the heart incapable of goodness, as cold iron cannot be wrought to any fashion. A heart full of pride, is but a vessel full of air; this self-opinion must be blown out of us, before saving knowledge be poured into us. Humility is the knees of the soul, and to that posture the Lamb will open the book; but pride stands upon tiptoes, as if she would snatch the book out of Christ's hand, and unclasp it herself. The first lesson of a Christian is humility; and he that hath not learned the first lesson, is not fit to take out a new. Humble eyes are most capable of high mysteries.

(4.) Prayer: when all fails, this will do it. Why did God write his mind to us in so mystical a dialect? We answer, The obscurity is not in his dialect, but in our intellect. Why does not he that made the will, make us also to understand it? We say again, We want wisdom, because we do not ask it. But many have prayed for knowledge, whereby they might apprehend these high mysteries, and yet have not obtained it. It may be they begged it, because they would be made wiser, not holier by it. It is their own honour they seek, not the honour of Christ. If they may be thought great rabbis, deep scholars, this is the height of their ambition; though neither the church be benefited, nor God glorified by it. *Scire volunt, ad scientiam*, They would know, for the mere sake of knowing; that is all. "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God," Jam. i. 5. *If there*, does rather lay down than suppose; lay down in reality, than suppose in argument. "If any lack?" who does not lack wisdom? How should he get it? "Let him ask of God," that fountain of wisdom. "And it shall be given him:" there is promise; he shall be sure of it. "But let him ask in faith," ver. 6; that is the way of obtaining: that God may be honoured by it, that is the end of enjoying it. As the grace of God is the fountain, from which our wisdom flows; so the glory of God is the ocean, to which our wisdom runs. It is derived from the one, and must be directed to the other.

St. Augustine was so bold as to beg of God, that Moses might come, and tell him what he meant by some places of Genesis. We dare not do so; but yet we may beg of the Spirit of God, who opens dark things, settles us in the truth, and keeps the key of the Scripture, to inform our hearts what Paul meant by some passages of his writings; the grammar whereof we know, that such is the signification of the words; but the logic or the rhetoric we understand not, nor what is the full meaning of those words.

Prayer is the remedy, the cure of all obscurity;

especially being accompanied with fervour and frequency. Though we have fished all night and caught nothing, yet let us east out the net again; pray still. Paul with exhortation ever joined invocation. Let us bestow the seed of the word with our prayers and tears; so will it grow in our hearts. Christ loves thy prayers; as one says, Not that you may show to him what he does not know, or give to him what he does not possess, but that you may receive of him what he himself has promised. It was a feeling complaint, seconded with a hearty prayer, "I believe; Lord, help my unbelief." So in praise to God for what I have, and in prayer to God for what I want, let my soul confess, I understand a little; Lord, help my ignorance.

"Which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest." These be the ravishers. It was for the honour of dead Patroclus, that two armies fought for his corpse; and it was for the glory of dead Moses, that two spirits, a good and a bad, an archangel and the devil, strove for his body. And it is some dignity for the Scripture, that it is contended for by the two churches; the Christian true church, and the anti-christian synagogue. But as when the two mothers contended for the child before Solomon, the pretending mother, upon the king's sentence, was content to have it divided, but the natural mother would not endure it; Either the whole to her, or the whole to me; hurt not the child: so the malignant church could well enough brook, that the written word were hacked, and slashed, and torn in pieces, because she knows it is none of her own, and doth rather prejudice than further her cause; but the protestant and reformed church, like the true mother, is careful to have it preserved sound and entire, and untouched with the fingers of corruption. When the Pharisees and the Sadducees strove for Paul, the chief captain fearing lest he should be pulled in pieces, commanded his soldiers to take him from them all, Acts xxiii. 10: so if the Scripture be not taken from heretics and sectaries, they will even tear it in pieces. For rather than they will believe as the Scripture speaketh, they will wrest the Scripture to speak as they believe: it must say as they say, or hold its peace. Yea more, as seven cities strove for the honour of the birth of Homer; or as the Sadducees in their intent to appose Christ, bring in seven husbands challenging one wife; whose mouths Christ soon stops, that in heaven there is no wife at all: so innumerable sects, and schisms, and heresies lay claim to the Scriptures, till they even lacerate and rend in sunder those sacred leaves; and that which is written for their instruction, they wrest to their own destruction.

1. They are unlearned. Learning is the ornament of a man, the oil to the lamp of his understanding, which maintains the light living. The soul would grow rusty without it, like a sword that is never scoured. Eloquence is good, and memory is good; but if these be without learning, they are but like the rock and the spindle without ever an inch of yarn. There may be learning without eloquence; which is like a handsome body wrapped up in ill-fashioned clothes. There may be eloquence without learning; which is like rich embroidery upon base stuff. There may be both eloquence and learning without discretion: men's actions do express their knowledge better than their words. A mere scholar is but a live book; and it is wisdom that sets forth a man, yea, that constitutes a man, more than literature. It is easy and usual for a man to be without learning; and it is not rare to find learning without a man. To speak sentences is far easier than to speak sense; yea, and a sensible discourse is easier than a

rational carriage. There may be learning, eloquence, and discretion too, yet without honesty. We may sooner get acquaintance with the nine muses than with the three graces. Learning, discretion, and honesty, are three degrees of comparison; the last is the highest. The other may make a man eminent in the world, the third brings him nearest to heaven. Our perfection in this life is virtue; in the next knowledge, when we shall read the glory of God in his own face. He that wants learning, hath an imperfect head; but he that lacks honesty, hath a defective heart. This is one of their characters, that are here indicted for forcing the virgin, Truth, Christ's royal and immortal daughter: They are unlearned.

2. These unlearned men are aptest to pervert the Scriptures: out of which we gather this undeniable conclusion, That ignorance, or the want of learning, is no ways a help to devotion, but rather a ready way to damnation. This is plainly delivered by St. Peter: The unlearned wrest the Scripture to their own destruction. The principal column, whereby both the Turk and the pope uphold their sovereignty, is by keeping the people in a helpless ignorance. The pope will allow his subjects no divine learning; the Turk denies to his any learning at all. Unlearned, all of them; yea, and indocile, some of them. The one such as cannot be taught for want of means; that is their infelicity. The other such as refuse to be taught, for want of will; that is their obstinacy. There is not one tackle in all the bark of papacy, for which Satan is more beholden to the bishop of Rome, than the doctrine of ignorance. Give him but darkness in any man, and he is never from home. This is the maintenance, the revenues, of both their crowns; as strong as an oath of allegiance to both their kingdoms. Neither is this unlearnedness peculiar to the laity of Rome; but it is entertained in their cloisters, and enoacheth upon the clergy. That of Melchisedek king of Salem, Gen. xiv. 18, to render *salem*, salt; or to interpret *maria*, the seas, Gen. i. 10, for *Maria*, the blessed Virgin; was but easy mistakes. To read, *domum everit*, i. e. overturneth the house, for *domum everrit*, i. e. sweepeth the house, Luke xv. 8, might be the fault of transcription. But to turn Paul's *Hereticum devita*, i. e. Avoid a heretic, Tit. iii. 10, into *Tolle de vita*, i. e. Make away with him, was a wicked misprision. But enough of that; it is not their ignorance of God's law, which we so much blame, as their law of ignorance, their paradoxical praise of ignorance. For so they commend it, as if Christ had bequeathed ignorance for a legacy to his church. Love he commended, and faith he commended, peace and obedience he commended; yea, and knowledge he commended; This is life eternal, to know God and Christ, John xvii. 3; these blessed legacies he left us: but that any way, by insinuation, toleration, or dispensation, he should be a friend to ignorance, it were blasphemy to think. The servant that knoweth not, shall be beaten. And it was not his charge to the apostles only, but to the Jews, and in them to all men, "Search the Scriptures," John v. 39. Meddle not with them, say the Romists: Search them thoroughly, saith Christ. But unlearned men, say they, when they come to the Scriptures, are apt to misunderstand them. But why then, say we, are they not bred up in the Scriptures, that they might learn them? First, they deny them to read the word of God, wherein they might be learned; and then, because they are unlearned, they shall not read the word of God. A young man is not suffered to come into the river, whereby he might learn to swim; and then in his able years, because he cannot swim, he may not be

suffered to come into the river. He hath a very gross and dull eye, that does not discern this juggling. There is a mist of darkness, a mystery of iniquity in it.

3. To leave them: our apostle peremptorily concludes, that unlearned brains are apt to misinterpret these sacred rolls: and, oh how happy had it been for the church, if the exposition of them had never been intrusted into the hands of ignorance! But whose feet so nimbly carry them up into the pulpit, as theirs that have the least matter to say when they come there? Yet who dare be so bold as they? who so tedious? They are able to speak more with ease, than any man can endure to hear with patience. I censure no man; yet I could wish, for the credit of the gospel, that some whose congregations are numerous enough, would either study more, or speak less. But like will to like; unlearned hearers will resort to unlearned teachers. They care not for matter in their discourses, but store of words; as if they would tell us that their very profession was all words, no matter. As one said of a poor apothecary's shop, that he could find no drugs, for the pots and boxes; so it may be said of those that pretend to religion, and no further, We cannot perceive good deeds, for words. Or as when Jacob looked for Joseph, he found nothing but his coat; so while we look for honest men, we see nothing but their cloak: only a cloak of a good nap, and a fair gloss of profession; that is all. I would it were not almost the religion of these dissembling and wanton times.

4. But for you, beloved, though you cannot be profound clerks, yet you may be honest men. Holiness is not tied to literature; doctor and saint are not convertible terms. For then he that knows his master's will, could not choose but do; and so there had been a needless threatening of greater stripes. But as you cannot conclude upon us, because our life is bad, therefore our doctrine cannot be good; for that were a harsh conclusion; so neither do we conclude upon you, because your knowledge is little, therefore your goodness is less; for that were a false argument. Indeed, first men must know, before they can do; yet your conscience will tell you, that you do not all the good you know. Illumination and sanctification are two several things, and differ as a light and a perfume: put a candle into a lantern, and it will make it light, but it will not make it sweet; some perfume must do that. Divine knowledge makes us understand the gospel; but it is Divine grace which makes us live according to the gospel. Therefore what you want in great learning, supply with good living. I love preaching, and I love practising; and I had rather hear one sermon in a day, and do three good works, than hear three sermons in a day, and do never a good work else. Franeiscus Petrarch, the tetrarch of scholars, was famous in his time, yet could not escape censure. Four men undertook to set upon him: one had no learning, the second a little, the third not much, the fourth somewhat, but intricate and perplexed. Good man, he was not tried by his peers. All their opinions were summed up in this sentence: Petrarch, an unlearned, yet a good man. The king stormed at this censure, the nobles fretted, his friends were vexed, and almost all men threatened revenge upon such saucy judges. But Petrarch himself applauded their judgment: Oh, said he, I wish what they say were true! The end of all which study, was to be a good man; if learning came in upon the way, I did not refuse it; but now seeing that, by their sentence, without learning I may have goodness, what a comfort is this to me, and to thousands more of no better knowledge! I had rather, of two unhappy disjunctions, see an honest

man without learning, than a learned man without honesty.

Doctrina salina. Learning is a salt-pit, from whence we have the seasoning of all our actions; but *virtus, remota*, virtue is the beauty, which makes them all lovely. Learning is but the sowing of the ground; a holy and virtuous life is the harvest. Knowledge in the soul is but for breed; when it is once married to grace, they will bring forth a glorious issue, a race of heavenly fruits, a posterity of good works. Abraham begat Isaac, Isaac begat Jacob; and so by a lineal descent, down to Christ; so faith begets virtue, and virtue begets knowledge; and so by lineal ascent, up to Christ. Faith is a second Mary, the mother of Christ, to bear him; and good works, another act and office of the same mother, to nurse him. For the former, faith, it doth again incarnate the Son of God; so Mary, that blessed Virgin, exulted no less with a believing mind, than with a fruitful womb. For the latter, good works, they do still nurse the Son of God, with a charitable indulgence. This himself acknowledgeth: "I was an hungry, and ye gave me meat." And if in a modest humility they seem to put it off, "Lord, when saw we thee an hungry?" he both satisfies others and gratifies them; In doing it to my brethren, ye did it unto me, Matt. xxv. 35. 37. 40. This is that milk of charity, and nourishment of pious deeds, that will make Christ feast within us. The woman joined them both together in a natural sense, "Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked," Luke xi. 27; acknowledging them both to belong to the same mother: and Christ joins them both together in a spiritual sense, "Blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it," ver. 28. Knowledge and faith come by hearing; and so is Christ born in our souls: the effect of faith and knowledge is obedience and doing good; and so is Christ nursed in our lives. Hear, therefore, that you may learn; learn, that you may know; know, that you may do. And though you cannot attain to so much learning as may become great scholars: yet at least get so much, as may make you honest men and good Christians. So far make sure to be learned, that you may be saved. It follows,

They that are unstable. *Stabilis, a stando.* The unstable man is one that cannot stand: like a drunkard, he reels from place to place. He hath put so much intoxicating sensuality into his head, that he cannot stand on his legs. A drunkard, indeed, not so much for excess, as change of liquors; for his soul doth affect variety of doctrines, more than the intemperate body doth variety of drinks. Now he sucks the grape of Orleans, anon that hotter fruit of the Canaries; then he is taken with the pleasant moisture of the Rhemish plants: sometimes the juice of the pressed apples and pears delights him; which he warms with the Irish usquebaugh, and then quengeth all with the liquor made of English barley. So the unstable soul takes a draught of religion from every country: so much of Anabaptism, as may make him a rebel; so much of that loving family, as may make him an adulterer; so much of Rome, as may make him a traitor or idolater; so much of Arianism, as may make him a blasphemer. Only he will stand in nothing, as the drunkard can stand to nothing. As a fool or child, that hath an air in his head, thinks that the bells (then ringing) go to the same tune; and rather frames the sound of the bells to his imagination, than his imagination to the sound of the bells: so when a fond opinion is got into an unstable head, he conceives all places of Scripture to tend unto that purpose; and will not bring his own doctrine to the rule, but rather bends the rule to his

own doctrine. So, because he hath a crooked position, he wrests the Scriptures, to make them as crooked as his position, as himself.

The unstable man partly knows what he hath been, he knows not what he will be, nay, he knows not what he is. He runs through as many religions, or rather sects and schisms, as St. Paul did through perils; perils of waters, perils of robbers, &c. 2 Cor. xi. 26. He finds watery perils, by lighting among the Anabaptists, with their second immersion in the waters of baptism: perils by his own countrymen, by joining with them that murmur against order and discipline: perils by the heathen, in partaking of their profaneness and superstition: perils in the city, by siding into singularity and faction: perils in the wilderness, by following the brethren of the Separation; leaving the church for private conventicles: perils on the sea, by offering to sound that inscrutable depth of predestination: perils among false brethren; while they pretend to bring him to the true mother, the church of Christ, they lead him to Rome, that unnatural stepdame, the strumpet of antichrist. No perils could overwhelm Paul, because he stuck to his God: the unstable soul waves God, and therefore is subject to all perils.

Opinions in the mind, and diseases of the body, are alike infinite. The masters of that physical art can scarce number or name all sicknesses. Whatsoever disorders a faculty, and the function of it, is a sickness. Let the eye be distempered, yea, let but the finger ache, it is a sickness. Some names they derive from the place affected, as the pleurisy; some from the effect of the disease, as the falling sickness: from what it does, or from where it is, they devise how to call it. And yet because all these will not serve, they are fain to extort names from what it resembles, what it is like; so they have the wolf, and the canker, and the polypos. But certainly, opinions and tenets in religion, which are diseases of the mind, do for number outvie all the diseases of the body; nor are there names enough for them. Therefore as the papists call divers of their orders by the names of their founders; the Dominicans of Dominick; the Franciscans of Francis; of Austin, the Augustines; of Bennet, the Benedictines: so schismatics are fain to borrow appellations from their ringleaders; of Browne, to be called Brownists; of Arminius, Arminians; as once of Arius, Arians; of Donatus, Donatists: and yet still they lack names. It hath been a question, whether there be more names or things; but in this instance it may be easily resolved, for certainly in religion there are more sects than names; and so far are many from knowing how to denominate their opinions, that they must even let them pass with the bare name of opinions.

"Prove all things: hold fast that which is good," 1 Thess. v. 21. St. Paul gave great liberty: "Prove all things;" but withal good counsel; "Hold fast that which is good." These unstable men will take the liberty, to prove all religions; but not the counsel, for they commonly choose that which is worst. The unstable man is a live weatherecock, that turns with every puff of vain doctrine; only the dead one does more good, because it tells which way the wind blows. If he cheats that old serpent in any thing, it is in this, that he is in so many minds the devil knows not where to have him. Yet at last death takes him up for a vagrant, and delivers him over to the next sessions, where he is indicted for plurality of wives: for he hath married himself to abundance of errors, and gone a whoring with his own inventions, Psal. cvi. 39; and is cast by that statute: "If they shall say, He is in the desert; go not forth: he is in the secret chambers; believe it not," Matt.

xxiv. 26. He that is *multivolus*, i. e. many-willed, will surely be *malevolus*, i. e. evil-willed. He is "a reed shaken with the wind," Matt. xi. 7: to-day the reed bends to the south, to-morrow to the north; now the head looks eastward, by and by westward; never upright, but when the wind is down. Alas, that ever a trembling reed should be the emblem of any Christian. Let us not be such, but rather hold fast that which we have, Rev. ii. 25. The Lord hath enriched us with his saving truth; let us stand in it, stand to it, stand for it, against all assaults. "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," Eph. iii. 14. What weighty suit had that devout client to the throne of grace, that he does not only put himself into such a posture, but also tells us of it? "That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man," ver. 16: all is for stability in the truth, for our perseverance in grace. Lord, reclaim the obstinate, recall the wandering, establish the wavering, raise up them that are fallen, and confirm those that stand; that we may all live to thee, and die in thee, and dwell with thee for ever.

They wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction. We may say of the Scriptures, which are God's spiritual nets to catch our souls, as of that net which had enclosed such a multitude of fishes, "Their net brake," Luke v. 6: in nature it was broke, but by Divine power kept whole. So the sacred Scripture is ravished by these impostors from the pure and virgin innocency, and yet it is not ravished. They wrest and pervert it to themselves; but still the word of God remains sound and entire. They tear it with their figments, and yet it remains whole. So apostates "crucify to themselves the Son of God," Heb. vi. 6: to themselves; yet Christ is safe and glorious in heaven. As he that lustfully desires to defile a virgin, hath committed adultery in his heart; the virgin remains spotless, but he is polluted: so these misinterpreters of God's book, in their intention of mischief, can make a shift to befall themselves; but the maiden honour of the Scripture is undefiled. Fools throw dirt at the moon; yet she needs no charitable hand to make her clean again. A natural fountain may be so poisoned, that all its springs cannot work it out; but no such injury can be suffered by the supernatural fountain of truth. Swearers are said to tear Christ in pieces, and blasphemy to wound the majesty of God; yet still is the Deity out of the reach of this impious violence. As the will to do God acceptable service, is as acceptable as if it were indeed service; so the intent and offer of wrong, shall be judged for wrong in the court of justice. These men wrest the Scriptures, not to the prejudice of that sacred canon, but to their own destruction. This is done many ways.

I. By admitting no more of the Scriptures than will make for their own turns. This course that old father of lies took, when with a Bible under his arm, and a text in his mouth, he did set upon Christ: "It is written. He shall give his angels charge concerning thee," &c. Matt. iv. 6. He that durst touch the blessed body of Christ with his hand, will venture to touch the holy word of God with his tongue. But here was subtlety mixed with presumption. What can be a more authentic weapon than the Scripture? But that the devil should fight with it is the wonder. He cites it indeed, but with mutilation, with distortion; by wronging the words, by wresting the sense; it comes not out of his mouth but maimed and perverted. The text quoted is this, "He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways," Psal. xci. 11. One piece of it is left out,

all misapplied by Satan. The promise of preservation is with a limitation, "in all thy ways;" but to fall down from the pinnacle, was not the way. So much as served Satan's turn, to tempt Christ, to tempt God, he cites readily; the angels shall keep thee: but that they should keep him in his ways, this he leaves out, for it would have made against him. This way of descending, was by the stairs, not by a precipitation. It is easy to see from what school they come, and where they learnt their divinity, that wrest and mangle the Scripture, to their own purpose. As Marius took so much of the Roman laws, as would serve for his ambitious ends; the rest he left out as superfluous. It is a common practice of the pontifical writers, in their quotation of Scriptures or fathers, only to cull out here and there a maimed authority, for the better colour of their schisms; but that which makes against them, is ever passed over in silence. And yet they keep a noise, as if the Scriptures and they were good friends. The devil did say as much, and yet he was never the nearer to the truth. Let us take the word from the author, not from the usurper.

2. By adding that to the Scripture, for which they have no warrant; with apocryphal shreds patching up the sacred canon. This is the curse of that antichristian synagogue, concerning the Holy Scripture: they call it an imperfect rule, an inky divinity, flexible to every humour, without the compliment of their traditions. They have a book called *Protevangelion*, i. e. a kind of original Gospel, fathered upon St. James, full of strange stuff. As that when Christ (an infant) was carried into Egypt, and assaulted by thieves, one thief withstood all his fellows, and would not suffer them to lay hands upon Joseph, desiring the child Jesus to remember this good turn; and that this was the very thief whom he remembered upon the cross. That Christ in his minority, working with his father Joseph in the trade, had been corrected by him for cutting a piece of timber too short; but that miraculously with his hands he pulled it out to the full length. Is not this goodly stuff to be put upon our faith? Thus out of the vanity of their wits, they devise all variety of tales, whereby they may lead men's minds from the written word, to a belief of strange fictions. From hence grow those voluminous legends, and infinite fabulous inventions and dreams of the ancient heretics. With these delusions they stuff their sermons and postils; turning the holy story into a mere comedy, with their several hints, and actors, and entrances. No sooner have they singled out a text from the Bible, like a flower out of the garden, but they dress it with such new terms of art, that the gardener can scarce know it again. There be such mysteries and parables, such metaphors and allegories, forced out of plain propositions; that as they wonder how we should not receive them, so we wonder more how they could find them. But a sober ignorance is better than a drunken knowledge.

3. By distinguishing the Scripture, till (in a manner) they extinguish the light of it. Christ was offered up once for all, Heb. ix. 28. This they distinguish, telling us of a sacrifice bloody and unbloody: the one, once on the cross; the other, daily in the mass. Drink ye all of this, Matt. xxvi. 27. They distinguish of *all*, and would have it to be meant only of all the apostles, not of all Christians. Marriage is honourable among all men, Heb. xiii. 4: that is, say they, among all them that are not bound by a vow to the contrary. There is one Mediator, Christ, 1 Tim. ii. 5. This they distinguish; he is the only Mediator of redemption, not so of intercession. Again, that he is Mediator both in regard of

nature and office; the saints are mediators in regard of office, not of nature. So, say they, Christ's satisfaction is in virtue sufficient, but not efficient in act, unless it be applied by our satisfaction. To take away all opinion of merit, Christ chargeth us, when we have done all we can, to hold ourselves unprofitable servants, Luke xvii. 10. To establish merits, they elude this with a distinction; We are unprofitable to God, not to ourselves. When we prove that divers popes have erred, and have been heretics; they answer, that the pope may err as man, not as pope. But when the man did err, where was the pope all the while? Are not these pretty distinctions, whereby they mangle the word, and delude the world? Upon this file hang all those dusty cobwebs of Rome, wherein they catch souls like flies, and prey upon them with their poisonous breaths. Upon this drum beat all the schoolmen, making a harsh clattering with their subtle questions and idle disputations. By this last kind of enigmatical divinity, the wit and capacity of man is fettered and entangled; by the next, which is their historical figments, it is fondly trained on and inveigled. By the first way, it is enchanted and astonished; by every one of them it is robbed and foully abused.

4. By misalleging the Scripture, to the defence of their schismatical tenets. If you will take an inventory of popery, what can you light upon, but such notorious distortions and misapplications of holy writ? What the evangelist testifies of Christ, that he did many other signs, "which are not written in this book," John xx. 30; that the book of Conformities applies to St. Francis: Many other signs also did St. Francis, which are not written in this book. To St. Agnes they ascribe that, "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee," Cant. iv. 7. To St. Lucie, that, "The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not," John i. 5. Are not these impudent profanations? "God made two great lights," Gen. i. 16: the pontifical, to rule the day of the spirituality; the regal, to rule the night of the laity: and this latter is less than the other by fifty-seven degrees, saith a glosser, like some skilful astronomer. "Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder," Psal. xci. 13: Pope Alexander the Third applied this to himself, when he trampled upon Frederic the emperor's neck. Certain ambassadors lying in such a posture, under the pope's feet, were taught to cry, Thou that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. They fetch the like ground for it out of the psalm, "Thou hast put all things under his feet," Psal. viii. 6: The fowls of the air, which are, say they, the angels in heaven; the beasts of the earth, Christians in this life; the fishes of the sea, the souls in purgatory. What honour doth the Scripture attribute to Christ, with which the pope hath not made himself bold? "A sure foundation, a precious corner-stone," Isa. xxviii. 16. "Kings and queens shall bow down to thee, and lick up the dust of thy feet," Isa. xlix. 23. They shall "appoint themselves one head," Hos. i. 11. "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth," Matt. xxviii. 18. It was said of Pope Leo, Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah. Of another, Light has come into the world. He is called the Great Shepherd of the flock, the Bridegroom, the Lamb. Christ hath no royal robe, but the pope fits it to his own back; about which sacrilegious work, the Jesuits are his cunning tailors. Because Christ contradicted not Peter's speech, Here are two swords; this was warrant enough for Boniface the Eighth, to challenge the power of both swords, temporal and spiritual. Peter was charged to pay tribute both for his Master and himself, Matt. xvii. 27: therefore is

Peter the chief over the rest of the apostles, because none of the rest paid; as if paying of tribute were a sign of pre-eminence, and not rather of subjection. "Rise, Peter; kill, and eat," Acts x. 13: was not this a goodly foundation for Baronius to build on, that the pope might excommunicate the Venetians? A man is "taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch," Mark xiii. 34. This man, say they, is the soul: going into a far country, departing out of this world: the authority left with his servants, is his charge to his executors. What must they do? With his goods they must procure the prayers and suffrages of the church, to free him from purgatory. The watching of the porter, is the duty of his pastor, daily to sacrifice for him by saying mass. Were not these deft interpretations? What is, if this be not, wresting of the Scriptures? They have yet one way more to abuse them.

5. By raising strange and unnatural conclusions out of them. One proves that Peter had no skill at his weapon, because he did but slice off Malchus' ear, when he should have struck off his head. Another, that the king is inferior to the priest, because Peter was an apostle that smote, and Malchus signifies a king that was smitten. Another, that ecclesiastical dignities are not to be conferred in regard of kindred, but of merit; because Christ gave the keys to Peter, and not to John, though John were his cousin, and not Peter. Are not these marvellous proper collections? They can tell you how many thorns were in Christ's crown; and what he wrote on the ground, when he absolved the adulteress; and what speeches passed between the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost in paradise about the incarnation of Christ. Such metaphysical speculations swarm in the brains of our pontifical doctors; such frothy inferences boil out of their unskinned wits. God hath ever been jealous of his word, as of his own honour. His name is but that whereby he signifies his nature to us; and his word is but that whereby he signifies his will to us; they that take either of them both in vain, shall not be held guiltless.

This latter is the reverend and impartial judge of all controversies; and whatsoever contradicts it, is not an illumination of the Spirit, but an illusion of Satan. Hierome by those "four and twenty elders," Rev. iv. 4, understands the four and twenty books of the law, as they are divided by the Hebrews: "clothed in white," because therein is no lie to be found; and "on their heads crowns of gold," because of their victory over sin and Satan. The anti-christian synagogue labours to bereave the Scripture of this honour, as the title or office of a judge; because the church is more ancient than the Scripture. But if this were a good reason, then magistrates could not be judges of the people, because the people are more ancient than the magistrates; nor should the laws have authority over them, because they are more ancient than the laws. If we do not understand by the Scripture, the paper and print only, but the doctrines therein contained; then all that is there said of the nature and properties of God, of his eternal counsels, and of the world's creation, must needs be more ancient than the church. "The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge them in the last day, that receive not my words," John xii. 48. This shall be judge, when all the world, even these perverse judges themselves, shall be brought to judgment. "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them," Luke xvi. 29. If Moses and the prophets were sufficient to instruct the brethren of Dives, how much more able is the addition of the

Gospel and Epistles to bring us to salvation! Christ lives now, not only amongst us, but also within us. In this evangelical glass, we can behold him crying in the cradle, and dying on the cross; buried in his grave, and rising from the dead; ascended far above all heavens, and there sitting as an Advocate to plead our cause. Who then shall lay violent hands on this sacred canon with impunity? To take off God from his own meaning, and to father upon him a bastard sense, is intolerable blasphemy. Yet we know where such wretches dwell; that offer to wring God's weapon out of his hand, and impiously return the point upon his own bosom.

The summary conclusion is this: Impostors and perverters of these sacred records, are in the state of damnation. They that will give God a new tongue, shall feel his old hand. They put the Scripture to the torture; first they conceive an opinion, and then screw the word of God to the maintenance of it. They will not so conceive as he speaks, but they will have him so speak as they conceive. First they conclude, thus it shall be; then they force the Scripture to consent with them, that so it is; as when lustful Amnon could not win Tamar by fair means, he uses force. A little flourish of words is with them a main advantage; like raging wild beasts, that when they cannot come at the person, they rend in pieces his garment. But as a man, so the Bible, consists of a body and soul: the sound of the letter is but the body, the sense is the soul. The seed is the word of God: they that corrupt it, as heretics; or choke it, as hypocrites; or keep it down forcibly from growing, as tyrants; or thrust other seed into it, as papists; shall have just vengeance for their pains. For as God gave pure seed, so he will require pure corn. Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve," Matt. iv. 10; this is pure seed. To worship angels, or saints, or the crucifix, or images; this is sophisticated seed; God did never sow it; it is the enemy's supersemination of tares. Christ's seed was left in the garner of the prophets and apostles: they that adulterate it before it be sown, or nip it when it does spring, or cut it down before the Lord's harvest, shall be indicted of this felonious rape, the wresting of Scriptures: when all their fond allusions shall be found illusions; and as they have attempted to make God speak against himself, so their own tongues shall be their own accusers, and condemned they shall stand by their own consciences.

Here let us take two cautions, as marks to know them, and means to avoid them.

1. We may discern them: all the cunning of an impostor cannot keep him from a discerning eye. "Whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God: or whether we be sober, it is for your cause," 2 Cor. v. 13: this is the best temper of God's faithful workman: his carriage towards God is full of zeal, not without groans, agonies, and raptures; but his conversation towards men is full of mildness, of a soft, sweet, cool, and affable demeanour. Hypocrites and impostors deal otherwise: for in the church, in the pulpit, they seem to be men inspired with holy furies, like burning seraphim, rapt with ecstasies, and amazing all their hearers: take them into their chambers, in their solitary and separate meditations, whereunto God only is privy; view their life, as it is abstracted from the public eye; they are not only calm and tepid, but even foul and wicked: sober enough to God, and transported only towards men. As hypocrites, with their dissembling holiness towards God, palliate their injuries done to men; so heretics by their morality and fair deportment towards men, make a way for their blasphemies against

God. The former is like a meteor, which burns clear upward to heaven, but hath a squalid tail dangling to the earth; the other, like the moon, is then brightest towards the earth, when she is dark towards heaven. Roaring profaneness makes too much noise for imposture; it is the language Satan speaks amongst ruffians; he hath another garb for the brethren of singularity. Iniquity is a cord or cable, a gross sin; but hypocrisy is a fine-spun thread, scarce discernible. If you see a man that hath nothing but heaven in his mouth, and yet nothing but the world in his hand, you may suspect that he hath Satan in his heart. They that mingle the respect of themselves with the sacred truth, have not the Scripture for a text, they may have it for a pretext. But such as mind only their Master's glory, with trembling and innocent hands turn over their Master's book; and interpret it as it is meant, to direct us the way to heaven, and to bring us to salvation.

2. We may avoid them, by cleaving to that word, which they are still cleaving in pieces. Thou shalt protect them in thy tabernacle from the contradiction of tongues, saith the psalmist, Psal. xxxi. 20. Out of the tabernacle of God, we meet with the contradictions of the world, with a world of contradictions; which way soever we turn ourselves, there is no end of controversies. That as in the burning of some wet fuel, we cannot see the fire for the smoke; so the light of the Scriptures is dusked by the vapours of controversies. Whilst green wits range abroad into the woods and thickets of schoolmen, that wild forest of polemical divinity, they cannot escape unscratched. Those briars and brambles pluck off the wool of the sheep. They that love such intricate and perplexed walks, had need of iron shoes, for they tread upon thorns. I deny not but there may be a solid use of those abstruse questions; but then they must be read with sober eyes; otherwise there is more danger in being snared with difficulties, than hope of benefit to our saving knowledge. The dove that keeps her close in her nest, those "clefts of the rock," Cant. ii. 14, is not troubled with these wild flutterings. Adhere to the church, and therein to the Scripture, whereof the church is the depository, not the judge. In the tabernacle was the ark, and in the ark the testimony. The tabernacle was but the husk, the testimony was the kernel. Never tell me of the husk without the kernel, of the tabernacle without the testimony. The tabernacle was ordained for the keeping of the law; and the custody of the gospel is also intrusted to the church. But as the testimony was the life of the tabernacle, so the life and soul of the church is the gospel. On this blessed covenant let us rest our faiths, and it shall bring rest to our souls.

They wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction. That which is said of tapers, the same which lights extinguishes them; or of the creatures, that nourishment may be made detriment; so also of the Scriptures, that the word of life may be so distorted from the life of the word, till it becomes the food of death to us. Like an overcharged cannon, it may recoil upon us, and brannish with the splinters. That which God gave us for a spiritual sword, wherewith to wound our enemies, may be so wrested out of our hands, that it becomes a sword for our enemies, wherewithal to wound us. As the taper is put out by an inversion of it; the fire should be above the oil, and so it burns; but if the oil gets above the fire, so it drowns; or as the creatures are noxious only by the abuse; meat nourishes, excess of meat suffocates; wine cheers the heart, too much wine overburdens and endangers a surfeit: so it is with the Scriptures; take them in their pure, proper, natural,

and genuine sense, they are the bread of life, and the waters of life, and the immortal seed of life; there is nothing but life in them. But as Paul said of the law, "The commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death," Rom. vii. 10; so heretics may say of the gospel, What God meant for our life, that we have abused to our own death; yet still the covenant, no less than the commandment, is "holy, and just, and good," ver. 12. From the wrong understanding of the Scriptures, spring heresies, says a father. They are raised out of the Scriptures, though they be revincible by the same letters. Irenæus calls heresy, An image made up and reformed out of the royal and divine image (which is in the Scriptures) broken in pieces. Wicked men will build errors upon the pillar and ground of truth. Four observations are here offered to us.

1. Hypocrites and impostors never meddle with the Scriptures, but to wicked purposes. This project they learned of their father: "Cast thyself down; for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee," Matt. iv. 6. He knew the Lait that Christ would soonest bite at; that he relied upon nothing so much as the voice of his Father: if any stratagem can prevail, it must be a pretence of Scripture. Therefore he draws out his "It is written;" dealing with the sharp, and blading it out with the word of God. He, forsooth, is a lover of the truth, and will persuade Christ to nothing but what he hath Scripture for. He does not always show his horns, but sometimes veil them with holiness. What an honourable testimony was given by that maiden possessed with a spirit of divination! "These men are the servants of the most high God, which show unto us the way of salvation," Acts xvi. 17. Who would look for the devil, under the habit of such good counsel? He is the father of lies, and will he bear witness to the truth? He knew Paul to be a sworn enemy to his kingdom, and yet he rings the bell to his sermon, and gathers a great audience about him. But he had another drift in all this; he made a show to underprop the truth, but he meant to undermine it. By the maid's repeating and clamorous noising of it, he hoped to work a suspicion in the hearers, that Paul and the devil had compacted together. He hath Scripture for Christ, and a fair testimony for Paul; yet Christ struck him down, Matt. iv. 7, and Paul threw him out, Acts xvi. 18. So his factors, to prove their heretical tenets, make bold with the Scriptures: as, in the fable, the fox never praised the law, but when it might make him a way to his booty.

2. This is the cause of many men's irresolution, the dissonant interpretation of the Scriptures; in that all men, of all religions, do allege it. The places seem to contradict one another: Christ allegeth it, the devil allegeth it; what shall we do? Which way soever we take, it may be the wrong. Therefore some lie down, like Isachar, between both the burdens, and sue out a writ of ease for their consciences, thinking it best to let all alone. Must we needs be either Gnostics or sceptics? Because we cannot know all, shall we examine nothing? To leave the war, whereunto we are lawfully pressed, till we have disputed the cause, which belongs not to us, is but a base tergiversation and flinching. Because our enemy hath recovered some of our artillery, and plays upon us with our own ordnance, shall we therefore quite abandon all the rest of our munition? Because we cannot reconcile both parts, shall we be so civil and mannerly as to displease neither part? Though one side be false, we must not shift ourselves from all inquiry of the truth. We might as well fear to eat, lest we should be choked; or leave watching,

and set the gates wide open, because the enemy will hardly be kept out. Let us not turn that to security and idleness, which God hath made the matter of our exercise. Wherefore serve those promises: "Seek, and ye shall find," Matt. vii. 7: He that would do the will of God, shall know his doctrine, John vii. 17. If we be not prepossessed with prejudice, our heavenly Schoolmaster will teach us. And if we understand not so much as will make us learned, yet shall we understand enough to make us blessed.

3. The foreknowing that doubts will arise, should make us more skilful in the way to clear them. It is written, saith Christ: It is written, saith the devil. If they be written, they are both true: if true, how are they contrary? and contrary they must be, being cited by enemies. The text cannot speak: what resolution then is there for the conscience? Shall we make the Scriptures like wax, susceptible of any impression? or like bells, tunable to the ears of the hearer? Though the printed letter cannot speak, and they that wrote it are in heaven; yet there are means to come by their meaning. First, prayer; that is a key to those heavenly mysteries. He that gives us the understanding to pray, will also give us the understanding that we pray for. O Lord, teach me thy statutes. Secondly, examination of the words; what they be in the text, what in the context; whether proper or figurative. He that makes a propriety of speech of a figure, is like him that took the curtain for the picture. Thirdly, the drift and scope of the place must be weighed. To the ruler that asked what he should do to inherit eternal life, Christ's answer was a direction to keep the commandments, Luke xviii. 20. Not that Christ meant, the way was by the works of the law, as the papists gather from it; but to confute his opinion that thought so, when he could never fulfil it. We are justified by faith, saith Paul, Rom. iv. 3: We are justified by works, saith James, Jam. ii. 21. St. James dealt with them that stood too much upon faith without works: St. Paul dealt with them that stood too much upon works without faith. The one a justice of acception with God, the other a justice of approbation before men. Fourthly, Scripture must be conferred with Scripture; it is an index both of itself and the contrary. Compare that of St. Peter, "Charity shall cover a multitude of sins," 1 Pet. iv. 8: with that of Solomon, "Love covereth all sins," Prov. x. 12: then we shall find, that it doth not cover sins before God, as the papists would have it; but qualifies and hides them from men, as God would have it. Fifthly, that which is not proportionable to the analogy of faith, and agreeable to the rule of truth, is a wrested interpretation. "This is my body;" if I take it for the substantial flesh of Christ, as it was upon earth, this crosseth a commandment, "Thou shalt not kill;" yea, it crosseth my creed, which binds me to believe that he is in heaven. I know that in Scripture some things are not expressed, which are yet implied: *Scriptura non dicit, sed non contradicit*; i. e. The Scripture does not say, but it does not say against. If it cross not the rule of faith, it may be received: the honest and believing heart shall be instructed.

4. This is no disgrace to the Scriptures, that they are depraved by heretics; nor is it a wonder, to hear hypocrites quote that authority, which Satan himself hath not spared to cite. Though Scripture be opposed to Scripture, yet this must not withdraw the determination of matters from the book of God; for none can better try the truth, than the Spirit of truth. When the devil had abused that place, Psal. xci. 11, by enforcing the promise contrary to the commandment; making that absolute, which in itself was but conditional; as if the Lord, who would protect him in

his ways, would also protect him out of his ways; which was to adulterate the Scripture: yet this detracts nothing from the glory of it, because Satan and his unps meddle with it. Nay, this rather graceth it; for their very allegation is a secret acknowledgment of the honour due to it. Christ therefore did not throw away his weapon, but striketh with the same sword wherewith he was stricken, Matt. iv. 7; and makes a holy use of that to his Father's glory, which to his dishonour was abused by the adversary. The word of God is not the worse, because these men have depraved it. The bee gathers honey on the same stalk from which the spider sucks poison. Some have been poisoned by their meats and drinks, yet either these things must nourish us, or nothing. Though the murderer slay a man with his weapon, yet the soldier may lawfully gird a sword to his side: "It is expedient that one man should die for the people," John xi. 50: a Caiaphas spake it; must not we therefore believe it? "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his," Numb. xxiii. 10: though this were the wish of an enchanter, yet the prayer will do well in the mouth of an honest man. "These men show us the way of salvation," says the Pythoness, Acts xvi. 17; yet Paul will not deny himself to be a preacher of salvation, because she affirms it. And if the devil transform himself into an angel of light, shall therefore the good angels forgo their light? The intemperance and surfeit of an epicure, does not make our sober appetites out of love with our dinner. It may be Satan, by alleging of Scripture, meant to make Christ weary of his weapon; as the fashions of apparel, when they are taken up by the base, are cast off by the great. And it was one cause, why Christ afterward forbade the devil even to confess the truth, because his very mouth was a slander.

It is Satan's old trick, to counterfeit an imitation of the Son of God; Christ allegeth a scripture to him, and he reallegeth scripture to Christ. What one act ever passed the hand of God, which Satan did not apishly attempt to second? they that quote God's word against the Author's meaning, are the heirs-apparent to Satan. If we seem to follow Christ in the outward action, but with contrary intentions, we do indeed but follow the devil in following Christ. It is not possible for impostors to find out a better colour for their heresies, than out of the Scriptures. Therefore with that heavenly gold, they gild over their base metal, that it may pass current. The prince of darkness will not scorn to borrow so much of an angel of light, as to seem godly for a mischief. If hypocrites deceive us with the glorious lustre of holiness, we see where they have learned those projects. Yet is not our Saviour distasted with the Scripture, because the devil mislays it in his dish; but rather he snatcheth the sword out of that impure hand, and beats him back with that usurped weapon. It is not the letter of the Scripture that can carry it, but the sense; while we separate these two, we profane both. The Scripture is one, as that God whose it is: where it shows any appearance of difficulty or inconvenience, it needs no light to clear it, but what it hath in itself. All doubts that may arise from it, are fully answered by collation. It is not the glorious flourishes of hypocrisy, but the castness of our slothful credulity, that abuseth us.

I know indeed, that many souls are betrayed by corrupting that truth, whose virtue is sovereign and saving. There is no devil so dangerous, as the religious devil. Yet as David would not doubt to eat of that sheep, which he pulled out of the mouth of the bear or lion; so let it be no scruple unto us, to fetch our own patrimony out of the hands of the Philis-

times; and to seek for salvation in that ark, which they joined with their Dagon. Good meat put into a stomach corrupt or feverish, doth not more nourish nature, than the disease; yet we do not thereupon forbear utterly to feed; but rather strive to purge out those bad humours, which cause the offence. The Lord hath given us light; let us beseech him also for clear and sound eyes, that we may take comfort in the light he hath given us. Let not the divine table of Christ be made a snare to our souls. The word of God is holy, oh that our hearts were so! then should we find that word not more true than cordial. And after all these depravations and clouds of darkness cast before that blessed light, we shall see it as plainly as the sages did the star, and it shall bring us directly to Jesus Christ. It follows,

“To their own destruction.” They make a fair business of it; so wresting the book of grace, that they quite wrest themselves out of the book of life. To say nothing of those sacrilegious poets, that have turned the sacred story into plays and interludes; and presented that on the stage, which was ordained for the pulpit. But if a man plays with God, he shall find God in earnest with him. Two causes of this perversion are principally here assigned by the apostle; the want of knowledge, and the want of sobriety; “unlearned, unstable.”

What innumerable absurdities have sprung from the former, Rome can give you a large inventory. Ignorance passeth among them for one of the graces; I had almost said, for one of their sciences. The mother of devotion, they call it; the blind mother of as blind a litter; superstitious devotion, the daughter of mopish indiscretion. “Ye worship ye know not what,” John iv. 22: well may they worship they know not what, that are religious they know not how. Lay-men are esteemed as swine; and must not be allowed those precious pearls. Espeneaus (In 1 Tit. pag. 105.) relates the speech of a noble Italian bishop: Our countrymen are terrified, saith he, from the study of divinity, with fear of incurring heresy; as if error sprung from the knowledge, and not rather from the ignorance, of the Scriptures. When an old priest of theirs heard a young man allege Scripture out of the New Testament, he wondered at it; and protested that he had been a priest fifty years, and yet never knew what the New Testament was. The prohibition of the Bible was so strictly urged, that it was more danger to be found reading a chapter of it, than counterfeiting the king’s coin. This appears by that ancient law in our kingdom, that in many criminal offences, he that could but read a psalm in Latin, though he understood never a word of it, should be exempted from the secular power, as being fit to make a clerk of. This law is still continued; not that all such as can read, are fit to be made priests, but to mitigate the rigour of the law in petty offences. Now they have translated the book of God into divers vulgar languages; but still, as they have corrupted it with false glosses, so they tether it up within certain limits. It is not permitted but to such as have a dispensation from their ordinary, or that by their yearly revenues can dispense such a sum of money: as if heresy could fasten upon none but beggars; or the rich only, and not the poor, stood in need of comforts. Thus the title which Epiphanius gives to all heretics, belongs principally to them; *Lucephari*, i. e. The lovers of darkness.

For the other cause, the want of sober judgments, how shall we do to excuse ourselves? We have too many of those that wrest the Scriptures.

1. Reprove a sensual gallant for his voluptuous life, shared out into play, dalliance, drink, and sleep, and he hath Scripture to defend it: “There is no-

thing better for a man, than to eat and drink, and make his soul enjoy good in his labour,” Eccl. ii. 24. God would have a man to enjoy good in his labour; but what is this to them that never labour in good? There is a particular calling; follow that: there is a general calling, to labour in the vineyard of salvation; work out that, Phil. ii. 12. When you have done both these, if there be any spare time left, you may go play. But it is a sacrilegious impiety, to make that word the buckler of sin to defend it, which is given for a spiritual sword, to kill and mortify it. Such men wrest it to their own destruction.

2. Rebuke a worldling for his scraping rapacity; tell him that covetousness is idolatry, that it brings out a catalogue of curses: he contradicts you with Scripture; That man “is worse than an infidel” who provides not for his family, 1 Tim. v. 8. As if men must needs provide for their own, by taking away other men’s; and could have nothing to leave their children, but that which they purloin from the children of God. He that buys a patrimony for his child, with the loss of his own soul, hath but a dear purchase, a very hard bargain. There is a true story of a rich oppressor, who had stored up a great mass of wealth for his only son. This man falling into sickness, and thereby into some remorse, called his son to him, and told him how abundantly he had provided for him; withal asking him, whether he did truly and really love him. The son answered, that nature (besides his paternal indulgence) bound him to that. The father being now in his sick bed, further puts him to it, how he would express this love to him: the son said, in any thing that he should command him. Hereupon his father chargeth him to hold his finger in the burning candle but so long as he could say one Pater-noster, without removing it. The son attempted it, but could not endure it. Yet, says his father, to get thee wealth and a large estate upon earth, I have hazarded myself to hell; for the welfare of thy body, I have ventured my soul. Thou canst not suffer the burning of a finger for me; I must burn body and soul for thy sake. Thy pain is but for a minute; mine must be unquenchable fire, even torments for ever. By this consideration being melted into repentance, he restored all the gains of his injustice, made the poor partakers of his riches, abandoned all worldliness, and was recovered both in body and soul to the Lord. As he hath many followers in his base avarice, so I would to God he had some in his gracious repentance. Little do gripulous fathers think, that what was forty years a gathering, should be spent in one Christmas revelling.

3. Reprehend a dissolute liver for his inordinate courses; persuade him to a seasonable repentance; tell him that he hath no promise of forbearance, that many are cut off by sudden death in the midst of their sins, or justly delivered over to hardness of heart and final impenitency: yet he can prolong his sensual pleasure, by a warrant of Scripture; At what time soever a sinner repents, &c. Ezek. xviii. 27. Thus what is written for his consolation, he turns to poison; of his physis and restorative, he makes a drink of intoxicating desperateness. Alas, why did God give us his word, but that we might be saved by it? Why are we not left in blindness, like the heathen, but that the Lord intends this gracious light for our conversion? Shall we make that our encouragement to be evil, which God hath ordained to bring us to goodness? The gospel is our Father’s will; shall we dare to interline it? To get a false legacy, shall we forfeit the true? It is our charter, the covenant that God hath made with us, to save our believing souls in Christ; shall we subtly pick words and cavils out of our evidence,

to overthrow our own inheritance? O why should we wrest that to our own destruction, which is meant for our salvation? There be sayings, by which a profane soul heartens himself on to lewdness; and yet even those the tender conscience takes for motives to repentance. There be sentences, from which a too late repenter will suck desperation; and yet they that seek the Lord early shall receive from them his morning dew, his seasonable mercy, his sweet compassion. In a word, let us neither extenuate those places that make against our sins, nor misconstrue those that make for the peace of our souls. So while we do no way wrong the Scripture, it shall every way comfort us in Jesus Christ. Amen.

VERSE 17.

Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.

It is the policy of that old serpent, to get upon us the same way that he did at first; which is, by drawing shadows over substances, as he did the body over the soul. The way to mend this, and to cheat the devil, is to turn man the right side outwards, and to set the soul foremost again. Josephus thinks that the serpent, before it was an instrument of Eve's temptation and fall, did go upright and speak; and that his present muteness and creeping, were a curse laid upon him for that fact. But if he formerly went upright, if he formerly spoke, it might be wished that he did so still: because if he did go upright, we should the sooner see him; if he spoke, the sooner hear him. In his curse we are cursed too; his very creeping undoes us. When he presents pleasing objects to our eyes, the snares and baits of sin, he says nothing: he is a dumb serpent, but still a serpent. When he winds error and falsehood into our souls, through the labyrinth of our ears, he licks the dust in a hypocritical humility: he is a creeping serpent, but still a serpent. The vanities of the world, honour, pleasure, wealth, envenom our affections; but the errors of the world, schism, faction, separation, these poison our judgments: there the body is more taken, here the soul. The rule to help the former is this, that the body and the soul still go together, but the better before. The rule for the other, that the soul ever follow God, as the body follows her; that she never stand to her own judgment, but to his that made her. The rule for both, that we lay hold upon the gospel of grace with both hands, of faith and practice; for so the understanding and the will, which is the whole soul of man, is made up again, and sanctifies the body. Let us keep the will and testament of our once dead and ever living Testator, the sacred record of the gospel, perpetually in our hands, in our hearts; and then error may knock at our doors, but find no entrance; it shall not come in. The wicked may invite us to their house, and promise us pleasant cheer, novelties and dainties; new opinions, new positions, new speculations, rare foreign stuff; but we will not go. Thus if we stick close to the evident written truth; when thousands perish in their strange devices, which did creep like serpents into their wanton heads, and stung their hearts; we shall not fall from our own steadfastness: which is our apostle's special care in this place. "Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know," &c.

The main building of the text is a caution; the porch or entrance into it, is by an insinuation. The

apostle insinuates himself three ways. First, by an illation upon the premises, Therefore. Secondly, by his love to their souls, Beloved. Thirdly, by granting their former acquaintance with these dangers, Seeing ye know these things before. The caution arms us against two miscarriages; the one of wandering, that we be not led away; the other of falling, that we do not fall away. The former is a sinful way, the latter a fatal end. In the way, there is the error of the wicked, and the seducement of the weak. In the end, we have a station, a steadfastness, and a precipitation, or falling from it. But then there seems to be a kind of dilemma in the words: for if they were steadfast, how could they fall? If they did fall, where then was their steadfastness? It is cleared by distinguishing the times: so long as they continued steadfast, they never fell; but when they once fell, they ceased to be steadfast. He that standeth now, may yet fall hereafter, 1 Cor. x. 12.

"Therefore." This illative bids us look back a little. There is no word superfluous, that ever dropped from the pen of the Holy Ghost: somewhat sure there is in it, and that of no small moment. As David answered his brother Eliab's chiding, "Is there not a cause?" 1 Sam. xvii. 29: certainly there is a cause. Wheresoever we find a therefore, we must not slip it; for the whole weight of the sentence lieth upon it. It is the ground that feeds the root, it is the root that bears up the tree, on which all the fruits grow. It is the prophet's rule, first, to look to the root downward, before to the fruit upward, Isa. xxxvii. 31. Every argument is shut up with a therefore; it is the known note of a conclusion. Thus may the syllogism be framed: Whosoever would escape destruction, must adhere to the truth: but you all desire to escape destruction; ye therefore stick to the truth. Erring from the Scriptures, is the middle term, whereupon the whole argument runs, from which the very life of the induction breathes. There is perdition threatened to them that abuse God's word; this we would fain avoid; therefore beware of committing such an abuse, beware of being led away with such an error. The wherefore of it is destruction, and who would not fly from that? Yet we are naturally so slow, that we must be spurred on with a caution.

"Beloved." Of all the medicines and electuaries ministered to us by our spiritual physicians, love is the sweetening. Bitter pills will down when they are made up in love. We will suffer incisions, the opening of our veins, and the letting out of our blood, when we know it is done in love to our health. And shall we not suffer the word of exhortation, when it is the argument of love to our souls? Paul with passion, Christ with compassion, reproved sinners; all in love. If there be any other intention in the dispensers of these heavenly mysteries; whether it be covetousness; as Simon Magnus would have bought the Holy Ghost, that he might have sold him, and so got money by him; or pride; as the sons of Sceva would needs be casting forth devils, without a commission; or flattery; that say to men that despise God, "Ye shall have peace," Jer. xxiii. 17; like chaplains of Abiathar's humour, that with blanching vices at the table, spoil their grace before dinner; or vain-glory; as the Pharisees made long prayers, and (doubtless) longer sermons, that the people might commend their memories, and have a rare opinion of their merits; or emulation; as Tertullus offered to outvie Paul with eloquence; or envy; as those that bitterly rejected that apostle's credit; or hypocrisy; as Judas preached against unnecessary waste, because he would fain have put it in his own

purse : or contention ; as some preached Christ in strife, Phil. i. 15 ; that contend more for the honour of their own wit than of Christ's gospel ; if any of these springs set our wheels a moving, if these be the ends of our preaching, such an end will follow it, as we had better be without it ; even such a misery at the end, as will know no end of misery.

Love is the promptuary of all our labours : this obligation, this adjuration, did not Christ lay upon Peter only, but upon every minister, If you love me, feed my sheep, John xxi. 16. Love is the master of all difficulties, the digester of all injuries, the silencer of all excuses, the heart and life of all good actions. Law is not so strong as love : we do many things in love, which we need not do in law. Be pleased to note here the difference of affections that is in the pastor and the people. The people will render no duties to their pastor, but what they are compelled to by law. Nay, would it were no worse. It might be wished they would do but that ; we find the contrary, they do not. We do not, like dull oxen, tread out no more corn than the goad of the law pricks us to ; but though you muzzle our mouths, we fill your garners. Only love constraineth us ; and that with so pleasing a violence, that we even love our own fetters.

But we cry out of the want of love on all sides. The minister professeth love to his people, but they will not believe it. The people pretend no less love to their minister, though he cannot find it. How shall they be tried? There is one rule to try both faith and love : the proof lies in good works, Jam. ii. 18. What you do for us, and what we do for you ; this shows in what measure we love one another. We feed you with our spirituals ; this is a demonstration of our love to you : but if you let us languish for want of your temporals, I am sure here is no proof of your love to us. If we should all examine our hearts according to this infallible rule, your want of love to us would be judged by your own consciences.

We like any charity well but the doing charity : if our love would cost us nothing, we would make it welcome. But gracious love is of a nobler nature : it hath eagles' wings, and will fly to do good : it will run, where it cannot fly ; it will go, when it cannot run ; yea, love will creep, where it cannot go. Sometimes charity flies, as an eagle to feed her young ones ; she flies east and west, swifter than the wind, with an ardent desire of doing good : she flies up to heaven, and would show herself in those glorious courts : and this is an angel's pace. Sometimes she runs, faster than Cush or Abimelech to David, or Peter and John to the sepulchre of the Son of David. "Half my goods I give to the poor," Luke xix. 8 : his alms run from the fountain of his heart, as streams from an overflowing spring ; and this is a saint's pace. Sometimes it goes ; if with a slower agility of foot, yet with the same alacrity of mind : when the Samaritan saw the wounded passenger, he "went to him," Luke x. 34. "We would have come unto you, but Satan hindered us," 1 Thess. ii. 18 : he could not come, yet he sent ; "We sent Timothy our brother," chap. iii. 2 ; and this is a friend's pace. Sometimes it is driven to creep : such a cripple was St. Peter in his purse, as the other was in his legs ; whom he thus gratified : "Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have I give thee," Acts iii. 6. At the building of the tabernacle, if men's estates could not reach to gold, or silver, or scarlet ; yet their goats' hair was accepted, Exod. xxxv. 26. Love will seek many ways. If the rich afford their alms, the poor may give their prayers : the widow gives her two mites, all, Mark xii. 44 ; and this is the widow's pace. Two considerations here are not to be omitted.

1. It is our love that makes us jealous over your souls, with a godly jealousy. 2 Cor. xi. 2 ; like guardians that have the charge of some noble virgins, we dare not trust you with yourselves. Paul in his constrained absence, sends to know their faith, 1 Thess. iii. 5 : we would not have you like to Pharaoh's lean kine, feed much, and be never the fatter. "The hireling careth not for the sheep," John x. 13 ; they are not his own, and what minds he whether they be fat or lean? A mercenary advocate looks only to his fee : let his client's cause stand or fall, it is all one to him, so long as he hath his money. A capon that hath moulted away all his feathers, and is cold and naked, in the absence of the hen, will run to her nest ; not for any love to the chickens, but to warm his own sides. Such hypocrite and imperfect pastors have more love to your riches than to your souls. "I seek not yours, but you," saith Paul, 2 Cor. xii. 14 ; that is the voice of love. With no less fervency, with no fewer tears, do we pray for you, than for our own souls. The dog forbears to bark, because he is intent on the offal : There are many dogs because greedy dogs ; therefore are they dumb, because they are greedy dogs, Isa. lvi. 11. I will gladly bestow, and be bestowed for your souls, 2 Cor. xii. 15. He will bestow : that love is welcome, which brings meat in the mouth of it, which talks of bestowing. In our measure, we thus strive to bestow our loves too. Let us bestow ; yet what, alas, have we to bestow? For gold and silver, you have it already ; we have it not. But our studies, our labours, our loves, our lives ; these we have to bestow, and we bestow what we have. "She hath done what she could," saith Christ, of Mary's piety, Mark xiv. 8 ; and, She hath given what she had, of the widow's charity, Luke xxi. 4. If nothing but gold and honour were worth the bestowing, our liberality were soon stalled. But by the grace of God there is something else. There be talents, though the world scarce value them at pence a piece ; and treasures of wisdom, Col. ii. 3, and riches that never fade, comforts everlasting ; and these are worth the bestowing, and worth the accepting too, when we consider all. For howsoever, in our vain days, we look upon these proflers with fastidious eyes ; as it is usual with men to have no sense of their souls, till they must leave their bodies ; yet when they must part from them, or when they are disquieted within them, that they may either keep them in peace, or in peace forsake them ; then some gift of our love, some counsel or comfort, will be held worth the bestowing : and it is our love to bestow it.

Yet our love sticks not here, but we even yield ourselves to be bestowed. There be many that care not what they bestow, so they may not be bestowed ; we would spare our goods ; but rather let them perish, than not spare ourselves. If it once trench upon life, then, "Be it far from thee," Matt. xvi. 22 : favour thyself then, or never. "Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath, will he give for his life," Job ii. 4 : we will give all to our skin, to save the blood under our skin ; spend all we have, to spare ourselves. There we part with our goods, not our blood ; with our living, not with our life. We have not ventured unto blood, Heb. xii. 4 ; it is not yet come to that. Our goods are but the goods of fortune ; our labours are but the goods of nature ; our prayers but the goods of grace ; but when it comes to our lives, that we must lay down them for the brethren, 1 John iii. 16, here is love in his zenith and exaltation. This is a love strong as death, Cant. viii. 6 ; and "greater love hath no man than this, to lay down his life for his friends," John xv. 13 : when a man dares challenge death to a single combat ; and all this in another's cause, not his own. We then show proof that you

are our beloved, when to preserve your spiritual life, we sacrifice our own natural life. "Much study is a weariness of the flesh," Eccl. xii. 12: it makes our soul weary of our work, yea, it makes our soul weary of our flesh. We abridge our natural course, draw on untimely diseases, and hasten upon us death, before we have half run our race of life.

This our love costs us more than the sweat of our brows; even the tears of our eyes, the sorrow of our hearts, the vexation of our minds, and the very anguish of our souls; all to testify, that you are our beloved. Timothy must ply his book, and give attendance to reading, 1 Tim. iv. 13, till he grow sick again; Jeremiah's eyes must run like spouts, Jer. ix. 1; Lot's righteous soul must be vexed, 2 Pet. ii. 8; and Paul's heart must be grieved, 2 Cor. xi. 29. Lay the people's unkindness upon our souls, together with the burden of our calling on our bodies; and we do (in effect) antedate the day of our death, prevent our term, and pay the debt of nature ere it be due. In this sense we may say with Paul, that we die daily, 1 Cor. xv. 31. We make no more reckoning of our labours, than of chaff; and are more glad of our loss, than others would be of their gain. We do not hold our very life precious, to win the souls of our beloved. Death is bitter, and loss is not sweet; yet love can so change their natures, that in loss we shall find sweetness, and gladness in death. This is love indeed, the very soul of love; and without this, all the rest is but a caress. Not the outward action, but the inward affection, is all in all. If we cast up the bill of our expenses; the expense of our goods, of our blood; yet without this love, the sum will amount to nothing, 1 Cor. xiii. 3. They are all but ciphers, till the figure of charity be set to them; then they have their valuation, and rise up to tens, and to hundreds. Lay all these together, and deny, if you can, that you are our beloved.

2. But now it is time to see what will become of all this, and what fruit our love will bring forth in you. Love again, at the least; we can look for no other. There is no greater allurements or provocation to love, than to be the first in loving. No attractive like this. He that begins to us in love, looks that we should pledge him. That man hath an obdurate heart, who, although he would not bestow love, yet will not repay love: that will neither lead, nor follow; neither one way, nor other, will be won to love. We may commend love, as one did water, for two good properties; it neither makes a man in debt, nor in drink: so love is neither hard to get, nor costly to keep. If for all our expensive love, so liberal of our means, of our health, of our life, we cannot find bare and naked love again, we have very ill luck. Yet such luck had St. Paul: "The more abundantly I love you, the less I am loved," 2 Cor. xii. 15. For all his dear and precious bounty of love, he sought only to win the like favour and mutual love at their hands, without respect to any other thing in the world; yet he even missed of that. If he had gotten it, yet what singular thing were it? "If ye love them which love you, what reward have you?" Matt. v. 46. In a word, there is but one sun, infinite rays; all our loves are but the beams of the love of God. All rivers run into the sea; and all loves shall be swallowed in the love of Christ.

"Seeing ye know these things before." The orators which declaimed in the presence of the Roman emperors, in their panegyrics, took this course to make those emperors see what they were bound to do, by saying that they had so done already. For this both increased the love of the prince to his people, to be told how well he had done; and withal conveyed a counsel into the prince, to do so still.

Such praises come of good respects and wishes; and is a form of civility that works much upon noble natures; to wrap up the pills of good advice in the golden leaf of commendation, when by telling men what they are, they represent unto them what they should be. As their way was to procure things to be done, by saying they were done: so our apostle here takes another way, and by telling them what they should be, doth in effect tell them what indeed they are. His caution for the future, is but a narration for the present. When he bids them take heed of falling, he doth praise their standing. By exhorting them to what they should do, he insinuates what they have done already. As if he spake not to move a wheel that stood still, but to keep the wheel in due motion; persuading them, not to begin, but to continue in goodness; and proposing to them their own examples, to be as constant still, as hitherto they have been. Praise is the reflection of virtue; but it is as the glass or body is that giveth the reflection. Here it comes from a mouth that would not flatter; and falls upon a subject which it might make better, by no means worse. It might not make them proud of their standing; it might humble them with fear of falling. "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever," Heb. xiii. 8. In adhering to the truth, let us be so too; yesterday, and to-day, and the same for ever here: so then hereafter, when time shall be no more; no more yesterday, no more to-day, yet for ever and ever; we shall enjoy that comfort and glory, which shall never be taken from us.

1. We gather out of these words, this doctrinal sum, or evident conclusion; That constancy in goodness is not the inseparable effect of knowledge, for then this caution were in vain. Beware lest ye fall. Look to it well, for it is no impossible matter; neither is it rare to find knowledge in the head, without goodness in the heart. Knowledge puffeth up; love edifieth. "A certain lawyer stood up, and tempted Christ," Luke x. 25. He came not to be caught by him, but to entice him; not to reverence that Divine wisdom of his Teacher, but to magnify himself for some great scholar. Let him know never so much, he is resolved to be never the better man. All things are valued by their proper good. We mind the strength of the ox, which we buy for the plough; the fitness of another, which we buy for food. We would have our hound of a quick scent, to trace out; of a swift foot, to overtake; of a bold courage, to assault and attack. That is best in every thing, for which it was made. Man was made to serve God; if he be not good at that, he mistakes his end. Knowledge is but the commencement, obedience is the act; that prepares, this perfects. As when Hippomachus Aliptes, in Plutarch, a man of exceeding tall stature, was commended to the place of a champion, and warranted to win the day; another answers, Yes, if the prize were given to him that could reach highest, his height would much advantage him; but it is valour, not stature, that must get the crown: so if the kingdom of heaven were promised to learning, then the greatest scholar would soonest obtain it. But it is, Well done, good servant, not, Well read, great scholar, that carries it. "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them," John xiii. 17: do them; never happy till then. Did you never hear of some miserly merchants, that sell rich wines, and drink nothing but water themselves? Nor of hypocrites, that will lie, cheat, slander, be unclean, and do such close villanies, that are never without a Bible in their pockets?

Speculation, be it never so excellent, is not the whole building of a Christian; but it is rather the groundwork of action. The former is like the lower

millstone, that of itself lies still: put practice, that upper moving millstone, to it, and they both will grind well together. Where exercise is not, learning will want experience; and where experience fails, errors will creep in; and where errors creep in, knowledge will creep out, or be thrust out perforce; and where knowledge is ousted, the soul will quickly be seduced. So for all their knowing of these things before, St. Peter's caution is not in vain, to take heed of falling from their own steadfastness. The priests and scribes may know where Christ is to be born, and truly inform Herod of the place; yet never stir a foot towards him. Such men are like artificial teeth set into the mandibles; they may be of some use for speaking, they are of none for eating. What avails it a philosopher, that he can dispute learnedly of the nature of fire, when he is ready to perish with cold? or the physician to prescribe a wholesome diet, when himself feeds improperly, and surfeits with intemperance? When the proposer gave for his question a matter of state, and the replier, who was something dissolute, found fault with it; We may not meddle with this: the proposer said, that the privileges of the school were much wronged, by confining it only to such questions as wherein they were practised: and added, We have heard you dispute of virtue, which no man will say you much put in practice: you are loth to meddle with that. Practice is the soul of knowledge.

"We will make thee borders of gold with studs of silver," Cant. i. 11. Who ever saw the like? For borders of silver to be latched and overlaid with gold, it is common; the better metal covers the baser ever. But to overlay gold with silver is a rare kind of polishment. Yet that is the fashion of the saints; they are silver without, but gold within; that holiness which appears, is nothing so precious as that which lies hidden. Hypocrites will gild copper; but they that are good as well as wise, though their conversation be but silver, will have a golden heart. There is a double martyrdom; a bloody one, when Christ is magnified in the roses of his church, by death; and a bloodless one, when he is magnified in the lilies of his church, by life. This is not only verbal, by confession of the mouth; but real, when our deeds make good our words. God is glorified, Matt. v. 16, Christ is magnified, and Wisdom justified, all of their children: not only by the testimony of their lips, but of their lives. Our knowledge prepares us to do it, but our holiness does it indeed.

Geographers speak of a footless bird, that is still hovering in the air: such footless souls have they, that are still hovering in the air of contemplation, but never descend to action. Take the dead body of a man, and clothe it with a thousand garments, yet you shall never make it warm; because it wants the natural heat within, which those adventitious helps might cherish. If a soul be dead to goodness, though you feed it with a thousand precepts, till it become a quick library of learning, a magazine of knowledge; yet you cannot put the heat of holiness into it, because the living principle is wanting, grace Divine. Let that spark be first in it, and then all these helps will blow it into a flame. Otherwise knowledge is but a fair light, put into a foul and dirty lantern, and gives but a poor glimmering. By a redundancy of meat, and excessive rejection of the stomach, are caused obstructions; and from them ariseth an opilation or stopping of the liver; and that stopping breeds the head-ache; and that head-ache often grows to a frenzy, sometimes to an epilepsy. The vices of an inordinate life are such obstructions to men's knowledge, that they come to forget

God and all goodness: their knowledge withers away with their hearts; and they forbear to listen to their conscience, as if they forgot to eat their own bread, Psal. cii. 4. No marvel, then, if the apostle warns them of a fall, though he praise them for knowledge; for knowledge will fall from us, when we fall from goodness. They both love to dwell together; and if we once turn goodness out of our doors, knowledge will not tarry behind with us.

2. The foreknowledge of assaults, is a special help to the resistance of them. If we know these things before they come, we may the better withstand them when they do come. When we find men perverting the Scriptures, this is not an unheard-of thing: we knew they would do so; and if they do so, it is no more than was foreknown to us. He that is told of his enemy's postures, and at what ward he will lie, may both the better avoid him, and the more easily vanquish him. We make but a sorry use of our knowledge, if our adversary, wanting a sword, can foil us with the scabbard. This makes to the conviction of two defects in hearers. First, of them that will not remember the good they did once know. Secondly, of them that will not do the good they both know and remember.

(1.) For the former: it is easy to forget the lessons we have been taught; but then to forget them when we should use them, is unhappily dangerous. David, who had long been exercised in the school of patience, yet in the provocation of Nabal, had his lesson to seek. He that happily digested all the railing and persecutions of a wicked master, cannot put up this affront of a neighbour: nothing can assuage his choler, but blood. There be two shrewd picklocks, that wrench open the closet of our memories. Wine is one, the subtle fumes whereof unrivet every joint of it, and loose the cement that holds it fast. Deep drinkers have shallow memories. Women is another: Delilah crept so far into Samson's bosom, that she forced a secret from him with her weakness, which all the Philistines could not have wrung out with their strength. The greatest blessings that ever befell mankind have been rusted with this canker of oblivion; even the death and passion of our dear Saviour, and the redemption by that act purchased. For why should we crucify him again, and make his wounds bleed afresh, but that we forget his sufferings? How dare any with serpentine tongues, full of the venom of oaths and curses, blaspheme his sweet and precious name? All our excuse is, that though we know these things in the history, yet we forget them in the act of our sin and blasphemy.

A traveller hath balsam about him, to cure any wound; he falls among robbers, receives wounds, faints, and bleeds to death, and quite forgets his balsam all the while. We know many comfortable doctrines, and have laid them up in our memories; yet when temptations assault us, they are foiled. What is the reason? That same reminiscence, the key to unlock our memories, is wanting; and so we fall into gross errors and odious crimes. "Remember Lot's wife," Luke xvi. 32: we all know the story; and yet when the occasion comes that we should use it, we utterly forget it. It fareth with sentences, as with coins: in coins, they that in smallest compass contain greatest value, are best esteemed; and in sentences, those that in fewest words comprise most matter, are most set by. The shorter, the better; the better carried away, and the better kept, and the better called for when we need them. "Remember Lot's wife," is one of rich contents, yet very compendious; it consists but of three words, and five syllables; so that we are without all excuse, if we do not remember it. Yet alas, when we are departed

from Sodom, and have bidden farewell to our sinful pleasures, there is still such a desire to return upon us, or at least a mind to look back so far prevails with us, that we neither remember Christ, nor Lot's wife, nor ourselves. "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom," Luke xxiii. 42; think on me then, and there. So Christ to us; Remember me, O man, in thy thralldom; now and here think upon me. You know me well enough, but give your mind to remember me. "Remember the word that I said unto you," John xv. 20. If we remember what Christ hath said unto us, we shall the better remember what he hath done for us. When we are tempted to wantonness, by beauty; or to covetousness, by gain; or to drunkenness, by dissolute companions; or to idolatry, by papists; do we not know the vileness of these sins? "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?" 1 Cor. vi. 9. Yes, science is not wanting, but reminiscence fails. We are all valiant soldiers, till we come to fight; excellent philosophers, till we come to dispute; and good Christians, till we come to master our own lusts.

(2.) For the other: many are good at the knowing, but naught at the doing; they know, and remember too, but practice and they are strangers. Our duty is not discharged in knowing our Master's will; few Christians should then ever go to hell. To small purpose do we keep the law in memory, and break it in life: in vain do we remember Christ in our words, and forget him in our deeds. It is not a speculative, but a practical memory, that pleaseth God. What though we had a memory beyond Cyrus, that could call every soldier in his army by name? What though the evidences of time were recorded in our brain? Yet without the obedience of life, the life of obedience, all this knowledge would but cumber the soul, as Saul's armour did David. "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves," Jam. i. 22. He that doth so, how sure soever he makes himself, and how wisely soever he thinks to carry the matter, is fallen into a deception of the sight; and if he hear no otherwise, into a deception of the ear too. His receiving of the word, is nothing but a deceiving of himself. All the matter is in the word "only;" we cannot speak so much good of hearing as we must speak evil of hearing only. To hear is somewhat, but not all; a part, not the whole. "One thing is needful; and Mary hath chosen that good part," Luke x. 42. Though Christ commendeth hearing, and urgeth the necessity of it; yet he calls it but a part: the better part is but a part, it is not the whole: one thing, but not the only thing. Is all the body an ear? is all hearing? 1 Cor. xii. 17. Yet as some are like Malchus, with his right ear cut off, that hear all sinisterly; so others put all the senses into hearing, and make all the body an ear, while they place all religion in hearing. Thus it comes about, that many *præscientes*, i. e. foreknowing, in speculation, prove *nescientes*, i. e. ignorant, when it comes to action. The birds of the air seem to be wiser than we; for when they know the gin, they will avoid it; but we, knowing Satan's illusions, yet wilfully run into them.

We have a knowledge; but there is an untoward without that mars it: it is *sine cura, sine conscientia, sine humilitate*; without attention, without conscience, without humility. There was such a conceit in a fiction, that a well-informed city found yet many defects in her members, and wondered where the fault should rest. It was told her by a critic, that there was one small particle, without, that spoiled all; advising the extermination of it. An edict was made,

and certain orders set down, for the banishment of without, and for the exprobration of them that retained it. A magistrate without justice, is a river without water; a rich man without liberality, a tree without fruit; a young man without repentance, a house without a roof; a woman without modesty, meat without salt; a scholar without discretion, a pen without ink; worth without silence, a treasure without a keeper; a design without power to go through with it, a flight without feathers; wit without patronage, land without dew; knowledge without practice, smoke without incense; a Christian without patience, a horse without a bridle; and intendment without constancy, a wheel without a spring or balance. If we could be once rid of this without, all would be well: we should then no longer have faith without works, which is like fire without light or heat; nor repentance without amendment, which is a washing without being clean; nor profession without honesty, which is a face of goodness without a body; nor zeal without knowledge, which is a fire without a chimney; nor knowledge without obedience, which is an eye without a foot; nor religion without conscience, which is a body without a heart. If these withouts, these privations that so offend piety, were gone; the rest, that so offend felicity, would follow. For then we should attain to peace without trouble, comfort without sorrow, light without darkness, health without sickness, life without death, glory without envy, and joy without end.

"Lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked." Man is naturally such an arch-flatterer of himself, that he hath a better conceit of his own rules, than of the Divine principles; and thinks that he can guide himself well enough, without God. More than once were the Israelites chidden for going a whoring after their own inventions. The way taught us by God, dislikes us; we must have one of our own invention. Ye shall not do whatsoever is right in your own eyes; but what I command you, saith the Lord, Deut. xii. 8, 14. But our father Adam's old disease sticks upon us; we must know good and evil: something we must find out to ourselves, or make to ourselves; of somethings we must be the authors and inventors, that so we may seem to be as wise as God, if not wiser; and to know what is for our turn, as well as he, if not better. This is not only a disease of our common life, that we still labour about new inventions: we invent new meats for our diet, new fashions for our apparel; and there is not only an ingenious throat, that studies the witty gluttony of a meal; but an ingenious hand, forming new garbs for the back, and tempering new colours for the face. And these inventions have not their vicissitudes, like the seasons of year; but their successions, and posterities, and genealogies, like the descents of nature. And as fast as we are weary of one, a new invention is found out, which we must embrace, cost what it will; though the price of it hinders our giving of alms, yea, though it bring us to the begging of alms, yet have it we will. These be our inventions; we spend all upon them, and we know no end of them. Yet were this vanity confined to secular matters, it were more tolerable; but even in the worship of God we have our inventions too. We have itching ears, and after our own lusts heap to ourselves teachers, 2 Tim. iv. 3. We fill the chapels of our ears with new teachers, that they may fill our heads with new inventions. We are still devising tricks, opinions, and fashions, which our fathers never knew of, Deut. xxxii. 17. God charged Saul to destroy all Amalek; but he would invent a better way, which God perhaps could not think of: in frugality, he will spare some; in policy, the fat and

best; and in piety, forsooth for sacrifice. Such an error was once in Peter; "Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee," Matt. xvi. 22: as if he had found out a better way, as he thought, than Christ could devise. These new inventions have such a taking quality, that the authors once infected with them, become corrupters of others, and means of a vast contagion. There is enough in the first view of them to make them hated.

1. They are errors: and what beauty can we find in error, that we should be in love with it? Error is nothing but a wandering out of the way. "They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way," Psal. cvii. 4. When a traveller is bound for Jerusalem, where his inheritance lies, is it a pleasure unto him to wander in the wilderness? It is a curse to "wander in the wilderness, where there is no way," Psal. cvii. 40. Wandering is for rogues and drunkards. The former are so taken by the statute, for vagabonds; they are never out of their way, because they acknowledge no certain home, whither any way should bring them. For the other: "They grope in the dark, and stagger like a drunken man," Job xii. 25: though they were in the way, yet it is very hard for them to go upright. We are all prone to err: some out of ignorance: "Ye err, not knowing the Scriptures," Matt. xxiii. 29. Others out of malice; "It is a people that do err in their heart," Psal. xcv. 10. All out of weakness: "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way," Isa. liii. 6. As if the leading sheep takes a vagary, all the flock will follow him; so when Adam went out of the way, we all turned aside, and have wandered ever since. Nor could we ever have recovered the way again, unless the Son of God had become the Son of man, and so reduced us: for he "came to seek and to save that which was lost," Luke xix. 10. Neither yet, without him, can we hold right one moment: we cannot keep the way, except he keep us in the way. St. Augustine seems to be very angry with his friends, that they would offer to vindicate him from all error. (In Epist. ad Marcellinum.) I myself, saith he, am able to judge both you and myself; for both I have erred, and you err in saying I have not erred. It shall never please me, to be esteemed what I am not. Such men do not love Augustine, but some other man under the name of Augustine: They love, he says, not what I am, but what I am not. For such a boast, he condemns that great author of the Roman eloquence, who gave out of himself, that he never spake that word which he wished recalled; terming it a speech that better became a fool than a philosopher: and to say truth, he had great cause to recall even that word, by which he so meant to clear all the rest from any need of recalling. St. Augustine concludes; That of Tully does not please me, it is not necessary to recall a word: but rather, that of Horace does grieve me, A word once uttered cannot be recalled. To err then is very easy: Thou standest by thyself, and therefore thou dost not stand; thou goest by thyself, and thou either wanderest or fallest. An infant that will offer to go alone, shall fall; and a blind man without his guide, will miss the way.

Why therefore should error tempt us? That which is rottenness in fruits, barrenness in the earth, darkness in the air, sickness and deformity in the body, is error in the mind. Was ever any man in love with corruption in his meat, raggedness in his clothes, leprosy in his skin, or with famine, or any uncomfortableness? Why then should a reasonable soul dote upon error? A man affected with error, is a heady beast: one that will be miserable in despite of pity. The Divine word, human reason, and the

direction of nature, he abhors. Admonish him, he jeers you; show him the way, he scorns you; offer to lead him, he spurns at you. He is the only man in his own conceit, that having a shop without tools, can build a city without materials, cure the sick without medicines, and be a great statesman without any brains. He is his own academy, his own magazine; and is in all things, *sibi compendium, alibi ludibrium*, i. e. a repository to himself, a laughing-stock to others. One only companion he admits, him he trusts, with him cohabits; and that is custom. He takes his own ways, whither his fancy leads him, and thinks himself only in the right; till at last he falls into a deep bog, and there is an end of him.

Alas, that a man should buy error so dear, when he may have truth so good cheap! We only think those things costly, for which we pay money: so we complain of dear commodities, dear purchases, and dear bargains; but we never think that dear, for which we pay ourselves. That error and vanity, which stands us in no less price than our own souls, we esteem pennyworth good enough; we never grudge at this; for which if we were to pay our dwelling-house, or all the coin in our purse, we would take time to think upon it; and consider well ere we bought it. Which makes it plain, that *nihil cuique se vitius*, i. e. nothing is held cheaper by any one than himself: the vilest, basest, and cheapest thing we have, we hold ourselves. Oh that we could learn, both by the estimation of our monies how highly to prize our souls; and by the dear valuation of our souls how to hate errors and vanities! But as in Luther's time it was a paradox, *Justitia causa injustitie*; i. e. A (conceited) righteousness was the chief cause of all unrighteousness. First, because it makes men proud; and pride is an ugly sin. Secondly, because it does not perceive itself to stand in so much need of Christ; without whom there is nothing but sin. So we may say, *Prudentia causa stultitie*; i. e. (An opinionated) wisdom is (in a manner) the sole cause of all folly: for it so transports a man with the imagination of his own knowledge, that he runs into error with confidence. And while he forbears to take God along with him, he is most certain to leave the truth behind him. Thus error at first creeps in at the back door, till truth be dispossessed of her old dwelling; and then he revels, domineers, and keeps open house. This deformity, that it is error, is enough to make it loathed.

2. It is "the error of the wicked;" this aggravates it, and makes it yet more detestable. For there may be an error of infirmity, without any notorious wickedness of life; and there may be wickedness in life, without any palpable error in judgment; they are both bad, asunder; put them together, and they are so much the worse. There were heretics, called the Nicolaitans; wherewith God charged the church of Pergamos, "Thou hast them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate," Rev. ii. 15; sprung from Nicolas, one of the seven; and their posterity, the Gnostics, from Carpocrates; as Eusebius testifies. These held, saith Epiphanius, that only faith was necessary; and so a man did believe and embrace their positions, live how he list—he could not choose but be saved. There be some of their mind still; that think, so they forget not their creed, they cannot miscarry. Which is as much, as if a man carrying his sword in his hand, might not stumble into a ditch. The Eneeritics, sprung from Lactantius, fell into the other extreme, and affirmed that, It was not to be cared what any man *believed*, it was only to be cared what any man *did*. So the creed might be well enough cancelled, because a good course of life is only regarded with God; and in

every sect, he that lives well, shall be saved. Which is as if a traveller should throw away his weapon, and yet never be in danger of thieves; or reject the light, and yet fear no darkness.

"Of the wicked." Hierome reads it, of the unwise; which Lorinus labours modestly to reconcile, by telling us, that in the Scriptures, the fool is ever taken for the wicked man. But he should also have showed us the contrary; that the wicked man is always taken for the fool. But false teachers, though they be wicked enough, yet are cunning fools. The devil is that wicked one; yet we do not use to call him fool. He is the great patron of seducers, and indeed he makes fools of them; but withal, he makes them wise enough to make fools of us. It is not his folly, but his wickedness and cunning, that does us the mischief. And if his instruments were not more Athiophels than Nabals, more cheats than sots, our danger were the less. But as the bristle could not draw in the gross and pitchy thread, unless way were first made for it by the awl; so these doctrines of devils, so called as they are the inspirers and authors; and doctrines of men, so termed as they are the instruments; being as black, pitchy, and sooty as hell itself; would find no entrance into our beliefs, if they were not brought in by that cunning way of sophistication and plausibleness. Certain impostors, having the statue of the king curiously carved, and composed of gold and precious gems, for their profit, melt it, and cast the same gold and jewels into the image of a dog; and then give out, that this image of theirs, though of a dog, is the very image of the king; because here is the same gold, the very same precious stones. So heretics take the Scriptures, which is the word of the great King: they coin new glosses and expositions upon it; giving such strange and uncouth senses, that they force it to speak what it never meant: yet still persuade their hearers, that it is the very gold they look for, the right Scripture, word for word, weight for weight. But as we say of the former image so changed, that it is neither the king's, nor a dog's, but rather their own that devised it; so we may say of the Scripture thus abused, that it is neither God's word, nor its own self, but theirs that have corrupted it. *Sed male dum recitas, incipit esse tuus*, says the poet to a base repeater of his verses; i. e. Recite it ill, and it becomes thy own.

"What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldst take my covenant in thy mouth," Psal. l. 16; seeing thou not only hatest it in thy heart, but also pervertest it with thy lips? It were good and fit that such men, before they be suffered to meddle with the Scripture, should put in sureties, that the senses they give of it shall be orthodox, and consenting with the church. For the trusting of every man upon his single bond, to interpret any place of Scripture, is the occasion of much error: so grow they bold to utter their own fancies, and look to be believed upon their bare word; which is to be lords over the faith of their hearers. If Satan came to us in broad terms, charging us to renounce Christ, we should utterly defy him: the truth (he knows) we will embrace. Therefore he creeps in like a serpent, and sows tares, Matt. xiii. 25; that these growing together with the seeds of truth, may in time choke them. The things that were ordained for a means, whereby the Gentiles might come to know God, by Satan's illusion became occasions of their more offending him. (Chrysost. Orat. 2. de Providen.) By the visible things of the creation, they might have understood the invisible things of the Godhead, Rom. i. 20: so they might. But they fell to worship the sun, moon, and creatures, omitting to know their

Maker: so they did. Where should we know Christ, but out of the Scripture? "Search the Scriptures; they testify of me," John v. 39. Yet as it often happens, that in the very high-way we cannot see for the dust; so upon the face of this sacred spring, the devil collects such clouds of errors, that many men lose Christ, in the very place they are appointed to find him. Or as in dark nights, pirates use to kindle fires, and make great lights upon the rocks and maritime coasts; whither when the seamen steer in hope of harbour, they meet with wreck and ruin; so heretics flourish with Scriptures, or at least with some flashes of it, like false lights; to which when distressed souls repair for succour, these pestilent seducers feed them with nothing but pernicious error. (Origen in Ep. ad Rom. cap. 14.) Fowlers by setting up a dead tree, besmeared with lime, and dead birds upon it, as if they were all living, allure the live birds to them, as to their friends and acquaintance, and so bring them to destruction. The application is easy; the experiment too common: dead errors are the snares of living souls.

This is the cunning of these wicked impostors: something they will have good, to draw down the evil; the greater part shall be evil, to poison the good. Gregory declares, if Rome had not some truth, she would never be believed; if she were not full of errors, her followers could not be deceived. As the apostle here from God, so we from the apostle, by the commandment of God, warn you of these things; that ye fall not into the error of the wicked. It may be that you slight our speaking; but they of whom we warn you, would give much to have us hold our peace. If the truth had not some champions, error would soon overrun the field. Philip of Macedon besieging Athens, sent legates to the city, conditioning with them, that if they would deliver into his hands ten of their orators, such as he should choose, whom he pretended to be the disturbers of their commonwealth, he would raise his siege, and be at peace with them. But Demosthenes smelt out his plot; and with the consent of the Athenians, returned him this apologetic answer. The wolves came to treat of a league with the shepherds, and told them thus: All the feud and discord betwixt you and us, ariseth from a certain generation of dogs which you maintain amongst you; deliver us up those dogs, and we will be good friends with you, neither will we any ways wrong you. The dogs were delivered up, the peace was concluded, the shepherds secure; but oh the woeful massacre that was presently made amongst the poor lambs! they were all devoured, the shepherds undone; and all by parting with their dogs. If the popish faction could once get the ministers of the gospel to hold their peace, or procure them to be muzzled by authority, or to be delivered over to their wolfish cruelty, woe to your souls! Error would then play the king, darkness triumph, hell make play-day, truth would languish, and all goodness fall flat to the earth. As little as you now regard us, you would then miss us, and wish for us, and say, Blessed is he that cometh to us in the name of the Lord, Psal. exiii. 26.

3. That ye be not "led away." This touches our copyhold; for there may be error in men, and yet this not to extend to wickedness; there may be a wicked error in others, and yet that not extend to us, further than to be an occasion of our tears and prayers for their recovery. But if we be led away with it, now the danger is come home to us; it nearly concerns ourselves. There is an error in judgment, and an error in practice: that in judgment persisted in, and violently defended, grows into heresy; that in practice continued and resolved upon, grows into

wickedness; either of them is a wicked error. A man may stumble and not fall; or fall, and rise again. It proves to a man's good sometimes, that he hath erred into evil. But it is better to err ten times with the feet, than once with the life.

The main scope of the point armeth us against vacillation and inconstancy. There be some that will "turn away their ears from the truth, unto fables," 2 Tim. iv. 4: very toys will lead away fools. So greedy is our nature of change, that it will listen to any whisper of innovation. To the papist, when he promiseth change: and what change doth he promise? You shall have the old religion again; wherein (for your comfort) you shall never understand a word, what either God speaks to you, or you must speak to God: and for variety, you shall have half a communion for a whole one: is not this a fair exchange? To the sectary they will listen, when he promiseth change: and what is his change? O you shall have a fine new church government for your old one; a presbytery is better for you than a hierarchy, elders than bishops. There are brains that are the forges of such alterations; and there are ears that drink in, and fingers that itch for, such fatal projects. In the inventors, pride and malice breed them: because they cannot rise themselves, they would ruin all; and make it their practice to bring men to the bough, though they have never a tree in their garden for the purpose, as Timon had. One calls them fit timber out of which politicians are to be hewn: knee-timber, which is good to make ships of, that are ordained to be tossed on the seas; but not for houses that should stand firm on the land: these be the leaders. In the embracers, it is at first weakness, then wilfulness, that yields to this leading away. Without patience and perseverance, we could never hold out our journey. For as our nature is tender, and would not endure the cross but for patience; so it is flitting, and would soon be weary of any good course, but for perseverance. The Romans were highly commended by St. Paul, that their faith was "spoken of throughout the whole world," Rom. i. 8: and yet when Paul was converted at Rome, they all forsook him, 2 Tim. iv. 16; all shrunk away. Though men be as confident as was Peter; Though all should, I will not, Matt. xxvi. 33; yet they may fail as Peter did. The motives of perversion or leading away, be commonly two; something new, or something strange.

1. The former is the way of schismatics, who are therefore called Novelists. The lower parts of Germany are grievously pestered with them: as I have heard of above thirty several sects of religion in one town; so that, Come, will you be of our church? is as familiar among them as Good morrow. It is reported, I know not how truly, that divers among us, transported by the novel doctrines of their half lunatic teachers, are taking up for a new plantation beyond the seas; but it were happy for the old plantation, if she were well rid of them. Such men are led away with What new thing? A new fashion does not more take your proud lady, nor a new play your gallant, nor a new tavern your drinker, nor a new trick your cheater, nor a new drug your empiric, than a new opinion does your schismatic. Which having once handsomely formed, and outwardly beautified, he dares now advance in the pulpit; and there is such crowding to it, as if it were the only jewel in request. "What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind?" Matt. xi. 7. Yea, O ye reeds shaken with the wind, what went ye out into the wilderness to see? A vanity brighter than yourselves? Yet as the golden calf took the Israelites, because it was made of their

car-rings; so a factious conceit transporteth these hearers, because it is made fit for their cars.

2. If it be a strange thing, it is more catching; for then a new thing is included in it. It could not be strange if it were not new. Not new in itself, but new to us; for familiarity takes away strangeness, as time takes away the newness of any thing. By this trick the Romists lead away their proselytes; they tell you of wonders: Here is nothing in your church, but what is common and obvious; come to us, and we will show you glorious objects: temples adorned like theatres, priests like actors, images richer in their ornaments than queens; utensils, and properties, and appendances; no milliner's shop can compare with us: we have a great master that commands kings, that can pardon sins, that can give fair indulgences. To all which the amazed hearer answers, It is very strange. Wonder in natural things, is but the daughter of ignorance; and if ignorance be in love with these vain shows of wonder, who can wonder at it? As in the poet, Myrrha was in love with her own father; so give ignorance leave to be affected with her own daughter. They do almost nothing but work miracles: natural effects, with them, are miracles; casual accidents, miracles; magical illusions, miracles. They can make a miraculous drawing of a tooth, a miraculous cutting of a corn. So Justus Baronius affirms, that when he was converted to them, he was miraculously cured of the colic, by stooping to kiss the pope's foot. Pope John XXII. did pile up miracles so fast, that he said in the canonization of Aquinas, He wrought as many miracles, as ever he determined questions. Which of their saints is not reported to have done many miracles? It is a great favour of them that they have not put St. John the Baptist quite out of the catalogue of saints, because the Scripture testifies of him, that he wrought no miracles. Indeed to me this appears the greatest miracle, that they can find men to believe their miracles.

But, beloved, shall they lead us away thus? shall they catch us with such a poor trick, as the ostentation of miracles? Their relying upon miracles, implies an induction of new doctrines: that which is old, and received, needs no ratification by miracles. So that we have just cause to suspect their doctrine of novelty, because they so labour to uphold it by miracles. And shall that which is new, the invention of man, lead us from that which is old, the institution of God? Wonders we have at home; we need not go to Rome for them. Our fairs, and marts, and popular streets abound with wonders. If there may be found any heterocelites, any stigmatical monstrosities, or but so much as uncommon forms, and uncount productions of nature, they are exposed to view for money. Men that are grown up toward the stature of giants, or stunted to dwarfs, hermaphrodites, or the like, are held very strange things. Yet the plain Christian Tell-truth did know a stranger thing than all these. Being demanded what it was, he answered, A sinner. That a man should provoke God, so gracious and mighty; that he should believe Satan, the father of lies and cruelty; forget his own death, so imminent and inevitable; obey the command of his flesh, a drudge so ignoble; admire the world, so fickle and dangerous; despise heaven, so blessed and glorious; and all for vanity, such a wretched emptiness: this he, good man, thought the strangest thing in the world. And so indeed it is, in one sense, in regard of reason; though not so in the other sense, in respect of custom.

This indeed might seem strange, if we that are bred children of the truth, should be led away with the error of the wicked. This would be a grief to

our Father. The Holy Spirit leads us into all truth; and shall a lying spirit lead us away into falsehood? If we be led by the Holy Ghost, we are the sons of God, Rom. viii. 14: if we be otherwise misled, what are we but bastards? "Grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption," Eph. iv. 30: by no means let us grieve our Father. This would be a grief to our mother: the church mourns when she loseth her children. She loseth them, or rather they lose her and their own blessing, when they are led away by the wicked: let us not grieve our mother. This would be a grief to our brethren: to see one that sprung from the same womb, and was nourished with the milk of the same breasts, to turn recreant, and revolt to the common enemy: Our brother is lost, is a woeful complaint: let us not grieve our brethren. But the worst grief will be to our own souls; for in being led away from our Father, mother, brothers, we have lost ourselves. We have chosen our professed foes for fast friends, and made our true friends to become our foes. And if this leading away were by force and compulsion, against our wills, it were more tolerable; as Israel was led away captive by their enemies: but wilfully to follow seducers, against our own conscience, is most damnable. Take here two remedies for the avoiding of this mischief.

1. Let us truly weigh the folly of inconstancy. "Be not carried about with strange doctrines: for it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace," Heb. xiii. 9. To be loose, then, in the main joints of religion, must be very bad. The tottering wall is soon blown down; but being down, who shall set it up again? The righteous soul is like a body of a square figure; turn it on which part you will, lay it how you list, it will still be constant, and like itself. An unstable Christian is the world's worst movable; a little resembling the silkworm, but not of such profit; one day you shall find him a fly, another time a maggot, seldom twice in the same shape. Take gold and throw it into the water, yet it loseth neither the value nor colour; cast it into the fire, and it comes forth purer: but dirt is hardened with the fire, and dissolved with water. The sons of levity are such, as that they are joined withal would have them to be; hard or soft, cold or hot, tall or low, great or small; of any temper. For shame let us once be steady, before we are laid in the steady carth, wherein there is no motion. We say the fowler cannot easily kill the flying bird; but whether we stand or go, lie or sit, in what posture or place soever we are, death can both hit, and wound, and kill us. And in the grave the most pragmatical busybody shall be quiet. There is no shifting of ground, no changing of sides, there. They that troubled all their neighbours, shall be there as tame and calm as their fellow-cloids. The body shall be confined to one place, the soul to another, without removing; till they be removed to the bar, and brought before the tribunal of Christ.

2. If we would not be led away, let us stick close to our God. We are sheep apt to wander: we shall not, if we keep to our Shepherd. We are reeds, movable with every wind: yet bind the reed to a pillar, and it stands firm. It is ill sticking to any thing but God; all other props will fail us. Riches cannot keep us, but that we may be led away from them; nor keep themselves, but that they may be led away from us. Nay, do they not rather help to lead away our confidence from God? The foresters knowing that the elephant useth to sleep leaning against some tree, are wont to cut the likeliest tree with a saw so deep, that the unsuspecting beast thinking to rest upon it, falls down with it, and so is

surprised by them. They that put their trust in man, shall soon find him hewn down by death; and then there lies their hope in the dust with him. God appears to the Jews in types, signs, and figures; but at last he departed from that people, because they too much trusted in them. In the fulness of time he appeared to his church in himself in his Son; and from that church he will never depart, because we cannot too much trust in him. I will hold myself fast by the hand of my God; as to that purpose the royal prophet. Let us wed ourselves to him, wedge ourselves to him; so shall we not be led away. Antæus, when Hercules threw him to the ground, still rose up the stronger; because he got new strength by touching his mother: so if we hold ourselves fast to the Lord, and depend upon him by our faith and prayers, all the forces of Satan shall not lift us from the truth, because we shall perpetually get new strength and vigour by touching our Father.

If we dince never so little from God, presently error catcheth us; as chickens that will stray from the wings of the hen, are in danger of the kite. He that would describe a circle in paper, if he hath brought that circle within one inch of finishing, and but remove his compass a little, he cannot make it up a perfect circle, except he begin again, and find out the same or a new centre. Though we have so made God our centre, as to fix our hearts upon him; yet the least remove of our compass, a little wandering from him, may endanger us to error. Nothing can fill a man's heart but God: so that if God be in the mind, though nothing else be there, it is full: if God be not there, although it be full of other things, it is still empty. For the world, like that transformed king, does but feed upon thistles, things that will prick, but never satisfy. So nothing can keep a man from wandering, but the manutenency of God: if he let go his hand from us, we will presently go from his hand; and going from his hand, which is truth, we are presently surprised by the hand of error. The devil does but watch this opportunity; if we stir forth of doors without God, he instantly sets schism and heresy upon us. So the Novelists, leaving him, by leaving that order and discipline whereby he governs his church, he hath suffered to be led into factions and errors, till they crumble away into private conventicles, and at last become nothing, either in existence or appearance. That church which will needs be the form to all churches, because she hath left his written will, he hath left to herself and her own traditions; and now she is swollen into tumours, and ulcers, and blisters. When men once neglect God's leading, their next step begins at this leading away. How often hath the fantastical desire of seeing mass, been plagued with falling into idolatry! As foolish young men have been so taken with an interlude, that they must needs, forsooth, become players. But as Ulysses bound himself to the mast, that the syrens might not tempt him; so let us unite ourselves to the Lord, our faith to his word, our obedience to his will, and our confidence to his power and promise; and then, as no strength can pluck us out of the hand, John x. 28, so no persuasion can lead us away from the side, of Jesus Christ.

4. "Beware lest ye fall from your own steadfastness." There be two things much conducive to the keeping of us upright; elevation when we are down, circumspection when we are up. For the former; "Shall they fall, and not arise?" Jer. viii. 4. For the other; "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall," 1 Cor. x. 12. It is good to go on, provided that we be in a good way, or else it is better to return. If Hagar be going from Abraham's house toward Egypt, the angel calls her to return, and not

to persevere. Gen. xvi. 9: but if Lot's wife be going from Sodom toward Zoar, the angel willetth her to persevere, and not to return. Gen. xix. 17. St. Peter's "beware" here, is but an exposition of his Master's "remember" elsewhere, Luke xvii. 32: both fortify us against backsliding. As there be goods, to prick us on to goodness; so there be evils, to fasten us into goodness, Eccl. xii. 11. The church daily strives to convert and make new proselytes, and thinks it an honour to show old and constant professors. The poet put no less virtue into *tucri*, (to hold fast,) than into *querere* (to seek after). Nor will the lawyer pass a conveyance with a mere *habendum*, but he will add a *tenendum* too. The physician ends not the cure of his patient with the cure of his disease; but after all, minds the preventing of a relapse. Our first study is to win your entrance; next, to hearten your continuance. We are glad of a Well begun, good convert; but most joyful to hear that *euge* at the last, Well done, good servant: that is the crown of all.

Our blessed Saviour did not always content himself with "Come unto me," Matt. xi. 28; but sometimes changed his note into "Abide in me," John xv. 4. To one that would enter into the church, and be baptized, St. Philip had his condition, "If thou believest," Acts viii. 37: to the other, that were entered, and thereby might be secure, St. Paul had his caution, "If thou continnest: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off," Rom. xi. 22. The first care is to lay the foundation sure, lest it fall, like the house built on the sands; the next, to perfect the roof, that it rain not through, and rot the principals, Matt. vii. 25. It is not enough to call them backward which are loth to come on, but to spur them forward that are ready to lag behind. There is an Enter ye, proclaimed to them that are without; and there is a Go on, inculcated to them that are within. Of all the stories in the Old Testament, Christ sets a memento upon the head of Lot's wife's turning back; as if he earnestly desired those that have forgotten, to remember it, and those that remember, never to forget it. With salt from her pillar, let us sprinkle ourselves; that we never go back, or fall from our own stedfastness. There were two memorable monuments of God's judgment in that story, Gen. xix.; the lake of Sodom, and Lot's wife's pillar: the one the plague of resolute sin, the other of faint virtue. The Sodomites are an example of impenitency. Lot's wife of instability; they of obstinate perverseness, she of relapsing righteousness; they of never being good, she of turning from good to evil. To them that wilfully continue in the state of sin, there is a monument of reclamation, the lake of Sodom; for them that languish in the state of grace, there is another monument of caution, Lot's wife's pillar. But our beware here, points directly to the latter, that we fall not from our own stedfastness. This the apostle dissuades us from by his counsel, as his Master showed the danger of it by an example. Let us borrow a little more light of the Lord's example, that we may the better embrace the servant's counsel. Two particulars let us examine; why she was turned into a pillar? why into a pillar of salt?

First, why into a pillar? First, shall we say, for the similitude it bears unto a human body? That were something; both were erected to stand upright. Secondly, or that it was a usual monument of the dead? Absalom in his life built himself such a pillar against the time of his death; and great monarchs had their piles and pyramids. But that was not the intent of this pillar; it was never meant for Lot's wife's honour. Thirdly, or because when they intended in older times to disgrace men to the world,

they engraved their faults on pillars? Fourthly, or because when she should move, she stood still; therefore she was turned to a pillar; always to stand still, and never to remove? This is indeed somewhat near the matter; but not all. Fifthly, a pillar is a durable thing, and God meant her a spectacle to posterity. They that lived in those times, (and it lasted long, even to Josephus' days,) might be instructed by their eyes; we have a memento for our ears; yea, this pillar is set up for our sakes. And this is one good which the Lord draws out of evil; that he suffers not evil examples to vanish as shadows, but to remain as pillars, to warn them that come after. When we come at this pillar, we are put in mind to change our course, and take another way; so shall we not be led into error, nor fall from our own stedfastness. This way took she that perished; that way went he that was saved. Let us remember Lot's wife, but follow Lot; remember her, but follow him; by no means looking back.

Next, why of salt? St. Augustine gives the reason of it; for our seasoning: That the salt of the pillar may be the seasoning of our life, he says. For our benefit, God erected this monument: he does not only embalm the memory of the just, for our imitation; but powders and makes brine of the evil, for our admonition. So that if we take the pillar, and engrave Christ's memento upon it, there is both a statue and a statute. God could have sunk her into the earth, or blown her up into air, that no visible relic of her should remain: but he makes her a pillar, not only for gazing, but of salt, for our seasoning. If we find any desire of relapsing to the world, any corrupt humour of returning to our former lusts, let us draw it out with the salt of this pillar. This is a happy art of extracting salt out of others, as treacle out of vipers; and to make them profitable to us, that were unprofitable to themselves. Though Lot's wife were evil, yet her salt is good. If we have seen others miscarry before us, by being led away with errors, and can remember St. Peter's beware; we shall draw honey out of hemlock, the strength of standing from their weakness in falling. Why are not traitors buried as soon as they are executed? Why are their heads and limbs advanced upon poles, but for a warning to all? God could root out the remembrance of the wicked, together with their lives, from the earth: he does not: but rather sets up their quarters in stories, that their punishment may be our advertisement. He does not pour out their blood, and cast it away, but saves it for a bath, that the righteous may "wash his feet in the blood of the wicked," Psal. lvi. 10. Beware then, and we are safe: this is a handful of salt to keep us, and to make us keep. Put them both together; let this pillar prop our weakness, and this salt season our sacrifice, that we may be kept in our own stedfastness. For some useful application:

1. Let us shun the society of idolatrous seducers, and hate the very air wherein they breathe. So deeply doth God detest idolatry, that he forbids the prophet to eat the bread, or drink the water, of a people infected with it, 1 Kings xiii. 9. That inhibition might be personal, but the grounds of it are common. No pestilence should be more avoided than the conversation of the irreligious or openly scandalous. We shall hardly win them to goodness; their familiarity will easily possess us of their wickedness. We may do good turns to the superstitious, but it is dangerous to receive any from them. Kindness is more safely done to a papist, than taken from him. That which is done to him, obligeth him; that which is taken from him, obligeth us. His obligation to us may be an occasion of his good: our

obligation to him may occasion our hurt: the surest way is to keep aloof from all pestilent seducers.

2. The greater show of sanctity that error puts on, the more suspicious let us be of the intended mischief. Jeroboam threatens, the prophet stands undaunted: Jeroboam fawns and promises, the prophet is not moved. But then comes a grey-headed seer, and pleads a counter-message from God; the prophet yields and transgresseth, 1 Kings xiii. 18, 19. It may be he thinks, An aged man, a prophet, an old prophet, will not, sure, belie God to a prophet. No man will forge a lie but for an advantage: what can he get by this but the entertainment of an unprofitable guest? Though God would not suffer me to feast with Jeroboam, yet he may allow me to eat with a prophet. Why are not God's revelations as free to others as to me? A countermand from an angel of God releaseth me from my strict charge. My fidelity is approved in refusing the bread of Bethel; God may in pity of my faintness afford me sustenance elsewhere. Thus if we once come to dispute with God's express commands, how easily do we fall from our own steadfastness! Who would have looked for a liar under hoary hairs and a holy mantle? Who ever saw more external strictness, than in those emissaries of Rome that come to turn us from our God? Who would not trust that gravity, that austerity, which they seem to carry over themselves? It is the conclusion of simple souls, These men must needs be saints. There is no temptation so dangerous, as that which comes shrouded under a veil of holiness, and pretends authority from God himself. Nothing is so apt to deceive us, as the fairest semblances, as the sweetest words. Satan as a fiend may affright us, but he would appear an angel of light when he seduceeth us. Our safest way to be kept from error, is not to believe the speech for the person, but the person for the speech.

3. Let us consider, that these seducers help to overthrow us, and east us down; but what help is there in them to raise us up? There they leave us; in a forlorn condition, as the priests left Judas after his treason. "What is that to us? see thou to that," Matt. xxvii. 4. Or as the old prophet of Bethel left the prophet of Judah, 1 Kings xiii. 23: he could take the pains to fetch the man of God into sin, but he will not bear him company one foot at his departure. He had been the occasion of his fault, but he was loth to be unwrapped in his judgment. All the kindness he will do for him, is to inter him in his own sepulchre, and to weep over him. It is a cruel courtesy to kill a man, and then help him to his grave; to betray him with our lips, and then to bedew him with our tears: the prophet had needed no such friend if he had not met with such an enemy. So the Romists teach their followers to direct their prayers to saints; but for themselves, when they come to die, then, Christ, and none but Christ. When they have brought their proselytes whither they would, then let them shift for themselves.

"Beware lest ye fall from your own steadfastness." After all these premised particulars, for the better method in handling the summary doctrine, I will set down certain theses, conclusions, or grounds, which either are radically in the text, or naturally without force may be derived from it. First, men may fall from their own steadfastness, or else this beware had been in vain; for no man is charged to beware of that which cannot happen. Secondly, there is a proneness in the nature of man to fall; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak; therefore there is great need of this caution. Thirdly, if any fall away, it is their own fault; they are not compelled, nor thrown down by God, but they fall of themselves; it

is by their own weakness, or their own wilfulness: another thing implied in the beware; for if the Almighty power should do it, all the bewares in the world could not withstand it. Fourthly, if God suffer some to fall, that have stood, yet this is no impeachment to his justice; because he leaves none without means of standing, or hope of rising. In the text, they have knowledge granted, therefore they may stand; there be seducers forewarned of, therefore they may fall; and the fall is not pronounced desperate, therefore they may rise again. Fifthly, men may fall far, from their own steadfastness; that is, from that measure of stability which for the present they have, yet not totally, so as to have no firmness at all; to lose even the very foundation and principles of truth, or to suffer an utter eradication of grace: or if so much, so far, so desperately they fall, yet this lapse may not be final; the grace of God is not debarr'd them, nor the gate of mercy shut against them, nor is the sentence of irrevocable damnation passed upon them. Sixthly, it is dangerous to fall at any time, but then worst, when Christians have stood some time in the truth, as these to whom our apostle writes: to them a caution is especially needful; for the nearer heaven, the greater fall to the earth. Seventhly, lastly, the summary use, the principal scope, the main antidote to prevent all this, is a constant perseverance unto the end.

Conclusion. 1. Men may fall from their own steadfastness. Though it be true, Abundant cautioning does not harm, yet there is no need of warning where is no possibility of danger. Now this falling can be incident to none but Christians; for they that never were up, cannot be said to fall. Nay, not only to Christians at large, in the latitude of all that are baptized; for in that number we shall find abundance of heretics, no fewer hypocrites, and innumerable ungodly persons; some not informed in their judgments, the rest not reformed in their lives: these cannot be said to fall, for they never stood. But we must restrain it to converts, such as are called into Christ, have embraced the gospel, graced their faith with good works, and conformed their demeanour to piety. Yet that these may fall from their own steadfastness, there is possibility; that they do fall so, it is great pity. Oh that this point were not to be proved by too dear experience! How many have fallen, even with all the helps of standing about them! Judas was continually in the presence of Christ; he heard his sermons, he saw his miracles, he tasted his bounty, did eat at his table, even that sacramental bread; yet he fell. Who would think that the devil durst enter into Christ's own college? or that any of his college should entertain the devil? So in Noah's octonary family, one was a son of Belial: he saw the judgment of the flood upon all the world; by a miraculous mercy himself escaped; he was at his father's sacrifice; yet he fell. In the little family of Lot, one fell off. She was, by being Lot's wife, incorporated into the house, and made partaker of the blessings of faithful Abraham: she was brought out of the idolatrous world, kept safe in Egypt, preserved from the sin of Sodom, from the fire of Sodom, delivered from the captivity of the five kings, from the perishing of the five cities. How gracious were all these mercies! what abundant means and strong helps had she to stand! Yet she fell. She was brought out of Sodom, warned of the ensuing danger; had angels to go before her, her husband to go with her, daughters to attend and follow her; she was gotten to the entrance of Zoar: yet that place she made choice of to perish in, which God had picked out to save her. Thus she sinned, in respect of herself, desperately: in respect of the angels, contemptu-

ously; in respect of her husband and daughters, scandalously; in respect of God and his mercies, unthankfully; and fell away in the wickedness of a wilful defection. There were but twelve in Christ's family, and one of them fell away: but eight in Noah's family, and one of them fell away: but four in Lot's family, and one of them fell away. Ham was preserved in the ark, yet he fell. Lot's wife was reprieved by the angels, yet she fell: who would not fear, if one may perish in the company of angels? Yea, Judas was under the tuition of Christ himself, yet he fell. There is then a possibility of falling.

For use and application, here, it is but having recourse to our apostle's caution. We may fall, therefore let us look to our standing. We may be led away; the devil will venture to try; therefore let us not give him one foot of ground; but if he beckons one way, be we sure to take the contrary. There have been some that stood in as little fear of falling, as now they are in hope of rising: pride and wantonness was the cause of their fall; faith and humility must keep us upright. When we remember what we have been, we have just cause to be ashamed; so when we consider what we may be, we have no less cause to be afraid. (Bern.) We know our beginnings, we do not foreknow our endings. We may be certain that thus we are; but that thus we shall be, is above our assurance. We see how much of our way we have past; we see not how much is left, or whether we shall be able to hold out to the end. As we have cause to pray, O God, when we are old and grey-headed, forsake us not, Psal. lxxi. 18: so to gird up our loins, and redouble our strength, that we may persevere. For it is nothing to begin, unless we continue; nor to continue, unless we do it unto the end, 1 Thess. v. 23.

2. There is a proneness in the nature of man to fall. Not that when we stand, we are held up by force; for God offers no violence to the will of man, but sweetly disposeth it to desire its own good. Yet the Second Adam hath not so far cast out the first, but that the new ingrafted scions doth relish of the old stock, and still there is a tang of original corruption left in us; as a vessel, after much rinsing and cleansing, will smell of the first seasoning. "I am carnal, sold under sin," Rom. vii. 14. Sold? This is not such a sale, as wherein there is a seller, a buyer, a thing sold, and the price. So in Adam's selling, Satan was the buyer, innocency and heaven sold, and the price was an apple. So Ahab sold himself to Satan for a slave, to work wickedness, by his wife's instigation, and setting him on to the bargain, 1 Kings xxi. 25. Paul was not sold thus; but Augustine says there be two kinds of slaves: one that selleth himself into captivity, and willingly obeyeth a tyrant; another that is sold into servitude against his will, as Joseph was sold by his brethren; and so was St. Paul sold. Selling is sometimes taken for a simple tradition, without any price: "Ye have sold yourselves for nought, and ye shall be redeemed without money," Isa. lii. 3. But this selling and buying must be understood in a different sense. In the sale, the price is nought; but it is nought in respect of God, for he had no honour by it; no gain redounded to him; and yet while they sold themselves, they sold not their own, but God's; and in reason, the owner of the thing sold should have the price. So in the purchase of redemption, the price is nothing; that is, nothing to them; it cost them nothing; they paid not one penny for their own deliverance. But in respect of God, the price was not nothing: "for the redemption of their soul is precious," Psal. xlix. 8: it cost him much; even as

much as it could cost him, the precious blood of his dear Son.

Sinners out of Christ are sold two ways. First, they are sold in the common market of man, when Adam sold himself and all his posterity. Next, they have made a new bargain with Satan, and sold themselves over to him again for the pleasures of the flesh. Thus did Ahab, and Judas, and Demas wilfully sell themselves; though long ago they repented the match. But Paul does not speak there of himself, as in the person of a natural man; for every man considered in nature, is sold under sin; and there be some that have abandoned and prostituted themselves to sin: so that, as Jude calls them "tres twice dead," Jude 12, so we may call these souls twice sold. The buyer hath fine and recovery upon them. But St. Paul speaks in the person of a regenerate, spiritual, supernatural, and sanctified man; meaning that no man upon earth, in what measure soever holy, can so emancipate himself from that captivity wherein Adam hath intrahled him, but that he is still unwrapped in sin, and sold under sin. (Beza.) There be two kinds of servitude: some are slaves because they are so born, being the children of slaves and bond-parents; others have sold themselves, and wilfully become bondmen. Like to the first are the regenerate, for they are born servile, being conceived in sin, Psal. li. 5. The unregenerate are like to the other, for they have sold themselves into bondage. Yet may the very regenerate be said to be sold two ways. First, in regard of original corruption; for which they may thank their first parents, if at least it be worth their thanks. Secondly, because the leaven of that original sin remains in them, and makes them subject to many infirmities; so that they cannot do what they would, but they too often do what they would not.

The conclusion is then plain, that there is still a tendency left in our nature to be led away into error. The seed of all sin is within us, therefore even of apostacy. A good scholar, that will ply his book in his master's presence, yet may fly out when his back is turned. The bird that hath long contented herself with her cage, feeding and singing there; yet if she spies the door open, will whip out, and fly abroad. Our nature is like a deceitful bow, Psal. lxxviii. 57; which when it is bent to the full, except it be followed hard, till it be sure and fast, starts back again, and is as far off as ever. It is called, the flesh; and such flesh is it as will rot without salt; if it be not corned, it will of itself bring forth corruption.

For use of this conclusion: We find here just cause to deplore our miserable estate by nature, and to consider how deeply our first parents have engaged us; so that (not to let go the former metaphor) we are all even sold under sin. We exclaim against any man that hath sold a city, or a country, or an army, to the enemy; but Adam sold the world. He sold his children, and children's children, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: he sold all the patriarchs, and all the prophets, and all the princes of the earth: he sold all the apostles, Peter and Paul, and both their regiments, the glorious hemispheres of the world, Jews and Gentiles: he sold all, even the dearest friends that God had among the sons of men; even the disciple whom the Lord loved, and the mother of the Lord himself, whom all generations call blessed. He sold his wife, yea, he sold himself; and if Christ had not provided for himself by a miraculous generation, Adam had sold him too. If Christ had been conceived in original sin, he must have died for himself: nay, he could not have died for himself, but must have needed another Saviour. Such a prodigal had we to our Father; and we take after him, for in this respect we are all prodigal children.

But now what was the price of us? He sold all; what had he for it? When the patrimony is at sale, the children look for portions. Alas, he had nothing for us, and nothing could he leave us, but sin, shame, and sorrow; that is the portion of all the sons of men. We complain now that land will not sell, that the price of it is fallen; that twenty years' purchase is come down to sixteen. Yet sure, as cheap as it is now, it was cheaper at first; both land and landlord. What was Paradise sold for? what was the whole earth sold for? what was mankind sold for? what had Eve for her part? It could be but a little fruit; so little, that the Scripture will not tell us what kind of fruit it was: yet she had something. What had Adam for his part? yea, for the whole? Nothing besides a morsel of fruit; except it were any content to him in pleasing his wife's humour; as Hierome thinks, he so dearly loved his wife, that he did eat, lest otherwise she should have been discontented. Yet if he had that satisfaction he had something. But now after both these, what had we for our part? He sold our inheritance as well as his own: it is fit we should have somewhat for our right. Now what fell to our share? What had we for earth, and heaven too? for innocency and happiness too? Alas, nothing could accrue to us by this sale, but sin and woe. Adam sinned, and we suffer. Before we had any possession of felicity, or could claim any interest in it, we had (in him) forfeited it. We had a punishment before we had a being; God was displeased with me before I was I. I was built up not fifty years ago, in my mother's womb; and I was cast down almost six thousand years ago, in Adam's loins. We all here are born in the last age of the world, yet died in the first. This is that portion left us by our parents; original sin, and a corrupt inclination of our nature to transgress, to be led away into error: and the most holy souls upon earth cannot be quite rid of it. O wretched men that we are! who shall deliver us from the body of this death? Rom. vii. 24. We are prone to fall.

3. If any fall away from their own steadfastness, it is their own fault. It is from God that we stand, from ourselves that we fall. If God did cast us down, our beware would do no good, there were no remedy, we must fall. But seeing there are but three that can do it, the devil, his engines, or ourselves, the beware is requisitely put upon us; and if we do hit it right, it will save us. But if we will fall for want of circumspection, it is in vain for us to blame any but ourselves. Saul would have put his transgression upon the people, but it would not do; God would not take that for an excuse. Adam would have discharged his sin upon his wife; but God finds Adam guilty, and so judgeth him. "Thy way and thy doings have procured these things unto thee," Jer. iv. 18: they be our own, and we must answer to them, and answer for them. We may have leaders into temptation, but it is our fault if we follow them. Nay, to come closer home, do not we tempt ourselves? Satan is not the sole cause of evil. The fowler sets his glass, spreads his net, whistles like the bird; yet cannot all this make the fowl come into his net whether she will or no. If we had not pliable ears, and flexible affections, the syrens might sing in vain. But there is something within us, that befriends temptation; some combustible matter, which that fire soon takes, and will soon take that fire. If we were pure crystal glasses, that would endure no poison, it were some security; but naturally Satan is not more ready to offer than we to receive his infection. So that the apostle's beware is of use at every turn; as God hath set Fear ye upon the very porch of our house, and made it the beginning of all our

wisdom. The only way to be secure in fear, is to fear security. So St. Paul helps them out with their perseverance, by this advice, "Be not high-minded, but fear," Rom. xi. 20.

So then there is somewhat within us which is against us: we may challenge others for misleading us; "but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust," Jam. i. 14; which is not any one appetite, but the fountain of all corrupt affections. And this remains in the most regenerate: there is a law in our members, warring against the law of our mind, Rom. vii. 23. How holy soever we are, yet against opposing principles, we have opposing desires, as Parasus observes. Our own feet carry us to sin, and we love the journey. Our own affections seduce us, and we run into errors by our own wills. We are not only sold in Adam; there begun the mischief; but we have confirmed the sale, by further selling over ourselves unto vanity. By him we are sold to original sin: to actual and habitual sins, by ourselves. We, we have been our own undoers. You have sold yourselves, Isa. l. 1, and your own immortal happiness. Immortality was sold in that first contract between man and sin. We talk of twenty years' purchase; but what number of years was the price of immortality? It is our eternity: God hath another manner of eternity in him, even a whole eternal day; an eternal forenoon, and an eternal afternoon too; for as he never shall have end, so he never had beginning. We have an eternal afternoon, in our immortality; for we shall no more see an end, than God hath seen a beginning. Millions of years, multiplied by millions, make not up a minute to this eternity. And yet this we sold; we, to witness that the fault is in ourselves. And what did we sell it for? When that tormented worldling in hell valued one drop of water at so high a rate, what would he have given for a river! How poor a clod of the earth is a manor! how poor an inch a shire! how poor a span a kingdom! how poor a place the whole earth! And yet we have sold our bodies, and souls, and consciences, and heaven, and eternity, for a few grains of this dust.

Whom then can we blame for our falling? we have sold ourselves, and all our ability of goodness. Do you ask for what? Our first father sold us cheap; but we sell ourselves cheaper. Ourselves, all ourselves; our bodies to lust and intemperance, our souls to pride and malice, our consciences to hypocrisy and unfaithfulness, and all this for nothing. For sin is but a privation, and privations are nothing. "What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death," Rom. vi. 21. We got by it but barrenness, shame, and death. Barrenness is a privation of fruit, shame a privation of innocency, and death a privation of life: for these privations we sell ourselves, and these privations are nothing, positively nothing. But hath not the covetous man gold and riches for his soul? would he sell his conscience for nothing, though he esteem it nothing worth? He may have gold, and want comfort; riches, without the use of them; as the miser's curse is, hunger in plenty: and what is hunger more than nothing, unless it be worse than nothing? The adulterer satisfies his filthy lust; he hath his pleasure; therefore he sells himself for something. To-night indeed sin may look like a purchase, like a treasure; but ask him to-morrow how he likes his bargain: then his awaked conscience will confess, that he hath sold himself for nothing; for weakness in his limbs, for darkness in his understanding, for emptiness in his purse, for absence of grace in his soul. Now weakness, darkness, emptiness, and absence, are privations, and privations are nothing. All the name of substance that sin takes, is that it is a heavy

and intolerable burden. My iniquities are a burden too heavy for me, Psal. xxxviii. 4. All the treasure that is in it, is that treasure of "wrath against the day of wrath," Rom. ii. 5: all the positive reality, that it is a vexation to the conscience. Now vexation doth but deprive us of peace, a burden of ease, and wrath of comfort: and this is a fearful privation, of the grace of God here, and of the face of God hereafter: a privation so much worse than nothing, as that they upon whom it falls, would fain be nothing, and cannot.

The conclusion is clear, then, that this falling away is our own fault; and so much our fault, that we sell ourselves to that purpose. Rather than want sins, we are apt to tempt ourselves. He that frequently feels not some secret invasions upon his honesty; as when he is poor, to steal; when he is rich, to be idle; when he is full, to wantonize; when he is in authority, to be proud: is nearer an angel than a man. Nay, how often do we save Satan the labour, and become our own tempters! Conscience is in some a flash, in others a flame; in the former it is soon gone, in the other it burns long; but what man is quite without this fire? This same flesh and blood is a giddy guide; as when the serpent's tail would needs lead the body, there followed mad courses and desperate precipices. Passions, like Actæon's dogs, when they are once blooded, will devour their own master. Our affections will be doing, set them on what work you will. Like horses, whether you put them to your perfumed coaches, or to the noisome soil-carts, they will draw. Hence it comes, that lust in the desire and thought, (contemplative uncleanness,) is often more punished than lust in the act; because to the latter we are tempted partly by others, to the former we wholly tempt ourselves: and he that wilfully but wounds a man, is more punishable than he that kills him against his will. The drunkard hunts after the wine; temptation needs not stand like a tavern-bush in his way, for he invites himself. "The adulterer waiteth for the twilight," Job xxiv. 15; the harlot needs not to attract him with her wanton looks or language; he attracts himself. The motion to sin is within us; Satan's promotion is but a working upon us. In a manner, we are devils to our own hearts; we push ourselves down, and are the main occasion of our own falling. What a mockery is it to pray, "Lead us not into temptation;" whereas we in the mean while seek temptation! Do what you pray for. Then shall we find, that for Satan's temptation we shall have God's sustentation: yea, Lord, "deliver us from evil; for thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen."

4. If God suffer some to fall that have stood, yet this is no impeachment to his justice; because he leaves none without means of standing, or hope of rising. In the text it is granted, that there is knowledge in general, and foreknowledge of these things in particular, in them: therefore they may stand: there be seducers forewarned of, and a leading away by them is not denied to be possible; and a beware is given them for that purpose; therefore they may fall: yet being down, their fall is not pronounced desperate; therefore they may rise again. This conclusion hath two branches: the former vindicates God from injustice, if we do fall; the other saves us from despair, though we are fallen.

(1.) That sin should be the cause of sin; for sin can and will beget children, and that in its own likeness: or that sin should be the punishment of sin, as the brood of the viper kill their dam, or as Sennacherib was slain by the issue of his own loins: who can complain of either? Whether God doth deliver us over to punishments for sins, that when the measure of our sin is full, he shall empty the measure of his

judgments upon us; or to sins for punishments, making future iniquities the scourges of former; there is no injustice in it. If he shall leave any particular soul that hath left him; or withdraw his Spirit from a whole church, that hath withdrawn herself from his truth; this is not done out of any tyrannical wilfulness, but out of a punishing justice; not for his pleasure, but our deserts. He is not bound to stick unto them that forsake him. If he opens his bosom when we come to him, and holds us there so long as we will tarry with him, it is his mercy; but when we will fly from his arms, if he lets us go, is it not his justice? They misjudge the liberty of our infinite Creator, that imagine him any ways bound to his creature. We are obliged to him, not he to us; we not to offend him, not he to defend us.

If they will go into captivity, let them go; yea, if they will needs go, he will send them, and give them up into the hands of their enemies, and deliver them over to punishment for sin, or to sin for punishment. If he takes the sin which he finds within us, and makes it his executioner upon us, so that future sins become the plague of former, still he is just. It is no easy smart we feel, when God latheth us with punishment for our errors; but to punish one error with another, a great sin with a sin still greater, oh this is a sore revenge. David had his choice of three rods, war, famine, pestilence: either of them could scourge him thoroughly, and fetch blood of his soul; but if all three had been inflicted on him together, they had not been so heavy, as when God gave him over into his own hands, and suffered the sin in his own bosom to become his master. Last now hath the regiment of David, and that sends him to adultery, adultery prompts him to murder, murder must be secreted by hypocrisy, and that produeth impitenency and a senselessness in sin. After he had fallen one story, into uncleanness, he stays not there, but falls another story, into homicide: and from that to another, dissimulation: till at last he falls to the very bottom, security and benumbedness of soul; and lower he could not fall. Being there, he had cause to lift up his voice, with "Out of the depths have I cried," Psal. cxxx. 1. Now all these were his own sins: God had no hand in the doing of them. The adultery was his; he polluted the marriage-bed. The murder was his; he slew Uriah with the sword: though Uriah fell by the sword of the children of Ammon, yet says Nathan, Thou hast slain him, 2 Sam. xii. 9. The blasphemy was his: it came out of the mouth of the uncircumcised, even of the Lord's enemies; yet because he gave the occasion, it was his blasphemy. The obduracy and persisting a whole year without remorse, was his sin; all his: "I acknowledge my transgressions," Psal. li. 3. God had no hand in the doing of them, but God will have a hand in the disposing of them. With an idle wantonness he began: God took his adultery, and made it his bailiff to attach David for his idleness; and then he took his murder, and made it his bailiff to attach David for his adultery; and then he took the Gentiles' blasphemy, and made it his bailiff to attach David for his murder; and then he took his long deadness of heart, and made it his bailiff to attach David for that blasphemy. So here was a generation of sins, a race of iniquities; one begetting another, and the last worse than the former.

Beware therefore; for if you be once led away, who knows where you shall stop? Error begets error; and if we once languish or lase of our own steadfastness, still we fall lower; and the less hold we have of God, the more hold Satan hath of us. "Let us fall into the hand of the Lord," says that straitened king, "for his mercies are great; and not

into the hand of man," 2 Sam. xxiv. 14. Between God and man there may be some kind of comparison: but would any sinner say, Let me fall into the hands of the devil, and not of man? rather into more sins, than some punishments? It was a most fearful imprecation upon God's enemies, Psal. lxxix. 27: "Add iniquity unto their iniquity;" that was woful: but, "Let them not come into thy righteousness;" into which they can never come, unless they first come into repentance; this is the fatal doom. Among all the vials of wrath, there is none more deadly; when men shall be suffered to add sin unto sin, and never offer to repent of their past sins, till they are past repentance. This is that reprobate sense, to mistake miseries for mercies, sins for comforts. So many think to assuage the anguish of one sin, by doing another; which is a remedy far worse than the disease.

Prodigality is a gallant sin; but the prodigal cannot but see that his patrimony wastes; how then shall he maintain his riot? Why, it is but coupling another sin with it; oppression of his tenants, extortion of fines, and taking of forfeitures; and all shall be well. All well? So the devil thinks it, but so he shall not find it. If the horror of prodigious uncleanness have caused in others a dejection of spirit, how should they remedy this? How? Straight, there is a factor of hell present, that cries, Come, you are melancholy, let us to the tavern: he can cure all your sadness with a charm of wine. How could the harlot ever sleep, without this incantation of strong drink? Her affrighted conscience would be a worse fury within her than the severest marshal could be about her, but that the incessant noise of sin will not let it be heard. The covetous muckworm could never digest his legal pillage, but that the hope of the next advantage adjoins the anguish of the former. These sinners take all such carnal satisfactions for medicines; but God sends them for plagues. Oh madness, to call great plagues peace! Wisd. xiv. 22. To smother sin from the eye of the world, or to shadow it from the eye of our own conscience, by interposing more sins, is a physic prescribed by Satan. Repentance is appointed by God, the only physic for sin; a remorse for the evil we have done, not the adding of more evil to it: as the drunkard is sick in the morning, till he hath qualified the old heat with a new. To cure sin with sin, is but to heal an ulcer by deading the flesh; which indeed doth not make us whole, but insensible of pain. Repentance be our physic: this if we take, we may be cured; this if we continue, we shall be saved.

(2.) As this clears God, so the other branch of the conclusion comforts us. If we have fallen, let us not conclude upon ourselves that we shall never rise again: for God doth not say so; not in this text, not in this epistle, not in the whole Bible. Far be it from us, to impose upon ourselves a necessity of perishing. There may be a falling off on our part; and there may be a withdrawing of grace on God's part; yet he hath still reserved to himself the power of restitution, in both parts. There be many terms of union between God and us, none of separation, that disjoins us from God, that I ever read of: of eternal separation none, I am sure, in the Scriptures. "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God," Isa. lix. 2: this is the nearest to it. And yet that was particularly spoken to the revolting Jews, not indefinitely to all sinners; and it was a commination, that if they persisted in sin, so it would be; rather than a conclusion, that so it was: or it was a caution, that it might not be so; rather than a commination, that it should be so: or it was a complaint, that they had done enough on their part to make it so; rather than a decree on God's part, that

it should be so indeed. Or take it in the most strict and literal sense, yet it was not a determination without a condition. Though they were now divided, they might be united; though their sins had put them asunder, yet their repentance might bring them together again.

He is called our Father, and full of pity, Psal. ciii. 13: what will not a father do, and suffer, to reclaim his son, before he leave him to his own desperate ways! It must be a prodigious offence, that can separate a son from the love of his father. He is compared to a mother: Can a mother forget her child? was God's question to Zion, Isa. xlix. 15. He stays not her answer, nor assures himself of any good answer from her; but adds to it, Yea, a mother may forget her child, yet I will not forget thee. Can God do it? Did God ever do it? Did he ever cast off without possibility of reaccepting? When? Where? Whom? We neither can show the time, nor the place, nor the persons, to whom God gave such a peremptory repulse, saying, You shall never repent, but you shall perish. That of the prophet is most comfortable, "I will betroth thee unto me for ever," Hos. ii. 19. The husband and wife are one flesh; Christ and our soul, by this marriage, one spirit, 1 Cor. vi. 17. The words of the contract are, "I will betroth thee unto me for ever." There can be no divorce imagined, where there is no marriage; and if there be a marriage with God, there can be no divorce, neither; for he betroths for ever. Therefore as often as our hearts, upon the doleful consideration of our sins, be afraid of a divorce from our God, let us cheer them up with the comfort of a marriage with our God. So Ambrose sweetly and safely, Hast thou heard of a divorce? believe the marriage. Did God ever take in a favourite, and afterwards utterly reject him? The crow went out of the ark, and came no more; the dove went, and came again, and came with an olive branch. God may absent himself, on purpose that he might be sought; but he comes again, and that with an olive branch of peace. The Jews did indeed put away their wives, not only for the wife's fault, but for the husband's frowardness; but we have too good experience of our God's love and patience, ever to charge him with that: we must deny him first, for he cannot deny himself.

To follow this comfortable metaphor of our marriage to God, and to take away all mistrust of a separation, let us consider for what causes the Jews might put away their wives, and by that precedent examine whether God (our Husband) hath so threatened to put away us. And because in the place where divorce is permitted, Deut. xxiv., those essential circumstances are not set down, which were required in those bills of divorce, and without which they were void; give me leave to borrow so much exemplification from a great light in our church, as he hath collected for the clearing of this point.

[1.] This bill of divorce might not be written in private, not in the husband's bed-chamber; but by a scribe, a public notary, or some such authorized officer. Where, O disconsolate soul, canst thou find such a bill sent thee from the hand of God? There is no looking for it in his bed-chamber, in his unrevealed decrees, for they are kept private in heaven; but in his public records, his Scriptures. Now these are books of covenant, of contract; not of separation or divorce. In what place hath God said to thy sad soul, Get thee gone, I will none of thee? If any clause in that sacred instrument seems to trouble thee, do not follow the misinterpretation of thine own brain, but consult the dispensers of those holy mysteries; from them thou shalt find comfort.

[2.] The wife, how guilty soever in her own conscience, might not take herself to be put away, except the husband had expressly given her a bill of divorce. Hath thy Husband, thy God, done so to thee? Hath he any where set down the peremptory sentence of thy condemnation? As I live, saith the Lord, I would not the death of a sinner, nor the falling away of any soul, Ezek. xxxiii. 11. If of none, why of thine? He would have all men to be saved, 1 Tim. ii. 4: if all, does he except thee?

[3.] Those bills of divorce were to be testified by witness, and these beyond exception. If thou imagine a bill of reprobation against thee, what witnesses be there to it? Here thou mayst bring in against thyself, the melancholy of a distempered brain, the uncomfortable sadness of a sullen heart, the dejection of a jealous spirit, the distrust of mercy, and diffidence in the promises of the gospel: but are these witnesses to be heard against God? yea, against thyself? They have not a sound mind; their testimony is nothing worth. O but my conscience is a thousand witnesses. It is, that thou hast committed a thousand sins; it is, that thou hast received a thousand blessings. But that there is an eternal decree of reprobation against thee, thy conscience (misinformed) can be no witness; for thou wast not called to the making of those decrees. God calls heaven and earth to witness, that he hath offered thee thy choice of life or death; but that he hath thrust death upon thee, in heaven or earth, there is no witness.

[4.] Those bills of divorce were to be authentically sealed: but canst thou show any such bill of everlasting separation from God, with his seal to it? He hath given us two fair and broad seals of his mercy, in both the sacraments; seals in white, and seals in red wax: of white, in the participation of the candour and innocence of his Son, in our baptism; of red, in the participation of his body and blood, in the holy supper. But for any seal of reprobation, or of irrevocable divorce from God, thou canst show none; there is none. If thou pretend such a one, because thou hast fallen into sin, know that it is but a counterfeit deed, an instrument of Satan's forging; there is neither God's hand nor seal to it. O but I am plagued more than other men. What of that? Is this a seal of God's anger? Was it not to be a seal of God's favour? "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth," Heb. xii. 6. For spiritual defects, there may be a scruple in thy conscience, a perplexity in thy resolution, a darkness in thy understanding; yet who dares call all this a seal of God's utter dereliction? For temporal sufferings, not a sudden death, not a shameful death, not a stupid death, not a raging death, must be to thyself by the way, or to those that see thine end, an evidence or seal of reprobation, or of final falling from God. That God, who hath unsearchable ways to his unsearchable ends, both bless us from all these in ourselves, and from making any of these, when they fall upon others, seals and tokens of his everlasting wrath.

[5.] The names of the parties must be set down, and of both the parties' parents, and that to the third generation. Is there any such thing in our feigned bill? We may conceive three descents on our Husband's side, in the blessed Trinity: first God the Father, then God the Son begotten of the Father, and then God the Holy Ghost proceeding from the Son and the Father. The Holy Spirit we know to be the God of our consolation; the Son, to be the God of our redemption; the Father, to be the God of our creation; but can we find a God of separation, a God of rejection, among all these? We may conceive three descents on our own side: first, as we

are the children of dust, of nothing; next, as we are the children of Adam, reducible to nothing; last, as we are the children of God in Christ, in whom we are all things. God hath married us in all these estates. First, in the house of dust, where he made us good; then, in the house of ruin, where he found us lost; and last, in the house of peace and grace, where he redeemeth us in Christ. He did not put us from him in our creation, nor utterly reject us in our prevarication; and now in the house of our restitution, in the church, in the body of his Son, will he divorce us there? Who can suspect it?

[6.] Lastly, if the bill were interlined, or blotted, or dropped upon, it was void. Pretend any place of Scripture that may seem to condemn thee; and know that that place is interlined; interlined by the Spirit of God, with conditions, limitations, provisions, and exceptions. If thou repent, if thou return: that interlining cancels the bill. Look well, and thou shalt find it blotted and dropped upon: the venom of the serpent is dropped upon it; the wormwood of thy desperation is dropped upon it; the gall of thy melancholy is dropped upon it; and this voids the bill. And if thy moody and clouded eyes cannot discern these drops, do thou drop upon it thyself. Drop upon it the tears of true contrition and repentance: that shall void the bill. Drop upon it the blood of thy Saviour; that shall destroy the bill. Through that blood look upon the bill, and thou shalt see that it was nailed to the cross, when he was nailed; and torn, when his body was torn; and that hath quite cancelled the bill. Now, "Where is the bill of your divorcement?" Isa. l. 1. There is none such; never imagine it, for God hath not made it. There is a book of his covenant with us in Jesus Christ; to that let us adhere faithfully, and we shall never fall away from his mercy.

5. Men called into the truth, may yet fall far from their own steadfastness; that is, from that measure of stability which for the present they have: yet not totally, so as to have no firmness at all, to lose even the very foundation and principles of truth, or to suffer an utter eradication of grace. Or if they fall so fearfully, yet this lapse may not be final; the grace of God is not debared them, nor the gate of mercy shut against them, nor is the sentence of irrevocable damnation passed upon them. Falling must needs include a mutation of state and place: he is not fallen, that is not removed from off the place, or down from the station, which he had, and wherein he stood. A man may slip, or stumble, or stoop low; but if he fall, his footing was lost, his holdfast gone. He is not where he was, nor as he was: neither in the state, nor in the degree, the same that he was before. There is a consummation, when holiness is crowned with reward in the end; and there is a continuation, which holds out to the end: and there may be an interruption; either by the seducing of others, or falling away of ourselves, in the text: which yet is not quite secluded from mercy, nor deprived of hope; for after one, more, many falls, there may be as many recoveries by grace. He that falleth to-day, may rise again to-morrow, hold out to the end, receive the reward of righteousness, and be crowned with immortal glory. In this great question, which at this present so exerciseth the studies of the Christian world; Whether a man may fall from grace; or if he do fall, whether totally and not finally, or finally and totally, or neither? it were a dangerous boldness for me to determine. It belongs not to our meanness and littleness to speak; humble doves must not presume to see so far as eagles. That which I purpose to deliver concerning this argument, shall be short, profitable, and comfortable: and all

this by way of application and use, in three words; *caveat, sperate, confidite*: of caution, hope, confidence.

(1.) *Caveat*, beware: that is our apostle's rule here, so he teacheth me; it is my rule, so I desire to teach you; and let it be your rule, so to guide your own hearts. There be four degrees that incline and dispose us to falling, as it were four stairs ere we come to the bottom: this beware is to be set on the forehead of them all. First, a wavering; when we begin to doubt, and to question that truth, which we have so long embraced: this is the first step of falling from our own steadfastness. Unbelief is the bane of constancy and perseverance; of constancy, in the purpose of our mind; of perseverance, in the tenor of our life. When we once come to daily with God's word, and to regard it by halves, we are in the way to despise it, or not to regard it at all. Let him that standeth take heed lest he fall: if the devil can but once get us to stand still, he conceives hope of our falling. His salutation is like the thief's, Stand and deliver: no sooner stand at a stay in goodness, but presently deliver your innocence. Secondly, a fainting; when we grow weary of the walk of righteousness. Fainting is the next step to forsaking; they that keep not their old pace, have a mind to tire. Beware of both these: that thou stand not to demur; that thou languish not in the way. Thirdly, a looking back; so Lot's wife lost herself. Her charge was, Look not back, lest thou die: she would look back, to die for it. Be not weary of well-doing, Gal. vi. 9: it is ill to buy the ease of our body with the hazard of our soul; but worse to look back; for that is as much as to say, we have left our heart behind. The first thing that a recreant soldier forsakes, is his courage; and the last thing that forsakes him, is his heels. He that hath but his eye set a running from the spiritual wars, means that his soul and body shall follow after. Fourthly, an estranging of the heart; that is the lower stair; when we come to be glutton with godliness, to loathe manna, and to be weary of our obedience. So Lot's wife was weary of shifting so often; and removing from Ur to Haran, from Haran to Canaan, from Canaan to Egypt, from thence to Canaan again, then to Sodom, and now to Zoar: she takes the conceit of more troubles ensuing still; and therefore even resolves to prefer Sodom and her pleasures, before Zoar and the desolate mountains.

Caveat, beware of these dangerous precipices. First, let us think that it is the devil's suggestion, You need not make so much haste; you shall come thither time enough; heaven will not run away. Secondly, that we forfeit all the fruit of our former well-continued course, by a relapse; we have done all in vain. Nay, we have not only lost our own labour, but have caused Christ to lose his labour too; so that all his sorrows and sufferings are in vain to us. Thirdly, let us think on the folly of beginning in the Spirit, and ending in the flesh, Gal. iii. 3; of laying a precious foundation of our house, and then finishing it with a covering of thatch. If the righteous man turn, all his righteousness shall be forgotten, Ezek. xviii. 24. Would it not grieve us, by the error of one hour, to make void the perseverance of many years? Fourthly, let us think on the disgrace, the scandal, the infamy of this reversion: the disgrace to ourselves, while we live; the scandal to others, when we are dead; and the infamy of our names to be enrolled in the catalogue of the revolvers from the faith. Fifthly, let us think on the difficulty to be reclaimed: when the residence of one wicked spirit is filled up with seven worse, Matt. xii. 45. Sixthly, let us think on God's exemplary judgments upon the relapsed; how Lot's wife in the act of her

looking back was turned into a pillar of salt, Gen. xix. 26. We desire to repent ere we die: she was taken away in the very article of her sin. We desire to die with respite, and from sudden death we pray God to deliver us: hers was sudden; she looked backward, and never looked forward more; it was her last look. We would die the common death of mankind, and be visited after the visitation of other men, Numb. xvi. 29; hers was a strange kind of death. Being dead, our wish is to be buried; she remained above ground, the spectacle of God's wrath to posterity. A reed she was, a pillar she is; she was melting water, she is congealed to salt. Seventhly, consider, that not to continue, shall speed as ill as not to begin. *Non ingreditur*, and *non progreditur*, not to enter the way, and not to keep the way, find but little difference at last. Not to come out of the state of sin, is to perish; and to relapse when we are come out, is to perish too. One and the same end is to the sinner without repentance, and to the righteous without perseverance. Eighthly, yea, lastly, revolting believers shall justify unbelieving sinners; their frozen iniquity shall condemn our melting piety. If they be obdurate in vice, shall not we be constant in virtue? Beware therefore: you may fall, beware you do not; you may fall very far, God keep you from it.

(2.) *Sperate*, hope. When we consider sin in the horrid foulness of it, we have great cause of dejection: and to him that will not fall down on his knees in repentance, for falling from his own steadfastness, I dare promise no comfort; no hope of comfort; no more than I can promise fruits to that piece of ground upon which no moisture falls. We have erred, and so are guilty of weakness; we have erred after knowledge, and so are guilty of wickedness; we have erred after the receipt of many mercies, and so are guilty of unthankfulness; we have erred against many stops and gracious withstandings of our sin, and so are guilty of wilfulness. If all this cannot humble us, and break our hearts with remorse, *no sperate*; look not for that at my hands. I dare not, I cannot open the door, when God hath shut it; no more than I can or dare shut the door, when God hath opened it. "He that hath the key of David, openeth, and no man shutteth; shutteth, and no man openeth," Rev. iii. 7. He hath opened the door of mercy to repentance, and who dare shut it with a Depart ye? Against impendency he hath barred it, and who can open it with a Hope ye? But when, on the other side, we consider the infinite mercy of our gracious God, how far our evil comes short of his goodness, how readily he answers to the voice of repentance, how willing he is to lift up those that be down and that call upon him for help, how able he is to reconvert the dejected; then we proclaim to all them that would stand, and yet do fall; to them that are fallen, and would rise; that are led away, and would return; Hope ye, be of good cheer. "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able," 1 Cor. x. 13. "I have loved thee with an everlasting love," Jer. xxxi. 3. Whom he loveth, he loveth to the end, John xiii. 1. "Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand," Psal. xxxvii. 24. "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee," Heb. xiii. 5. Every sentence breathes into our fainting hearts a Hope ye; sure comfort.

Though you may think in your sorrow that you have quite left God; yet God in his purpose hath not quite left you. But it is, you say, a common complaint, The Lord hath forsaken us. "Then hast cast off and abhorred," Psal. lxxxix. 38. David expostulates, Why hast thou forsaken me? and the Son

of David came to this: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Matt. xxvii. 46. Yet consider; did God forsake either of them? He might be angry with David his servant, for his grievous sins; more angry with Christ his Son, for the sins of all the world: and in their present sense, that anger might work in them an apprehension of his forsaking them: but he did not forsake them, nor will he forsake thee; thou mayst think so, but God will not do so. Who should occasion such a forsaking? It must be either God or thyself; no devising of a third. Satan is an enemy, and God will not hear him; thou knowest him a liar, do not then believe him. God will not do it, he never forsakes first. If it be done, it must be thy fault: and if thou acknowledge that it is done for thy fault, it is not done; for that acknowledgment implies a free confession; that confession proceeds from a true repentance; repentance procures a pardon; and what is pardoned, is as if it never was committed.

(3.) *Confidite*, be confident. Let us trust in the Lord's strength, by which alone we may be kept from falling; and in the Lord's mercy, by which alone we may be raised up when we are fallen. So feeble are we without the support of grace, that there oftentimes appears very little difference between the righteous and unrighteous. Both are subject to, and the former more exercised with, temptations. When a bad motion is suggested, the wicked receive it, and delight in it. And, by your favour, so did David as well as Saul; and so do we all too often. The wicked give consent of will to it. So do the other, if grace but a little hide itself. They practise it. So sometimes do the righteous, if the Spirit restrain them not. The ungraciously lie in sin. And so do the other, till God raise them. Where then is the difference? Surely, somewhat in the persons: the ungodly are carried into sin without resistance; the other are overborne with violence, but not without resistance: "The evil that I would not that I do," Rom. vii. 19. But the main difference is in the mercy of God; if we escape temptation, it is his mercy; if we stand in temptation, it is his mercy; if our wills consent not, it is his mercy; if we consent and the act be hindered, it is his mercy; if we fall and rise again by repentance, all is his mercy. All our trust stands in his mercy. Not that thereby we should be encouraged to fall, for that were presumption; but being fallen, that thereby we should hope to rise again, and so be kept from desperation. We are nothing in ourselves; we have no way but to trust in Jesus Christ.

6. It is dangerous to fall at any time; but then worst, when we have stood some time in the truth. To have steadfastness, and not to hold it; after long standing, then to fall; is deadly. The nearer to heaven, the sorer bruise in falling down to the earth. For the winter brooks, Job vi. 15, if they dry; for the summer fruits, Amos viii. 1, if they rot; for the morning clouds, Amos vi. 4, if they scatter; for the shallow-rooted corn, Matt. xiii. 20, if that wither; for flitting and unstable professors, if they languish; the grief is the less, because there was little better hope of them. But for men that have embraced the truth, a long time defended it, suffered many injuries for the defence of it; digested the bitterness of many sorrows, when that showed them their sins; and sucked the sweetness of many comforts, when that assured them of forgiveness: that these men, after all this, should fall from their own steadfastness: alas! how can it be thought on without tears? Pharaoh could seem religious when the fit took him; every great plague put him into a fever, and then he was golly on the sudden; O pray for me now:

but when the fit was over, Pharaoh was Pharaoh again, as profane as ever. Nine times he began to relent, and nine times again he hardened his heart. But he was never good, egg nor bird: his beginning was naught, his proceeding worse, and who could look for any better at his latter end? Saul kept himself well for two years, Judas for three years, and (as it is storied) Nero for five years; yet all fell into damnable wickedness; scarce three worse in the world.

But most lamentable is the memory of Lot's wife. How long did she stand stedfast! By computation of time, from Abraham's going out of Ur, to the destruction of Sodom, it was thirty years; so long did she abide in the family of the faithful, full thirty years. She escaped the superstitions of Egypt, she was not defiled with the sins of Sodom: neither the famine of Canaan, nor the fulness of the cities of the plain, made her fall away: she endured much with Abraham and Lot, in their exile, in their travel, in all their afflictions. Yet she that escaped all these perils on the sea of this world, shipwrecks in the very haven; at the entry of Zoar, where she should have saved her life, she willfully lost it. How should we tremble at these precedents! what a sensible impression should we take of our own weakness! Let the wicked be like goats; the older they grow, the worse and more fulsome meat they are; and in their old age, not edible, not endurable. But that men should appear sheep all their days, and in their latter end turn to goats; from pillars in the church, for their steadfastness, to reeds in the wilderness, for their levity; is sad news to heaven and earth, to angels and men; and only welcome tidings to the fiends in hell. Beware, therefore; let us not verify Nebuchadnezzar's dream, to be golden proselytes, brazen professors, iron politicians, and then to end our old age in clay. Let not our souls turn to clay, before our bodies be turned into clay. But rather in this, let us be like fame, which *vires acquirit eundo*, i. e. acquires strength as it goes; or let our goodness be a river, which is small at the spring or beginning, but enlargeth itself, gathers in fresh waters, fills the channel, and at last empties itself into the ocean of mercy.

7. Lastly, the summary use, the principal scope, the main antidote to prevent all this, is perseverance to the end. When God had created the light, it is added, he "saw that it was good," Gen. i. 4. When he had created and disposed the heaven, the earth, the waters, he "saw that it was good," ver. 10. When he had distinguished the lights of heaven, he "saw that it was good," ver. 18. When he had blessed the earth to bring forth plants, grass, herbs, and made the beasts and cattle to feed upon it, he "saw that it was good," ver. 25. When he had replenished the air with fowls, the water with fishes, he "saw that it was good," ver. 21. He gave them all his approbation, and commended them every one in the beginning; each in particular, all in general, very good. But when he came to man, and had made him for whom he made all the rest, he paused upon the matter, and never graced him with the least commendation in the beginning. What might be the reason? St. Ambrose gives it, He was first to be tried, and then to be commended. (Lib. 7. de Institut. Virg.) In Christians, not the beginning, but the end, is praised. I will keep thy statutes always, even unto the end, Psal. cxix. 112. We belong to Christ, "if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end," Heb. iii. 6. We are partakers of Christ, "if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end," ver. 14. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life," Rev. ii. 10. "To him that

keepeth my words unto the end, will I give the morning star," ver. 26, 28. This is the way to be safe while we live, and to be saved when we die. We have many considerations and motives to spur us on to perseverance.

(1.) Without this, all our service is a maimed sacrifice. If a sacrifice be offered to God, he likes it not, unless it come entire; *cum cauda*, with its latter end. No defective oblation pleaseth: the lame and sick will be refused by the very governor, Mal. i. 8. It must have horn and hoof, Psal. lxxix. 31; and not want so much as a tail; for the tail-piece (by name) is disposed of in the sacred rituals, Lev. iii. 9: to show that no holy course is accepted, if it be not closed up with a good end. The holy oil which was poured on Aaron's head, ran down to the skirts of his vestment, Psal. cxxxiii. 2: if God do not find the unction of his grace in the conclusion of our life, if that be dried up in the skirts, we might as well have neither had garment nor oil at all. Perseverance is the sister of patience, the daughter of constancy, the mother of peace, the mistress of concord; the pickle and preserver of virtues, without which they will putrify; the salt of the covenant, without which the flesh of our sacrifice will take wind and corrupt.

(2.) Unsteadfastness is an argument of unsoundness: they that are not constant, never were sincere. "A friend loveth at all times," Prov. xvii. 17; for ever; and he was never a true friend, that ceaseth to be so. He that truly loves Christ, never leaves him. "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations," Luke xxii. 28. Yes, that is the trial; they love him indeed, that love him in his distress. It was a just complaint of that rebellious generation, that their "spirit was not stedfast with God; their heart was not right with him," Psal. lxxviii. 8, 37. Though it be an argument *a posteriori*, yet it holds: if we see men give over their loyalty to God at last, their hearts were never upright with him at the first. God takes up no room in the corporation of man, for his bed-chamber, but the heart; he lies at the sign of the Heart. Therefore the voice of constancy is, My heart is ready. If thou wilt make me a king, my heart is ready: if I must continue a shepherd, still my heart is ready. So Paul was ready for honour, ready for disgrace; for poverty or riches, for joy or sorrows, for life or death; for all ready. Such a Christian is well shod; he will hold out to the latter end.

(3.) It is a rule in the civil law, That is as good as nothing, which holdeth not. Nothing is said to be done, as long as any thing remains to be done. A will unfinished, is no will; a deed, unless it be signed, sealed, and delivered, is no deed. In the paying of money upon bond, the want of a shilling forfeits a hundred pounds. They that wrought in the vineyard, must labour to the evening, before they have the reward: will any master think his servant's day's work done when he goes to bed at noon? Is that house finished which wants a roof? *Concedunt prima postremis*; i. e. The former part of our life yieldeth unto the latter, and the latter carries it quite away from the former. The sinner that repents, bath his wickedness blotted out; in his present righteousness he shall live: the righteous that relapseth shall not have his righteousness mentioned; in his present sin he shall die, Ezek. xviii. 22, 24. According to what we are, not what we have been, we shall be judged. Mary Magdalene was a sinner at first, at last a saint; so a saint she shall be found in judgment, not a sinner. Herod heard John; good was his beginning: he did many things well; better was his proceeding; but when he concluded with the murder of John, this marred all. His beginning is forgotten, his proceed-

ing not thought on, but his conclusion was his confusion; that sent him to hell. Judas shall not be judged as a preacher, but as a traitor; not according to his apostleship, wherein he lived, but according to his treachery, wherein he died. Our first love will do us no good, if we forsake it, Rev. ii. 4; nor our beginning in the Spirit, if we end in the flesh, Gal. iii. 3. As Gregory the Great was said to be the first of the bad bishops of Rome, and the last of the good ones; the first of the bad, because he brought in innovations; and the last of the good, because there never came any so good after him; so our standing at a pause in religion, and weighing (with Demas) the truth of the gospel in one balance, for which we are so troubled, with the peace of the world in the other balance, by which we may be so enriched, may be called the first of our bad actions, and the last of our good ones. The first of our bad; for he that shall but dare to bring Christ in competition with the world once, hath ungratefully sinned: the last of our good; for to try the spirits, and by examination of the truth to confirm our own faith, may be a good work; but Christ so seems to be put into the scales with the world, that he justly gives that man over to the world, which durst offer to rank it with Christ.

(4.) The end of every thing is all in all. The end for which a thing is ordained, denominates it. *Ante obitum nemo beatus*; i. e. No one is happy before his death; (Hieron.) die well, then blessed. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord," Rev. xiv. 13; they that die blessed, are sure to live blessed for ever. Blasphemers and secure transgressors were so hedged in with prosperity, that David stood at a maze, wondering what the Lord meant to do with them; at last he was let into the sanctuary, and suffered to behold, and then he understood their end, Psal. lxxiii. 17; which was indeed sudden destruction. But mark the righteous, and "the end of that man is peace," Psal. xxxvii. 37. The children of this world seeing the righteous so encompassed with troubles, their eyes still wet, their whole life exercised with sufferings, give them for lost men, quite out of God's books; but mark their end: Now they are numbered among the children of God, and their lot is among the saints, Wisd. v. 5; lo, now the wicked are of another mind. We say, All is well that ends well: so the main end of our whole life, should be to make a good end of our life. We may also say, That is ill which ends ill: he that dies a bad man, was never indeed a good one. In show there might be little difference; but the end distinguisheth all, as St. Bernard speaks of Paul and Judas. Judas began well, but finished ill; Paul began ill, and finished well. (Ad Soror. cap. 20.) The bulrush, in the fable, derided the vine, that it must endure such digging and weeding, such pruning and binding, and be vexed with such a deal of trouble, only to yield man a little good liquor; whereas the other, without any molestation, might enjoy its own happiness. Summer comes, the sun scorches, yet still the vine flourishes, shaded with leaves, and laden with fruits; but the moisture of the bulrush being spent, it hangs down the head, and droops, and withers; and being trodden upon with beasts, confesseth that the end is all: in vain is it in the beginning to flourish, and in the end to perish.

(5.) Christ persevered for us; and shall not we persevere for him, in him, to him? He was a Friend indeed, for he loved to the last, John xiii. 1. To the end, shall I say? nay, more; of his love there is no end. There was no beginning of his love, nor can there be an ending. He is not only the Founder, but the Finisher of our salvation, Heb. xii. 2. To signify this, he appeared to St. John, in a long garment down to his lower end, Rev. i. 13. He never

rested, till he could triumph in his *Consummation est*, It is finished; till all was done that was to be done, for the accomplishment of our redemption. Much he endured, and that much long, even to the last gasp. How strangely was that heavenly Vine pruned upon earth! His honour was pruned with the knife of ignominy; his peace, with the knife of enmity; his estate, with the knife of poverty; his friends, with the knife of persecution; and yet he held out, till his life was pruned with the knife of death. Nor was this a common death; but the kind of death was more sad than death itself. "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death," Matt. xxvi. 38. Not his scourges, nor his thorns, nor his nails, made Christ open his mouth; but the sorrow of his soul. Why then did he not give over? All that he was to endure that night and the day following, was presented to his mind, when he said, My soul is heavy even unto death. Why then did he not draw back? Why did he not follow Peter's counsel, "This shall not be unto thee?" Matt. xvi. 22. No, the love of our souls triumphed over the love of his own life; on he will go, and persevere he will, till his last drop of blood be spent on the cross for us. Yea, what king ever went so willingly to be crowned, as he to be crucified? who so gladly from execution, as he to it? What man was ever so desirous to save his life, as Christ was to lose it? Witness that speech; "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished?" Luke xii. 50. His mind was in pain, till his body and soul came to it. And to him that dissuaded him from it, he used no other terms than to the devil himself; "Get thee behind me, Satan," Matt. xvi. 23. So willingly went he to it, so unwillingly would he be kept from it. He went on foot when he was to preach and do good; but he rode for haste, when he was to suffer evil. His willingness was so great, that his blood would not stay the executioner's leisure, but did burst out into a sweat, a strange sweat, in his bitter agony in the garden.

All this he foresaw before he suffered; and while he did foresee, he suffered. This made his soul so heavy: it might arise from three causes. From the weight of the objects: never sorrow like his sorrow, for never sufferings like his sufferings. From the susceptibility of the sufferer: he was able (through that hypostatical union) to suffer all that God's justice could inflict; all the punishments due to all the sins of all men. From the singleness or entireness of the pain; no relief, no ease, no comfort: he found never a Reuben to say, Let us not kill him, for he is our brother, Gen. xxxvii. 26. There was no such clear apprehension of sin as in him; he saw it in all its foulness. No such perfect detestation of sin as in him; he hated it with all extremeness: yet he must suffer for it; "The Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all," Isa. liii. 6. He foreknew all this; why did he not prevent it? Why did it not dishearten him? He was safe enough; who could touch him? He was at supper among his friends; why did he go into the garden among his enemies, where the traitor waited for him? His apprehenders fell backward with a word of his mouth; why then did he not leave them? When he had smited with the scourges, why would he endure the thorns? Losing so much blood with the thorns, why would he yield to the nails? O Lord, how little sorrow makes us draw back, and sink away from thee! Yet no torments could procure thee to forsake us. Thus did Christ persevere unto the death, that he might save us; and shall not we persevere all our life in our service to him? He is "Alpha and Omega," Rev. i. 8; not only Alpha, for his happy beginning; but Omega, for his thrice

happy ending. He never left us, till he had made it sure that God would never leave us. Now the highest act of religion, is for the Christian to conform himself unto Christ. He never fell from us; we are basely unthankful, if ever we fall from him.

(6.) God himself is eternal, who expects our service. Now what hath levity and inconstancy to do with eternity? (August.) When doth God give over feeding, and protecting, and blessing of us; that we should give over serving of him? In youth? No, Thou hast upheld me ever since I was born. In old age? No, I am feeble and grey-headed; but thou art my Comforter. In my joy? No, for thou makest my cup to overflow, Psal. xxiii. 5. In my sorrow? No, for in the multitude of the sorrows of my heart, thy comforts refresh my soul, Psal. xciv. 19. At any other time? No, for thou wilt never leave me, nor forsake me, Heb. xiii. 5. Is there any time then for us to forget him in? In our jollity? No, I will remember thee in my mirth, Psal. cxxxvii. 6. In our sorrows? No, In trouble we will visit thee, and pray when thy chastening is upon us, Isa. xxvi. 16. In youth? No, then we must remember our Creator, Eccl. xii. 1. In our old age? No, let Asa's example forewarn us of that. The Lord takes charge of us so long as we have any being; therefore so long as we have any being let us look to the charge of the Lord. If God blesseth thee, O Christian, in his eternity, he looks that thou shouldst serve him in thy eternity. His love lasts longer than our service; yet let our service last as long as our life: this is all we can do, and our gracious Maker asks no more.

(7.) The reward of our service is eternal; why should not our service be so? Why should not God require a long, lasting obedience, for an everlasting recompence? why not holiness unto the end, for a blessing in the end, which shall be without end? Bernard saith, There is joy in the end, but joy without end. Indeed it is base, merely to serve for the reward. That is the impulsive cause, not the efficient or constituent cause; for the good man would be good were there no heaven. The heathens called virtue, a theatrical good; as if a man would not be virtuous, if he had no spectators to take notice of him. But it is false; for virtue will be as clear in a desert, as in a theatre, though not so conspicuous; only it may grow more strong by the observation and applause of others, as a heat that is doubled by the reflection. Of two horses, the one will go well without the spur, the other will go better with the spur: shall we say of this latter, Tush, the life of this horse lies but in the spur! No, for the spur is no matter of impediment, but an ordinary instrument. So the reward, which is glory, and honour, and eternal life, are but the spurs to righteousness and good works, which would often lag and languish without them; and these are ever ready to attend upon goodness. So though we would run well without a reward, yet the consideration of this reward may make us amend our pace. The Lord and Giver of life did not refuse the proposed reward. "Who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross," Heb. xii. 2. Though he were the fountain of joy, and had it infinitely in himself; yet the better to bear out his sorrows in the way, he propounded to himself the joy in the end. I know that true love does not derive strength from hope; it loveth without hope of benefit: yet to quicken our love, which is so apt to faint, let us remember the reward. The forehead of the righteous are marked with Tau, Ezek. ix. 4; which (as Omega in the Greek) is the last letter in the Hebrew alphabet: and the sign of "It is finished," among them. Now these titles are inseparable

to the reward. It is not only a life, but a life everlasting, Matt. xxv. 46; not only an inheritance, but an "inheritance incorruptible," 1 Pet. i. 4; not only a kingdom, but a "kingdom which cannot be moved," Heb. xii. 28; not only a crown, but a crown of immortality. These be the attributes that belong to the reward; and must not the like belong to the service? Perseverance is the image of eternity, saith Bernard. All that we can do, is to serve God while we live; and all that we can wish, is to reign with God when we die. O then let us fix our eyes on the prize, and gather up our feet to the race, and still reach forth to the things that are before; forgetting the things behind, and pressing toward "the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus," Phil. iii. 14.

(8.) As perseverance is the queen of all virtues, because it is alone crowned; so it is also, because Satan alone lays snares for it: the devil is ever fighting against the latter end. As the king of Syria charged his captains, to "fight neither with small nor great, save only with the king of Israel," 1 Kings xxii. 31; so the prince of darkness commands his commanders, the leaders of his troops, and those that stand at the head of his companies, his master-temptations, not to fight against any virtue, small or great, but only against perseverance in goodness; upon whose head he knows the crown must fall. He bestirs himself, not only because he knows his own time to be short, Rev. xii. 12, but because he perceives our time to be short. Therefore he redoubles his forces, as if he still meant to make the last conflict the sorest; resolving to set all at that stake, and either now to win, or to sit down with loss and despair. The most fiery dart in his quiver, he reserveth to our death-bed; if we can quench that, the enemy is hopeless. Good cause have we then to make much of perseverance, which the devil would so fain get from us. Eternal life is not given to all, for then we would all presume; nor to none, for then we would all despair; but it is given to him that overcometh. Fight therefore to the last minute: the eye of thy Saviour is upon thee; if thou faint, to cheer thee; if thou fight, to second thee; if thou conquer, to crown thee. So that no combat, no conquest; no conquest, no triumph. Continuance is the crown of all other graces, and heaven shall be the crown of continuance.

(9.) The wicked are constant in their sins; why are not we in holiness? They labour hard for that which shall confound them, and shall we think any pains too much for that which shall save us? They will not be persuaded to break off their sins by repentance; and shall we be tempted to break off our repentance by sin? If they will know no period of their rebellion, till they sink down into hell; for shame let us know no date of our obedience, till we come up into heaven. Wickedness, like the sea, hath bounds; God, by his blessed providence, hath limited the raging waves of them both; but goodness knows no limitation. They cannot be so evil as they would; we have liberty to be as good as we can. The children of grace, and the children of disobedience, have their several races: they set out together: heaven is the goal of the former, hell of the other. Indeed the wicked may sooner and more easily get to their journey's end; for it is but tumbling down the hill; yet though we cannot be in heaven so soon as they are in hell, we may be as sure of the joys of the one, as they are of the pains of the other, if we hold on our journey. Though our salvation be with more difficulty wrought up, than their perdition; yet grace, time, and diligence may work it up in due season. You find none of them

hankering in the ways of sin: the drunkard will hold out till he have lost his eyes; the incontinent, till he have wasted his loins; the contentious, till he have beggared his purse. What as hame, says one, that the ungrateful people of God show not so much perseverance in goodness, as the wicked do in evil! If ever they turn from sin, it is God's especial grace that gives them repentance; but when we fall from our steadfastness, it is through the defect of our own perseverance. The Lord make the former good, and the other better unto the end!

(10.) Lastly, it is perseverance alone that carrieth away the crown. It is the end, not the fight, that crowns. (Bern. de Pass. Dom. cap. 14.) Patience and perseverance are fellow-labourers in God's harvest: they work together, they sweat together, they suffer together; and if either of them be compelled to bear the heavier load, it is patience: yet though patience endure the burden, perseverance goes away with the blessing. (Bern. Libello qui vocatur. 8. punt.) "The Lord blessed the latter end of Job," Job xlii. 12: yet he was blessed very well in the beginning; for he had "seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, five hundred she asses;" and for the heirs of all this substance, "seven sons and three daughters," Job i. 2, 3. But his extraordinary blessing came at the last, when all his temptations were past; in the latter end of his book, and the latter end of his patience: God blessed the latter end of Job. Men are either cursed or blessed, not as they suffer in the middle, but as they speed in the end. Job might have some blessings in the beginning, sure he had many troubles in the midst, but his end made amends for all: God blessed the latter end of Job. Christianity is compared to a race: now in a race, all that run, win not; only "one receiveth the prize," 1 Cor. ix. 24. He gets the garland, that first gets the goal. But in this spiritual race it is otherwise: Not he that cometh first, but every one that holds out to the last, is crowned, says Chrysostom. I deny not, but we must also make haste, and not only strive to outrun them that run with us, but even to outrun ourselves. Let this day's pace mend yesterday's, and to-morrow's exceed them both. Old age, in secular races, is the more unwieldy disposition; but in this, the more vigorous, as being near the end of the course, and almost having the prize in hand.

The schoolmen make of this perseverance, not any one particular virtue, but a condition implied in every virtue. (Bonavent. in Sent. 3. Aquin. 1. 26. Ju. 5. 8. ar. 3.) It is *Dei donum, quo cetera servantur dona*, i. e. God's rare and especial gift; the maintainer and preserver of all his other gifts. (Aug. de Bon. Pers. lib. 2.) Without this, faith would languish into diffidence, hope give over her expectation, patience sink under her burden, and charity be weary of well-doing. Perseverance to virtue, is like the lungs to the heart; which keeps it in breath, and encourageth it to the end of the race. He that endureth unto the end, shall be saved, Matt. xxiv. 13; and he that doth not, shall lose all that he hath done. Coming but a foot short, may make a man miss the prize, and lose the wager he ran for: as in travel to a city, he loseth all his pains in the way, that gets not to his journey's end. True it is, that "every good and perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights," Jam. i. 7. The virtues that adorn a Christian soul, do every one of them claim kindred of Almighty God: they descend from him in the one and the other line. Yet perseverance is his only daughter and heir, which carries away all the patrimony. For whereas all other virtues run in the course, perseverance alone receives the prize:

so Augustine. Patience, repentance, temperance, all run well; only perseverance to the end gets the cup, the cup of God's blessing; as God blessed the latter end of Job. Our blessed Saviour once provided a table on earth, for the people, who had continued with him three days, Matt. xv. 32; not because they heard him, and a little followed him, but because they continued with him. And he hath promised a table in heaven; Ye shall "eat and drink at my table in my kingdom," Luke xxii. 30; but to whom? Not to those that only heard him with some attention, and followed him with some admiration; but to them only that continued with him: "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations," Luke xxii. 28. To teach us, that both these tables, the blessings of earth, and the blessings of heaven too, are provided only for them which persevere in their righteousness unto the end.

All those graces which the Holy Ghost hath wrought in us, must be cherished and continued to the latter end: for of those the Lord only blesteth the latter end. Patience is an excellent grace, but without perseverance it would often be to seek; as when an unwanted blow comes, the fencer is put from his ward. Repentance is a happy and necessary grace, yet without perseverance it would be dashed out of countenance, and be jeered for a sullen melancholy. Nothing dries up faster than a tear, says Tully: it seldom continues moist a whole day. Obedience itself would lose the reward by coming short, but for perseverance; for no virtue can expect those eternal blessings, but that which holds out to the latter end. Nothing but eternity can look to be rewarded with eternity. By our eternity we obtain the eternity of God. If we look for a happiness that shall continue as long as God's being, we must continue in a holiness which shall last as long as our being; I mean our mortal being on earth. So that no grace can lay claim to that blessedness, which is in the eternity of God, but perseverance to the end, which is the eternity of man. We would be happy upon earth, but especially we desire to be blessed in heaven; we cannot rise from the one to the other, but by climbing; Jacob's ladder is our way. Let us begin at the foot, which is grace here below; and so get up to the top, which is glory there above. But still remembering the state and condition of that holder: There were angels descending, and angels ascending; but none sitting, none standing still. (Bern. Ep. 253.) If we desire to have our faith blessed with vision, our hope changed into fruition, our repentance comforted with pardon, our charity crowned with glory, and all our service rewarded with eternal life; let us keep these graces in breath and motion, ever in the ascendant, climbing higher and higher, till they come to the top of immortality. And as when rivers toward their end, approach near unto the sea, then the tide comes and meets them; so when the course of our piety draweth near to the end of our life, God comes and meets us; comforts us with a taste of heaven before our death, and gives us, after death, the everlasting possession of it through Jesus Christ.

We see by this time, the manifold dangers, and manifest ruins, which follow upon the falling away from our own steadfastness: but, as Gregory says, What will it profit to know these things beforehand, if it should not be your lot to attain to them? Take heed for some short rules, to keep you constant in your way.

1. Begin with resolution; forecast the worst, and prepare for it. Both hope for the most even, and prepare thyself for the most uneven. (Sen. Ep. 24.) Some professors are but like those that go to sea

upon pleasure: they purpose to sail no further than they see the way clear before them; if the sea begin to work, or they to be sick, back again with all haste to the shore. But the right Christian is bound for heaven, as the merchant is for his port: storms and tempests cannot alight them; on they go, through fair or foul, till they arrive at the desire of their own hearts. Resolve to continue, or never begin.

2. Fortify thy heart with sincerity; be that within, which thou wouldst appear without. Nothing that is fictitious is lasting. (Ambr. Offic. lib. 2. cap. 20.) A false gloss disgraceth the stuff. Whatever things are counterfeit, are frail. (Cypr. ad Donat.) Counterfeit pearls will not hold their lustre. If our heart be not right, we cannot be steadfast, Psal. lxxviii. 37. The seed among stones will not prosper, Matt. xiii. 21; hollow-hearted, and shallow-rooted, soon gone. Whereas the firm plant is nourished and flourishes, does not wither, under the burning sun. (Aug. in Psal. xliiii.) As Jehu to Jehonadab, "Is thine heart right?" then come up into my chariot, 2 Kings x. 15. Come up; no descending, but all ascending and rising then. Some have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof, 2 Tim. iii. 5; all because they are not sound at the heart. A man is what he is when he is tried: the times of peace show no difference; every man then thinks himself good, but knows not whether he be so or not. Persecution is the touchstone; then many of the forward sink away; and they that made the least show of religion, stick closest to it. The outward profession of some is a blaze, the inward holiness of others a spark; persecution is the bellows, which blows the spark into a flame, the blaze into nothing, to the wonder of all men.

3. Keep a good conscience in all things, and thy faith from shipwreck, 1 Tim. i. 19. Conscience is the bark, and faith the commodity embarked; if the bark miscarry, what shall become of the commodity? Sins against conscience make foul breaches in this ship. Repentance indeed is the calker, to stop the leaks; but it is better to prevent the making of a breach, than put it to the remedy of stopping. We deal with our conscience as with our apparel: when we have got on a new suit, fresh and fair, we are very chary of abusing it; we take heed where we sit, what we touch, or against what we lean; but when it once grows a little old, soiled and sullied, we have no such regard of it; we little pass what we do with it, nor mind where we cast it. So the uxorious husband at the first idolizeth his wife: no noise must disturb her, the cold wind must not blow upon her, the sun must be shaded from her beauty, her feet must scarce touch the earth; nothing must offend her: she commands all; her will is a law. The sinner that is suddenly turned zealous professor, is no less tender over his conscience: not a word must pass his lips, nor a thought be admitted into his heart, without her strict examination and approbation. But full soon doth that dotard grow sick of his wife, and this zealot grow weary of his conscience; their love will languish, if they do not fall into the other extreme. The new suit is brushed, and carefully looked to; the wife at first is tenderly regarded; and the conscience for a while is kept most pure. But ere long, the suit will grow old, the wife stale, and the conscience troublesome, and there is no more respect had of them; so little duration there is in extremes.

4. Encourage thy heart to perseverance, by considering how short a time is set down for thy labourousness. So we to God, "Remember how short my time is," Psal. lxxxix. 47; so God returns it to us,

Yea, O man, remember this thyself, and be not weary of thy pains. What we live is but a point, says Seneca. And what can be long in that, which is so short of itself? "Be faithful unto death," Rev. ii. 10; no longer is required: it is a note of stint, as well as of extent, there. Not that our fidelity to Christ shall then cease, but then it shall be out of the danger of ceasing. Do but hold out to that day, and then thou art sure for ever. It is but for a short time, that we serve and suffer: and who would not for a short time endure any hardness, to live at heart's ease for ever after? We would serve a hard and unkind master upon such terms; much more a Lord so kind and liberal, that came to serve for us, ere he required this service of us, Matt. xx. 28. It is not long, but light, which is exacted of us, in respect of that which is expected by us, and promised to us. "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," 2 Cor. iv. 17.

VERSE 18.

But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.

Those things that God intended not for multiplication, were made perfect in their first being: perfect in nature, there needed no completion; perfect in number, there needed no addition; perfect in order, there needed no mutation; perfect in measure, there needed no augmentation; perfect in degree, there needed no melioration. The stars do not propagate; one star does not beget another; therefore God in the creation made as many stars as he purposed there should be. The angels do not multiply; one angel cannot beget another; therefore at first they were made in an abundant number. Nor needs there any accession of goodness or happiness to their being, for they are perfectly good, absolutely happy, according to their condition. But for the things of this world, their blessing was increase; and therefore their number was but small at the beginning, because they were made capable of propagation. So mankind began with two, in the creation; and the world was replenished by eight, in that restitution after the deluge. From those first two, how many millions have been and shall be derived! The earth is full, heaven shall be full, and it is to be feared that hell will be full too; and all of persons sprung from their loins. "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth," Gen. i. 28. This had been an infinite blessing, if Adam had stood in his innocency, and begot such as himself was in his first estate; but alas, he begat such as himself was in his fallen state; the bitterness whereof he tasted in his first-born son Cain, who was a fratriicide and a reprobate. It is worth our observation, the first man that died went to heaven, the first man that was born went to hell. Death is a punishment; yet though it seized on Abel, he was saved. Primogeniture was an honour, especially to be (though not the first man, yet) the first-born of mankind; Cain had this honour, and yet perished. Adam and Eve begat children in their own likeness; but they could not beget them in the likeness of God. They were created in his image, but in his image they could propagate none. By nature we increase our kind, but it must be by grace if any of our kind be blessed.

Thus we still multiply, nor shall there be a cessa-

tion of this increase, till God puts a stop into the wheels of time, and sets a period to all things. But this is not the full extent of that increase. There is a vegetative life in the body, whereby it grows in stature; and there is a quickening Spirit in the soul, whereby it grows in goodness. The tree bears a seed, by which it may bring forth other trees of the kind; and yet withal the same tree may grow in itself, both in respect of bulk, tallness, and fruits. There is an increase in the one, and a multiply in the other. If the body may grow in his capacity, why not the soul, in her capacity? The body may grow in quantity, till it become greater and taller; why may not the soul grow in grace till it become holier, and grow in knowledge till it become wiser, than it was before? The stars are at their highest, the angels are at their happiest; they cannot grow more bright or glorious. But men may grow from sinners to saints, by repentance; and from saints (as it were) to angels, by holiness. We come not immediately from our mother so perfect men, nor immediately from the sacred font so perfect Christians, but that we may admit a time of growing. We have the parts, but not the degrees of perfection. He that was perfection itself, yet would yield to the course of nature, and order and regulate his life by the direction of that, "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man," Luke ii. 52; in him dwelt "the fulness of the Godhead bodily," Col. ii. 9; he was the wisdom of God, and the only beloved of God: yet would he increase in all these; in wisdom, and stature, and favour with God and man. So must we grow till we come to "a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ," Eph. iv. 13.

"But grow in grace, and in the knowledge," &c. We read of two trumpets which Moses was commanded to make of silver, Numb. x. 2. So we have here two trumpets; one sounding from heaven to earth, Grow in grace; the other resounding from the earth to heaven, To Jesus be glory. The former soundeth forth a point of theology; the latter, a point of doxology. The sound from heaven, is a point of theology or divinity, summoning us to an increase of grace. The sound from earth, is a point of doxology, or thanksgiving, returning to God praise and glory. When God gave the law, it was delivered with the sound of trumpets; when he requires the law, it shall be with the sound of trumpets; "at the last trumpet." In both the angels are the ministers; in both, the instruments are trumpets. So after a metaphorical sense in the gospel, both in respect of what comes from Christ and what is returned to Christ, here is a trumpet and a trumpet: the one for proclamation, the other for acclamation; the proclamation of grace, the acclamation of glory; grace proffered by him, glory ascribed to him. "I will take the cup of salvation, and praise the name of the Lord," Psal. cxvi. 13. So here is "I will take the cup," in the one: and "I will praise the name," in the other.

In the sound of the former trumpet, two things are remarkable. 1. The ground of the lesson, The grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. 2. The descent upon it, and elongation of the note, Grow in this grace and knowledge. In the sound of the other trumpet, there are three notes. 1. What? Glory. 2. To whom? To Christ Jesus. 3. How long? Now and for ever. There is a time when this trumpet from heaven shall cease; the angelical trumpet shall put an end to the evangelical trumpet. There can be no time of proffering or receiving grace, when time itself shall be no more. No growing then, for the harvest is come. No increasing then, for all

they that are not full shall be sent away empty. But the latter trumpet shall sound always: Glory to God, is the song of the church militant, unto the end; and the song of the church triumphant, after the end, without end. All the saints and angels shall sound this trumpet, and sing this song, for ever: "Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever," Rev. v. 13.

The text begins as the world began, with an Increase; and ends as the Bible ends, with an Amen. There is *fiat* in either of them: that we may grow in grace, there needs God's *fiat* to that: that we may set forth his glory, there is required our *fiat* to this. This Amen is an echo, the answer to both these trumpets, and hath relation to both the corollaries. Christ wisheth grace to us, and we say Amen to this; we wish glory to Christ, and add again Amen to that. That his grace may be increased in us, Amen to that; that his glory may be advanced by us, Amen to that too. In regard of God's favour, and man's thankfulness, to them both, Amen. Thus the root of the tree is the grace of God, and the top of the tree is the glory of God. Grace in the foundation, glory in the roof of the building. Blessing in the beginning, and blessing in the end; it begins with God's blessing of us, it ends with our blessing of God; "who is blessed for ever. Amen," Rom. i. 25.

In the sound that comes from heaven, which is a hortatory persuasion, there be two principal things to be observed; the foundation, and the increase; grace, and growth; the root of the tree, and the growing of the tree. No growing without a root, and no live root from which there is no growing. Christ is the root, grace the sap, and knowledge the fruits; for so we shall find it to be, practical knowledge, which consists merely in the production of good works. Christ is the root that supporteth us, grace is the sap which he communicates to us, and knowledge or obedience is the fruit he expects from us. Grace hath the first room in the text, and so it shall have in my discourse. Wherein two circumstances sum up all. 1. What it is. 2. Of what value it is.

1. What it is. The poets took grace for beauty. With them, beauty in the face was a grace; comeliness in their carriage, a grace; handsomeness in wearing their garments, a grace; pleasantness in their discourse, a grace; bravery in their actions, a grace; but by their leave, it was but a poetical grace. We have those that take grace in a worse sense, even for that which is most ungracious, sin. He that wantonly can court his mistress, is said to do it with a grace. He that justifies an untruth, and bears it out with a smooth impudence, is said to come off with a grace. When a gallant manageth a foul quarrel, his abettors will not stick to say, that he carries it with a grace. Yea, of the very desperate blasphemer, his parasites will not be ashamed to report, that he swears with a grace. But if this be a grace, certainly it is a diabolical grace; it came from hell. The poet's grace owes much to nature and education; the sinner's grace is indebted to the devil and corruption: the former may pass, the latter is intolerable. God forbid that we should grow in such grace.

Divine grace is another thing; as it springs from a higher generation, so it is of a nobler disposition. As there be divers acceptations of it in the Scripture, so infinite distinctions of it in the school. There is uncreated grace, the free love and favour of God, which is called *χάρις*; so to Mary, "Thou hast found favour with God," Luke i. 30. And grace created or infused; which are the gifts of the first grace, called

χαρίσματα: so every good gift, natural, moral, or spiritual, is grace. Some would have *χάρις* to signify only saving grace; and *χαρίσματα*, such common graces as may be in the wicked. All grace is God's gift; nor will he give it to those that will not receive it. To give belongs to none but God; to receive to none but man, says one. The grace of God is without our will, but it is not within us without our will. The papists speak in the dialect of that harlot to Solomon: Neither mine nor thine, but let it be divided. Neither all to God, nor all to man, but let it be divided betwixt grace and free-will. This is false and injurious to God; for all goodness is from grace. It is either grace preventing, that converteth; or grace following, that confirmeth. So St. Augustine: Grace goeth before, that we may will; grace followeth after, that we may not will in vain. The cause of God's grace to us, is merely in himself: the internal motive is his own free love; the external impulsive is the merit of Christ. The effects of it are either eternal, in our election; or temporal, in our vocation, and sanctification. The gifts of grace are either common to all, or peculiar to the elect. There is grace privative, that keeps us from evil; and grace positive, that plants us with good. As for that of grace operating, and co-operating, it must be qualified; as that *acta fit activa voluntas*, i. e. the will being first moved by grace, is not idle; or else it will cross that infallible position, It is God that worketh in us both the will and the deed, Phil. ii. 13. And for that old one, of *gratia gratis data*, and *gratia gratum faciens*, i. e. grace graciously given, and grace making gracious, just exception might be taken against it; for when they speak of one kind of grace that is freely given, what do they but insinuate that there are other graces which are not freely given? But this is a distinction which hath so many grey hairs upon it, that I am loth to discredit it. Some, on the other side, are so young and abortive, that they would not be mentioned.

In a word, grace is either taken actively, for that love and favour of God whereby we are accepted in Jesus Christ; or passively, for the several gifts wrought in us by the Holy Spirit, and that improvement of our talents, whereby we bring forth acceptable fruits. The first grace is the cause, the other graces are the effects; the first is without us, the rest within us; the first is the original grace in God, the other are graces created and infused into us. In the former consists our justification, our sanctification in the latter. Our rooting is in the first, our growth in the other. When our faith waxeth stronger, our charity hotter, our patience meeker, our obedience more conseasonable, our conscience more sincere: this is to grow in grace. And the more we grow in goodness, which is the latter grace, our sanctification: the more assured we grow of the former, even the favour of God in Christ, which is our justification. Still the more holy, the more happy. It is true that our justification admits no latitude; we can be no more than just and righteous: but that grace is without us, no growing in that. But our sanctification admits of degrees and measure, and is within us: so that we may grow in that. We cannot be more just to-day than we were yesterday in respect of God; we may be more holy in regard of ourselves. And if we be not more beloved than we were, yet we shall feel ourselves more beloved and blessed than we were. We are all equal, every believer of us, in forgiving grace, but not in inherent grace; all equal in the grace that justifies us, not in the grace that sanctifies us; in this latter let us be growing. In the Old Testament we do not read of grace, but as it is taken for God's favour, or man's favour; never for an in-

herent habit. "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ," John i. 17.

"Grow in grace;" that is, in the improvement of the holy seed within us, and bringing forth the works of grace; then shall the first grace, which is the favour of God, enlarge his beams of mercy upon us. Thus our apostle began his Epistle, "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you;" that was his appreciation; so he concludes here in the end, "Grow in grace;" this is his exhortation. Peter only joined peace with grace, in his salutation: Paul used also to put in mercy; "Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord," 1 Tim. i. 2. We might look upon them, what they are, how many, and how ranked. All good things are referred to these three heads; a trinity of blessings, as it were from the Trinity of Persons: mercy from God the Father, grace from God the Son, and peace from God the Holy Ghost. Yet as grace never comes alone, mercy and peace come with it; so it never comes hindmost, it hath always the first place. But you will say, mercy is the cause of grace; why then is it placed after the effect? St. Paul went *a notiore ad ignotum*; i. e. from that which is known, to that which is unknown; for we had never known mercy but by grace: as he that would go to sea, must take a river by the hand. Mercy in the remission of sins, grace in the sanctification of life, peace in the eternal blessedness of heaven. But still grace hath the priority of place; and indeed, under God, it is all in all: we have no good, we do no good, but we must thank grace for it. Therefore in our common ejaculations, upon all occasions, when we hear others wish for divers temporal things, we sum up all in this one vote; God send us his grace, we ask no more. And surely we need not; for all blessings wait upon grace, as maids of honour upon the queen: grace, or nothing; grace, and every thing. This makes us equal to the angels; and without this we are miserable and forlorn wretches, worse than beasts. *Præstat non nasci quam sine gratia mori*. It is better not to be born, than to die without grace: which is my transition to the next point.

2. Of what value it is. But alas, who can value it? What gold can buy this pearl? What Indies can purchase it, where it is not; or redeem it, when it is lost? What would not the reprobate angels give, what would they not suffer, for one dram of grace! Though in their malice they hate it, yet for their ease they would fain have it. We cannot better tell how to value it, than by way of comparison. Put it into the balance with temporal things, and that will help us a little to know the worth of it.

(1.) Grace comes from the best fountain, the mercy of God in Christ. You will say, all temporal things come from the same fountain of goodness: "Every good gift is from above," Jam. i. 17. But though the spring be the same, Solomon distinguisheth them in the stream or current: "Length of days is in her right hand; and in her left hand riches and honour," Prov. iii. 16. Temporal things are the gifts of God's left hand; grace is the gift of his right hand: this he gives to his chosen, as Israel "laid his right hand upon the head of Ephraim," Gen. xlviii. 17. Temporal things do not make the possessor happy; grace does: yea, they make his account greater; grace makes it less.

(2.) Grace serves for the good of the noblest part of man, his soul; other things do but nourish or delight his mortal body. This moving coffin of the soul is but earth, and will crumble to earth; from that womb it proceeded, and to the same tomb it shall be gathered; dust to dust. But the gracious soul is a heaven, says one; having for a sun under-

standing, for a firmament faith, for influence charity, for motion hope; the Holy Ghost for our Mover; and an army of virtues instead of stars. Such is the honour of grace.

(3.) Nothing but grace can satisfy the soul. The proud self-lover will have all his apparel sit in print; and though he be in pain, yet will he not complain that his shoe wrings him. The worldling hath all things commodious about him; yet there is a little fury within that wrings him, a froward conscience that troubles him. Could he swallow the earth that swallows all, it might choke him, not satisfy him. But give him grace, and then he goes away springing like Joseph, and singing like David, "The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage," Psal. xvi. 6.

(4.) Temporal things have no charter of continuance; they are sometimes gone from a man before he dies, but they will never tarry with him longer than he lives. Yea, worse; for they will either work his discontent in leaving him, or his vexation in staying with him. Like a bad wife, that either will be gadding abroad or scolding at home. Did you never see a porter troubled with his burden, though all that he carried were his own? "The abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep," Eccl. v. 12. The more noise, the less sleep. While they do tarry, no tranquillity; of their tarrying there is no certainty. "At my first answer no man stood with me, but all forsook me," 2 Tim. iv. 16. As St. Paul at his first answer, so we speed at our last answer; no temporal things will stand with us, but all forsake us. If we look on this hand for riches, they are gone; if on the other hand for pleasures, they are gone; if behind us for friends, or before us for honours, or under us for our lands and possessions, all gone. "Only Luke is with me," ver. 11: only grace is left us; nothing but grace carries with us. Grace stands out for eternity, and nothing else.

For the good things of nature, some beasts exceed us; for those of fortune, many wicked men go beyond us: but we have those of grace; this makes us blessed, when the former are not, and the latter had better not be. What Solomon was among the prophets, and John among the apostles, such is grace among the virtues; even the especially beloved of God. Solomon had his dream, and John had his vision: Wisdom rested in the bosom of Solomon, and John leaned on the bosom of Wisdom: grace is now comforted with the presence of God, and grace shall be hereafter blessed with the vision of God. Christ now dwells with her, even in the bosom of grace; and she shall dwell with him, even in the bosom of glory. This is the beauty of the soul, the strength of the spirit, the peace of the mind, and comfort of the conscience. It makes the body a cabinet of immortal treasure, cleareth the eyes, fortieth the hands, directs the feet, composeth the gesture: and when this body must fall to the grave, grace covers it with comfortable dust, unto the hope of a better resurrection, and leaves it in a quiet sleep. At our dissolution, grace is both our physic and our physician; a cordial that never fails: it qualifies the sorrows, mitigates the bitterness and pangs of death; it stamps the devil under foot; it throws all our sins into the bottom of the sea, or buries them under Christ's cross, without possibility of ever rising again to witness against us. It takes the soul out of her wearisome tabernacle, and delivers it as a precious charge into the hands of an angel, and still keeps it inseparable company. The angels bear it up unto Christ, and Christ presents it spotless to God the Father, where it remains blessed for ever and ever.

"Grow in grace." There be divers means of acceleration in plants and vegetables, wherein art is used to help nature; and for the procreancy and stature of man's body, much is attributed to nourishment, something to the air, and not a little to education. But what is there that can make us grow in grace? Surely nothing but grace: the plantation and the accretion is by the same hand. *Qui dat esse, dabit et crescere*: i. e. He who gives being, will give also increase. When God had made all living creatures, he breathed on them increase: the former act gave them a being, the latter a blessing. One *fact* was enough for both; to make the world when it was not, and to make it more numerous than it was, not in new kinds, but in new individuals. Yet the former is called a creation, the other a benediction. There was a *bene* (well) in both: in the making, for there all things were very good; in the blessing, for there they were so much the better by increasing their kind. Howsoever God foresaw the decay that would follow upon sin, and the death that would follow upon the decay; yet he gave this blessing of multiplication, before either sin, decay, or death were entered into the world. So that as then out of the same mouth came both the *fiat* and the *crescat*, so here from the same hand proceeds both the grace and the growth. Both the *esse*, (being,) and the *melius esse*, (better being,) know no other but one and the same Author.

The growth of any plant is improved principally by three helps: the fecundity of the ground wherein it grows; the kindly heat of the sun, cheering it up with his influence; and the contribution of the clouds towards it, with their dews and showers descending upon it. The ground wherein we are planted, is the church; and she, like a kind and indulgent mother, accommodates us with all her helps: her doctrine to direct us, that we may do well; her discipline to correct us, when we do amiss; her sacraments, which are cordials to our heart, like springs, veins, and channels of grace to the root; her prayers to heaven, for a blessing upon that she gives, and for a blessing which she cannot give. The rain that continually falls upon us, to make us shoot up in goodness, is a frequent distillation of the word preached. If those holy dews do not soak into our hearts, we shall be dwarfs in grace. For this purpose Christ sends apostles, and pastors, and teachers, Eph. iv. 11: those be the clouds, and from those clouds come rain and showers: the effect should be, that we may grow up to the stature of Christ; there is our growth by it. The Sun that ripens us, and is the principal cause of this accretion, is Christ himself, that Sun of righteousness; all our growth is merely beholden to his beams and saving influence. He blesseth the ground that bears us; he filleth and emptieth the clouds upon us. Thus there is grace wrought in us, and grace increased in us. As grace is not given to him that would none of it, so nor is it increased to him that does not labour to improve it. We are not only having, but reasonable and holy plants; and must both labour for our own sustenance, and mature and further our own accrescence. The grace that is in us, is perfect; for the least grace is grace, as a spark of fire is fire. If men see but a little, so little that they think themselves blind, yet they do see; but they may be brought to see better, John ix. 39. We know there is a double perfection, of parts and degrees. The grace that is infused to us at the first, is perfect in regard of the parts; as a child is so far a perfect man, because it hath all the parts of a man; but it is not perfect in regard of degrees; for we may grow up in grace, as a child does in stature. In our conversion, when we first receive this saving grace,

we are but infants in Christ; yet infants may be tall men in time. Desire we to know whether we be grown in grace, or not? As by the growing of one plant, we may give a guess at all the rest; so here let us make a trial.

1. For faith and charity. Is our faith stronger? As our salvation is now nearer than when we first believed, so is our faith in that salvation stronger than when we first were converted? Is our charity grown from a hyssop on the wall to a cedar in Libanus? from the love of a few, and those our friends, and those very sparingly, and this with limitation and provision, that our love cost us little; is it grown to the sincere love of many, of all, even to our damage, even to our death?

2. Consider we our humility; how do we thrive in that? At the first we thought some worse than ourselves; do we not now think all better? Indeed of all graces in us, humility grows cross to the rest. Other virtues aspire upwards, humility looks downwards. We say of the rest, the higher they grow, the better; but humility is the best at the lowest. Faith, hope, and devotion have a holy ambition; they disdain to look lower than heaven: nothing can content them but an immortal crown. But humility pleaseth herself in a low dejection; yon shall find her (with Job) in the dust, in that school of mortality, disputing and conferring with worms and rottenness. Yet even there she grows; and that in the favour of God and his angels. The deeper she roots, the higher she sprouts; the lower her humiliation on earth, the higher her exaltation in heaven.

3. Our repentance hath such another kind of growing too. She grows from a spring to a brook, from a brook to a river, from a river to a great sea. This is a grace that does not only grow herself, but waters all other graces, and makes them grow faster in us. It is our own contribution of moisture, besides that of the clouds, that the young plants, which we have almost eradicated and withered by our sins, may be caused to grow again by our tears. As the morning dew is a pawn of the evening fatness, so our penitent tears put a fruitfulness into all our graces. When for that sin, which cost us at first but a sigh, we now fetch many deep groans; and for that which cost us but groans and prayers, we now spend floods of tears, and if it were possible, we would weep tears of blood: this is to grow in that grace, which moistens all our plants, all our virtues; and destroys all the weeds, all the sins in our garden; happy repentance.

4. Patience hath her growth, in our better ability to bear crosses. It may be at first, that we scarce durst wade through a ford of troubles, now we can swim in a sea of sorrows. Then a slight wrong molested us, now we can bear a load of injuries. Then we were provoked with words, now we can endure wounds, without minding revenge. Then we were angry with our persecutors, now we pray for them. Then we would have retaliated, and could not; now we can, and will not. Then we thought all suffering a punishment, now we judge it a prement. As Queen Anne Bullen, the mother of the blessed Queen Elizabeth, when she was to be beheaded in the Tower, thus remembered her thanks to the king: From a private gentlewoman he made me a marchioness, from a marchioness a queen; and now he hath left no higher degree of earthly honour for me, he hath made me a martyr. This is indeed to "let patience have her perfect work," Jam. i. 14, and to come up to her full growth; when for Christ's sake, and his gospel's, persecution shall be held an honour, and misery a dignity, and the very cross a crown. "Here is the patience of the saints," Rev. xiv. 12.

5. Contentment must have her growth too. It was the fault of the Israelites, never to be content : when they had water, they murmur for bread ; when they had bread, they complain for flesh : as if they had boarded with God, and he were to provide them diet, and they (good men) honestly paid for what they took. But Jacob their father, of whom they were called Israel, was of another mind : " If God will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on," Gen. xxviii. 20 : he asks no more. So Paul ; " Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content," 1 Tim. vi. 8. Are we more moderate in our desires now, than we were at first ? Worldlings, the older they grow, the more covetous ; but if in our age we are less desirous of the world, it is an argument that we are more satisfied with the Lord. One special means of the melioration of a tree, is a baring of the root, and throwing away the earth from about it. If these earthly things, riches, honours, pleasures be taken from us, and the world hath left us naked and destitute of its vain succours, we adhere faster to God. We do not covet them, we are content either with or without them ; satisfying our hearts with this, that Christ is all in all unto us.

6. Summarily, we may know our own growth in grace, by our bringing forth the fruits of grace. All trees are not frugiferous, Christians are. That which brings forth no fruit, how shall we know it is a tree, and no log ? There is little difference between a dead stock and a barren tree ; one brings forth as much fruit as the other. I know that boughs, buds, and blossoms, are indications of a tree's growth ; but there is no proof a Christian's growth without fruits. " Bring forth fruits meet for repentance," saith St. John, Matt. iii. 8 : he stays at nothing till he comes to fruits. For that was the tree planted, for that watered, for that manured, and succoured from earth and heaven : not to make materials, nor to give shadows ; not for the green boughs, or gay blossoms ; but for the fruits. The tree is for the fruit, and but for the fruit there had been no tree. Fruit is the thing for which it was first set, and still is suffered to grow : and when there is no longer any hope of that, " Cut it down ; why cumbereth it the ground ?" Luke xiii. 7. Then comes the axe to the root, Matt. iii. 10 ; down it goes, into the fire it must ; if it will not serve for fruit, it must for fuel.

There is no evident knowledge of our growth, either by our leaves or blossoms. Our leaves that so ruffle with the winds, are but our hearing of sermons : and of this we are very prodigal, and for this we look to be esteemed good Christians ; as if all godliness consisted in the hearing of a sermon. Is all turned to hearing ? where be the other senses ? Is the whole body an ear ? 1 Cor. xii. 17 ; what is become of the other members ? The papists stand much upon their auricular confession : but do not too many among us stand too much upon auricular profession ? There is an auricular confession, the religion of papists ; and an auricular profession, the main religion of our pure hypocrites. All the jewels of their goodness hang at their ears ; and but for their ear-mark, no man would take them to be Christians. The thorny ground is near a curse, Heb. vi. 8 ; but the fruitless fig-tree had a curse, Matt. xxi. 19. Hearing the word of grace, is no sufficient proof of our growing in the works of grace. You hear us, and you praise us ; and then think you have done enough. You hear our sermons, we hear of your commendations ; and we suffer them, but with trembling hearts. (August.) All this is but leaves, and we ask for fruits ; and not of the mouth, but of the deed. Fair words do no more prove your growing, than the large leaves of Jonah's gourd was an

argument of the lasting ; quickly they both fade ; one day green, the next dry. It is no good sign in a tree, when all the sap goes up into the leaves, and is spent that way ; nor in a Christian, when all his grace shoots up into words : a verbal goodness ; no reality at all.

Leaves come of the kernel, as well as fruits ; so doth chaff of the seed, as well as good grain : yet do we not plant for leaves, nor do we sow for chaff ; we make small account of either. " What is the chaff to the wheat ?" Jer. xxiii. 28. What are the leaves to the fruit ? Rather give us fruit on a shrub, than a tree that can reach the clouds, with nothing but leaves. There may be some fruit, without much growth ; but growth is nothing worth without fruit. Saul was higher by the head than all the rest of Israel ; many in Israel were better than Saul at the heart. The procerity and cedarly tallness of trees, with a glorious flourish of leaves, is goodly to the eye ; but the kindly fruits of the lower plants is more acceptable to the taste. The eminence of some notoriously zealous professors, may make them much admired ; but the good fruits of mercy in men silent and less notable, makes them more beloved. The former may grow in applause, but the latter grow in grace ; and this growth, O Lord, give me.

We have heard the two fundamental grounds : first, what grace is, with the value of it ; next, what it is to grow in grace, with the happiness belonging to it. For application to ourselves, two main uses I must lay to your charge. First, a labour to obtain grace. Secondly, an endeavour to grow in grace. The acquisition, and the accretion of it. All growing presupposes planting ; that cannot grow, which is not. It must have a being, before it have an increase. God gives the seed, first ; then Paul must plant, and Apollos must water, before there comes an increase. First give it a being, then look for a growing. The grace of God in me was not in vain, saith Paul, 1 Cor. xv. 10. See first that you have grace, and then that the grace you have be not in vain. In vain it cannot be, if it be in the Lord, ver. 58. His grace shall not be in vain, in you ; nor shall your labour be in vain, in him. For the obtaining of grace, divers duties are requisite.

1. Coming within the circle of grace. Seeing it is so precious, that life without it is but death, or worse ; let us creep into the sunshine, and live within the sphere and compass of grace. " Ye are not under the law, but under grace," Rom. vi. 14. There is no small benefit, to live within the precincts of grace. I do not say, that all who are *under* grace, are therefore necessarily *in* grace. Plants and stones lie under the same beams of the sun, and are wet with the same moisture of the clouds : the plants spring and grow, yet there is no alteration of the stones. But to live within the verge of the court, gives some hope that the king may one day cast a favourable eye upon us. We cannot come into the room where they make perfumes, but we must carry away some of the sweetness on our clothes. Nor can we walk in a garden of roses and violets, without participation of their pleasant odours. Which if either our superstitious recusants, that refuse the church in state and pride ; or our wanton recusants, that refuse it for delicacy and pleasure ; or our worldly recusants, that refuse it for the love of their mammon ; rightly understood, they and the temple would be better acquainted. Thomas was not with the apostles when Jesus first appeared to them, John xx. 24 ; and to his absence some have imputed his incredulity. It is ill to take, but worse to make, occasions of our absence. God hath appointed a day in a week, the church an hour in the day, and the state a place for both. To neg-

lect that day, that hour, and that place, is no less than to disobey the commandment of the state, of the church, and of our God himself. If Peter be out of the ship, he may sink. If Shimei be out of Jerusalem, he may die for it. Out of the temple, when we should be there, we may perish; if God be not as merciful to us as Christ was to Peter, and more merciful than Solomon was to Shimei; what business soever we pretend.

What are the common occasions that detain us; playing, or sleeping, or drinking, or evening of accounts, or visiting of friends? Think on it, when you play, and are at your sport, what if God should come to you in earnest? What if death should make a gamester among you? He throws at all; and would he not swoop all the stakes, to your terror and most irreparable loss? Had it not been better for you, that he had found you praying, than playing? When you sleep, why may not that stern serjeant take you napping? Why may not a palsy, or an apoplexy, or a lethargy, put you into your last sleep? You would not rise to serve God at the church; why should God arise to preserve you at home? Drinking, that is the common hinderance: oh how many hundreds about this city doth the tavern and tap-house rob the church of! With such a host, gain is godliness; and with such guests, the health of their souls is drowned in healths to their mistresses. One hour spent in praying, is tedious to them; ten hours in drinking seem nothing, so merrily the time passeth with such toss-pots. Think seriously, with the cup in thy hand, why may not that draught be thy last? Some merchants and tradesmen make bold with that holy time to set even their accounts; but how if God at that very time should call them to an account? It is to be feared, that no cheerful account could be then rendered. Others have their friends to visit; but how if God should then visit them, and smite them with some mortal sickness? It would be small comfort to their souls, that the church was then forsaken of their bodies. These judgments may fall upon men, in their wanton or wilful absence from the congregation; they have no supersedeas against them. Let us therefore keep the orb of grace, and the God of all grace will keep us.

2. Preparation for the word of grace. Faith comes by hearing, and by hearing comes all other grace too. The Holy Ghost is the fountain, preaching the pipe, our ear the channel, and our heart the cistern for this water of life. Receive not the grace of God in vain, 2 Cor. vi. 1. In vain it is to us, when either it is tendered and not accepted, or accepted and not improved. "Stir up the gift of God which is in thee," 2 Tim. i. 6. The sparks will not be kindled in our souls without hearing, and they will die in their own ashes without stirring. Hearing is the light that kindles them, prayer the tongs to stir them up, and meditation the bellows to make them burn. The word of the gospel is compared to a feast, and the hearers are the guests; but there is some difference in the carriage of the business. First, to a feast we are bidden, and we come; one invitation is enough: to the word we are invited often; but instead of ourselves, we send our excuses, Luke xiv. 18; we have no need of it, no stomach to it. Secondly, in a feast we are glad to have the best morsels carved to us, and let the coarser dishes pass by: but in hearing of the word, when the best counsel is offered us, we are so mannerly as to commend it to our neighbours; That reprehension toucheth such a one, not me. Thirdly, at a feast we desire to be the first; but in God's house we are well content to be the last. Fourthly, a sermon is still thought too long; When will he make an end? at a feast, we look for a second

or third course, and seldom call to take away. Fifthly, we make reasonable election of nourishment for our bodies; but we are bad choosers of the diet for our souls. That pleaseth us which is sweet to the sense, not that which is wholesome to the conscience. By nature we have no more skill in our own diet, than in our own physic. We shrink in our profession, and sink in our dignity, in respect of very mean creatures, that are their own physicians, their own caterers and carvers. They write that the hart being pursued, and wounded, knows an herb, which being eaten, throws out the arrow: a strange kind of vomit! The dog is subject to sickness, but he knows the grass that recovers him. It may be true, that the drugs are as near to us as to other creatures; it may be that obvious and common simples, easy to be had, would cure us. But we have not that innate instinct, to apply those natural medicines to our present dangers, which these inferior creatures have; we are not our own apothecaries, not our own physicians, as they are. Thus ignorant are we for our bodies, and naturally worse choosers for our souls. If we knew the value of the word of grace, nothing could keep us from the hearing of it. As Diogenes being repelled of Antisthenes, lifting up his staff to drive him away, replied, Do, beat me; yet thou shalt never drive me from thee, so long as I can learn any good by thee. As meat does not enter the body but by the month, so grace does not pass into the soul but through the ear.

3. Affection towards the fountain of grace. The Spirit of God is the fountain of grace; let us please him, as we desire to be made gracious by him. "Grieve not the holy Spirit of God, by whom you are sealed unto the day of redemption," Eph. iv. 30. He is the high God; let us not grieve him for his dignity's sake: he seals us up in grace; let us not grieve him for his benefit's sake. Because of his greatness, and because of his goodness; greatness in himself, goodness to us; for either of these, or for both of these, we should be so respectful to him, as not to grieve him. The apostle might have said, Yield him all cause of joy and contentment: it had been but reason, so. But not to give him any cause of grievance; what could he say less? Grieve him not for his own sake; if not for his own, yet for his seal's sake, for his grace's sake. Say the servants of Naaman to their master, "If the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it?" 2 Kings v. 13. So, if the apostle had imposed some great piece of service upon us, yet we should not have thought much of it. But he only chargeth us not to grieve him, which is no positive or actual service, of pains or peril; only a prohibition of disservice, as little as can be required. Hath he made his own sacred bed in the chamber of thy heart? O then trouble him not. Let not the noise of vain words disquiet him, nor the stench of carnal lusts offend him, nor the sluttish heaps of worldly desires make him weary of his abode. If thou find that glorious King in thy poor cottage, bow thyself with Abraham to the ground, and say, "My Lord, if I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant," Gen. xviii. 3. There are two sorts of persons whom we would not willingly offend; the great, and the good. Not the great, in regard of their power; they may do us a displeasure; which is the motive of fear. Not the good, in regard of their bounty; we may be the better for them; which is the motive of hope. If he be great, though he give us nothing, yet there is no wisdom to displease him. If he be good, and ready to do us good, though his power be not mighty, yet in honesty we should not anger him. But if he be great and good, able and willing to

pleasure us, then far it be from us to grieve him; which is the motive of love, and of such love as we always carry about us, love to ourselves. For all these respects, let us grieve the Spirit of grace no ways: for his greatness, lest he harm us; for his goodness, that he may benefit us; and for our own sakes, whom he hath sealed. If we desire grace in our cistern, let us dearly love the fountain.

4. Regard to the honour of grace. It honours us, we have good cause to honour it: as Theodosius the emperor preferred the title of member of the church, to that of head of the empire; professing that he had rather be a saint and no king, than a king and no saint. "Them that honour me I will honour," 1 Sam. ii. 30: and shall not we honour him that honours us? St. Paul chargeth us to "adorn the doctrine of our Saviour in all things," Tit. ii. 10: a good life adorns grace; scandalous sins cast disgrace upon it. We begin to storm at this challenge: What! dishonour grace? In our brave and lofty style, we scorn the imputation: What! we to discredit the gospel! We that profess it, and love it, and live in it, and are ready to die for it; we to dishonour it! I would it were not true: yet the apostle begs but an easy request of them that were, and (possibly) thought themselves, very famous Christians; "Grieve not the holy Spirit," Eph. iv. 30: not, honour, nor rejoice, nor glorify, but only do not grieve; and would be glad of that, till more comes. If you will not advance, nor credit, nor defend the gospel of grace; yet at least do but thus much for it, as not to disgrace it. Let not the name of God and his doctrine be blasphemed, 1 Tim. vi. 1. God's name! say we in our ruff and heat; what do we but glorify it, and make it famous and renowned every where? Ye say well; but hear you? In the mean time I would his name might not be evil spoken of by your means, Rom. ii. 24. Dishonour grace! why it is our life, our soul; the very life of our life, and the salvation of our soul: we will never do it. But is there not such a thing, as turning the grace of God into wantonness? Jude 4. What do you call this? Is it not a dishonouring of grace?

When we shall abuse either the promises of grace, which are the covenants; or the pledges of grace, which are the sacraments; by deriving an encouragement to evil from that merciful indulgence; is not this a turning of grace into wantonness? and is not that a discredit done to the honour of grace? If from the sermon which forbiddeth such a sin, we shall immediately run into the sin forbidden by the sermon; do we not disparage the house of grace, the time of grace, the word of grace, the very God of grace? Is it not a discredit to them all? When the pagan beheld Christians receiving the blessed sacrament, and observed with what reverence and devotion they demeaned themselves in that holy business, he was inquisitive what that action meant. It was answered him by one of them; That God having first emptied their hearts of all their sins, as pride, envy, covetousness, contention, luxury, and the rest, did now enter into them himself, with a purpose to dwell there. He was silent for the present; but followed and watched them whom he saw to be communicants in that action, for two days together; and perceiving some of them to fall into quarrels, uncleanness, rapacity, and drunkenness so soon, he declared his censure of them with this exclamation: I confess that your religion may be good, your devotion good, your profession good; but, sure, your hospitality is naught. Are you so unsophisticated, that you will not let your God dwell with you for two days together? This is the shame of Christians, this the disparagement of grace; when it is forced, against the nature of it, to

encourage lewdness: I may take this bribe, put up this interest, admit this uncleanness, drink this quantity: why? O, God is gracious: nay, therefore do it not, because thy God is gracious. "Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid," Rom. vi. 1. Will any sober man wound himself, to try the skill and love of his surgeon? God forbid it; and the thankfulness for his mercies, the remorse of our own hearts, the tenderness of our own consciences, and the love of our own souls, for ever forbid it. "Our God is a consuming fire," Heb. xii. 29: even our God, the God of grace, is a consuming fire. If we will dare to presume, he will not spare to consume. "Keep back thy servant from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me," Psal. xix. 13. "In many things we offend all," Jam. iii. 2; but let not the presumption of pardon induce us. Though God's grace be an inexhaustible treasure, yet we may spend so much of our own stock, till we become mere bankrupts. Let grace be the desire of our hearts, grace the prayer of our lips, grace the direction of our lives, grace the protection of our bodies, and grace the salvation of our souls.

Thus we have found out the way to get it; now we must seek out the means to improve it. "Grow in grace." This is done first by prescribing the furtherances, and next by removing the hinderances; both which I might make distinct passages: but I will knit them together, and set down certain rules which may direct us how to grow.

1. I begin at prayer; and where better? Hannah prayed to have a child, Monica prayed to save a child. Let us pray that we may have grace, and pray that we may save grace, and that grace may save us. Prayer is requisite, that we may be new-born in grace; and that, being so born, we may grow in grace, prayer must not be left out. "They are all gone aside." Why? They "call not upon the Lord," Psal. xiv. 3, 4. Prayer is a key, to open the gate of heaven, and let grace out; and prayer is a lock, to fasten our hearts, and keep grace in. Prayer is a messenger, to fetch that holy seed out of the garner above; and prayer is the former and latter rain, to make it grow beneath. Prayer woos it to come, and prayer wins it to tarry. Prayer is the invitation of that noble guest to our house, and prayer provides for the entertainment of it. Prayer procures it a being in us, and prayer supplies it with a blessing. Therefore pray continually, 1 Thess. v. 17, if thou wouldst grow continually. Yea, there is a growth in prayer, as there is in the grace we pray for. Our prayers may grow in zeal, in confidence, in penitence, in humility. Some censures may be fuller of incense than others; and the higher our invocations rise up in fervency, the more do graces come down in plenty. Therefore as they put some water into the pump, that thereby they may fetch up more; so let us pray, that we may pray better. When the mill is set a going, an easy wind keeps it so, and a stronger increaseth the motion. If the Spirit blow upon us, this sets us a praying; but a more powerful gale of grace and inspiration, adds vigour to our devotion. In vain do we expect that alms of grace, for which we do not so much as beg.

2. A jealous suspicion of our own strength. We say, He that teacheth himself, hath a fool to his master: so he that relieth upon himself, hath a reed for his upholder; either he will fall quickly, or is already down. Confidence in God doth only support us; we cannot put too much trust in him, nor too little in ourselves. It was Peter's over-venturousness that tripped up his own heels: "Though all men should be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended," Matt. xxvi. 33. Bravely promised.

But Peter swore, "I know not the man," ver. 74. Cowardly answer. I know not the man? He knew well enough what his Master was, but he knew not what himself was. Many had stood, if they had not what themselves sure of standing. (August. de Verb. Domini, 13.) Therefore is Peter's fall recorded. *Ut cuius majorum, sit cautela minorum*, as Gregory says, That the fall of the greater may be the warning of the lesser. Every error of theirs is a catechism to us; their lapses are our cautions. Those judgments "happened to them for ensamples," 1 Cor. x. 11. *Et cinere Judæorum, livicium Christianorum*; i. e. The ashes of the Jews will serve to make a ley for Christians, to wash and scour us from impiety. That which is upon record to their disgrace, can neither give courage nor comfort to us in the imitation of it. The falls of those who went before, were written for the warning of those who came after. If thou stand upon thine own bottom, remember Lot's wife: remember her that fell before thee. If thou art confident of thine own standing, remember Peter: he fell that was most confident. There are two sorts of mementos set upon all stories: if the example be good, memento, "Go thou and do likewise," Luke x. 37; if bad, memento, Do not thou likewise. Think upon Lot's progress, and coming safe to Zoar; remember, and do. Think upon his wife's retardation and retrospection; remember, and avoid. We are like to sick men; who when they have had a good day or two, think themselves presently well again: so they make bold to put off their kerchiefs, to put on thinner garments, and to venture into the fresh air; whereupon follow irrecoverable relapses. Let us only be confident in Jesus Christ.

3. A holy fear of falling must still possess us. "I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me," Jer. xxxii. 40. In the former part of that verse, there is an everlasting promise of God not to depart from us; yet still fear is placed in us of purpose that we may not depart from him. It is generally granted, that no man truly ingrafted into Christ, can either totally or finally fall away from grace; and that Peter did not so fall, because Christ prayed for him, that his faith would not fail, Luke xxii. 32. To say, it might fail in substance, not in time, is absurd; for can a thing perish, and yet remain in time? What time can be given to that which is not? Nor is it enough to say, that faith lost may be restored again; for then Christ prayed not at all for that faith which Peter had, but for that faith which he should have. Yet there can be no fall without great danger. Sin is a fall: we have taken up the term ourselves, in calling Adam's sin, Adam's fall. A fall indeed! for it fouls us as a fall, it bruises us as a fall, it bringeth down as a fall; down from the state of paradise, down to the dust of death, down to the bar of judgment, down to the pit of hell. Yet all falls do not harm us alike: there is in sin, the fall, the relapse, the wallow, and the not rising again: this latter, the not repenting, ruins us.

There may be a slip, a grievous sin; and those fallings back, worse; and a lying still, the wallow, worse than that: but if it once comes to impenitency, that "they fall, and not rise," Jer. viii. 4, this not only makes it most culpable, but leaves it most inexcusable. To prevent this, let us fear always, Prov. xxviii. 14. Fear is but a cowardly passion, yet it is set to watch the chief citadel, the very heart: as in a town of garrison, the most white-livered soldier may serve to ring the alarm-bell; yea, he is fittest for the purpose, for the fear of his own danger will make him vigilant to give warning to the rest. God doth give us fear for a ballast, to carry us steadily in

all weathers; but yet he doth ballast us with such sand as hath gold in it, with that fear which is his fear: for "The fear of the Lord is his treasure," Isa. xxxiii. 6. The Father says, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," Psal. cxi. 10: the Son repeats it, Prov. i. 7: he that collects both, calls it, "The root of wisdom," Eccles. i. 20; and that it might embrace all wisdom itself, ver. 27. Therefore, "A wise man will fear in every thing," Eccles. xviii. 27: he is never without it, never without the exercise of it; not only in heavy and calamitous times, but even in good and cheerful days too. "Noah, being moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house," Heb. xi. 7: though he had assurance of his deliverance, yet he provides the means of it with a holy fear. Though we can pretend to no other degree of wisdom, yet let us be abundantly rich in this, that we are possessed with a fear of sinning. Let us fear all stops, all impediments, all obstacles that may cross or retard our growing in grace; so shall our fear be turned into joy, and that joy be crowned with glory.

4. Next to the fear, let us place a beware: as we fear a dwarfing or growing downward, so let us beware of a stunting or not growing at all. That fear was a necessary caution, and this caution is no less a necessary fear. If we fear God, we will beware of displeasing him; shun the least act, the least word, the least thought of disloyalty towards him. He who works in us that we may draw nigh, also works in us that we may not depart. (August.) It is good and safe therefore to fear him. The devil could never have prevailed upon Eve, to withdraw her from God, but by working this fear out of her: Be not afraid; "ye shall not surely die," Gen. iii. 4. To one kind of fear, faith is opposed: "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?" Matt. viii. 26. With another kind of fear, faith is accompanied: "Thou standest by faith: be not high-minded, but fear," Rom. xi. 20. In the former, the more fear the less faith; in the latter, the stronger faith the more jealous fear. Faith, saith Tertullian, creates fear, fear creates anxiety, and anxiety produces perseverance. This fear, if it be fresh in us, will make us stick close to God, without stirring (as we say) an inch from him. Let us not more frequently brush our clothes than our fear, that it may always be kept fresh in our souls.

Then take heed of standing still: flatter not thyself, that because thou hast run thus long, thou mayst now make a stop; nor because thou hast gotten thus far, thou mayst now sit down and blow. One of these two must be chosen; either always to go forward, or altogether to fall back. (Bern. de Divers. 36.) No growing, some decaying; while we are not making onwards, we are going back fast. In rowing up a river, that runs with a strong current, if we rest our oars, we fall down the stream. Between mending and pairing there is no medium; while we neglect to gain, we do but spend the stock. So one sin opens the door to another; and while sins come in at the fore-door, graces will out at the postern. "What communion hath light with darkness?" 2 Cor. vi. 14. They will not keep company together. The ark would not stay with the Philistines, nor will the grace of God tarry with sinners. Virtues drop from such a tree, like leaves and fruits in a great wind. The idle servant might have had as many talents as the rest, if he had been a good husband: but he buried that he had, stood at a stay, did neither good nor harm with it: therefore his Lord would trust him with no more, lest he should hide them too. Reuben's non-proficiency is remembered in Jacob's will, when he bequeaths legacies:

"Thou shalt not excel," Gen. xlix. 4. So we try our casks first with water; and if they hold that, then we trust them with wine. To him that hath shall be given: there is a seed in our heart, which if it lives, and is fostered, we sprout, grow, and prosper; but if it die, farewell all spiritual life. For if one virtue be offended, she lureth away all her fellows, as many of Ishbosheth's friends shrunk away with Abner.

5. We must be wary not only to shun sin in the action, but in the very occasion. Often the opportunity to sin, produces a desire to sin, saith Isidore. How many that meant not to sin, are won by the very opportunity! "In the way wherein I walked have they privily laid a snare for me," Psal. cxlii.

3. Man in his innocency was not free from this. Paradise was made for man, yet there behold the serpent. Who can wonder if our corruption find him in our closets, at our boards, in our beds, in our garments, in our lawful recreations, when our holy parents found him in Paradise? And thither he no sooner came, than he fell to work: he can no more be idle, than he can be harmless. And mark his cunning: there were many trees in the garden, he meddles with none of them; only you find him at the forbidden. This he suggested to Eve, that she might look upon the fruit though she did not taste it. By looking, she came to liking of it; by liking, to longing for it; and so tasted it in her heart, ere it came to her hand.

He that would have the trees in his garden grow, must do what he can to keep them from all noxious things. If occasion be not sin, yet it is a friend to sin. Sparks in a flint, when left alone, are quiet, and appear not; but beat it with a steel, then you shall see them come out, and be able to kindle a great fire. The sparks of sin are raked up in the embers of our affections: let them not be stirred with occasion, they are quiet; but when opportunity blows them, there is the danger. It was a fearful curse upon trees and plants; "That which the palmer-worm hath left, the locust hath eaten," &c. Joel i. 4. It is applicable to our purpose. Conceive by the palmer-worm, the suggestions of sin; which are infinite, as that is called *multi-peda*, of many feet: this eats off a part of our tree. The palmer-worm gives way to the locust; which is a pendulous liking of the motion: suggestion delivers us over to approbation. The locust resigns to the canker, to idleness; which devours another part of our tree: approbation of evil delivers us over to sloth. The canker yields place to the caterpillar, to lewd company; which consumes the residue of our tree: sloth delivers us over to wicked society. But as they that live in a pure air, shut their gates against those that come from infected cities; or as the bees in winter keep their hives, and will not expose themselves to the bleak air, sharp winds, cold rains, and bitter frosts; so if we desire to grow in grace, we must shun all these dangerous infections. How worthy is he to miscarry, that will put to sea in a storm! If a man have a professed enemy, he does not only watch to avoid him, but all his faction and adherents: we must suspect all the occasions of sin, if we desire that our growth in grace may not be hindered.

6. Go on in humility, and learn to "walk humbly with thy God," Micah. vi. 8. If we take any pride in our growing, we are near a fall. Paul could not deny but that he had done much, and gone far: "I was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles," 2 Cor. xi. 5; yea, more; "I laboured more abundantly than they all," 1 Cor. xv. 10. "From Jerusalem, round about to Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel," Rom. xv. 19; from Syria to Scythia: yet, I forget

the things that are behind, Phil. iii. 13: as if all that is past were nothing, he looks to that is to come. They that run well in a race, do not often look back, to mark how far they have run, and how many they have outrun; but they still keep their eyes forwards, upon the ground before them, and upon those that have got ground of them. Though our tree did spread the branches, and flourish with leaves, and stand laden with fruits; yet pride is an unlucky wind, able to blast all. Two marks are usually given of our growing; obedience and humility. Obedience: Know you not that you are his servants to whom you obey? Rom. vi. 16. Know you not this? The works of obedience are an infallible testimony: if thy conscience can testify these fruits, then know that both the witness, and the thing witnessed, are graces. Humility: "For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and they which see might be made blind," John ix. 39. How shall we understand this? Scripture can best interpret Scripture. "God resisteth the proud;" they that see shall be made blind; he "giveth grace to the humble," 1 Pet. v. 5; they that see not shall see.

Men look up to the hills, but they love to dwell in the valleys: God may behold afar off the proud height of the lofty, but he plants his grace in the low vale of a humble heart, Psal. cxxxviii. 6. The woman bowed down with a spirit of infirmity, Luke xiii. 11, may be an emblem of humility: the humble shall be lifted up. Pride in the soul, is like the spleen in the body; when that swelleth, all the other parts languish. It is poison at the root of the tree, which corrupts the sap: and if the sap be corrupted, what will become of the tree? It is so dangerous a poison, that of another poison there was concocted a counter-poison, to preserve St. Paul from it. God would rather suffer him to fall into some infirmity, than to be proud of his singular privileges. "Lest I should be exalted above measure through abundance of revelations;" there was the poison of pride insinuating itself; I had "a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me," 2 Cor. xii. 7; there was the counter-poison or antidote which did at once make him both sick and whole. We are never more in danger of pride, than when we have made the greatest progress in the practice of godliness. It groweth fastest upon us, when other evils decay; and out of their decay sucketh matter wherewith to feed and foster itself. It occupies the beginning of our life, it besets the end, says a father. It is always busy, but then most eager when we are most holy. If thou art encompassed with friends and comforts, beware of high-mindedness then. The tares may outgrow the wheat, according to that proverb, An ill weed grows apace: but let the humble wheat be ripe and ready by harvest, and that shall be had into the barn, while the rest are cast into the fire.

7. Think no sin so contemptible, that thou shouldst make light of the admitting of it. In small matters the decay of grace first discovereth itself: as the decay of a tree first appeareth in the washy boughs or twigs, and by little and little goes on further into the bigger arms, and at length pierceth into the main body. He that is not faithful in a little, will be unfaithful in much, Luke xvi. 10. He that corrupts his conscience for a little, will at last make bold with it in a greater matter. That which is a mote in comparison of another sin, is a great beam considered in itself. There is no sin that is not in itself mortal: the sting of death is in every one, 1 Cor. xv. 56; and who dares play with the sting of a living serpent? But the worst mischief of small sins is, that they make way for greater. To omit that, *Quæque minus laediunt singula, multa nocent*; i. e.

Things single harm not; multiplied, they harm: to fall by one Goliath, or by the whole army of the Philistines: to be killed with many small shot, or with great ordnance; what is the difference? But as huntsmen make use of their little beagles; first they ply the deer with them, till he be heated and blown; and then they set on their great buck-hounds, that will pull him down, and pluck out his throat: so the devil employeth our little sins. Little sin is that little boy put in at the window, that opens the door for the great thief. A long thread of iniquity may be let in with a small needle. We have seen by experience, what hurt a little worm will do at the root of a tree.

8. Think on the comfort that comes by this growing in grace. "Every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth, that it may bring forth more fruit," John xv. 2. So are we dressed, that all comes not at once; but as the blade follows the seed, and the ear the blade, and the corn the ear; so grace first shows itself in good desires, then proceeds to good speeches, and without fail grows up to good works. Faith calls to love, and love to obedience, and obedience to constancy; and one grace foreruns another. Whom God predestinates, them he calleth; and whom he calls, he justifieth; and whom he justifies, he glorifieth, Rom. viii. 30: there is no defect on his part. Let us "grow up into him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ," Eph. iv. 15: let there be none in ours. As the rich grow easily richer, so the good grow quickly better. "See, here is water," says that noble cunuch; "what doth hinder me to be baptized?" Nothing, if thou believest, answers Philip, Acts viii. 36. If we desire to grow in grace, what hinders us to be loved, what hinders us to be blessed, what hinders us to be saved? Christ calls them to receive his word and grace, that hunger for it: now that very hunger is grace; For it begins to be infused, that it may begin to be asked for, says one. When the seed is in the ground, the Holy Spirit waters it, that it may spring up to a blade; he waters it in the blade, till it put forth an ear; he waters it in the ear, till it be ripe for the harvest. His charge to us, is to give them that need; his own practice, is to give them that have. Temporal things are given to those that need; spiritual, to those that have. Not that for the good preparation of nature, God adds the gift of grace. That the having should be meant of nature, and the giving of grace, is false logic, and fit for the school of Rome, which would have something in nature to merit something of grace. But how stands this with the justice of God, to enrich the wealthy, and suffer the poor to starve? Yes, for he gives but his own, and so hath free election of the object of his bounty: is it not lawful for him to do what he will with his own? Matt. xx. 15. But how stands it with the truth of God? "He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away," Luke i. 53. Yes, for that very hunger is grace; and if they had not first tasted the sweetness of it, they would not have had such an appetite to it. Besides, the rich think that they have a sufficiency of grace: the hungry confess their own emptiness, therefore it is fit that they should be filled.

Indeed we are all either full or empty, rising or falling, getting or spending, winning or losing, growing or fading, till we come to heaven or hell. Paul turns an apostle, Judas an apostate; the Gentiles become believers, the Jews infidels; Zacheus turns from the world, and Demas turns to the world. One grace opens the door for another; for God is not weary of blessing, where he hath once begun: yea, one gift is a kind of obligation upon him, to give more. Therefore are his mercies called infinite, be-

cause they are above number; and everlasting, because they have no end. First he moves Solomon to pray for wisdom, and then bestows it on him. If Cornelius is praying, Peter is sent to instruct him. If the son is coming homewards, you see the father running to embrace him. First, you have the eunuch with a good mind reading; then by Philip's help understanding; then by the grace of the Spirit believing; and lastly taken into the covenant by baptism. "Believest thou for this?" saith our Saviour to Nathanael: "thou shalt see greater things," John i. 50. So, repentest thou for this example? thou shalt see more. Lovest thou Christ for this benefit? thou shalt receive more. If thou be meek, like Moses, God will make thee wise, like Solomon; if wise, he will make thee righteous, as Abraham; if righteous, then patient, as Job; if so, then penitent, as Peter, and thankful, as David. Every instruction shall make thee careful, every benefit grateful; and thou wilt never be well, but when thou art doing good. Thus as a traveller passeth from town to town, till he comes to his home; so a Christian from grace to grace, till he comes to heaven.

9. Lastly, let us be ever meditating on that royal reward, which is promised to perseverance. So Moses "had respect to the recompence of the reward," Heb. xi. 26; Gal. vi. 9. "Be faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life," Rev. ii. 10. I will give, who am able to do it: I will give, who am faithful to perform it: I will give; it is his free bounty, we cannot earn it. We owe unto him all the good we do; he oweth us not so much as thanks for it. Doth the master thank that servant, because he did what he was commanded? Luke xvii. 9. Yet his free goodness will not suffer us to go unrewarded. What will he give? A crown. Who would not strive hard for a crown? The kings of this world have crowns, which cannot keep their heads from aching, nor their hearts from vexation: they may die, they do die, for all their crowns, and return to their dust. But this is a crown of life; that giveth life, and keepeth life, to them that wear it. But this very life will decay, and spend itself into the grave. Yes, but that is an eternal and everlasting life, a crown of immortality. Who would not seek by all means to grow in grace, that he might win a crown of glory?

"And in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." There is nothing more pleasant to man's nature, nor more winning upon it, than knowledge. For the hope of this gain, a superaddition of knowledge, Eve sold her husband, Adam sold himself and all his posterity, even all the world. Let me leave by the way of induction, to set down two preparatives to the subsequent matter. The argument is knowledge; concerning which I desire to observe, first, the pleasure which rational men take in it. Secondly, the strange properties of it.

For the former: knowledge is so fair a virgin, that every clear eye is in love with her; it is a pearl despised of none but swine. They that care not for one dram of goodness, would yet have a full weight of knowledge. Though they never mind to do good, yet there is no good which they would not know. Among all the trees of the garden, none so pleaseth them as the tree of knowledge. Conceivably, by way of apologue, that a more natural man is by God's permission let into his own treasury or storehouse, where all his graces lie reserved: he is allowed to take his choice, of some, or of all, or of what he likes best. He poisseth these precious jewels in his hand, and judgeth of them only by the weight; that which is most portable, and easiest to carry away, he resolves to make choice of. He first makes essay of charity; and perceives that this grace would much abridge him

of his old liberty; binding him to love his enemies, to pray for his injurers, to do good for evil, and to supply the wants of the needful out of his own store: therefore he lets it alone, as being too heavy for him. Then he tries temperance; and considers that this grace would restrain his appetite, destroy his sensual pleasure; that it would keep him from feasts, and revels, and the fruition of merry company: this is also too heavy for him. He lays hand upon humility, to see if this were any lighter; but observes that this grace doth delight to dwell in the dust: she is not for the honour of courts, nor for the favour of princes, nor for secular glory; but teacheth him to make his bed on God's cold earth, to dwell in obscurity, and never to think himself lowly enough: he likes not this, it is too melancholy, too heavy for him. He comes now to patience; but that, of all, least pleaseth him; for then he must suffer wrongs with silence, revenge his adversaries with prayers, digest losses with thankfulness, and be content with all impositions: by no means can he endure this; it is by far too heavy for him.

He removes to obedience, and makes experiment of that: but this confines his extravagant inclinations too severely. There is a law ordained, and he must be tied to the observation of it. Oh, the ten commandments are ten strict rules; his disposition is quite contrary to those canons. As it was satirically spoken of old, that the law, "Thou shalt not kill," troubles the physician; and that other, "Thou shalt not steal," angers the lawyer: so we may truly say, that the law not to offend, offends the corrupt nature of us all. It is so much the more harsh to us, as it goes against the grain of our affections. Besides, it is a glass, which presents to us our own deformities; which though we will not forego, we cannot endure to see. He thinks this virtue no better than manacles to his hands, and shackles to his feet, far too heavy for him. Then simplicity presents herself to him; a virgin fair without art, rich without a dowry; not more modest than amiable. He cannot but like her complexion, but her condition is the rub he sticks at. He considers that he is to live in this cunning world, where words and deeds are cut out of several pieces; where not to dissemble, is to invite deceit. Therefore in this he deals plainly, by telling that plain-dealing is not for his turn. She would keep from him much gain, and expose him to much loss; she is too heavy for him. Lastly, having balanced and refused all the rest, he lights upon repentance. She sits at the very door of his egress; and seeing him to undervalue her elder sisters, she solicits him to make choice of her. This grace if he could affect, it would also make him in love with all the rest. He would woo them all, if he were once won with repentance. But alas, he does not like her countenance: she is always weeping, and what should he do with so sad a consort, with so melancholy a mistress? He loves fair weather, and would not have every day rain. A merry heart is health and life: why should his jollity be slubbered with tears? She would ever and anon be calling him to mourning and lamentation; and of all lessons, he hath no mind to madrigals. Songs, not sighs, are for him. If the Lord says, Turn; he turns unto sin: so he makes a metathesis, while he keeps the word, and turns the meaning. But God will make a fearful metathesis upon him, turning both the words and the meaning; he shall be confounded and turned back, Psal. cxxix. 5. All these are too heavy for him.

After he was departed from the royal presence of those heavenly graces, peculiar to the elect, and the pledges of salvation; he passeth through the common hall, where sat abundance of virtues, but of a lower

degree, and less honour than the former; gifts which God communicates to men of all sorts, even to reprobates. He also weighs these in his hand, and many of them seemed too heavy for him. Amongst these he happens upon knowledge; and finding her so portable, and easy to be borne away without trouble, he makes his election of her, and settles his heart upon her: this is his love. Indeed we use to speak so proverbially, that knowledge is no burden. Could a man know never so much, it would be no trouble to him. To plot, devise, project, study, and invent, may be wearisome to the fantasy: cogitation is a trouble. To call to mind stories of old, actions and accidents forepassed, with all their circumstances, may be wearisome to the memory: recollection is a trouble. To arbitrate, resolve, and decide doubts and difficulties, questions and controversies, problems and disputable tenets, may be wearisome to the judgment: determination is a trouble. But to know, is no trouble: could we comprehend a world of learning, all the learning in the world, we should find no trouble in that. There may be trouble in the means of getting knowledge, none in the possession of it. If it could be infused into us; either the same way that Adam's was, by creation; or that Solomon's was, by inspiration; we should never think it a trouble: no man groans under this weight, no man complains of this burden. To apply it.

Knowledge we all strive to get, but who labours for virtue? Knowledge is light; and if we rightly weigh it, virtue is not heavy. "My yoke is easy, and my burden light," saith our blessed Saviour, Matt. xi. 30. You never heard Abraham complain of his faith, nor David of his obedience, nor Job of his patience; no more than Solomon did of his wisdom. The end is always more noble than the means: the end of knowledge is to do well; the means to do well is to know how. If we only seek to know, and there stop, we shall come so far as to see heaven, but never enjoy it: as Dives saw Abraham's bosom, but could not come at it. Knowledge is laudable while he is in celibate; but never happy till he be married. Virtue is ordained a wife for knowledge: where these two join, there will proceed from them a noble progeny, a generation of good works. He that spends his time only in the accumulation of knowledge, and contemplation of virtue, without the fruition and exercise of it; is like a curious painter, that having betrothed himself to a fair and chaste maiden, busieth himself only in drawing her picture, and is exquisitely punctual in every dimension and lineament: no colours are held good enough, no posture expressive enough, no art sufficient to set forth her beauty: with this picture and dead counterfeited he is so taken, that he forgets the living principal, and the fruition of her to whom he is contracted. So the other can paint you virtue to the life, but he hath no mind to marry her, nor to beget a posterity of good works by her. Thus knowledge loseth his consort; together with her beauty, which is fairer than the skies; with her society, which is as pleasant as the angels'; with her dowry, which is no less rich and ample than the kingdom of heaven. Thou pretendest that thou hast knowledge, and hast possessed it a long time; thou hast known Christ, as Timothy knew the Scriptures, from a child. But still thy knowledge is a bachelor; it is high time to marry him. God hath appointed a wife for him, grace. Marry thy knowledge to grace: no creature shall forbid or hinder those happy nuptials: there is no precontract with sin, but may be disannulled, and made void by repentance. Grace is willing; let the same forwardness and alacrity be in thy knowledge. At this wedding, heaven and earth,

saints and angels, will rejoice. First then let us know, without which there can be no truth of goodness; and then let us do good, without which there can be no hope of blessedness. "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them," John xiii. 17. This couple are married on earth, but both they and their issue shall be crowned in heaven.

For the latter. Knowledge hath two properties, not common or obvious, but both remarkable.

1. It is not desirable to them that never tasted it. As rich and precious as it is, yet of this wealth millions are not covetous. What do the ruder sort care for knowledge? If the waterman can discern the wind and tide, keep his boat right, take in and land his fare, what cares he for more knowledge? If the carman can drive on his luggage, and rule his horse; if one beast can guide another, though it be without all fear of doing mischief; what cares he for more knowledge? If the husbandman be capable of his tillage, and can distinguish the seasons; or the artificer be cunning in his trade and manufactures; or if the usurer be perfect in the art of his bonds, and can see to tell his money; what care all these for more knowledge? They are of Festus's mind, that much learning will make a man mad, Acts xxvi. 24. As for the mystery of godliness, and knowledge of salvation, they are so modest and mannerly that they leave that dish for their betters; not knowing, that in refusing knowledge they refuse heaven and all blessedness. But alas, how should they like the food which they never tasted? "Taste and see that the Lord is good," Psal. xxxiv. 8: taste first, then ye (that despise knowledge) will be of another mind. One morsel of this divine food, would put such an alteration into your appetites, that you will still cry for more: "Lord, evermore give us this bread," John vi. 34. Then should you see them run by troops into the school of knowledge, that heretofore passed by those gates with scorn. "Lord, dost thou wash my feet?" John xiii. 6. What was the reason of this question? we read of no scruple made by the rest: and, to the vexation of Rome, in this great honour Peter was not the first. Why then does he only except against it? His Lord shows both him and us the reason: "What I do, thou knowest not now," ver. 7. For want of this knowledge, he gives his Master a peremptory denial, "Thou shalt never wash my feet," ver. 8. Never? tarry but a little, and you shall hear him recant, and change his note, upon Christ's "If I wash thee not:" "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head," ver. 9. Carnal men will not allow one corner of their soul for divine knowledge; yet methinks when they hear Christ say, If you will not know me, I will not know you; depart from me, I know you not; they should be of Peter's mind, and not proffer their feet to the washing, one corner only, but even their whole soul to the entertainment of saving knowledge. As the rural man dwelling in an obscure valley, would never be persuaded to ascend the adjoining hill, what company soever offered to lead the way; at last being overcome, he went up, and then was so taken with the goodly prospect, that he could not be kept down; so if worldly men would be persuaded once to climb up the hill of knowledge, and there to contemplate the glory of heaven, and the blessedness of immortality; they would so scorn this base region of sin and darkness, that (with Paul) they would long for a dissolution. Let this prevail with you to accept of a taste of knowledge, and then blame us if you do not like it.

2. Another strange property it hath: that they who have it, exceedingly feel the want of it; where-

as they are insensible of any such defect that want it. For these latter, a man without knowledge is scarce a man; he lacks his eyes, the chamber of his understanding is empty. And as emptiness is not in nature, so grace is not in emptiness. He is a very beast; howsoever he scorns the comparison, yet the wisdom of heaven puts it upon him: "Understand, ye brutish among the people," Psal. xciv. 8. Therefore he no more desires knowledge than a beast calls for a book. He is asleep; and do men while they are asleep, call for a light, or complain of the sun's absence? Nay; he is dead; and dead men feel not the want of meat or clothes. Ask thousands that pass by, what they lack; and scarce one of a thousand will tell you that he lacks knowledge. Where it is not possessed, there it is not desired. For the other, they never have enough. There is an unnatural appetite in the body, the effect of disease; that the more men drink, the more thirsty they are. There is an unnatural affection in the mind, a mere spiritual distemper, that the richer men are the more covetous. In the soul there is an infinite desire of knowledge; but it is natural: we would be wiser than our equals, wiser than our teachers, wiser than all others, and yet (after all this) wiser than ourselves: no philosopher did see so far into the secrets of nature, no astronomer was so well acquainted with the motion and influence of the stars, no poet ever sung such transporting raptures, no physician had such skill in the composure of medicines, no linguist was so well seen in the languages, no canonist in the laws, no politician in states, no divine in the Scriptures, as we would be in them all. What speak I of these? Solomon had not a clearer knowledge by inspiration, nor Adam by his creation, than we would wish to have, whether by acquisition or infusion. Nay, what do I speak of men, our progenitors? we would be as wise as the angels: as the widow of Tekoah colloqued with David, My lord the king is an angel of God, to discern good and evil, 2 Sam. xiv. 17. Nay, we will scarce stick there, so long as the tempter hath a "Ye shall be as gods" for us: the wisdom of men, of saints, of angels would not content us. We must be as gods. Wherein? In "knowing good and evil," Gen. iii. 5. There can be no higher, no greater measure of knowledge; otherwise our insatiate souls would aspire to it.

Oh the mellifluous sweetness of knowledge! how doth it enchant the sons of men! He that left all the graces behind him, yet would take knowledge along with him. It is so indeed; many men neglect grace, that would fain have knowledge. But to see the unluckiness of it! They refuse what they might have with ease, and choose what after much difficulty they cannot obtain. They would be wise, and cannot; they might be holy, and will not. A man may love knowledge very much, and yet want it: but if so heartily he love goodness, he shall be sure of it. (Richard. de Contemplant. cap. 1.) Indeed he that is grossly ignorant, does not affect knowledge; nor does he that is notoriously impious, affect goodness. But here is the difference: many a one desires knowledge, that proves none of the wisest; but a man is made good by the very desire of goodness. Yet as we cannot see the light but by the light; so if it were not for knowledge, we would not be so desirous of knowledge. It was Solomon's option, "Give thy servant an understanding heart." 1 Kings iii. 9: his request in a dream, but his wish in most serious deliberation. The night follows the temper of the day; and as our hearts are waking, so they use to be disposed in our sleep. If the thoughts of Solomon had not been intent upon wisdom by day, he had not made it his suit in the night. Now, without

any competition, he fastens on that grace which he longed for: Give me an understanding heart. If Solomon had not been wise before, he had not known the worth of wisdom, nor preferred it in his desires. It is the love and admiration of knowledge, forestalling our hearts, that makes us so thirsty of this spring; which thousands pass by, and never drink of. The dunghill cucks of this world know not the price of this pearl, the worth of this jewel: they that have it, know that all other excellencies are but trash and rubbish to it. That famous queen of the South comes a great journey to that more famous king of the East; the queen of Sheba, to the king of Israel. What was her errand? To learn wisdom. She had what she came for: and in a short time, so well had this studious lady profited by the lectures of that exquisite master, that she envies none, she magnifies none, but them that live within the air of Solomon's wisdom: "Happy are they that stand continually before thee," 1 Kings x. 8. Oh then how great a blessing is it to live within the orb of the gospel: and to hear a wiser, a nobler, a greater than Solomon! Luke xi. 31. She was a woman, most of you here be of a stronger sex: she came from far, you have Christ at home; she left her kingdom, you are in your own country: she only heard of wisdom by report, you have continual experience of it; she brought rich gifts, you will scarce give thanks; she desired to purchase it, you will hardly accept of it; she came to a mere man, you to Him that is God and man: so far as Christ is greater than Solomon, shall her holy care judge our neglect with just condemnation.

For application: It cannot be denied, but we live under the sunshine of knowledge: the saving beams and comfortable influence of that heavenly blessing replenish our orb: it is perpetual day with us, and there is no night, unless it be in our own breasts. If our tree of knowledge does not grow for all this, what will become of us? Yes, we flatter ourselves with a We grow; but then God replies, Where is the fruit? Where are our works? The Egyptians in their palpable darkness could do nothing but sit still: it were a shame for the Israelites, in the light of Goshen, to do so. They could see to follow their business, the other could see no business to follow. We have work to do, and day-light to do it in: let us beware lest night come upon us before it be done, John ix. 4. Common knowledge will not serve for the despatch of this work: they must have a clear light, and a clear sight too, that can see to work up their salvation. Masons or carpenters can see to work by a candle: the texture of their labours is easily discernible. But to cut a signet, or make a watch, or do such curious manufactures, there needs a clear and strong light. For the despatch of our secular affairs, an easy portion of knowledge will serve the turn: a rational man, especially helped with experience, will go roundly through with them. But our salvation is spun up of a finer thread: and will ask a greater measure of illumination to perfect it. There may come a time of darkness, or we may be removed to a place of darkness, or (for our neglect of the light) we may be oppressed with the power of darkness. Now the sun shines, the gospel flourishes; the word of grace is preached, the seals of grace are administered, all the treasures of heaven and comforts of mercy are offered to us: now let salvation be our work on earth, and then salvation shall be our reward in heaven.

"In the knowledge of our Lord." The second sound of this heavenly trumpet summons us to an increase in knowledge: for there must be no dead or barren trees in God's garden; all fruitful, all growing. But here three questions may be moved.

1. Why grace is set before knowledge, whereas, in order, knowledge is before grace. Illumination properly precedes sanctification: we must be wise, ere we can be holy. Among all the virtues, wisdom hath the first place. Why then first grow in grace, and then in knowledge? We answer, (1.) That they are infused together: in the act of our conversion, all graces (in their measure) are wrought in us. There is not a former and a latter in their donation; as princes give preferments, raising up their favourites by degrees. We have not patience put into us to-day, and temperance to-morrow, and repentance next week, and charity at another time; but they are given all at once; our eyes are opened, our hearts softened, our affections rectified, all our faculties changed and sanctified at once. Indeed this renovation is not perfect at the first, that is left to our growing; but it hath at first a perfect being. The seeds of all graces are then sown in our hearts; not one left out. As Joseph's advancement was entire, and his honours came all together: for Pharaoh did make him warden of his granaries; made him lord controller of his house; made him lord marshal and lieutenant over his armies in the time of war; lord president over all his subjects, Gen. xli. 40—44. So our graces come at once, as to their essence; by degrees, as to their increase. Holy knowledge therefore could have no priority of grace. (2.) Grace is the general favour of God, knowledge but a particular grace; grace the main river, knowledge but a creek; grace the tree, knowledge but the fruit; grace the mistress, knowledge but the attendant; grace the mother, the honour of knowledge is to be the daughter; grace hath many children, knowledge can be but one of them. Now it is fit, that the tree should be set before the fruit, the lady before her servant, the mother before the daughter, grace before knowledge. (3.) Grace can save us without knowledge, but what will become of knowledge without grace? Little infants, the children of the faithful, die washed in the holy laver, the blood of Christ, and are eternally saved: yet what knowledge had they? They know not what others do unto them, what God hath done for them; they know not that they are baptized, they know not that they are born: yet they are saved by grace, without knowledge. But who was ever saved by knowledge, without grace. It is orderly, then, that grace should be preferred before knowledge; which gives life unto it, and without which it would perish. For knowledge without grace, will but sink men lower into hell; but grace, without the help of knowledge, will advance us to heaven, and crown us with glory.

2. The object of this knowledge is Jesus Christ. Why is the second Person only mentioned? Why not the other two, the Father and the Holy Spirit? Is it enough to know Christ without the rest? No; but we had never known the rest to our comfort, without Christ. If you object that, This is eternal life, to know God, and Jesus Christ, John xvii. 3: first the Father, and then the Son; by no means leaving out the Holy Ghost: for, "Know ye not that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" 1 Cor. iii. 16. Knowledge is wrought in us by the Spirit, and shall not we know the Spirit that works it? Yes, God forbid otherwise: but in knowing Christ, we know them both. First, the Father: If you know me, you know the Father also. He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father also, John xiv. 7, 9. The Son is the express image of his Father's person, Heb. i. 3: therefore they that know the one, cannot but know the other. And for the Holy Spirit; "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost," 1 Cor. xii. 3; 1 John iv. 2. It is then the

gracious work of the Holy Spirit, to teach us to know Christ. Thus in knowing Christ to be our Saviour, we know the first Person to be our Father, and the third Person to be our Comforter. Christ is all in all; we cannot know the sun, but withal we must know his light that illuminates us, and his heat that cherisheth us. It was Paul's determination, not to know any thing, but what concerned Jesus Christ, 1 Cor. ii. 2. That is enough, we need no more knowledge to the completion of our happiness. Therefore it might well be decreed by the learned of the Christian world, that none should take their degrees in the school of learning, unless they could first read and understand the title of Christ crucified.

3. Why are these two coupled together, grace and knowledge? Grace had wont to have other companions. "Grace and truth came by Jesus," John i. 17: grace and truth; there was a fit match. Grace and righteousness by one Jesus, Rom. v. 17; another convenient pair. "God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble," 1 Pet. v. 5: grace and humility; these two well consorted. "By grace are ye saved through faith," Eph. ii. 8: grace and faith; there also it is nobly accompanied. "The Lord will give grace and glory, Psal. lxxxiv. 11; O there is a blessed couple. "We have access by faith into grace, rejoicing in hope of glory," Rom. v. 2: there is grace in honour and state; she sits on her throne, waited upon by faith on her right hand, by hope on her left; neither is she without her crown, the hope of glory. Indeed it is not yet placed on her head, for the day of her coronation is not come; but faith sees it, and hope expects it, and grace shall have it. This is a society fit for grace; truth, righteousness, humility, faith, hope, glory; there she is among her noble ladies, attended by virgins of honour. "Kings' daughters were among thy honourable women: upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir," Psal. xlv. 9. All the other virtues are of the blood royal, yet but servants to grace: she is the queen that stands upon the right hand of God himself, in a vesture of gold, wrought about with divers colours. She hath change of suits; sometimes she wears raiment of needle-work; but still the virgins that be her fellows, or followers, are with her, ver. 14. But who gave knowledge this privilege? How came she by this honour, that faith, charity, patience, obedience, and those princely virtues, should be left out, while she is put in? Those are all near the person of the queen, continually in the presence; knowledge, if it be a courtier, is of a lower rank, and more remote.

It may be answered, that, (1.) Grace, in one word, comprehends all the other; and where the genus is named, what needs any mention of the species. Faith is grace, and charity is grace; repentance, patience, humility, and all the rest are graces; their particular honours are involved in the general. So that when we are called upon to grow in grace, we are not stinted to this or that grace, to one or more graces; but we are charged with all; grow in grace, in every grace: so the honour done to the mother, redounds to the whole family. Knowledge is not preferred to any grace, but every saving grace is preferred to knowledge. (2.) Grace and knowledge are joined together, because the one helps to maintain the other. Knowledge is like a star, the darkest part of the orb, till it be enlightened by the sun; a mere dark lantern, till grace put a light into it. It may see much into nature before, and be cunning in this world; but it is grace that gives it eyes to see into heaven: thus grace maintains knowledge. Again, the more we know Christ, the better we love him; the farther we look into the joys above, the more we are ravished

with them; the more comfort we find in the fruits of grace, the more growth we wish to the tree of grace, of our own hearts: thus knowledge maintains grace. We know the way to heaven, because grace hath informed our knowledge; we go the faster to heaven, because knowledge hath inflamed our grace. Fill the lamp with oil, and put no fire to it, and it will not keep us from darkness. The lamp is not lighted from oil, but is nourished by oil. Let the head be never so full of knowledge, till the fire of grace comes to it, it gives us no light; put to that holy spark, and then we see clearly. On the other side, grace is not kindled by knowledge, but by knowledge it is cherished. Grace directs knowledge how to contemplate, and knowledge stirs up grace to practise. Grace will not suffer knowledge to want illumination, nor will knowledge suffer grace to want operation. Thus do they mutually help one another, and both help us to salvation in Jesus Christ.

These questions being cleared, let us come to the distribution. "Grow in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." Here is the tree, the life, and the growth: the tree is knowledge, the life of the tree is Jesus Christ, and the growth of it is not limited, Grow in this knowledge. The thing commended to us is no common chaffer, but knowledge; no common knowledge, but the knowledge of Christ; no common or sparing measure of knowing Christ, but a growth in his knowledge. To begin with the tree itself; some fruit let me gather from that: one thing would be noted both for instruction and caution; what the kinds of knowledge are, and how it may be distinguished. Nor let this be censured for a topical discourse, as if I meant to common-place upon knowledge in general, or at large; for you shall perceive that I reduce all to this head, and only aim at this end, to show how unworthy all knowledge is to be compared with the knowledge of Christ. Together with the unprofitableness of human science, without divine; how vain it is, how fruitless it shall be, how sinful it will be, and how pernicious it may be, to the soul of man.

The kinds of knowledge may three ways be distinguished. First, in their spring and beginning. Secondly, in their order and proceeding. Thirdly, in their virtue and operation.

1. In their spring and beginning. Every knowledge is from God, that only Giver of all good and perfect gifts, Jam. i. 17: but every knowledge is not alike; one may be more noble than another: all good in their kind, not all equally good in the same measure. Every perfect is good, but every good is not perfect: let us not think that all our gifts are of one size. Some of that nobleman's goods are called pounds, Luke xix. 13, and some talents, Matt. xxv. 15: now a talent is more than a pound; Cæsar's penny more than the widow's two mites; yet good money all, in their several values. "The law is good," 1 Tim. i. 8, yet it could bring nothing to perfection, Heb. vii. 19. Nature, in its own self, is good, yet not perfect. Neither nature nor the law are taken away, for they are both good; but grace is added to both, to perfect both. Wealth is called "this world's good," John iii. 17; and those temporal things we give to our children, as bread, meat, nourishment, are called by Christ "good gifts," Matt. vii. 11; yet we cannot deny, but the gifts of heaven are better. So one knowledge may be more excellent than another; yet both good, and both from the same Author. There is a knowledge common to all, and another peculiar to some. Knowledge in trades, whereby men become skilful artificers, knowledge in arts, whereby they become famous scholars, are both good; but not comparable to the knowledge of grace

and holiness, whereby they become good Christians. For common knowledge;

(1.) Such is that we call wit and cunning. "The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light," Luke xvi. 8: wiser in their generation, not wiser for regeneration. The wisdom of this world is folly, 1 Cor. i. 20; yea, death, and enmity to God, Rom. viii. 6, 7. Owls see better in the night than men, yet men have a better sight than owls. Cats may have clearer eyes; but it is to kill mice, not to read letters. The wisdom of worldlings is but cunning; they study men more than books; which makes them good in their own alley; but turn them to new grounds, and they have lost their aim. They are far short of wisdom; not only in point of honesty, but in point of ability: for cunning is but a sinister knowledge; it may be earthly, sensual, devilish, not descending from above, Jam. iii. 15. There is a wisdom that descendeth not from above; how then is all knowledge from God? The faculty of knowing is from God; the defect or deprivation of it is from man. Shall God be blamed for giving us eyes, because we turn them after vanity? or ears, because we open them to scurrility? or feet, because we make them swift to shed blood? No more is he to be blamed for giving us understanding, though we employ it to mischief. Grace and knowledge are coupled together in my text, they are not so in every man.

(2.) Such is that we call policy. Ahithophel had wit enough to give shrewd counsel to a traitor; he had not grace enough to save himself from the gallows. How great a politician was that counsellor of David! how oraculous in his good, how devilish in his bad advices! Two projects he had to secure the treason; there was much of cunning in them both. First, for fear that Absalom should relent, and David remit, and so that breach be pieced, he counsels him to second his unnatural conspiracy with as unnatural incest; not only to violate his father's throne, but his father's bed; and not to do this villany in secret, the argument of fear or modesty, but so that all Israel might be witnesses of the son's sin and the father's shame. If they two be reconciled, thinks Ahithophel, what shall become of us? But this act is so desperate and unpardonable, that he must needs go on in rebellion. Secondly, that this treason may end in victory, he hath another plot ready. Protraction may be an advantage to David; therefore I will pursue him to-night, and come upon him while he is weary, 2 Sam. xvii. 1, 2. How pernicious was this advice! For besides the weariness and unreadiness of David's army, the spirits of that holy king were daunted; so that the field had been won ere any blow was stricken. Celerity had gotten the conquest; there had scarce been any resistance of a sudden assault. Here was wit enough: Ahithophel wanted not the knowledge to discern of times and seasons. He that observes every wind, shall never sow; but he that observes no wind at all, shall never reap. If you ask from whence this knowledge comes, from heaven, or from hell? I answer, from both, in a diverse manner. The faculty is from heaven, the perversity from hell. That he had a deep wisdom, he was beholden to God; that he diverted it to sinful purposes, he might thank the devil.

Let our observation be here, how dangerous a presumption it is to be wise without God! this is the way to come short home. How cunningly do politic naturians contrive their plots, as if there was no power to cross their projects, or revenge their wickedness! They conspire on earth, God laughs in heaven, Psal. ii. 4. So far indeed he gives way to their sins, as their sins may prove plagues to them-

selves. So he disposeth of wicked men and spirits, that while they are unwilling to fulfil the revealed, they may fulfil the secret will of God. While they think most to please their own fancies, they overthrow their own souls. This way, saith the wisdom of Almighty God. Tush, we know a better way of ourselves. There was a king of Aragon, Alphonsus, who because he was a king, and a philosopher, imperious over his subjects, and expert in the motion of the heavenly bodies, grew to such a height of insolency, that he blasphemously boasted, that if he had been of counsel with God in the making of the heavens, the heavens should have been disposed in a better order than they are. This man would not only be as wise as God, but wiser than God. There was one among the heathen, that went for wise, who said, that to become rich, he would pray and sacrifice to Hercules; but to be wise, he would do neither; not a bend of his knee, not a whiff of smoke, would he afford: for, for wisdom, he could help himself to it well enough, and be beholden to never a god of them all. Rich if they would make him, well and good, he might perhaps thank them for it; but of his own head he could be wise enough. What, wiser than Daniel? Yes, he will be wiser than God. The apostle says, that "every good gift cometh down from the Father of lights," Jam. i. 17. We have some astrologers, (called judicial, but indeed without any sound judgment at all,) that have found out another derivation for these gifts; from the lights, and so would have us look no further. Such a conjunction or aspect of the luminary bodies, such a constellation or horoscope, such a position of planets, produce you these good effects. This is according to their astrology, not according to our theology. Not from the lights, from the host of heaven; but from the Father of lights, from the God of heaven, from the Lord of hosts.

Oh the miserable end of wicked politicians! What became of Ahithophel for all his deep knowledge? He had great wit for the public, none for his private self; he could govern a state, not rule his own passions. What a strange mixture of wisdom and folly do we find in that man! He will needs hang himself; that was an act of folly: yet first he will set his house in order; there was an act of wisdom. Who would think it possible, but for the truth of this example, that a man should be at once so wise as to put his house in order, and yet so mad as to break his own neck with a halter? that he should remember to order his house, that forgot to order himself? Yet there are such subtle worldlings, who are careful to provide their children portions, and provide no portion of comfort for their own souls. They have wit and knowledge, but it lies wholly without them, in their riches. They mind the disposing of what they have in their coffers, and forget what they have in their hearts; as Ahithophel took care for his family, that took none for his own body and soul. Mark the end of these cunning rooks; and if they do not make away themselves with their own hands, yet they make way for the fiends of hell to do it. He that with the deepest reach contrives his own sinful pleasure, does but study to provide his own halter.

For use. 1. It concerns all Christian states, to exclude such men from their council-tables. That holy king of Israel would admit no statesman, so far as he could discern, but such as were after his own heart, Psal. ci. 7; and he himself was a man after God's heart. Be he never so politic, be his wisdom more than any man's; yet if his heart be not right, he will not be faithful. I know that where the breast-plate is naught, yet some use may be made of the head-piece; use, I say, not trust. If men come

to counsel, and leave the God of wisdom behind them, there is rather a curse to be feared, than any expectation of a blessing. Into their counsel let not my soul come, Gen. xlix. 6; nor ever let their counsel come into my soul. Look for no good of those designs, wherof God was not at the making. If he be locked out of the council-chamber, error fills all the room. Where a politic head sows, and a false heart waters, God will give no good increase. One spark of religion is worth a whole flame of secular wisdom.

2. It concerns all private men. Carnal knowledge is a Peripatetic, and loves to be walking: wickedness sets it the boundaries: it shall walk but within such a compass. A compass indeed! Mischief it may study, but no goodness. There is an earthly knowledge, which lies in bed, and deviseth tricks of lucre, projects of oppression. The ungodly are not without their counsel; but blessed is he that hath not walked in their counsel, Psal. i. 1. What is the event of this counsel, whether taken of their fellows, or of their pillows? In the day they inquire, "Who will show us any good?" Psal. iv. 6. In the night, they meditate mischief on their beds, Micah ii. 1. They consult shame to their house: shame, is this all? No, ruin too; for the stones shall cry out of the wall against them, Hab. ii. 10, 11. Is not this a goodly knowledge, that brings with it shame and ruin? Such men have the wit to undo others, and do themselves no good. One might be wise in Macedonia, and a very fool at Athens; as Paul before his conversion was eminent among the Pharisees, but an idiot among the apostles. "The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God," 1 Cor. iii. 19; and a man famous for knowledge in the opinion of the earth, may be a mere sot in the judgment of heaven. He that "seemeth to be wise, let him become a fool, that he may be wise," ver. 18. As we must be humble, that we may be exalted; and dead, that we may live; so fools, that we may be wise. Let us know that we know nothing, till we know the gospel; and know that we know enough, when we once rightly know Jesus Christ.

3. There is a kind of knowledge above all these; whether that natural knowledge, granted to all men; or that artificial knowledge, granted to mechanics; or that political knowledge, granted to statistes: there is also a higher, even a prophetic knowledge, and this may be granted to reprobates. Such a knowledge had Balaam in his ecstasies; scarce ever any of the holiest prophets had so clear a revelation of the Messiah to come. The very beast he rode on had both her eyes and her mouth miraculously opened; so that she could both see an angel, and expostulate with her master. There was such an old prophet in Bethel, 1 Kings xiii. 11; of whom, considering all, a man knows not well what to think. He abode within the air of Jeroboam's idol, within the noise of his sacrifices, and permitted his sons to be present at those idolatrous services. If he were a prophet of God, what did he in Bethel? Why did he wink at the sins of Jeroboam? What needed a prophet to come from Judah, to reprove that sin which was acted under his nose? Why did he lie, and betray his fellow-prophet to destruction? Did these abominations become a prophet of God? If he were not a prophet of God, how had he true visions? How had he direct messages from God? ver. 20. How did he condemn the word of that prophet whom he seduced? ver. 22.

2. Why did he desire, that his own bones might be honoured with his sepulchre? ver. 31. We may conclude, then, that he was a prophet of God; but a corrupt and vicious one. When the other was slain by the lion, he had so much truth as to give a right commentary upon God's intention in that act, ver.

26: so much hospitality, as to send away his guest better provided for the ease of his journey than he came, ver. 23: though this were but a poor amend; when he had betrayed the life, and wronged the soul, to cast away some courtesies upon the body. He had so much faith and courage, as to fetch his carcass from the lion; so much piety and compassion, as to weep over him; so much love, as to wish himself joined in death to that body, which he had hastened to death. There was some goodness in him; he was not absolutely wicked. But all this cannot excuse his sinfulness: he was a seer, yet did not see his own way.

Such another was Caiaphas: "This spake he not of himself; but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation," John xi. 51. He spake not himself, but God spake through him, as through a trunk; Caiaphas in the mean time never the wiser for it. That old riddle is applicable to him; Of a man and no man, (which was a cumuch,) who with a stone and no stone, (which is the pumice,) killed a bird and no bird, (which is the bat,) upon a tree and no tree (which is the fennel); so Caiaphas was a prophet and no prophet; a prophet in that particular prediction, otherwise and at other times a priest only, not a prophet. He spake, and he spake not; he spake not of himself, and of his own excoitation, but God spake by him in a sudden inspiration. It was not a word springing up in his breast; it passed out of his mouth, but never came in his heart; the words were his, and not his. That Jesus should die for that nation, and not for that nation; for the Jews principally, but not for the Jews only. Thus it pleaseth the wisdom of God, to express himself even by the tongues of faulty instruments. Yea, Satan himself sometimes receives notice from God of his future actions; which otherwise that evil spirit could neither foretell nor foresee. Such, in all likelihood, was his information concerning the end of Saul: "To-morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me," 1 Sam. xxviii. 19. How could Satan tell this? Is the devil become a prophet? No; but as he was once a good angel, so he can still act what he was. Well may lewd men be good preachers, when Satan himself can play the prophet. What prophet could speak better words, than this foul spirit in Sammel's mantle? "Wherefore dost thou ask of me, seeing the Lord is departed from thee, and is become thine enemy?" ver. 16. Samuel himself, while he was alive, could not have spoken more gravely, more severely, more divinely, than this hellish counterfeit. Good words are no rule, to distinguish a prophet from a devil. This kind of knowledge is both rare and common: rare, in that it is seldom given to any; common, in that it is indifferently given to the good and bad. Prophecy doth not always presuppose sanctification. Many have had visions from God, that shall never enjoy the vision of God. One beam of holiness is worth a noon-day of illumination. Give me grace, what shift soever I make for knowledge.

We perceive now that there is a knowledge common to all conditions of men: there must then be a knowledge special and peculiar to some, or what distinction have we? No beam of this is denied to the saints; they may have it as well as the wicked: but there is a knowledge denied to the wicked; they cannot have it as well as the saints. To know not only the history, but the mystery, of the gospel; to know God in Christ, Christ in faith, and faith in good works; to know his sufferings our satisfaction, his merits our righteousness, and that we have our part in his redemption; to know that God is reconciled to us, the law satisfied, our sins pardoned, our

souls acquitted, and that we are in the favour of the Almighty; to know and feel the sweet peace of conscience, the inexpressible comforts of the Holy Ghost; to know that mercy shall keep us on earth, and that eternal joys are prepared for us in heaven; to "know the riches of the glory of God's inheritance in the saints," Eph. i. 18; "to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge," chap. iii. 19: this is indeed a knowledge worth our ambition, worth our seeking. But it is too high for the reach of carnal brains: as David speaketh in another sense, such knowledge is too wonderful for them: it is too high, they cannot attain unto it, Psal. cxxxix. 6; the refulgent glory of it would strike them blind. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God," 1 Cor. ii. 14. In the other knowledges, the righteous have part with sinners; but in this the sinners have no part with the righteous. Let me be weak in policy, so I may be wise to salvation. For application:

(1.) It improves them that know much, and will do little; that have full brains, and empty hearts; a library of divinity in their heads, and not so much as the least catechism in their consciences. Nor does this only touch the copyhold of preachers, but it concerns the capital tenure of all Christians. "Thou which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself?" Rom. ii. 21. It is no impossible thing: the candle that lights others to see by, sees nothing itself. Yield that the candle hath no sense; yet may not an ill-favoured painter draw a fair picture? Though himself have none of the most pleasing countenances, yet he may counterfeit an amiable face. The praises of virtue may be extolled and magnified in the mouth, where virtue itself cannot get into the heart. The carpenter may square other men's timber by the rule, his own at a venture. The servant may draw wine for all the family, and yet drink water himself. There is no necessity that every one should be good, which teaches it. When an orator, with great store of wisdom, had bitterly declaimed against folly, and somewhat abused his auditors; it was afterwards replied upon him by one of them, Sir, your discourse of folly may well be divided into three parts: one part you have declaimed against in all men, one part you have bestowed upon us, and the other part you have kept to yourself. But when a man shall commend wisdom to all his hearers, and keep no part of it to himself, for his own exercise, is it not madness? This is as if he were set to tell heads, and to number the company, and should forget to reckon himself. When an inheritance is to be divided among many children, will any co-heir set out the portions of the rest, and forget his own? We say for temporal things, when a man spends all, or gives away all, It was but his kind heart; but in the distribution of spiritual things, to leave ourselves none, argues not a kind, but a stupid heart. Heavenly knowledge is not lost by communicating; we may both give all and keep all. Lord, enable me to give so much as may make others rich in grace, and yet to keep so much as may make myself rich in glory.

(2.) For us all; let us keep our knowledge from ranging; it will hunt counter, if it pursues any other game but salvation. "Ye worship ye know not what," John iv. 22. That is a wild and rambling devotion, which knows not what it worships, whether God or an idol: as Saul, instead of Samuel, worshipped the devil; stooping with his face to the ground, and bowing himself, 1 Sam. xxviii. 14. Knowledge is apt to fly out, unless it be kept in by goodness. "It is a people that do err in their hearts, and they have not known my ways," Psal. xcv. 10. Soon must they err, that wander from the ways of God.

Many herbs that are wholesome and useful in the garden, grow wild in the desert or common field. So there is the wild rose, and the wild sage, and the wild thyme, wild succory, and wild tansy. These may have some virtue in the forest, where they spring naturally; but much more in the garden, where they are set carefully. Wise men are called sages; but our wisdom will grow wild sage, if it be not kept within the garden of grace. Our roses will wither, our time change colour, our succours be to seek; all will turn wild in the wilderness of sin. Our knowledge itself may so become wild, and so lose all the virtue. Fire is good and necessary, while it is kept upon the hearth within the chimney; it serves to warm our hands, to dress our meat, indeed for innumerable uses; but let it break out into the house, and the rage is most violent, the mischief irreparable. If our knowledge have got a gadding humour, a trick of playing truant; if it will steal out of school, to chat with Satan, and to inquire how the market of the world goes; how flesh and blood may be satisfied, in their appetite, in their addiction, in their curiosity, in their sensuality; it soon becomes wild, and flies out into rebellion. But keep it within the lists of godliness, and then it is a window to the ark, an eye to the soul, a guide to the affections, a Jehoiaha to Jehoash, to do right, 2 Kings xii. 2.

There are two daughters of the understanding; *scientia*, and *conscientia*; i. e. knowledge, and conscience: they must be sisters, both for their names and natures. *Con* (we know) is cver in composition: so that *conscientia* is but *scientia* with wings: a couple of them there must be at least. Science travels abroad. Conscience keeps home; it is internal and domestical. Knowledge is the intelligence, and brings in news; whereof conscience determines. It may be sometimes asleep, but is never absent. It is bred and born within us, it will live and die with us. When Adam by his sin had brought ruin upon himself, and deaded the powers of his soul to goodness; this faculty had the most life remaining in it, and was left like Job's messengers to bring him news of the great loss; I alone am escaped to tell thee, Job i. 15. This little spark was left fresh, to show what great lights were extinguished. The office of knowledge is to inform conscience; the office of conscience is to reform knowledge. Knowledge is the eye of the soul, and conscience the glass (for it is but reflection of the soul upon itself): now our eyes cannot see themselves but by the reflection of a glass; nor doth knowledge rightly know itself but by the representation of conscience. In knowing of other things consists the exercise of science; in knowledge of ourselves, the exercise of conscience: so Bernard. All the arts, and trades, and policies, and mysteries we know, are but ciphers: conscience is the figure; put this to them, and they will amount to something. From hence come so many errors in our life, when one sister leaves the other; when science will not take conscience with it, walking abroad; nor look in the glass of conscience, coming home. I know that conscience is as Zeno said of a wife, Either a perpetual solace, or a continual torment: sometimes she will be chiding, but it is because we have been rambling. What the Scripture speaks of Dinah, and the poets feigned of Diana, experience finds true of knowledge. While Dinah would be stragglng from her father's house, she was ravished by Shechem. While Diana or Proserpine would be roving from her mother's house, she was rapt away by Pluto. So when science leaves conscience her mistress's house, she will be defiled with sin. Goodness is the

seasoning of knowledge: if human wisdom be not powdered with Divine grace, it will stink: that only can keep it, and make it keep. It is not unlike that petitioner's son in the gospel, in a manner lunatic; it will fall into the fire, and into the water too: the disciples could not cure him, so nothing in nature will help this: only as Jesus spake there, "Bring him hither to me," Matt. xvii. 17; so if he will be pleased to speak here of our knowledge, Bring her hither to me, she shall be healed, her sister conscience comforted, and their mother the soul saved.

2. In their order and proceeding. Some knowledge is more honourable than other; "more to be desired than gold," Psal. xix. 10. Gold hath the preedeeny of all metals, more noble than silver; but God's word is more noble than gold. The apostle's counsel is universally to be embraced, "Covet the best gifts," 1 Cor. xii. 31. Solomon took knowledge and wisdom for the best; and without any leisure of deliberation, fastens upon that: Give me a wise and understanding heart, 1 Kings iii. 9. That soil could not have borne such fruit alone; if God had not sown this seed, the desire of knowledge in his heart, Solomon would not so much as have dreamed of it. Yet this choice being made, God likes the suit so well, as if he were beholden to his creature for wishing good to itself. So doth he esteem a good election, that he recompenseth it with advantage. If riches had been his request, he had never known wisdom, nor (it may be) riches either: now he asks the best, and speeds of all. Riches and honour come into the match. Because he asked what he should, he shall receive both what he asked and what he asked not. Of that which was promised him sleeping, he found the performance waking; even such an illumination in all the rooms of his heart, as if God had given him a new soul. We say of temporal things, The best is cheapest; but of spirituals, The best is most precious: how dear soever they cost us, they should be most dear unto us. Christ doth not dispraise Martha's hospitality, in preferring Mary's piety, Luke x. 42. Though she had chosen the better part, yet this doth not deny the other to be good. Many things are necessary to salvation, but the knowledge of the gospel is the chief. It is necessary by an autonomy, beyond all other things; simply, and for itself, through a necessity of the end; others in order to the end, and for the attainment of the end. (Stell. in Luc. 10.) As sustenance is necessary to maintain life, yet physic and exercise are necessary too in their times and places. Good is not excluded by better: water out of the tankard shall not lose its reward, Matt. x. 42, but meat out of the cupboard shall find a greater. Let the dead bury their dead, follow thou me, Matt. viii. 22. It is a good work to bury the dead; but to preach the gospel, a better. St. Paul more extols the office of preaching, than that of baptizing: "Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel," 1 Cor. i. 17. The ministry of the word is more noble than the ministry of the board: "It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables," Acts vi. 2: therefore the apostles chose deacons to that purpose, and gave themselves to prayer and preaching of the word, ver. 4.

There be some things not worth the knowing, because they are not worth the having. "Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth," Col. iii. 2. Not on earth, for that is the place from whence Christ is risen; "He is not here," Luke xxiv. 6. It is but a folly to seek him where we are sure he is not. Not on the mountains, where the beasts seek their food, Psal. l. 10: not among the clouds, whither the fowls of the air seem to aspire: not among the stars, that height of astrology, the highest

of naturians. But in a higher place, above all these, in heaven. Heaven is a great circle; where there? In the highest place of heaven, at the right hand of God. As nature would have us no moles, so grace would have us eagles, to mount up where the body is, Luke xvii. 37. There be upon earth some things higher in estimation than others; which the world takes for things above. To be above others in wealth and abundance, the richer, the higher, this is one above. To be above others in honour, the nobler, the higher, is another above. To exceed the common sort in pleasure, and the variety of carnal joys, is a great above with them. But alas, all these are lower things; and (without repentance) will sink down to the lowest, even hell: those have but base minds that admire them, and but lean souls that are satisfied with them. There is an above far above all these, a glory and immortality to be known: we are born to higher things, and should have a holy ambition of them. "To know the love of Christ," Eph. iii. 19, "here is wisdom" indeed, Rev. xiii. 18: to know the way of salvation, is the above of all knowledge. When we are studying that, let us think we are about a high point of wisdom; and that to perform it well, is the wisest action of all our life.

This knowledge does not only bring grounds for judgment, but rules for practice; and gives reasons why we do things, or leave them undone. It argues thus; I am now about a work, what will God think of it? May I offer it to him? Will he allow it? Will he help me forward with it? Will he in the end reward me for it? This is indeed a happy knowledge, as if it had been rapt up with Paul into paradise; or if it be not taken up into heaven, yet heaven is let down into it. As the legend speaks historically (which is only true symbolically) of St. Christopher, that before he was converted to the faith, he would serve none but the strongest; so this knowledge aims at none but the highest. He had for his first master a man of great strength and puissance, but a king subdued him. Him he forsook for that king; but finding him to be overcome by a neighbour, he betook himself to that other pagan conqueror. This conqueror was also tyrannized over by Satan, to whom he was a mere slave, doing all his base commands: this he could not endure, but entered into service with the devil. For a while he admired the power of his new master, and what a dominion he exercised over the sons of men; but in a short space he found out his weakness also: so feeble and fearful was he of a piece of wood, he durst not pass by the cross; but when that stood in his way, he must back again. Now that weary servant longed to know what this cross meant, and how he might find out a more potent Lord. It was told him that Christ was the Lord of that ensign, and that the cross was his banner. Thither then he flies, and there he found out a most mighty, an almighty Master. So let our knowledge climb; from strength to strength, from height to height, till it appear before God in Zion, Psal. lxxxiv. 7. Let it mount higher than riches in their treasury, higher than princes in their throne, higher than stars in the firmament, and fetch all her light and comfort from God in Jesus Christ.

There is a double use to be made of this point. First, despise not the least. Secondly, but seek the best knowledge.

(1.) There is no good knowledge, but it comes from the grace of God, and tends to the glory of God. As Solomon despised not to know the hyssop on the wall, any more than the cedar in Lebanon, so though thy knowledge be like the sun, yet condemn not the least star. "There are diversities of gifts, but the

same Spirit," 1 Cor. xii. 4: all light comes from the same Father of lights. He that made the elephant, made the ant; as well the fly, as the eagle; the poorest worm that creeps on the earth, as the most glorious angel in heaven. He that gives us the kingdom of heaven, and those eternal joys, gives also every piece of bread we eat, and commands us to acknowledge it. In one and the same prayer, which is the exemplar and precedent of all prayers, he teacheth us to sue for both "Thy kingdom," and "our bread." If it were but a little spark got into the flax, Christ would not quench it. Despise not the mean knowledge of thy brethren, though thy own soul have a clearer understanding. There may be divine wisdom in the heart of a man, though it want utterance. Full many have proved holy martyrs, that never were profound scholars: as that simple woman answered the persecuting prelate in Queen Mary's days, when he questioned her about the subtleties of learning, "My lord, I cannot dispute for the truth, but I can die for the truth." Thou hast a more reaching brain, another may have as honest a heart. Honour the least grace of God, whosoever thou find it. Say the gifts in some Christians be small; yet reverence the Giver for these; and then thy happiness shall be like Nathanael's, "Thou shalt see greater things than these," John i. 50. "Who hath despised the day of small things?" Zech. iv. 10. The day of small things may beget a day of great and glorious things. They that would not acknowledge God in the greater judgments, were driven to do it in the less. "This is the finger of God," Exod. viii. 19. God is called the Father of lights, in the plural, because of the degrees and diversities of his gifts; otherwise, the Father of light would have served. But we must respect the number as well as the nature of his gifts; and the several degrees of this gift, knowledge; which is light indeed, and fit to come from the Father of lights. There is one light of the sun, another of the moon, and another of the stars; and among the stars, one differeth from another in glory, 1 Cor. xv. 41: though one be not so bright as another, yet they are all good. Now God made the dimmest star as well as the sun in all his splendour. The humble daisy would fain grow, though it cannot shoot up so high as the margold. Let us learn to know and glorify God even in his least works; as Caesar's image is not only seen in his coin of gold, but even upon the poor penny. Bless him in all, for all.

(2.) Choose the best; refuse not knowledge in lower things, but aim at the highest. The serpent is the emblem of wisdom: Pharaoh's enchanters wrought wonders, when they turned their rods into serpents; but Moses' serpent devoured all theirs: all sciences are swallowed up in the knowledge of God. There is no true knowledge, which knows not, as Bernard says, In what order, with what mind, with what end, all things are to be done. For order, that comes first, which soonest leads to salvation. For desire, that is more ardent, which is more vehement towards love. For the end, to the edification of others, not ostentation of ourselves. That noble queen of the south came far to learn knowledge: in Solomon she found the mine, and stored her soul with that invaluable treasure. She gave him six-score talents of gold, 1 Kings x. 10; that was a royal gift of a queen to a king: Solomon gave her whatsoever she asked, ver. 13; and that was a more royal gift of a king to a queen. Hers was temporary riches, his eternal: hers might comfort the body, his could save the soul: hers arose out of the earth, his came down from heaven: her gift could not make Solomon happy, his gift made the queen of Sheba blessed. She came rich, she went away wise: she

came a queen, she went away a saint. There was not more freedom in her gift, than in her receipt; her own will was the measure of both. She gave what she would, and she received whatsoever she would ask; and surely she would ask the best. She was not such a truant in the school of wisdom, nor had so little profited by Solomon, but that she learned to crave the best. She returns therefore more richly laden than she came: she gave to Solomon, as a thankful client of wisdom; Solomon returns to her as a munificent patron, according to the liberality of a king. Seeing there is one knowledge higher and better than another, let us choose the best, the highest.

Give a natural man his choice of any dignity or honour in this world, and where will he fix? Would he content himself with a mean office, and hold it a credit to be chosen churchwarden or constable? offices which not a few are proud of. Or would his ambition be no more, than to fly justice-height, and be in commission of the peace? Or would he be pleased with the mayoralty of a city, or with some eminent place of judicature on the bench? Or would the nobility of a peer, or to be a general of the army, or a statesman at the council-table, satisfy him? Or were it enough for him to marry with a princess, the daughter of a king, which David took for so great an advancement? Or would he be content with Joseph's place, to ride in the second chariot of Egypt, and to be lord-lieutenant over the kingdom? No, but so long as there was a Pharaoh to say, Only in the throne I will be above thee, Gen. xli. 40, he is not pleased. *Aut Cæsar, aut nihil*, the king he must be, or nothing. His aspiring thoughts would never rest, till his head were encompassed with a crown. Oh where is our holy ambition of such a spiritual honour? Why knowledge is a crown: "The prudent are crowned with knowledge," Prov. xiv. 18. Not every knowledge; the gardener's to plant, the carpenter's to frame, the lawyer's to plead, the sophister's to dispute; these cannot be called crowns. Men may have skill in these and the like, and yet never deserve the glory of a crown, much less the crown of glory. It is not the philosopher's knowledge, but the Christian's, that is truly a crown. To know God in Christ, this crowns us. To the crown we would be as near as possibly we can; if we may not be kings, yet at least the king's favourites. When it was fancied that Christ should be a great King upon earth, there was sung straight to be near his throne. Good-wife Zebedee's two sons, that smelt of the fisher-boat, means was made for them to be next the King! Matt. xx. 21. Earls are companions of the king, and have their coronets: so are the saints, having fellowship with Christ, 1 John i. 3. Yea, they are kings; Christ hath made us kings to his Father, Rev. i. 6. Not that they may do what they list: spiritual kings may not be lawless; for they are made by Christ, and kings unto God. One crown they have, crown of wisdom; another they shall have, crown of glory. Why then do we stick upon these lower objects, as if the knowledge how to be rich or potent, were such a worthy matter. They be but dirty crowns, that are made of such stuff: higher must our knowledge mount, or no crown is to be had.

There is a saucy knowledge; when the astrologer will offer to pick God's counsel out of the stars, and derive his honour upon constellations. That speculation is high enough, too high, but withal too presumptuous; the astrologer shall never make himself a crown of stars. There is a wanton knowledge, a fictitious pöesy, transported not only from modesty, but from morality: which multiplies the one Deity

into the plurality of gods; prefers Parnassus to Mount Olivet; feigns and commends an elysium, for the heavenly kingdom; placeth metamorphosis instead of miracles; to whom a neat, pleasing fable is more delightful than the true and saving gospel; and in whose mouth the figments of a petulant brain are more frequent than the word of the eternal God. Their souls are taken with a smooth poem; they call it a rapture, and stick not to add the attribute of divine. But when a poet courts his mistress in a lascivious rhyme, is this a divine rapture? To defame the reputation of men, of states, of saints, in railing satires; is this a divine rapture? I censure not the art of poesy; it is excellent; a knowledge that may both profit and delight. I do not despise poets, that they are the best writers, next to them that write in prose. But it is the looseness of luxuriant wits, and spurious fancies, full of the venom of the serpent, that makes it odious. A higher and nobler knowledge belongs to Christians; in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, to sing the praises of God with uplifted hearts, yea, and uplifted brains too; thither upwards all. As our bodily eyes see not the air that is next them, nor the fire, nor the spheres, nor stop upon any thing till they come to the stars; so let the eyes of our souls, wisdom and knowledge, see nothing of this world, though it be never so near us; but pass through all, and only fix themselves upon the peace, and joy, and glory in heaven. So will the Lord bless our knowledge, and crown our heads with a crown of honour here; and then crown that crown with the Head of all, which is Jesus Christ, hereafter.

3. In their virtue and operation. Some knowledge is more effectual than other. There is a theoretical and a practiced knowledge; the former whereof may be without the latter, but the latter cannot be without the former. Men may have knowledge, and yet not do well; but no man can do well, unless he have knowledge. So divers interpreters by knowledge here understand obedience; the fruits, and effects, and consequents of knowledge, which are good works. (Lorin, in loc.) As if the apostle had said, Grow in grace, and in the works of grace. It is no news to have knowledge taken for obedience, or obedience for knowledge. "He judged the cause of the poor and needy: was not this to know me? saith the Lord," Jer. xxii. 16. If they be two, yet they are such two, as would never be parted, never found asunder; like Mary and Martha, both sisters, and both busy about Christ. Mary listens to his word, that she may know what to do; Martha looks to her hospitable office, that she may do what she knows. Martha prepares to feast him; Mary prepares to be feasted by him. And those lazy admirers of the contemplative life, have yet ascribed a greater reward to the active: as to relieve the poor and comfort them, is better than to say only, God help them. Every cherub had the form of a man's hand under his wing, Ezek. x. 10. There is not only the wing of knowledge to fly aloft; but the hand of practice, to do good below. "The one doth not cross, but assist the other; as the hands fetch their direction from the eyes, and the eyes look to the operation of the hands." As Simon and Levi were brothers in evil, so Mary and Martha were sisters in good. The union of these two is much commended both in the Scriptures and by the fathers.

For the Scriptures: "I desired the knowledge of God more than burnt-offerings," Hos. vi. 6. If this were only a speculative knowledge, certainly then there was more worth in burnt-offerings: for what is God the better for our wisdom? He is honoured by our sacrifice. But obedience hath there gotten the name of knowledge, and then it is fully expound-

ed. "To obey is better than sacrifice," 1 Sam. xv. 22. So, "Keep" the commandments of God, "and do them, for this is your wisdom and understanding" before God and men, Deut. iv. 6. Not a sign of wisdom, nor an effect of wisdom, nor the companion of wisdom; but wisdom itself. There also hath obedience got the name of wisdom. So, "Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him show out of a good conversation his works with meekness," Jam. iii. 13. There if they be not under the same name, yet they are in the same man: if distinguishable in their nature, yet inseparable in their subject. For that man's good conversation is wisdom, his good works wisdom, his meekness wisdom, and the discreet showing or manifestation of all, wisdom. "He that saith, I know God, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him," 1 John ii. 4. There is no term so odious with us as a liar; yet David was very round and homely with us, when he says, "All men are liars," Psal. cxvi. 11: without question, all sinners are liars. Some had their surnames from greatness; as Alexander the Great, Pompey the Great, Constantine the Great, Charles the Great: others from piety, as Metellus Pius, Antoninus Pius, Æneas Pius: the conscionable and obedient Christian takes one name from wisdom: he is a wise man as well as a good man.

For the fathers: Nazianzen, (in Apolog.) He is the wise man who speaks little *about* virtue, but does much *for* virtue. That wisdom is bright, which does not fly about in words, but consists in deeds. Bernard, (in Cant. ser. 23.) The sun does not warm all that it shines upon: so wisdom gives men light, to know what they should do; but does not inflame their affections, to do what they know. It is one thing to know wealth, another thing to possess it: nor does knowledge, but possession, make a man rich. Let me add, Nor does the possession, but the fruition, the use, not the having of it, make a man rich. (Isidore.) It makes to the accumulation and aggravation of a man's sins, to know what he ought to practise, and yet to be unwilling to practise what he knows. (Hugo.) In vain does the abundance of divine knowledge increase, unless it increase the flame of divine love. (August.) As God hath given the office and ministry of baptism to many, but the power of remitting sins in baptism he keeps to himself. Mark i. 8: so knowledge is a common gift, one man may teach another; but holiness is a peculiar grace, which he gives by none but himself. There may be a substance without an odour, but there can be no odour without a substance; so there may be knowledge without good works, but good works without knowledge never. A distinction of them we may conceive in our brains, God forbid there should be a division of them in our hearts. This consideration affords us a three-fold use.

(1.) It is our apostle's charge, "Add to your virtue knowledge," chap. i. 5: my exhortation here must be, Add to your knowledge virtue. If your wisdom be not operative, it had better not be at all: for we must give account of our knowledge, and that account must be according to the fruits of our knowledge. As Gregory speaks of the feast of resurrection, We keep Easter but ill, unless we express the matter of the feast, in the manner and form of our life: so we shall give but a sorry account of our knowledge, without a catalogue of good works; an inventory, not of our own counterfeiting, but upon record in heaven. "The Spirit moved upon the face of the waters," in the creation, Gen. i. 2: he did not lie, nor sit, nor stand upon them, but he moved; he instantly fell to work. An angel troubled the waters, John v. 4: not only looked on them, but moved

them. We are no sooner put into the spring of spiritual knowledge, but at once we both perceive our own foulness, and in that holy laver begin to wash our souls. As Naaman did not stand to view Jordan, but dipped himself seven times in it, to get off his leprosy. "They looked," or had an eye "to him, and were lightened," Psal. xxxiv. 5. Light and heat are inseparable: the nights are hotter at the full moon, because then there is more light. If the Lord doth enlighten us with knowledge, he doth also warm us with charity; and charity will be doing good works.

(2.) The purpose and end of our knowledge must be directed to goodness. Many learn much, that they may be learned, not good; and reputed among the wise, not among the saints. So some lawyers study to be cunning in the laws, not with an intent to help their poor oppressed clients, but by intricate quirks, windings, and distortions, to squeeze their purses. They would be rich by their knowledge, not honest; as their heirs would be made noble by their riches, not hospitable; and the third generation leaves neither honour, nor honesty, no, nor riches behind them, to their posterity. The priests and scribes could plainly have informed Herod concerning Christ, and clearly have expounded the prophet Micah, chap. v. 2; that he was to be a spiritual King, and not to take upon him any earthly principality; so that Herod needed not to fear the loss of his kingdom by him. Thus might they have kept that tyrant from blood, and prevented the murder of so many innocents. But such was their pride, that they would not. They had the keys, but they scorned to open the door, Matt. xxiii. 13. So you have Herod turning over the Bible, searching the Scriptures, examining the prophets; but to what purpose? He says, that he might adore Christ; but he lied, for it was that he might destroy Christ. Know, to be better, as well as to be wiser. There is no comfort in any knowledge, the scope whereof is not Divine goodness.

(3.) Let no knowledge satisfy us, but that which refers us, prefers us to Christ. There be common gifts, wherein natural men take their full acquiescence; yet we know, the dispensation of them extends to very reprobates. Balaam had the gift of prophecy, yet he loved the wages of iniquity. Saul had another heart given him, 1 Sam. x. 9; a kingly heart, not a holy heart. Athithophel's counsel was oraculous, yet his end desperate. Judas, haply, could preach like an angel, Matt. x. 4; yet in practice, a very devil, John vi. 70. Baptism is a gracious gift of God, yet many after the water of baptism, go to the fire of hell. (August. in Frag. num. 7. Ex Serm. de Mirac. 5. pan.) Prophecy, an eminent gift; yet Saul among the prophets. Faith, necessary; yet the devils believe and tremble. Do we not see in the world, a great statesman, yet a mere atheist? a deep divine, yet too covetous? an expert lawyer, yet a corrupt judge? an experienced physician, yet a mere naturist? a rare scholar, yet a great drinker? Chrysostom hath a fearful saying; He that knows good, and lives in evil, is no better than a devil in the shape of a man, or no better than a man in the nature of a devil. (Serm. Davidica, Cantica, &c. tom. 1.) These may have good parts, but they are not good men. The devils know and believe, believe and tremble; but they can do no good. Let us turn to God with repentance, which the devils cannot do; and be ingrafted to Christ by faith, which the devils cannot be; and possess the Spirit of sanctification, which the devils cannot have. So shall we, both in grace and knowledge, resemble the blessed angels, and be partakers of their glory in

the heavens. As no place can content the fire but the uppermost, still it riseth up toward its own region; so let no knowledge satisfy us, but the knowledge of Christ. The other elements, earth, water, and air, are pleased with lower rooms. There is an earthly knowledge; which lives like a mole in the mould, in the warm bowels of wealth; and cries, Let them take higher happiness that have a mind to it. Earth will to earth, an earthly desire to an earthly centre; so they live; till earth be turned into earth; so they die; yea, till earth be turned out of earth, their earthly souls into hellish torments. This is a base and brutish life. There is a knowledge one story higher; a watery knowledge, that seeks only after pleasure, and the sensual delights of the flesh. Give it strong wines, beautiful women, music and banquets, sport and merriments; this is all it cares to know. Where is the best liquor? Where meets the jovial companion? This is a fluid knowledge, that turns the blood into water, the very soul into water, and so runs it into the Dead sea. There is a knowledge yet a story higher than this, an airy knowledge, that seeks for nothing but glory. Advance it into the prince's favour, make it an admiration to the vulgar, blow it up with increase of honour; such empty, airy, windy stuff will fill this vain bladder. These elements of our sloth sit quietly in lower rooms; but divine knowledge, like the noble fire, mounts aloft, and finds no rest but in the region of immortality.

"In the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." All this while we have been getting up Jacob's ladder, and climbing by certain stairs and degrees to the knowledge of Christ. Now our meditations are come to the top: let us view the beauty of Zion, and with our intellectual eyes behold the face of Him whom our soul loveth. "Thou art fairer than the children of men," Psal. xlv. 2. First, generally.

1. The sun and the sea are the two great receptacles; the sun of light, the sea of waters. For the former; God made the light before the sun; but when he had made the sun, he reduced all that dispersed light into this one luminary: not locking it up in that body, as *Æolus* the winds in a cave; but so disposing it for the better communication to the world. Christ is the Sun of righteousness; in him is treasured up all wisdom and knowledge: not under lock and key, for the door stands continually open to all humble clients. It is but ask and have, Jam. i. 5; it cannot come upon easier terms. In Him "are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge," Col. ii. 3; not for his own use only; as the sun bath not light for itself; but for our more convenient participation. He "is made to us wisdom," 1 Cor. i. 30. In himself he is the wisdom of God, not created, but creating, all things. But what were this to us, if we might not partake of his wisdom? If he did hoard up his knowledge, as a miser doth his coin, or a philargyrist his coin, we might still be poor and beggarly for want of knowledge. But as "it pleased the Father that in him should dwell all fulness," Col. i. 19; so "of his fulness have all we received," John i. 16. And as we receive, so we must return; as our knowledge comes from his grace, so it must return to his glory. Without Christ we could not attain to knowledge, and without knowledge we cannot attain to Christ. It came from him, and it must never rest till it come back unto him. Grow in this knowledge.

For the other; the sea is that great cistern, to receive the confluence of all waters. First, from that large and vast pond, water is derived into all parts of the earth by veins and springs; those springs run into rivers, and those rivers empty themselves again

into the sea. So all good knowledge flows from the fulness of Christ, and is conveyed to us in certain pipes and channels, the ministry of the word and sacraments. This living water should return to the first fountain, all our knowledge must have recourse unto Christ. Secondly, rivers run by divers countries, and every where do them good as they go; and according to those several coasts, they have several names; but still they pass along, and keep their current: they make many grounds fruitful, but tarry with none of them; to the main they make main, and there they lose their names. Knowledge is a fair stream, and runs by many arts and mysteries: and does good at all times, in all places, to all persons. According to its several objects it hath several names; as knowledge in medicines makes physicians, in the statutes makes lawyers, in the arts makes scholars: but it sticks in none of these: still doth all good knowledge go forward, reaching at the chief good, till it be quite swallowed up in the comforts of Jesus Christ. Thirdly, when rivers come near the sea, the sea sends forth the tide to meet them, as it were a harbinger to entertain them. So when our knowledge is heavenly affected, and inflamed with the love of Christ, as the queen of Sheba was with the wisdom of Solomon; then Christ spreads out his arms to meet us, as the father met his returning son, Luke xv. 20. He prevents us with his favour, and graceth us with an extraordinary honour. Only this difference there is: the rivers are sweet, the sea is brackish; but our waters are brackish, and this sea is sweet. Other streams lose their fresh and pleasant taste, when they come into the sea: ours never get any pleasant or wholesome taste, till they come thither. All our knowledge is brinish and unsavoury by nature, and only obtaineth sweetness by flowing into this ocean of goodness. O Lord, all our fresh springs are in thee, Psal. lxxxvii. 7. We have waters of our own, but they are bitter: like the waters of Marah, whereof the Israelites could not drink, bitter waters. In the fountains of our hearts are the waters of manifold corruptions, so harsh that they will not down with our thirsty consciences; or unwholesome, like the waters of Jericho, they make the ground barren, 2 Kings ii. 19. Either all our fruits are wild, or our trees fruitless. Yet Christ can sweeten the one, and season the other, and cure all, by giving us the knowledge of his mercy, and the assurance of our own salvation.

2. Thus generally: now this knowledge is so sweet, that if we have once tasted it, we shall exceedingly thirst after it. "The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing," Eccl. i. 8, nor the heart with knowing; we are never content, till we see face to face, and know as we are known, 1 Cor. xiii. 12. As nothing could quiet Absalom, but seeing the face of the king, 2 Sam. xiv. 32; so we long to know how we may know Christ. And but reason: for there be many that meet him, and yet do not know him, some that seek him, and yet are ignorant of him when they see him. Jesus stood by Mary, she saw him, and yet she knew him not, John xx. 14. The two disciples were walking and talking with him, yet "their eyes were holden that they should not know him," Luke xxiv. 16. Joseph had done much for his brethren, yet they knew him not, Gen. xlii. 8. Christ at his resurrection was so changed, that they knew him not: "Who is this that cometh from Edom?" Isa. lxiii. 1. They might have some reasons why it should not be he. First, Christ was put to death, put into the grave, and a great stone upon him, but three days since; this man (we see) is alive. Secondly, Christ's apparel was shared among the soldiers, and he was left naked; this man

hath on glorious apparel. Thirdly, Christ was wrapped in linen, and so laid in the earth; so that if he appear, it must be in white; this man comes quite in another colour, all in red. So many disputes we still make about his presence: not only about his real presence in the sacrament, whereof there be large volumes of controversies; but also about his spiritual presence in our hearts, wherein there is a world of doubts. If some unusual crosses disturb our peace, or trouble our affections, presently there breaks out a voice, mixed with murmuring and despair, God hath forsaken us. No talk of his presence, of his absence we complain: our cowardly spirits say he has departed from us; yet "he is not far from every one of us," Acts xvii. 27. The angel went before Peter, though he saw him not, Acts xii. 8; and Christ is within us, even while we feel him not. "The Lord is in this place, and I knew it not," Gen. xxviii. 16. Jacob saw him, both asleep and awake: some are awake, and do not perceive him; others sleep, and do not dream of him. "He goeth by me, and I see him not," Job ix. 11. He is nearer us many times than we think him; even close by us, though we are not aware of it. And indeed when is he more near us than in our afflictions? I will be with thee in tribulations, is his promise. If at other times he remove, yet then he will not fail us. Then commonly we seek him, and he is soon found. He is found of them that seek him not, Isa. lxv. 1; but of them that seek him, never but found. "Thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee," Psal. ix. 10. Thus Christ may meet us, as he did Saul in the way to Damascus; or accompany us, as he did the two disciples to Emmaus; or stand by us, as he did by Mary in the garden; and yet we not know him. Yea, he may be before us, within us, and yet we not know him. To know him, therefore, is our desire, and how to know him is our demand. Two ways is he known here; by love, and by faith.

1. By love. I cannot say which is first, love or knowledge; whether we first love him, and so come to know him; or first know him, and so come to love him. But this I dare say, we do not know him, unless we love him: as in reason, we cannot love him, unless we know him. And this I dare say, that the more we know him, the better we love him; and the more we love him, the better we know him. I deny not, but there may be a knowledge without love. Did you never know any so cunning in the story of the gospel, that they could tell you the manner of Christ's life and death, from point to point; and yet have no more love of Christ in them, than there is fire in a fish-pond? The seat of knowledge is the head; of love, the heart. The sun may shine clear in a frosty day; yet for all his light, it may be bitter cold, and the face of the deep frozen, Job xxxviii. 30. Our eyes may see, when our bones shake. The beams of knowledge may fill our heads, and yet winter lie cold at our hearts; till they be even dead with uncharitableness. If Christ were beloved so far, and so well, as he is known, it would be a merry world in Christendom. The devil would have little to do; we should go to heaven in troops. But it is not so happy: the knowledge of Christ, and the love of Christ, have both one Father, but they have not both one mother. God is the Father of them both: from him all good gifts are derived; he gives both love and knowledge. But the difference is on the mother's side: the mother of love is grace; the mother of knowledge, nature. God so created the soul, that it should have an understanding capable of knowledge; which is still bettered by study and experience. So though it proceeds from God as Father, yet by nature as mother.

The devil did not lose his knowledge when he lost his innocency; nor did man by his fall lose his understanding: those faculties were depraved and corrupted, not abolished. So that by nature, especially improved with art, there is in the reason of man a capacity of much knowledge. Thus they may know Christ, in knowing the history of Christ; what he did, what he suffered, of whom, and for whom; without loving him. But the love of Christ is the daughter of grace, and so royal both by Father's and mother's side. Many a wise statesman is beholden to a far less wise (but much more loved) favourite, to help him to the speech of the king. Love is Christ's favourite, always in his gracious presence; knowledge is not so, but must be fain to wait at the door, and thank love for having admission. Love then is that friend at court, which helps us to the sight of the Prince; by love we come to know the Lord Jesus.

Desire we therefore to know Christ? This is the way; let us love him. "Every one that loveth, knoweth God," saith St. John, 1 Epist. iv. 7. We cannot put it into convertible terms; Every one that knoweth, loveth God; yea, more: God dwelleth in him that loveth; and he that loveth, dwelleth in God, ver. 16. Now God cannot dwell in us, but we must know our inhabitant; we cannot dwell in God, but we must know our Landlord. Mary's best knowledge of Christ, was her love; she did not know him when she saw him, but still she loved him: Many sins are forgiven her, for she loved much, Luke vii. 47. Not because she knew much, but because she loved much. Love does not wait upon knowledge for a reason of loving, but knowledge waits upon love for a means of knowing. Love stands not upon a query, Why should I love him? what good shall I have by him? Such a mercenary baseness cannot enter into the noble breast of charity. Let knowledge examine that, and knowledge shall find, that if the whole heaven were turned to a book, and all the angels deputed writers, they could not set down all the good Christ hath done us. But charity loves, because it is beloved: it is "he loved me," that sets me on fire; our love is inflamed by his. His love to us is infinite: it is not only a "Greater love no man hath," John xv. 13, but a greater love no man hath conceived. St. Paul chargeth us to know this love; yet withal, in the very same place, he tells us that it passeth knowledge, Eph. iii. 19. Though we cannot know it according to the immensity of the thing, yet we may according to our capacity. We cannot tell whether we love him first, and then know him; or know him first, and then love him. Certainly, regenerate love, and regenerate knowledge, were infused both at once; we can assign no first or last to them. But what doubt soever there is of the priority, the inferiority is clear; for "the greatest of these is charity," 1 Cor. xiii. 13. Love is greater than faith, therefore certainly greater than knowledge. Let us then know Christ, that we may love him; and never think to find him in our heads, unless we first find him in our hearts.

2. By faith. He who believes, understands; as some render the words of the prophet. This is the wedding-ring, wherewith we are married to Christ: now the husband cannot be unknown to his spouse. "Blessed is she that believed," Luke i. 45; and that by good consequence; for knowledge by faith is the beginning of knowledge by sight. Faith below is a beam of that beatifical vision above. To believe is the happiness of the journey below, as to see is the happiness of the country above. The former begins our happiness, the other consummates it. We live by faith, not by sight. Faith could not give us this life without Christ, nor will Christ give it us without

faith. He liveth in us, we live in him, Gal. ii. 20; both by faith. He can neither live in us, nor we in him, but we must needs know him. Faith is a taste of the joys of heaven, sight the fruition; we may know the sweetness and delicacy of the feast, by a little taste. From the seed comes the tree, from the tree the fruits, and of the fruits pleasant food. Faith is the seed, that springs up into holiness the tree, which yields the fruits of good works, which please the palate of the King of kings. All human knowledge is like wine, whereof we judge by experience; as if the philosopher tell us, that the least star exceeds the earth in quantity, or that there is no vacuum in nature, without plain reason or demonstration, we will not believe it; and when we have demonstration, our belief ceaseth, for then we know it. But when the Christian tells us of a Trinity in Unity, and Unity in Trinity; that Christ is God and man, yet but one Person; shall we suspend our persuasion till he prove it by natural reason? we shall then live and die infidels, than which we had better have lived and died beasts. Secular propositions are left to the taste of our reason; Divine mysteries are to be digested by faith. Of the other we may dispute like men, this we must receive like babes, 1 Pet. ii. 2. That is for the exercise of wit, this for the trial of faith. There is use of arguments, here is nothing but a promise. In that we are scholars, in this Christians.

Faith is a representative glass, which shows me Christ; and what he did on earth, and what he does now in heaven. What he did and suffered on earth. Faith goes along with him all his journey, from the cradle to the cross. It sees him doing good, and suffering evil. It sees him in such an agony under the weight of sin, that the burden makes him even sweat blood. Never was garden so watered before: Adam might moisten the ground with the sweat of his brows, but now it is wetted with a sweat of blood. His passion began with blood and sweat, and with water and blood it ended. It sees him betrayed with a kiss: collaterally he had upbraided Simon, for not entertaining him with a kiss, Luke vii. 45: from Judas he had it; that traitor kissed him to death. It sees him scourged, and that by his command, who with one breath pronounced him innocent, and yet condemned him to the lash. It sees him spit upon, and scorned: the glory of all was spit upon, the honour of all scorned, and the life of all crucified. He was whipped like a beggar, crucified like a malefactor; in all his sufferings, besides pain, there was infamy. He cured the blind man with spittle, with spittle his own eyes were blinded. It sees him not only defiled with excrements, but buffeted with blows. That face which the prophets and fathers so wished to see, is thus abused. It sees him crowned with thorns; a crown for mockery, thorns for sharp infamy. The first Adam's sin brought forth thorns on the earth, and now it is the Second Adam's turn to wear them. It sees him nailed to the cross, forsaken of God and men. For men; there was not a Reuben, to say, Let us spare him, for he is our brother. For God; he might say of his Father's absence, as Mary did when she missed him in the sepulchre, "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him," John xx. 13. For God; he gave leave to all his enemies, as to the winds, Put forth your strength. All this faith sees; nor does it leave him in the grave, where we use to relinquish our friends; but watcheth his rising far better than the soldiers did his sleeping. Yea, it follows him up into heaven, and sees him set at the right hand of his Father in glory; there continually interceding for us. Nor is this only by way of imagination; for all that read his story may have such an apprehen-

sion. But my faith sees all this done for mine own soul; thus he died for my sins, thus he rose again for my justification.

To the unbeliever all this truth is but a dream. If thou hast not faith, Christ was not born for thee, was not crucified for thee, rose not again for thee, nor intercedes for thee. Faith is the sight, and the light, and the eye of our souls; whereby we can read our own names in the book of life. It makes us not only acquainted with God, but familiar; so like him, that it transforms us into his image, into holiness. As a drop of water infused into a cup of wine, loseth its own nature, and is changed into wine both in colour and taste. The metal cast into the fire, puts off its own form, and becomes fire. The air enlightened by the sun, becomes light; and seems rather light itself, than enlightened. So faith transforms us into the likeness of God. Of all the virgins presented to Ahasuerus, none was so pleasing as Esther. "Let the maiden which pleaseth the king be queen instead of Vashti," *Esth. ii. 4.* When that decree was published, what strife, what emulation (may we think) was among the Persian damsels, that either were, or thought themselves, fair! Every one hopes to be a queen; but so incomparable was the beauty of that Jewess, that she is not only taken into the Persian court, as one of the selected virgins, but hath the most honourable place in the seraglio allotted to her. The other virgins pass their probation unregarded: when Esther's turn came, though she brought the same face and demeanour that nature had cast upon her, no eye sees her without admiration. The king is so delighted with her beauty, that contemning all the other vulgar forms, his choice is fully fixed upon her. Our heavenly King is pleased with all our graces: hot zeal and cool patience pleaseth him; cheerful thankfulness and weeping repentance pleaseth him; charity in the height and humility in the dust pleaseth him: but none of them are welcome to him without faith, as nothing can please him without Christ. There is none that dares venture into his presence, without faith; she is that Esther to which God holds out his golden sceptre. Adorn thy soul with this grace: "So shall the King greatly desire thy beauty," *Psal. xlv. 11.* Christ loved all his disciples well; only John leaned on his bosom. Faith resteth in the bosom of Christ, and Christ resteth in the bosom of faith; it were strange therefore if she should not know. "Henceby we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments," *1 John ii. 3.* Keep them! who is able? Though we cannot keep them all, yet there is one we can: "This is his commandment, that we should believe on his Son Jesus Christ," *1 John iii. 23.* This is light added to light, an assurance upon an assurance; we know him, and we know that we know him, if our faith be steadfast in him.

By this time we know the way how to know Christ, by charity and faith. But now here follows another query: How shall we know whether we have this faith and charity or not? A little would be said to satisfy us in this point.

1. Faith hath a ready way of knowledge. Show me thy faith by thy works, *Jam. ii. 18.* There can be no stronger or more evident argument than demonstration. The tree is known by its fruits, is an infallible rule. While we are in health, the natural heat within us turns all our nourishment into good blood, and makes us active and able for the prosecution of our affairs: so if we be in the faith, or have the faith in us, all accidents shall be turned by it into the matter or substance of virtue. As all things shall work together to our good, *Rom. viii. 28.* so to our goodness. Wealth shall be the instru-

ment of our mercy, poverty the cause of our humiliation: health shall minister cheerfulness to our labours, and sickness exercise our patience. Man is born to work and labour: if born to this, how much more born again to it! Thou sayest thou believest: Do what thou sayest, and this is faith: as St. Augustine gives the etymology of faith. The root of a tree is a ragged and jagged thing; no shape, no comeliness, no proportion in it; and therefore keeps in the earth, as if it would not be seen: yet all the beauty that is in the tree, the straightness of the bulk and body, the spreading fairness of the branches, the glory of the leaves and flowers, the commodity of the fruits, proceed from the root; by that it subsisteth. So faith seems to be but a sorry grace, a virtue of no regard: devotion is acceptable, for it honours God; charity is noble, for it does good to men; holiness is the image of heaven, therefore beauteous; thankfulness is the tune of angels, therefore melodious: but what is faith good for? Yes, it is good for every good purpose; the foundation and root of all those graces. All the prayers made by devotion, all the good works done by charity, all the actual expressions of holiness, all the praises sounded forth by thankfulness, come from the root of faith: that is the life of them all. As faith without works is dead, *Jam. ii. 17*; so indeed works without faith are dead. To have no good works, is the argument of a dead faith; as to have no breath, is the sign of a dead body: but this argument is from the consequent. But to have no faith, is an argument of dead works; an argument from the precedent, or the absence of the cause: as that body must needs be dead which hath no soul. Faith doth animate works, as the body lives by the soul: doubtless, faith hath saved some, without works; but I never read that works hath saved any, without faith.

Bernard compares Christian religion to a vine; whereof faith is the root, virtues the branches, good works the grapes, and devotion the wine. Thy faith then is known by thy works. "Thou art good, and doest good, O Lord," saith the psalmist, *Psal. exix. 68.* If we be good, we will do good certainly: faith can no more be idle, than it can be incredulous. By faith we know our God, and by works we know our faith. Do not understand that you may believe, but believe, that you may understand. That man is most welcome to God, not who brings more arguments, but more faith. (*August. de Spir. et Lit.*) By way of apologue, conceive a strife between four faculties, which of them should bring a man nearest to God: Majesty, Strength, Knowledge, and Faith. Knowledge pretends that she is the eye of the soul, and to find out the way is her proper office; she forbids all other to undertake it, or to arrogate that honour, for it is her right. Strength jostles knowledge out of the way, and comes in like a Samson, or an Alexander, with an I will either find a way, or make one; as if she were the champion, or guard of the soul, to bring her into the presence. Majesty challengeth this privilege from them both; as if that royal dignity belonged to her only: kings are gods on earth, and nearest in place to the God of heaven. Fortitude pleads that she is the eldest daughter of God, the image of his power. No less doth Knowledge, that she is the image of his wisdom. And the same doth Majesty say, that she is the image of his glory. Every one claims superiority: but they all despise poor Faith, and do not so much as say, "We have a little sister; what shall we do for her in the day when she shall be spoken for?" *Cant. viii. 8.* But let us tarry, and hear what the King himself says; The Lord will show whom he hath chosen. *Numb. xvi. 5.* They all wait at the door of the presence,

as the courtiers did upon the call of Ahasuerus. None but Esther is admitted: Faith hath the honour of the first call; she enters, and brings in the rest: all please in Faith. "Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called," 1 Cor. i. 26. Knowledge is not in this favour, for not many wise are called; nor Strength, for not many mighty are called; nor Majesty, for not many noble are called. Before, they had Faith in no regard: alas, what can she do? Nay, what can she not do? She can strengthen the weak, illuminate the blind, animate the dead, comfort the sorrowful, crown the patient, justify sinners, save souls, and give them an inheritance among the angels. What can she not do? She attains things inaccessible, discovers things unknown, comprehends immensities, apprehends the last things, and is a bed for infiniteness to lie on. There is a kind of omnipotency in faith: what is there that God can do, and faith cannot do? Strength is weak, compared with faith: what strength of man can remove mountains? Faith can, and that with a word. Height of honour is a mere dwarf to faith: that can but command mortals, faith is attended by angels. Wisdom is but folly to faith: that knows there is a God of comfort, this enjoys all the comforts of God.

2. Charity hath means to be known too. Although the fervour of love cannot be expressed, for he loves coldly who is able to express how much he loves; yet love will find ways to declare itself. "Love is strong as death," Cant. viii. 6. What is stronger than death? It devours all; and when it hath eaten up all, it will eat up itself; for death itself shall die: yet Christ's love to us was stronger. The effect of death is to separate the soul from the body; and such was the extremity of Christ's love. He spared not himself, that his Father might spare us: his love evermore showed itself in doing good. He emptied himself, but it was to fill us: he went out of himself, but it was to dwell in us: he died himself once, but it was that we might live for ever. If such a spring of love be in us, the waters of beneficence will be flowing from us. It can do Christ no good, but he hath his little ones to whom it may. As a Christian poet sweetly says:

*Christe, tuos, tua, te, gratis accepimus a te;
Ergo meos, mea, me, merito nunc exegis a me.*

O Christ, I freely have from thee
Thyself, and all that's thine;
And justly thou requir'st of me
Myself, and all that's mine.

Dying men often send tokens of remembrance to their friends: the best tokens of love that we can leave behind us, is mercy to the poor, John iii. 17. If a man professes love to me, and will do me no good, I will request no more of his love, than that he do me no harm. There is one love, though two objects of it: the love wherewith we love God for himself, and man, his image, for his sake, is but one: as there be two eyes, yet but one visual faculty. But the trial of our love to God, is doing good to man. The Lord hath taught us to make clothes, not only to clothe ourselves, but to clothe him in his poor and naked members. He hath taught us to build houses, not only to house ourselves, but to house him in erecting churches to his glory. Taught us to make ships, not only to transport ourselves, but to transport him, in his holy gospel, to unbelievers. Taught us to make bread, and to dress meat, not only to feed ourselves, but to feed him in his necessitous servants. There is no Dives among us, but thinks seem to be charged with the want of love:

What! not love God? But ask his conscience the next question: What good hast thou done for his sake? Nay, he can remember none of that; no goodness hath come from him all his life long. Perhaps once, at an extraordinary collection, the churchwardens screwed a groat from him; but he was sorry for it two days after, and pinched his family and his own belly the whole week following. Such men do not honour Christ, and therefore do not love him: they do not love him, and therefore to their comfort they shall never know him.

Not to suffer this high, sweet, and excellent point of knowing Christ to pass without some useful application: five particular duties it will require of us.

1. Let us desire this knowledge. They are in a fair way of finding, that set themselves to seek. When God intends to open the fountain of grace, and to give us the water of life, he first prepares us with a holy thirst. If a man be so created, saith St. Augustine, that by his heart, the best thing he has, he may find Christ, the best thing that is; then with neglect of these lower sciences, he may be sought after, where all things are secure to us; he may be seen, where all things are certain to us; he may be loved, where all things are right to us. There is a promise of obtaining, like a spark from heaven, to kindle in our cold hearts this flame of desire. "Seek, and ye shall find," Matt. vii. 7. It is easier, saith Bernard, for heaven and earth to pass away, than for one so seeking not to find, for one thus asking not to receive, for one thus knocking not to have the door opened to him. There be some things which we may desire, and yet want; but if we want desire, there is no hope of any good. Desire to the soul, is like the wind to the ship, that keeps it in motion. If desire fails, if the wind be down, presently the sails flag, our souls are becalmed. If thou wouldst fill thy purse with gold out of a bounteous treasury, thou dost not only open the mouth to receive it, but extend the plates and folds of it: thou extendest thy folds, and by extending makest them more capacious; so God by delaying enlarges thy desire, and by this desiring enlarges thy soul, and by enlarging makes it more capacious (to contain himself). There is a desire of worldly things, which is not a thirst, but a disease, and arises not from want, but from burning desire: so Seneca. Give it never so much wealth, there will be no end of its desire, but only a (further) degree. But the regulated and sanctified desire of the soul, as it comes from a better cause, and aims at a higher end; so it is of a nobler temper. It fain would know Christ, that it might love him; and love him, that it might enjoy him, and by that fruition be satisfied with him. "Thou hast given him his heart's desire, and hast not withholden the request of his lips," Psal. xxi. 2. The heart's desire first, then the request of the lips; the affection of the one, the expression of the other: both are satisfied. Speak and speed; that satisfies the lips. Wish and have; that satisfies the heart. Open thy mouth, yea, enlarge thine heart never so wide, and Christ will fill it, Psal. lxxxii. 10. This satisfies David, and makes him sing there, Selah; which is their diapason. "When the desire cometh, it is a tree of life," Prov. xiii. 12: the tree of life was in the midst of the garden, Gen. ii. 9, the very centre of Paradise: so doth it joy the heart. Seek Christ then in thy desires, and seek him while he may be found. Gregory saith, Now the Lord is not seen, but he is near; in the judgment he will be seen, but will not be near: after a strange manner in that last appearance he both can be seen, and (yet) cannot be found. We make much of an early flower, the first that springs

in our garden; so let us cherish this desire, the first flower of grace.

2. When we know Christ, let us acknowledge him. So Junius renders *γνωσται*, in acknowledging. If it be not the principal, it must needs be an infallible consequent of true knowledge: knowledge produces acknowledgment, and acknowledgment perfects knowledge. "If thou confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved," Rom. x. 9. We had need to look to it, whenas our salvation lies upon it. There be four sorts of men: some believe and confess not, some confess and believe not, some do neither, and the best do both. First, some neither believe nor confess Christ; neither tongue nor heart shall be given to him that made both. Atheists in this are short of the very devils, for they believe and confess too: the proclaytes of the Pharisees proved twofold more the children of hell than their masters, Matt. xxiii. 15. But that men should be twofold more the children of hell than devils, is most prodigious. Yet doubtless, if the devils had had a Redeemer, they would have believed and confessed also. Secondly, some believe and confess not: such are timorous Christians. So Peter had it within him, but out of him it could not be gotten, that Christ was his Lord. As St. John speaks of love, 1 John iv. 18, so we may say of faith; Perfect faith casteth out fear. "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?" Matt. viii. 26. It fares with confession, in this case, as with a vapour; which heat would fain expel, and cold resists the expulsion of it. So faith in the heart, like a kindly heat, labours to send forth the acknowledgment of Christ, and fear stands at the door of the lips to keep it in. Thirdly, some confess and believe not: such are hypocrites. The heart of the former cannot get the tongue forwards, but in these the tongue runs without the heart. The other have more goodness than they show; these show more goodness than they have. Their shop is continually open, but their ware is naught. The former, like Joseph of Arimathea, Nicodemus, and many more, were Christ's disciples, but durst not openly confess him for fear of the Jews, John xix. 38: these openly confess him, but are none of his disciples. Fourthly, true Christians both believe and confess: their heart is the spring, which being wound up by the hand of grace, sets all the wheels of their affections agoing; and those cause the clock to strike, the tongue to speak, and sound forth the praises of Christ. If we know him, then, let us acknowledge him; and that both in regard of the honour if we do, and of the danger if we do not. "He that denieth me before men, shall be denied before the angels of God," Luke xii. 9: there is the danger. But whosoever confesseth me before men, him will I confess before the angels of God, ver. 8: there is the honour. Many a one knows Christ, but does not rightly acknowledge him. Such a man Christ knows, but he will not acknowledge him. (Chrysost. Hom. 19. in Matt. c. 7.) But how small a thing it is for us to acknowledge him before atheists, tyrants, persecutors, in regard of his acknowledgment and owning of us before the glorious God and his holy angels!

3. If we know Christ, let us live like him, and be conformed to his image, Rom. viii. 29. That is the effect of God's knowing us, let the same be the effect of our knowing him. I know mine, and I am known of mine, John x. 14. I know mine: that is our security: I am known of mine; that fetcheth in our duty. If the princes of the world had known him, "they would not have crucified the Lord of glory," 1 Cor. ii. 8. Our sins are a continual crucifying of

Christ; and if we did truly know him, we would abhor thus to re-crucify him. If we wear the livery of that most holy Lord, and lead an unholy life, what is this but to shame our Master? Some have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof, 2 Tim. iii. 5. Such men may be reputed saints on earth, but they have no part among the saints in heaven. They have a rule to discern of life or death in a sick man; if they look upon his eyes, and find them so clear as to return the image of their own eyes, they conclude that he shall escape; but if there be no reflection, they make it a sign of death. Our understanding and knowledge are the eyes of our souls; upon which when God looks, and finds the representation of his own image, which is holiness and righteousness, there is life; but if that be wanting, we are dead. What does it profit, saith one, to know God, and to live without God? The Romish schoolmen spoil many a fair piece of truth by cutting it out into distinctions; but profane and licentious livers have one distinction worse than all the rest; for they so distinguish, that they extinguish the law of their Maker. It is commanded from above, that as every one professeth, so he should practise; as he seeth, so he should judge; as he readeth, so he should understand: that according as he knoweth, so he should instruct; as he hath, so he should give; as he thinketh, so he should speak; as he believeth, so he should acknowledge; as he loveth, so he should embrace; and in a word, do to all men as he would have all men to deal with him. This plain, just, and most sacred law is thus eluded by sinners: they affirm that all these things are done to the same end, though not after the same manner, or according to the same form. For there be some that profess, and some that practise; some that teach, and some that learn; some that believe, and some that confess; some that love, and some that give; so they pretend that all these duties are performed severally, which are required jointly, and in composition; done of divers men, that should be done of every man. But cursed are they that put those things asunder, which God hath joined together. Shall the magistrate, if he rules well; or the minister, if he preaches well; or the householder, if he looks to his family; think that he hath done all his duty? Nay, shall we think it one man's work to believe, and another's to do? one man's office to profess, and another's to practise? Is one only charged with patience, and another with temperance, and a third with charity? Am I only bidden to teach, and you to hear, and none of us all to do? What would become of religion, if way were given to such a distinction? No, but every man is charged with every good work; all holy duties are required of all men; and God will have no respect to him, that hath not respect to all his commandments. "How long will ye halt between two opinions?" 1 Kings xviii. 21. Yea, how long will ye halt between two practices? If we know Christ, we will imitate him; for that infinite goodness cannot but draw all wise hearts after him. Christ did not only teach, but do, Acts i. 1: our tongues run, but our hands are lame: we can talk well, but doing well is an art we are yet to learn. But alas, to speak well, and to live ill, is nothing else than to condemn ourselves with our own mouths. The physician that keeps an ill diet, loseth his credit: if he undertake to cure others of the dropsy, and be dropsical himself, he carries the proof of his ignorance in his own person. (Chrysost. in Matt. 7. Hom. 17.) For it cannot but be supposed, that he would, if he could, soonest of all heal himself. Lord, we have prophesied in thy name, Matt. vii. 22. Very well, I grant it; you taught others that sin would bring to destruc-

tion and vengeance: out of your own mouth take your sentence. Christ was without sin: to live like him, this shall be your knowledge.

4. Let us rejoice in this honour, that we know him. Let him that rejoiceth, rejoice in this, that he knoweth me, saith the Lord, Jer. ix. 24. This is a knowledge, which whosoever seeketh, is wise; whosoever getteth, is rich; whosoever keepeth, is strong; and whosoever enjoyeth, is for ever blessed. Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, Father, I thank thee, that thou hast revealed these things unto babes, Luke x. 21. That his Father's bounty had given us this knowledge, Christ himself rejoiced for us; and shall not we rejoice for ourselves? St. Paul was a profound scholar, and had abundance of human learning in him; yet in comparison of the knowledge of Christ, he is very homely with it all. Loss and dung, are the best terms he gives it, Phil. iii. 8; so was he enamoured and transported with the love of Christ. It was a true and just reprehension, where-with the high priest reproved the council, as they were set to condemn Christ; and a great deal better than he meant it: "Ye know nothing at all," John xi. 49. He spake right, for if we know not the Lord Jesus, we know nothing at all; our knowledge is nothing, or nothing worth. This brings knowledge out of the hall into the parlour; strips it of the old rags, and puts upon it a robe of honour and immortality. We may say of secular knowledge, as Antigonus did of his garment, O noble, rather than happy, rag! but of divine knowledge, O happy, rather than noble, garment! The world disrespects it; to the Jews it appears madness, foolishness to the Gentiles, 1 Cor. i. 23. The politician takes it to be a comely ornament, the gallant useth it for a compliment, the worldling admits it for table-talk; as if all discourse of piety were but a pretty recreation after business. But to them that are called, it is the power of God, and the wisdom of God, ver. 24. This knowledge of Christ is our life and comfort: which the Lord ingraft in them that want it, and increase in them that have it; till from the contemplation of him in grace below, we be taken up to see him in his glory above.

"Grow in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." Nature rejoiceth in a mediocrity, and is afflicted with extremes: as the sight is pleased with a green colour, which is between a black and a white. Too much light is no less offensive to our eyes, than mere darkness. Excessive diet is no less pernicious than famine; and more die of repletion, than of emptiness. Idleness fills the body with foul diseases, as over-labouriousness wasteth the spirits: both are extremes; moderate exercise is the mean between them. In the passions of the mind there be dangerous extremes. Very fear and cowardliness kills some, and some perish in a bold over-venturousness. There be some that weep out their souls at their eyes, whose heart is eaten up with sorrows; as our weekly bills tell us of those that die of grief. Worldly sorrow causeth death, 2 Cor. vii. 10. Others have died of joy; and scarce given leave to the beholders to weep for them, whom they have seen die laughing. Dionysius the tyrant fell from a high fortune; even from the royal throne to a wretched condition, from a king to a beggar. Yet the sorrow of losing his crown did not kill him; but he died of joy, and that so poor a joy, as to be applauded and commended of the people at a theatre, that he was a good poet: of this extreme he died. Joy is our best antidote against death; yet even that can kill: the best cordial hath been deadly poison. Thus nature is content with a mediocrity. So a competency of earthly things is the best estate in this

world; if we could know when we are well. "Give me neither poverty nor riches," Prov. xxx. 8. Poverty may precipitate us to base and desperate shifts; and riches may puff us up with pride and vain-glory. "Give us this day our daily bread," Matt. vi. 11: we are never so happily fed, as when we wait upon God for our daily bread; and are therewith content, as seamen with their allowance. In our actions there is a golden mean; and we may either neglect or overdo them. To besiege our patience, the devil hath a stupidity, as well as impatience. Against our devotion, he raiseth diffidence on the one side, and over-boldness on the other. In justice's way, there lies rigour and partiality; for charity, a prodigal and a pinching hand. Thus for the satisfaction of nature, for the felicity of estate, for order and rule to the actions of our body and passions of our mind, without question, mediocrity is the best.

But for the grace of God, for the knowledge of Christ, no mean must content us here. In these we must still be growing, like fruitful trees; and never think ourselves high enough, till we are in heaven. The state of that soul is doubtful, that can satisfy itself with a small measure of holiness. *Virtus in medio*; but then we must understand what that medium is. It is not in the midst betwixt two degrees, but betwixt two kinds. As liberality is *in medio*, between gripulousness and profuseness, which both are several kinds and contraries; so humility is *in medio*, betwixt pride and a base dejection; and faith is *in medio*, betwixt presumption and despair. Here virtue is between two extremes; but we cannot properly assign it a place between two degrees, because both are the degrees of virtue. As between a weak faith and a full assurance, both which are degrees of goodness: or between the love of the saints, the love of ourselves, and the love of God; all which are degrees of charity. In other things a mediocrity will serve well enough, best of all; but not in righteousness, not in grace: no competency to be talked of here; as much measure of this, as possibly we can, and all little enough. He is an Esau, that says in respect of spiritual things, "I have enough, my brother," Gen. xxxiii. 9. Not a child in God's family leaves off growing in grace, till he be grown up into glory. Let us grow therefore in the knowledge of our Saviour, as we would die in the assurance of salvation.

It is true that the same God gives the increase, that gives the knowledge; yet we must labour both for the knowledge, and for the increase.

1. For the knowledge. He that would come to the rich mine, must dig and throw away the base and barren earth that hides it. There must be a deposition of all worldly desires, before we can be fitted for the disquisition of heavenly knowledge. (Hierom. glos. in Prov. 2.) Every one that fights does not overcome; but no man can overcome unless he fights. All that hear the word of Divine wisdom do not presently understand it; but none can understand it unless they hear it. (Chrysost. in Matt. 7. Hom. 18.) Faith comes by hearing; and what wisdom doth excel it? Doubt joined with sober and modest questions, is the ready way to knowledge. Not every wrangling interrogatory; as the lawyer's question was, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Luke x. 25. He asked, not to gain himself any knowledge, but with a vain hope that Christ would bewray some ignorance. Therefore, He calls him Master, that he may deride his mastery, or teaching, says one. So Ahab questioned Micaiah, "Shall we go against Ramoth-gilead to battle, or forbear?" 1 Kings xxii. 15, not for satisfaction of himself, but of Jehoshaphat. There are not a few

that trouble a divine at the table with many questions; not that they may know, but only that they may cavil, having one thing in the mouth, another in the heart.

But there be holy and wholesome questions; the mind that never doubts, shall learn nothing; the mind that always doubts, shall never profit by learning. "Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness," 1 Tim. iii. 16. The mystery of godliness should be without controversy; yet what a world of controversies hath risen about it! Indeed the arguing points of controversy, *pro et contra*, is like the whetting of a knife; which we move to and again, backward and forward; this gets it an edge, and makes it sharp: so the other makes the truth appear bright and manifest. Our doubts only stir us up to seek the truth; our resolutions settle us in the truth we have found. There were no pleasure in resolutions, if we had not been formerly troubled with doubts; there were nothing but disquietness and discomfort in doubts, if it was not for the hope of resolution. It is not safe to suffer doubts to dwell long in the heart: there may be good use of them as passengers, they are dangerous as inmates. The treasure of much instruction had been locked up, and enriched none but the owner, if the door had not been opened by the key of question. Christ sat amongst "the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions," Luke ii. 46. He who, as God, gave them all the wisdom they had, as man hearkens to the wisdom he had given them. He who sat in their hearts, as the Author of all knowledge, sits in their schools, as a humble disciple. When he had heard, he asks; and after that, he answers. Those very questions were instructions; thereby he meant to teach, more than to learn. First he hears, then he asks: much more doth it concern us to be hearers, ere we be teachers. He gathers that hears; he spends that teaches: if we spend ere we gather, we shall soon prove bankrupts. The queen of Sheba came to Solomon, "to prove him with hard questions," 1 Kings x. 1. She that was such a faithful lover of knowledge, could not want great scholars at home; them she had apposed with her enigmatical queries, but still she was unsatisfied. Now she betakes herself to Solomon, that oracle of God; to him she empties her heart of doubts, and fills it with resolutions. She had her desire, and that was no small pittance. When we come to a rich treasure, we will carry away what we can. This potent queen, as she came far for knowledge, so surely she would not depart without her full load. She knew that she could not every day meet with a Solomon; and therefore makes the best use of her time, and so divine a teacher. Let it be so with us; doubting, that we may ask; and asking, that we may learn; and learning, that we may practise. It is a good thing to doubt, better to be resolved. There is much wisdom in moving a question well, though there be more in answering it. We have no patent of life; therefore let us not neglect the opportunity of furnishing our souls with the knowledge of Christ. To what end do we frequent God's house, and give his word the hearing, if we keep our hearts still in ignorance or uncertainty? O let not this blessed light shine in vain upon our souls.

2. The growth is in the next place requirable. Desire the milk of the gospel, that you may grow thereby, 1 Pet. ii. 2. Children grow by their milk; and when they are weaned from the breasts, they grow by stronger meat, Heb. v. 14. Whether by milk, or meat, still we must be growing. That small mustard-seed growth to a great tree, Luke xiii. 49. The wisest that are, were not so at first: they were

not born wise. "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child," 1 Cor. xiii. 11. St. Paul himself was once a child: why should we despair of getting knowledge, when we see those now to be wise men, whom we once remember to have been little children. It is a happy thing to begin well; the entrance is ever the hardest. The first liquor seasons the vessel for a long time after. (Hierome.) It is good for a man to bear God's yoke even from his infancy, Lam. iii. 27. It is but a politic trick of the devil to discourage early holiness: he that goes out betimes in the morning, is more like to despatch his journey, than he that lingers till the day be spent. Christ even in his childhood frequented the temple, Luke ii. 46; while children of that age were playing in the streets, he was found in God's house; not to gaze on the glorious building, or golden candlesticks, but to hear the doctors. In all his examples he meant our instruction; this pious act of his minority intended to lead our first years into a timely devotion. Having begun well, let us continue: Timothy from a child knew the Holy Scriptures, 2 Tim. iii. 15; yet St. Paul chargeth him to "give attendance to reading," 1 Tim. iv. 13. We must not look to be perfect at once: *non nascimur senes*; i. e. we are not born old men. We may be hopeful sprigs at our planting, we cannot be tall trees without growing. But the spring shows what we may hope for in summer; and if the proof of the latter do not answer the hope of the former, there is a fault somewhere. Our most blessed Saviour submitted himself to this condition of nature; he would grow by degrees, Luke ii. 52. If his perfection had at first showed itself without warning to the world, it might have been entertained with more wonder than belief: now he gives them a taste, and prepares their faith with a fore-expectation. If the sun in the morning should rise in his full strength and glory, he would dazzle our eyes; but having the day-star to go before him, and the lively colours of the dawning day to publish his approach, the eye is comforted, not hurt by his appearance. Before he was called to the public function of a teacher, he contents himself to be a diligent hearer: he asks questions, that could have taught the greatest rabbins divine mysteries. Yet so did his wisdom conceal itself, that whith it would be known to be there. Oh that our young students would fix their eyes upon Christ in his noney, and behold him in the lowly sphere of the auditors, not in the eminent pulpits of the doctors! He that could have taught the angels, listens to the voice of mortals. We have those that will needs run as soon as they can go; and dare venture upon some mystical problem, before they have learnt their catechism. The wiser Athenians were of another mind; for the more they knew, the less opinion they had of their own knowledge: inasmuch that they fell from that honourable name of *philosophi*, given them in the beginning, down to *idiote*; contenting themselves with the title of mere idiots.

And indeed the more knowledge we have, the more we feel the want of it; and where there is a conceit of sufficiency, we may have a shrewd mistrust of emptiness. There is a base and ignoble knowledge, whose object is only wealth and honour. Not but that I would have Christians, together with the simplicity of the dove, to get so much of the wisdom of the serpent, as to keep themselves from being cheated. No matter for increasing this knowledge; it will grow fast enough. There is a more base and brutish knowledge, which is cunning only in the satisfying our sensual desires. But as one said of rhymers, He is a fool that cannot make a ballad, and he is a greater fool that does make a

ballad; so is he no wise man that knows not how to feed his own carnal appetite, but he is more unwise, and wicked too, that does feed it. This is a knowledge that would be unlearned: these sciences grow in us too fast; and if these weeds be not rooted up, they will hinder the growth of that knowledge which can only save us. But in the knowledge of Christ let us still be growing: let every judgment we see, make us wiser in the fear of God; and every mercy we feel, wiser in the love of God; and let us depart from every sermon, wiser in the grace of God than we came. This is to grow in the knowledge of Christ; and as he by his knowledge doth justify many, Isa. liii. 11, so we by our knowledge shall get assurance that we are justified by him. To make some profitable use of all this to ourselves:

1. It teacheth us to content our hearts with no common measure of saving knowledge, but to labour for a fullness. And indeed it were a shame for us, that have so long and often brought our vessels to the living fountain of God's word, if they should not be full. Let us "be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding," Col. i. 9. Do we live in the sunshine, and yet remain in darkness? If we were not gluttied with this holy food, how could we find any relish in worldly fruits? But he that is full despiseth a honey-comb. And what are we full of? An opinion of knowledge, like bladders with wind, or some vessels with yeast. There is a great deal of frothy curiosities that fill us, but in respect of any noble, precious, and sovereign liquor, we are empty casks. And we have all the properties of empty vessels.

(1.) Vessels are made to keep good and useful moisture; for want of which repletion, they suck in air, which will soon corrupt and putrify. Our hearts are casks for the water of life; if that precious liquor do not fill them, vanity will; and what is vanity, but emptiness?

(2.) Empty vessels are deceitful; men come thinking to draw some good out of them, and there is no good in them: "wells without water," 2 Pet. ii. 17. Such houses we have in England, which in just derision we call mock-beggars. The poor come to their gates for relief, and there is neither food nor charity at home. Emptiness is the furniture of all the rooms. Nay, do we not find full pockets and empty hearts? rich churls as dry as kegs, out of whom no prayers or tears of widows and orphans can wring one drop of comfort?

(3.) Empty vessels will never sink to the bottom; cast them upon the waters, and they swim on the top, such is the lightness of their bodies. The word of grace, the gospel, is compared to a river, and that of the water of life, Rev. xxii. 1; our common hearts are like empty vessels thrown into this comfortable stream; but not one drop of water gets into them. They lie swimming on the face of the waters, and so let in some swimming notions into their brains; but down to the bottom they dive not, whereby they might be filled with saving knowledge.

(4.) Empty vessels make always the loudest sound; the less virtue, the greater report. Deep rivers pass away in silence; profound knowledge says little; but what a murmur and bubbling, yea, sometimes what a roaring, do they make in the shallows! The full vessel gives you a soft answer, but sound liquor. Samson slew a lion, but he made no words of it: the greatest talkers are the least doers. As when a rabbi, little learned, and less modest, usurped all the discourse at table; one much admiring him, asked his friend in private, whether he did not take such a man for a great scholar: to whom he plainly answered, For aught I know he may be learned, but I never

heard learning make such a noise. Religion is much heard of in our words, but it is little seen in our works. We have busy tongues, but lazy hands; and this argues but vain hearts; we may be still empty vessels. By their unseasonable noise, men are known for empty vessels.

(5.) Empty vessels will dry apace, and so fall to pieces. While there wants moisture within, to resist the heat without, they will rive and crack and cleave asunder, and be uncapable to hold any water. This mischief befalls us through the emptiness of our hearts, that we cannot contain the heavenly moisture poured into us. When they were able to hold grace, we would not receive it; now we receive grace, but cannot hold it. We are false at the bottom; a sermon runs out as fast as it came in. We have two doors, as we have two ears; the one is a fore-door, whereat the word enters, and the other is a back-door, at which it departs. Let us beseech the Spirit of grace to make up the breaches of our hearts, that they may be able to hold the water of life.

(6.) Empty vessels, by their long vacuity, become so dry, that they are good for nothing but the fire; when they can serve for no other use, their end is to be burned. This would be a woeful end for us, if the Divine justice should make such an end with us; yet such is the reward of emptiness. The word preached hath a filling faculty; it "filled all the house where they were sitting," Acts ii. 2: all sound from heaven is replenishing; and "they were all filled with the Holy Ghost," ver. 4. We have many sounds from heaven, but where is our fullness. We have empty brains, we understand nothing; empty memories, we retain nothing; and empty hearts, for we practise nothing. But if we be not filled with desire, and filled with delight, and filled with the love of grace and knowledge, we shall never be filled with the reward of glory. There is nothing so hinders us from mature knowledge, as the opinion of a competency; the conceit that we have enough to serve our own turns. But "blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness," Matt. v. 6; for the hungry shall be filled with good things, Luke i. 53. Let us humbly confess our own emptiness, that Christ may mercifully fill us. Lord, we are ignorant, do thou fill us with knowledge; we are empty, do thou fill us with grace: our heads are empty, fill them with illumination; our hearts are empty, fill them with sanctification: fill us here with the knowledge, and hereafter with the glory of Jesus Christ.

2. There must be no stop of this increase. Growing implies a continued act; if we once yield to an intermission, presently there follows a cessation, and a recidivation upon that. First fall off the fruits, then the leaves, after them the branches, and last of all comes down the tree itself. Many trees do not take every year; but all God's plants fructify every day. "The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree; he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon," Psal. xcii. 12. The palm tree is always in the flourish. What tree is comparable to the cedar, for straightness and stature? "Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish," ver. 13. Natural trees are planted abroad, spiritual ones within-doors. The other are either in the wide and wild forest, or enclosed in our gardens and orchards; these grow in the house; but it is in God's house. And they flourish in his court: many are ambitions of honour in the king's court; these flourish in the court of the King of kings. "They shall bring forth fruit in old age," ver. 14. Material trees wither with age, and cease to bear; these are still growing, still flourishing, still fructifying: as Abraham and Sarah had that promised son in their old age. Yea, toward

their end, they most abound with good works; they drop from them in abundance, like ripe and mellow fruit from a bounteous tree: read Hos. xiv. 5-7. Two angels sat in Christ's sepulchre, one at the head, and the other at the feet, John xx. 12. The head ever stands for the beginning, the feet for the end: as the beginning of a river is called the head, and the end of a song the foot. An angel there should be both at our head and feet: let us be careful, not only to have our beginnings glorious, like an angel at the head; but our endings also gracious, our conclusion comfortable, an angel also at the feet. Not the poet's beautiful virgin above, with a black fish at the tail: let not that end with a black angel, which began with a white. The ravens brought Elijah "bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening," 1 Kings xvii. 6. Let us not only take our breakfast on this heavenly food, but our supper too; as we desire to go to bed in peace, and rise again with comfort. In the morning let us feed on it, all day make it our repast, and in the evening of our days let it fill our souls. What though this sacred knowledge be brought us by a raven; by a minister unclean in himself, and foul with carnal aspersions; a bird of prey, given to rapine? yet the food is clean and holy; no Elijah will refuse it.

Let Christ be the Alpha of our youth, and the Omega of our old age, Rev. i. 8; who hath both protected our tables, and perfumed our coffins; that we may live with confidence, and die with comfort. He is, and was, and is to come; and ours in all these respects. He *was* our God, in a free and gracious election of us; *is* our Redeemer, in dying for us, in sanctifying us to himself; *is to come* our Saviour, in crowning us with an immortal diadem of glory. The state of grace is the perfection of this life, to grow still from grace to grace, and to profit in it; as to go on forwards is the perfection of a traveller, till he comes nearer and nearer to his journey's end. "Behold, I do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected," Luke xiii. 32. As God blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning, so Job doubtless in his latter end did more bless God than in his beginning. Commonly God reserves his best comforts to our latter end, to try us whether we will hold out to our latter end, or not. We are apt to expect a reward for our patience, repentance, and obedience, before it be done; we think it long ere the blessing fall. But let us know, that as there is no reward due, so (if there were) it is not due yet: we are in our bondage, not come to be capable of the inheritance. I have fought a good fight, and finished my course; now is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8; that was the right time; in the end of his victorious combat, to expect a glorious crown. So we must prolong our patience, and eke out our repentance, and renew the vigour and spirits of our obedience; awaiting the Lord's goodness unto the latter end; and then there is no doubt of the blessing: "The end of that man is peace," Psal. xxxvii. 37. As the Israelites dealt with the Moabites, smiting them in their country, 2 Kings iii. 24; still they went forward in that execution: so let us go forwards, smiting our sins with the sword of repentance. As there is nothing but our sinning, that keeps off God's blessing; so there is nothing but a serious repentance, that can break off our sinning. "Let us fear, lest any of us should seem to come short," Heb. iv. 1. Our obedience and righteousness must be of some length, such as will reach out as far as the reward; which falls not upon the beginning of any grace or virtue, but still upon the latter end. What shall become of them, then, that leave off growing, before they come to the end of perfec-

tion, the perfection of their end? as many of Christ's "disciples went back, and walked no more with him," John vi. 66. Lot's wife did but look back, and she perished: how worthy are they to perish, that go back from Christ! For them there is a woe-ful "Depart, ye cursed," in store, Matt. xxv. 41: since you would needs go, get you gone. They would needs depart, when Christ would have them tarry with him; now they would fain tarry with him, but he commands them to depart. But blessed are they that go with him, and grow in him, for they shall be called to him; "Come, ye blessed of my Father," ver. 34.

3. If we know Christ, let us make use of him, to his glory, and our own benefit. He takes it for an honour, when our humble confidence will enrich itself out of his treasure. Knowledge breeds society, and society binds faster than beneficence. There be that have a giving hand, but a denying face; and their sullen look discredits their bounty. Like one that flings his alms at the beggar's head, or throws his charity in the dirt. Such a man hath recompence enough, if his benefits be pardoned, though they be not praised. But Christ both is and loves a cheerful giver. If we truly know him, and his love to us, we will (in a due regard) be familiar with him: and familiarity makes a friend's bosom our closet, to lay up both our joys and sorrows, for the better enlargement of the one, and mitigation of the other. If in our sufferings there may be help had, there we find remedy; if not, yet we find ease. Do we know him to be the "Counsellor," Isa. ix. 6; why then do we not go to him for counsel? If he be a Comforter, to comfort all them that mourn in Zion, Isa. lxi. 3, why go we not to him for comfort?

(1.) We know him to be the best Counsellor; why then do we undertake any matter of importance without consulting his oracle? Hence it is that so many dote on a false religion, because for their choice they have not inquired at Christ. Christianity is become the footstool to policy: some have made a bargain with the world for a universal monarchy, and religion is but the label to that indenture. Those respects have filled popery with more clients, than either devotion or conscience. If a man attempt some great design, without the advice of his known friend, shall he not hear him justly expostulate: You neglect me; have you ever found me unfaithful? Did we ever find Christ, either not wise enough to direct us, or not ready enough to help us, that his counsel prevents not our resolution? He tells us all his counsel, Acts xx. 27, that may concern us; shall we make dainty to let him know ours? His is a bottomless depth of wisdom, ours a shallow puddle. His counsel prevails for good; ours, like Alithophel's, is often turned into folly. He knows our thoughts, without our revealing them; shall we stick to tell him what he knows? He looks to have it from our own lips, not for his satisfaction, but for the trial of our loves. He is patient to hear us open our cause, and takes no fee but our prayers. He counsels us without flattery, and rules us without ambiguity. He is ready to advise us in all our doubts, and to resolve us in all our deliberations. We choose a counsellor that is gracious with the judge: how dear is that Counsellor who is the Judge! This is to make some use of our knowledge of Christ.

(2.) We know him to be a sweet Comforter: therefore as the patient discloseth his grief to the physician in hope of cure, so let us confess our sins and sorrows to Christ in assurance of comfort. Men may reveal our shameful secrets, and so make the scars worse than the wounds: Christ will not fail to cover

them from others, that are humbly discovered to him. How many psalms did David begin in fear, which he ended in joy! You shall see terrible anguish sitting in the door, irremediable sorrow looking in at the window, despair bordering in the margin, and offering to creep into the text; yet after a sharp conflict, nothing appears but joy and comfort. So that you would think them two several psalms; one of perplexity, and another of relief. Or if but one psalm, yet composed by two men, of contrary dispositions. Yet it is but one psalm, and made by one man. What, did there a messenger of good news come in, as he was writing his odes; as Elisha sent to the king of Israel, while he was rending his clothes? 2 Kings v. 8. No, but as his soul grew still more inward with God, it became lighter and lighter, rising from under the burden with comfort. Shall we still hold our hand on the pain, and pine away with an obstinate sullenness, that may be cured even by saying we are sick? Suppressed tears are a double smart; though otherwise they may be unprofitably spent, yet they give air to the grief, and discharge us of some load. But when they are spent in the bosom of Christ, as Mary's were on his feet, we shall be sure of comfort. Much is forgiven us, yea, even all the sins that we weep for. Our sighs and tears are vapours and moisture, which Christ draws up to return them back upon us in showers of mercy. "I said, I will confess my transgressions," Psal. xxxii. 5; he had not yet done it: God gave him a pardon, even as soon as he had a will to ask it. "Lord, all my desire is before thee, and my groaning is not hid from thee," Psal. xxxviii. 9; even that was a powerful oratory. Mercy often prevents repentance, but repentance never fails of mercy. Therefore he required our humble acknowledgment, not because he hath need of our confession, but because we have need of his pardon. And why should he in justice grant it, to them that will not vouchsafe to crave it? Wicked men afflicted, are like frantic men wounded; who finding ingredients prepared to dress them, tear them all in pieces. But if we know the sovereign cordials that Christ hath in store for us, we will seek to none but him and his Holy Spirit for comfort.

(3.) We know the sweetness and excellency of Christ, therefore we cannot but love him; and if we love him, how grievous will it be to lose him! To lose her soul's love, Cant. iii. 1, might well nettles the spouse. This caused Mary's tears to stream forth; her Lord was gone, John xx. 13; how should she be quiet? This, had it been true, was cause enough of tears. She wept to see him suffer death; there she knew that he was taken away. But though his soul were gone, his body was left her, that dead object of her love and pity. For his death she had wept her fill; yet his body remained, a cold corpse; one would think cold comfort for her. But this was all she had now left of him, and have they taken away that too? This set her a weeping. His being taken from the tomb, grieved her more than his being slain on the tree. There she had something left her, now nothing at all, taken away quite and clean; this was not all, but "I know not where they have laid him;" she had wept much for his death, this taking away renewed her tears; but "I know not where," was the extreme astonishment. (August.) To lose Christ, and so to lose him as not to know where to find him, is most fearful to them that know him. Though he be taken from us, it is some comfort if we can tell where to fetch him again; but to lose him at home, to miss him in our hearts, without knowledge where to find him abroad, may well put both the Maries to their tears, Luke ii. 48. They, she knew

not who; had taken him away, she knew not how; and carried him, she knew not whither; and laid him, she knew not where; there to do with him, she knew not what; and to find him again, she knew not when: no need to ask her why she weeps, John xx. 13.

They that have such a loss, and have not withal lost themselves in insensibleness, cannot be without great cause of mourning. The wiser, the sadder: they that know not Christ, think it no such great matter to lose him. What cares a stupid worldling for the removal of our candlestick? What is it to him, if the superstition and blindness of popery did overshadow the land, and turn day into night? It is nothing to him, if he can see to get money. Light or darkness, Scripture or tradition, the king or the pope, Christ or antichrist, are all one to him. To hear a sermon, or see a mass; he likes them both alike. But to them that know Christ, the loss of him is terrible: and doth not that nation lose him, that loseth his gospel? As Mary would not be comforted with the sight and speech of angels, nor with the sight and speech of Jesus himself, till he made her know that he was Jesus; so there is nothing in men or angels, nothing in earth or heaven, that can quiet the troubled heart, till Christ be found. Till he that is taken away, be restored to us; though it should come from heaven, from the angels themselves, our souls would refuse all manner of comfort. Such was her sorrow for a supposed loss of him; what should be ours, then, that lose him, not dead, but living; not once, but often; not in supposal, but in very deed; and that by sin, the worst way of losing him; and that not by others taking him away, but by our own wilful defaults? Shall not we be moved, nor grieved, nor break any of our sleeps or sports for the matter? Do we reckon him as good lost as found? When Christ, and the Holy Ghost, and the favour of God, and all is gone, by our obstinacy, we can soon be comforted again for all this. There needs none to say unto us, Why weep you? but rather, Why weep you not? If we know the sweetness, the joy, the heaven that is in his presence, and find him departed from us, let our tears run down in abundance; let us allow ourselves no rest, till Christ be found, till he be reconciled to us by faith and repentance, and have reconciled us to God by mercy and forgiveness.

4. Let us encourage our growing unto the end, by the recompence we shall find in the end, Heb. xi. 26. For though God be good unto us all the way, yet he will be best at last. As he did bless Job temporally, so he will bless all his saints eternally; him on earth, all the rest in heaven; that their latter end shall be happier than their beginning, Job xlii. 12. And if our virtue, like to his patience, do not hold out to the end, if we be not best at last, we cannot look for such a reward. How was Job thus blessed? First, in the duplication of his children. If you object, that both at first and last he had an equal number of them, seven sons and three daughters, ten in all; yet know, in fair probability, that the former ten were in heaven, increasing the number of saints triumphant, and the latter ten on earth, to increase the number of the saints militant. Ten he had with God, and ten God had with him; so that they were doubled. Secondly, in the duplication of his substance: for if we compare the first chapter of that book with the last, we shall find that God doubled his wealth, Job i. 3; xlii. 12; and that to a good man is a blessing. Thirdly, the blessings he had in the beginning, he had in common with other princes of the East: they made him but one of God's children at large; being blessings given

to the good and bad, Matt. v. 45. But this long chastisement, and a patience full as long as that, made him God's special darling; for God scourgeth the son which he tenders and fondles, above the rest of his children, Heb. xii. 6. Fourthly, his fame and renown is much enlarged by it; which is a blessing to persons no less religious than honourable. He was in the beginning known to God; he knew what he would do, and how he would hold out: now he is become known to us. "Ye have heard of the patience of Job," Jam. v. 11. Heard of him? we cannot choose. The devil in his beginning was fain to compass the earth, before he could find him, Job i. 7: now he cannot tempt any of God's children in their afflictions to impatience, but presently he hears of him. One Jupiter set out by Homer the poet, was worth ten Jupiters set out by Phydias the carver, says Philostratus: because the former flew abroad throughout all the world, whereas the other never stirred from his pedestal at Athens. So at first the honour of Job was confined to Uz, a little corner of Arabia: now it is spread as far as the sun can extend his beams, or the moon her influence. His book began with There was such a man; but before it ends, it shows that there was such a saint: there was such a favourite of heaven, such a mirror of the earth, such a wonder of the world. Fifthly, he was a good man before: they that knew him, might well acknowledge it, for God himself does confess it, and the devil could not deny it, Job i. 8, 9: but yet he was not tried; put him to the test, and see what he will prove then. Many a man goes for good and honest; so others think him, so he thinks himself; and he finds not in his own heart any cause to the contrary, but so he should continue; but let him be had to the trial, furnish him with spiritual weapons, put him into the lists, charge him with a combatant; let temptation, tribulation, and misery be champions against him; see how he will behave himself against these antagonists; if now he comes off with victory, record his name in the chronicle of the saints, and enrol him for one of Christ's conquerors. So did Job fight, and so did he overcome; proving himself to be one of God's worthies. He was a rich and good man before; but this advanced him to his honour of knight-hood: he was made a knight of Christ's own order, a knight of the cross; and in the last day, when that great General comes to his glorious triumph over his enemies, Job shall not be without his honourable equipage; but adorned with the rich collar of his sufferings, and covered with his afflictions like the robes of the martyrs, and crowned with his patience, which is super-crowned with everlasting blessedness.

In all these respects God blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning; which he would never have done, if his beginning had been as perfect as his latter end. What an encouragement is this to us! Who would not be still growing in knowledge and goodness, that is sure of so happy a recompence? What though we be not like Job, rewarded with honour, children, friends, prosperity, power, and riches, and such temporary movables, in the end of our days? Yet we shall be filled with peace, joy, glory, and eternal life at the end of our days. If we be not made lords of the earth, yet we shall be kings in heaven. Besides, even for the present, Although the chest be emptied of gold, yet the heart is filled with faith, (August.) We may come to be poorer in earthly things toward our end, than we were in the beginning; yet we may grow in grace and knowledge more than many others, that grow in place and preferment above us. But what we want in the riches of the flesh, we have in the riches of the Spirit; we have it in the one or the other balance. The

peace of conscience, and the comforts of the Holy Ghost, are our happiness here; and the kingdom of heaven shall be our inheritance hereafter.

5. Lastly, for caution. Every virtue hath a professed enemy: darkness is not more contrary to light, nor sickness to health, nor death to life, than vice to goodness. Humility hath a professed enemy, which is pride; charity a professed enemy, which is malice; hope a professed enemy, which is despair; mercy hath a professed enemy, which is cruelty; faith a professed enemy, which is infidelity; liberality a professed enemy, which is covetousness; so obstinacy is a professed enemy to obedience; apostasy, to perseverance; atheism, to religion; hard-heartedness, to compassion. If these be not always in the field, they are always in feud; a continual war is proclaimed by them, one against another; no reconciliation, no peace, no truce is to be admitted. They are sworn enemies, and will never give over the combat, till one side lie in the dust. So the professed enemy of knowledge is ignorance. Darkness is raised up by the prince of darkness out of hell, to oppose the light which comes down from the Father of lights out of heaven. When Christ displays his banners, the devil will muster up his forces. He hath an army of rebels, to wage war with Michael and his angels, Rev. xii. 7. But besides these public and open foes, that profess hostility, every virtue hath a secret enemy, that does her the most mischief, Psal. xli. 9. It is Satanic policy, to deceive under the name of a friend. Absalom so upbraided Hushai with a pleasant scoff of his professed friendship to David, "Is this thy kindness to thy friend?" 2 Sam. xvi. 17. So hope, besides her professed enemy, despair, hath a secret one, presumption: this seems to be but an improvement of herself; at worst but an excess, an extreme, an overweening hope. So liberality, besides her professed enemy, gripulousness, hath a secret one, prodigality: this seems to be nothing else but an advancement of her worth, and all for her honour, to scatter abroad her riches with a blind and open hand. Religion, besides her professed enemy, atheism, hath a secret one, a superstitious misdevotion. In the glorious temples of idolatry, this may seem to exalt her into heaven: whereas indeed it corrupts her upon earth, and precipitates her to hell. So knowledge, besides her common enemy ignorance, hath secret ones: which howsoever they may seem her friends, betray her to ruin: these are sloth and pride. As profuseness cuts the throat of liberality, and presumption breaks the neck of hope, and superstition is a plague to infect religion, so these are the bane of knowledge. Sloth in the discourse, and pride in the abuse: the former starves her to death for want of food, the other tickles her to death with self-conceit. These are not Satan's hand-guards, but lurchers; not violent robbers, but privy thieves; indeed his cheaters, which cozen our souls, and flieh away our knowledge of Jesus Christ; or rather hinder the growth of this knowledge, which is my present argument. Let it not seem tedious to you, for me to remove these two blocks out of the way of our spiritual knowledge.

(1.) Slothfulness and neglect is the former: when we cease to use our knowledge, we lose it. God did not give us this ground, that we should let it lie fallow: if we do, it will bring forth nothing but weeds and nettles, which will both stink to God, and sting our own consciences. Christ by his knowledge doth justify many, Isa. liii. 11, and we by our knowledge must satisfy many. Paul's growth in the knowledge of Christ, was seen in confuting the Jews which denied Christ, Acts ix. 22. What is a man the better for his land, if he let it lie untilled? Bad husbandry

will find but a thin crop: no tillage, no harvest. The talent that lies useless by us, shall be taken from us, Matt. xxv. 28. The schoolmen and casuists run out the metal of their knowledge into tinkling bells and cymbals, and languish into a thousand needless and endless questions; thinking to magnify it, and themselves by it, by spending and venting it in unprofitable, cold, and bloodless subtleties. But what is the notional sweetness of honey, to the experimental taste of it? If we be not the better for our knowledge, we were better never to have had knowledge. Otherwise, it is but a fair estate in the hands of a fool, or like the pencil of an exquisite painter in the hand of a cobbler. It is storied of an ancient and reverend rabbi, who that he might by some demonstration win the people to make use of their knowledge, and to reduce it to practice, put himself into the habit of a mountebank, or travelling aqua-vite man; and in the market made proclamation of a sovereign cordial, or water of life, that he had to sell. Divers call him in, and desire him to show it: whereupon he opens the Bible, and directs them to several places of comfort in it: intimating that as they had the knowledge of the Scriptures, so if they would make use of it, they should both live holy, and die happy: for that indeed was the water of life. It is not God's meaning that any grace should lie dead in us, much less knowledge. It is never out of exercise, though the labours of it be different, according to the seasons. In childhood we are subjected to the labour of discipline; in age to the labour of doctrine; in the time betwixt these to the labour of practice. He who is ignorant of these things, let him learn them in childhood; what he hath thus learned, let him practise in youth; what he hath thus practised, let him teach in old age. Thus Hugo. So that knowledge hath no time to be idle.

No sooner had God given the king of Israel wisdom, but all Israel shall be witness to the wisdom of their king. The decision of that controversy between the two barlots shall make him talked of, 1 Kings iii. 16. Our all-wise Maker will find occasions to draw forth his graces to use. Dan and Beersheba were too narrow bounds for the fame of Solomon: it flies over all lands and seas, and transports the whole world with an admiration of his more than human knowledge. Kings send their ambassadors, and a great queen comes in person, to hear the wisdom of Solomon, 1 Kings iv. 34: there is still more work for him. Confined air grows corrupt: untrodden paths grow woody. Musical instruments, without handling, will warp and become nothing worth. A sprightly horse will lose his mettle by standing unbreathed in a stable. Rust will take the swords that hang by the walls. The cynic, rather than want work, would still be removing his tub. It was a law of Solon, that if the father had taught his son no trade in his youth, whereby he might get his living, that son should yield no relief to his father in his age. In that day wherein we do no good, how can we without shame pray for our daily bread? All virtues have their several employments, and so hath knowledge. God hath no use of the dark lanterns of secret and reserved perfections. We ourselves do not light up candles to put them under bushels. The great lights, whether of heaven or earth, are not intended to obscurity; but as to give light to others, so to be seen themselves. How did Pomponius, in Plutarch, pull his son Numa out of private obscurity, and put him upon public actions fit for his abilities! We are not a little beholden to Cresipion, for stirring up St. Hierome in the eastern countries, and to Hilary, for rousing up St. Augustine in the western countries, to withstand the spreading infection of

Pelagius. There is an *honestum* in every virtue, which is proper to the possessors; but withal there should be an *utile*, which is common and beneficial to their neighbours.

There is a shamefaced modesty, which slackens the bridle; and there is a preposterous zeal, too hot on the spur. Some will hardly come forth when they be called; as others will run before they are bidden. I cannot tell which is worse in the time of need, for the learned to hide themselves with Ulysses, or for the unlearned to thrust themselves forward with Thersites; certainly neither is excusable. As the latter overshoots by boldness, so the former falls short by bashfulness; both are to blame. Socrates took no less care to persuade Charmides, Plato's uncle, to undertake the public business of state, than to dissuade Glaucos, Plato's brother, from it. The former of these was a man of much worth, but too little boldness; the latter was a man of very much boldness, but too little worth. The fault of the latter was more odious, but the fault of the former was more noxious: Glaucos was sick of impudence, Charmides faint with diffidence. There was more reason to blame the former, but more need to blame the latter. Glaucos, by too much undervaluing of others, and arrogating to his own wisdom, made himself contemptible; but Charmides, by too much admiring the worth of others, and despising his own, made himself unprofitable. The former, by his audaciousness, fell into the contempt which he might have avoided; the other, by his timorousness, lost the honour which he might have gained. As the one needed the bit, so the other the spur: the bold one for his own sake, to escape a private loss; the other for the commonwealth's sake, to perform a public good.

The rust and disuse of knowledge, in men fitted and called to the service of God, is a sin almost unpardonable. Silence is the daughter of shamefacedness; both which, as they are excuses for mediocrity, so they are prejudices to excellency. They are always the wisdom of fools, and sometimes the folly of the wise. The labours of the learned are the treasure of the church; not by way of indulgence, to profit the dead; but by way of instruction, to comfort the living. The Holy Ghost came down upon the apostles in the form of tongues, Acts ii. 3. Why like tongues? In regard of themselves it was enough to receive the Spirit of wisdom; the receiving him in the shape of tongues, respects us. They have not only a supernatural knowledge given them, for the illumination of themselves; but also tongues, for the communication of this knowledge to us. This conveys it from man to man. Reason is impressed in the soul, expressed by the tongue; therefore the Latins call *oratio*, speech, as it were *oris ratio*, the reason of the mouth. The soul is the fountain of knowledge, and the tongue a channel from that fountain. As Holofernes stopped the fountains of Bethulia, so preachers that use not their tongues, stop the current of the Holy Ghost. Indeed there are some who preach, as Nabal did fast, once in a year; and that must be a sheep-shearing too, when they receive the benefits of their flock, the rents of their rectories. Some are tongued from their birth, as was Cræsus' son; they cannot vent their knowledge, it may be they have no knowledge to vent. Some are tongued by riches, as Demosthenes was by the Milesians; they say to their tongues, as that epicure did to his soul, You have enough; e'en take your ease, Luke xii. 19: these men have a fee to be silent. Others are tongued by greatness: rather than to speak against the stream of the times, they must forbear to speak against the sins of the times. These know that

matters go amiss: yet for quietness' sake, they even sit still and let them alone. Alas, if they should touch upon their lord's delirium, what hope have they of their lord's preferment? The limbs after long sitting, are scarce able to walk: sluggish rest will make our gifts rust. Idleness engenders un-ability; they will not preach at the first, they shall find that they cannot preach at the last. It was the soldiers' lie, "His disciples came by night, and stole him away," Matt. xxviii. 13. But it is too true here; by night, when we put ourselves into the darkness of works, into the works of darkness, this privy thief comes, and steals away from us the knowledge of Christ, while we sleep in supine carelessness. Therefore let us use it, and do good with it, and then it shall do good unto us.

(2.) Pride and vain-glory is the other hinderance. We need not be told again, that knowledge is one of the fairest flowers in our garland; let us not then blast it with the unwholesome wind of vain-glory. St. Gregory gives us this memorable caution concerning our knowledge; That while it enlightens the darkness of ignorance, it should not take away the light of knowledge. When Pride comes upon the stage, exit Wisdom. The one doth not more enlighten the head, than the other doth darken the heart. He goes on: By this we may discern of our spiritual knowledge; if it works more upon the heart, than upon the head, it is right. The first operation of proud knowledge, is to make the head light: the first work of this divine knowledge, is to make the heart heavy. Not that it deprives us of joy, but prepares us for joy. It does not make us proud, but humble: nor set our fancies running, but our eyes weeping. The first irradiation of this light, like some flash of lightning, breaks the stone in the heart. The schoolmen, when they suit the beatitudes with the gifts of the Spirit, join sorrow with science; weeping for sin with knowledge: and they give this reason for it; That sorrow for sin can issue from no other fountain but the knowledge of God; nor doth this couple ever part. (Aquinas, 2a. 2e. qu. 69. art. 3.) They are not therefore mismatched; for there is no clearer way of seeing God upon earth, than through tears. "He that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow," Eccl. i. 18. He that increaseth the knowledge of Christ, shall ever increase the sorrow for his sins. So Augustine applies it: and on the contrary. He that increaseth his sorrow for sin, shall prove a great clerk in the school of Christ. The gall and bitterness of sin being thoroughly felt, restoreth a Christian to his perfect understanding, as the gall of the fish did Tobit to sight, Tob. xi. 8. *Multum crucis, multum lucis*, as Luther says; i. e. Where there is much of the cross, there is much of light: we are best instructed, when we are most afflicted. Before the sons of Jacob shall know Joseph for their brother, Gen. xlv. 1, they shall feel his displeasure. When God hath exercised his children with roughness, then he will be perfectly known to them, Job xlii. 5. Christ's cross begins our learning: that real alphabet of true Christianity is spelled out by suffering, not by reading. Thus the knowledge of Christ breeds humility, not vain-glory; not arrogance, but repentance. They that are puffed up with their knowledge, never sought it for Christ's, but their own honour. Hence it comes, that *Ibi peccant, ubi peccata emendare debuerunt*: i. e. There they err, where they ought to have corrected their error. (Isidor. de Sum. Bon. lib. 3.) But above all, God saith, "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom," Jer. ix. 23; yet many do so, and bless themselves in so doing. Tully could say, (*Offic. l.*) *Deforme est de seipso predicare*; i. e. It is an unsightly thing for a man to proclaim his own praises.

Yet this man, so qualified, that nothing but the eloquence of a Tully could sufficiently praise Tully's eloquence, is taxed even by those friends that would have concealed his small blemishes: That the speech which flowed from him as sweet as honey, was made to taste as bitter as gall, by the interlacing of his own praises. Cato the elder had a fair commendation given him by consent, to be a prime orator, a better senator, and a most excellent commander; yet he was so given to boast himself, that his best friends were ashamed of him. (Plin.)

There be three corrosives, which well applied, may eat out this ulcer and impostume of vain-glory, and purge the air of our knowledge from the killing infection of pride.

[1.] The uncertainty of our knowledge in secular and political businesses. The most wise God hath hidden from us the event of things. Future contingents may fall out otherwise than we imagine. The surgeon that deals with an outward wound, can tell whether he can cure it, and guess in what time; but the physician that undertakes the cure of a fever, can neither set the time of his patient's recovery, nor assure him that he shall be recovered at all. The artisan with his convenient shop and tools, can make up his day's work if he be not hindered. But the merchant adventurer can promise himself no such matter; he must have one wind to bring him out of the haven, another to carry him about to the Land's End, and perhaps another to drive him unto the place of traffic: so that he can promise nothing, neither for the time of his return, nor the venting of his commodity, but as the wind, and the weather, and the mariners, and the seas, and the time of trade, will give him leave. All politic successes are conjectural, not demonstrative: they stand in need of the concurrence of many causes, which are casual; and of many men's minds, which are mutable; and of many opportunities, which are accidental: so that we cannot build upon them. In stratagems of war, much hope is grounded on the negligence of our enemies; we may think them asleep, who be as waking as ourselves. Antigonus made full account to set upon Eumenes unawares; but he found Eumenes as vigilant as himself, and so was fain to retire quickly, as wise as he came. So for war; and the like we find in the passages of peace. Solomon, that wonder of wisdom, might think by joining in affinity with his neighbour princes, and marrying their daughters, to strengthen his own kingdom; yet more, to win those heathen to the kingdom of God. Why should not they be brought to worship the God of Israel, that were so allied to the king of Israel? He was deceived in both; for this turned to the ruin of his kingdom, and well near of himself. For the secret underminers of his state and succession, were were they entertained, but among his allies? Hadad with Pharaoh, probably Solomon's own father-in-law: Jeroboam too was harboured in Egypt, 1 Kings xi. 18. 40. And for his wives, they turned away his heart after other gods: he could do no good upon them, they wrought him to much evil. So Constantine, that religious Christian, and famous politician, thought that by building a city in the confines of Europe and Asia, which might be a match for Rome, and by placing one of his sons to keep his court there, he should impregably fortify the empire. But the building of new Rome was the decay of old Rome; and the division of the empire was the destruction of the empire. So Phocas, by dignifying the prelate of Rome with that extravagant title of Universal Bishop, and Pipinus, by endowing the church of Rome with large revenues and principalities, thought they had done wondrous well. But the lift-

ing up of the man of Rome was the lifting up of the man of sin, and the increase of his estate was the diminution of his piety. No cross offences are the events to our purposes: "the way of man is not in himself," Jer. x. 23. There is no policy so provident, no providence so circumspect, but it is subject to errors; therefore not to be trusted on, much less to be gloried in. That which is so full of uncertainty, can be no cause of glory.

[2.] The imperfection of our knowledge many ways may well abate our pride. In divinity it may get most; because toward the furnishing of ourselves with that knowledge we have most helps. Yet the most acute and judicious divines have acknowledged their ignorance, and deplored their errors, in divers points. We know but in part, 1 Cor. xiii. 9. If he that learned his divinity among the angels, yea, to whom the Holy Ghost was an immediate Tutor, did know but in part, it is well for us if we know but a part of that part. That which an Egyptian priest said to a Grecian, Ye Grecians are always children, will be found true, not only of the Grecians, but even of the Egyptians, yea, and of Christians too; that for understanding we are children, all of us. I deny not, but among the Romans, Nosiea was called *Corculum*, for his pregnancy of wit. Among the Grecians, Democritus Abderita was called, not *σοφός*, but *αῶρος*, wisdom itself. Among the Britons, Gildas was called *Gildas Sapiens*, Gildas the Sage. Among the Jews, Aben Ezra was called *Iechachan*; they said of him, that if knowledge had put out her candle, at his brain she might light it again; and that his head was the throne of wisdom. Before him, among the Israelites, Aithophel was the man; his counsel called an oracle: yet because another's advice was once preferred to his, 2 Sam. xvii. 14, he falls into a desperate discontent. So proud was he of wisdom, that it went to his heart to hear of any wiser than himself. This caused him to misinterpret a poor disgrace, and to overrate it. What if he were not the wisest man of all Israel, must he needs therefore go hang himself? What if his counsel were despised? A wise man knows how to live happy, in spite of an unjust contempt. What if another man's counsel was held better? Was it not madness in him to revenge another man's reputation upon himself? Worldly wisdom is no protection from shame and ruin. We talk of wisdom, but where is it? Why should the Nile overflow only in the summer, when waters are at the lowest? Who could ever satisfy others or himself, by delivering a cause of that? Why should the loadstone draw iron, or incline to the pole-star? who hath knowledge to give a reason of that? We all pretend to it, but where is it? "The depth saith, It is not in me," &c. Job xxviii. 12. This wisdom is not in the depth, but the depth is in this wisdom. "O the depth of the wisdom and knowledge of God!" Rom. xi. 33. Our best knowledge is repentance: "The fear of the Lord is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding," Job xxviii. 28. All our other knowledge is imperfect; and who will boast of his imperfections? Indeed stories report, that Agesilaus bragged of his stump foot, and Sertorius of his one eye; and played upon their own defects whosoever they came. But I believe this was a Sardonic laugh; a trick to prevent the jeering of others, rather than any delight they took in it themselves; for naturally men do not boast of their deformities. This defect in our knowledge may well nip our glory.

[3.] It is not our own, nor of ourselves; and why should we glory in that which is another's? The ape is proud of his master's jacket, the dog of his gorgeous collar; the ass jets it in the lion's skin, and

the crow braved it in her stolen feathers. We seem to be sampled with such irrational creatures, we take all these for ridiculous foibles; yet we cannot reflect upon ourselves, nor consider our own priding it in another's riches. "What hast thou that thou didst not receive?" 1 Cor. iv. 7. "A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven," John iii. 27; especially not wisdom. The Spirit of wisdom, and the tongue to express it, all from on high, Acts ii. 4. "Every good and perfect gift is from above," Jam. i. 17: they grow not in us, we spin them not out of ourselves, but they come from above. Therefore why dost thou glory? If it be given, why forget we the Giver? Let him be had in memory, he is well worthy to be thought on; yea, let him have all the glory, for it is his. He that paid our ransom for us, 1 Tim. ii. 6, when we were not worth a groat; he that cast his own garment upon us when we lay naked, and healed us when we lay wallowing in our own blood, Ezek. xvi. 6; he that redeemed us from all our enemies, Luke i. 74: will he take it well at our hands to glory in these his bounties, as if we were beholden to none but ourselves? Yet foolish man will be wise, naked man will be brave, filthy man will be pure. Though for all the cost and charges that God is at upon us, we remain poor beggars, yet in the midst of this beggary we can find in our hearts to glory; not in the cross of Christ, Gal. vi. 14, which he endured for us; but in the gifts of Christ, for which we are beholden to him.

These three corrosives well laid on, may eat out the cancer of pride and vain-glory, which so cleaves to our knowledge: to which I might add a fourth for conclusion: [4.] That this is a secret thief which steals away our knowledge. It is like the albugo, or white spot in the eye, which dimmeth our understanding; and makes fools of Catos, and Platos, and Tullies, and Aithophels: leaving them at last never an eye to see withal. That we cannot know our own defects, nor the sum of our debts, nor the depth of our misery; that we cannot know God's infinite riches, nor the worth of his pardon, nor the height of his mercy; what may we thank but pride? These be those dead flies that corrupt the ointment, Eccl. x. 1. As furnished bodies that have nothing to feed on, will fall to their own flesh; so vain-glorious men, for want of parasites, will be their own trumpeters, though they dispense God and man. For God, he will find means to manifest thy knowledge when it may make for his own glory. Thy knowledge is a colt, a wild ass's colt: "Vain man would be wise, though he be born like a wild ass's colt," Job xi. 12. Tie up this colt till God calls for him. If thou find that the Lord hath need of him, then loose him and let him go, Luke xix. 31. And for men; while thou art silent, they will speak thy praise; but if thou speak thine own praise, they will be silent. There was a temple in Diospolis, a city of Egypt, wherein were pictured a little boy, an old man, an eagle, a fish, and a crocodile. (Clem. Alexan. lib. 5. Strom.) For the device of this hieroglyphic, there was a boy painted, to signify generation; an old man, to signify corruption; an eagle, which for the quickness and clearness of sight, was meant to symbolize God, who seeth all things; a fish, to insinuate hatred, for fishes were abomination to the priests of Egypt; (Herodot. lib. 2.) and lastly, a crocodile, which they present as the emblem of insolency. The whole sense being laid together, imports this: O ye that are young, and coming on; O ye that are old, and going out of the world; to you and to all be it known, that God doth hate pride and insolency. The saints, when they would magnify God's mercies to them, used first to declare their own former conditions. "With my

staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two hands," saith Jacob, Gen. xxxii. 10. I walked alone with my staff, like a poor private soldier; now I am become the general of two regiments. He chose David from the sheepfolds, and set him to feed Jacob his people, Psal. lxxviii. 70, 71. I was a mean shepherd, that tended my father's flocks in the desert; thou hast made me a king, and that over thine own people, and set me in the throne of majesty. To this purpose Amos; I was an herdsman, thou hast made me a prophet, Amos vii. 14, 15: instead of feeding beasts upon earth, I am honoured to know and teach the secrets of heaven. Yet in the height of these dignities, they all kept lowly minds; no pride crept into the honour of the one, or knowledge of the other. So doth the Lord hate pride, that they two could not endure to dwell together in one wide heaven; how should they endure to dwell together in one narrow breast? One heart can never contain them, if one heaven could not hold them. Christ will know none but the humble, and none but the humble souls truly know Christ.

Thus long and late I am come to a period of this argument, concerning the growth of the knowledge of Christ. All they will pardon the prolixity, that have had any relish of the sweetness. It could be tedious to none, but those that either do not or will not know him to their comforts. I beg not their favourable construction, but I pray for their happy illumination, Eph. i. 16—18. Carnal minds are so far from learning how to know Christ, that they do not know how to learn him. They think they can as well learn him at home, as at church; by following their profession, as by going to a sermon. And this learning of theirs discovers itself in their actions. For they have learned to swear by him, they have learned to tear his holy name in pieces with lewd blasphemies, they have learned to crucify him again by their malicious sins. Of this learning they have store in their hearts; and this learning they convey to their children, who can swear as soon as they can speak: they learned that of their parents; it was one of the first lessons that ever they taught them; if not by precept, yet by practice and example. "But ye have not so learned Christ," Eph. iv. 20: Satan taught them that kind of learning; it came not down from heaven, but up from hell. Some sin comes to us by kind, it costs us nothing; other by custom, and that is not very chargeable neither. But they both did cost our Saviour Christ dear, even his own precious blood; and if they be not unlearned again, and quite broken off from us by repentance, they will cost us dear too, even our own precious souls. But there is another manner of learning, another way of knowing Christ; which consists in putting off the corruption we have by nature, and putting on the holiness of grace, Eph. iv. 22. This is a good learning, and happy thus it is to know Christ. Without this, it is with us in our sins, as it was with Peter in his ecstacy, we know not what we speak, Luke ix. 33. But with that direction, we may use the words of Christ, "We speak that we do know," John iii. 11. Without it we are "foolish, and know not the way of the Lord," Jer. v. 4; with it wise, even to salvation. Suffer but two meditations more, and I have done.

1. Knowledge hath a difference from all other virtues, though it be a virtue itself. Some virtues are only conversant about good, and some only abstain or restrain from evil; knowledge hath respect to both good and evil. Some virtues are only and properly fitted upon good; albeit collaterally, or by way of consequence, they keep us from evil. So the object of charity is goodness, the orb wherein it moves

is goodness. It loves God above all, who is the chiefest good; next the saints, who in their degrees and measure are good. With the heart it loves good, with the hand it does good. Paul indeed gives it some negative attributes, and that rightly: "It vaunteth not itself; seeketh not her own," 1 Cor. xiii. 4, 5. But these are not the walk of charity; they may be assaults and ambushes to trouble her in her walk, which she spurns out of her way as she goes; but her way is good, and her walk is good, and her end is good. So the object of faith is good: the promise of God, which is sure and good; the merits of Christ, which are precious and good; the inheritance of heaven, which is firm and good. It is true that she is often put to it, to remove doubts, to clear difficulties, and to dispel sorrows; but her eye is not fastened upon them. Her object is the Sun of righteousness; these are but clouds betwixt her and the Sun. It is not the purpose and scope of her journey to meddle with these, but these will meddle with her. They are not her way, but enemies in her way. So are all sins, and the father and mother of sins, the devil and the world. She does not only brain those Babylonish little ones against the stones, Psal. cxxxvii. 9, and kill the young whelps and curs of that cursed litter; but even confounds the sire and the dam. The sire; faith resists the devil, 1 Pet. v. 9: the dam; faith overcomes the world, 1 John v. 4. Still her object is good, yea, God. No less may be said for hope, it looks only for good; no man hopes for evil. The beginning of it is good, for it is rooted in comfort; the progress good, for it goes on in cheerfulness; and the end is good, for it is only blessedness. Evil is the object of fear, good of hope. It may have some conflicts by the way; fear, and despair, and presumption are three shrewd adversaries; but hope overcomes the evil, and pursues the good, and saves the soul, Rom. viii. 24. No less might be said of meekness, which is only pitched upon a quiet good; and mercifulness, which minds only a beneficent good; and of pureness of heart, which consists in an innocent good.

Again, some virtues are principally exercised with evil, and all their strength is employed in the victory of that. Virtue is abstinence. What is sobriety, but an abstinence from drunkenness? What is chastity, but an abstinence from uncleanness, whether in thought or act? What is temperance, but an abstinence from excess? So St. Augustine defines it; The business of the temperate man is in restraining and quieting his passions. Wherein consists the honour of patience, but in the quiet and unmoved suffering of evils? Where there is no evil, patience hath nothing to do. And what is repentance, but a sorrowing for evil? Wherein doth it properly consist, but in grief for sin? These latter virtues are not properly positive, their exercise is not seen but in the conquest of evil. Uncleanness is evil; to avoid that is chastity: drunkenness is evil; to shun that is sobriety: excess in diet, apparel, pleasure, is evil; to preclude that is temperance: contempt and injury are evils; to bear them meekly is patience: all sins are evil; to wash them off with tears is repentance. These virtues, like the stars, shine brightest in the night. To abstain, not only from evil, but from some good, is a virtue: *Est virtus placitis abstinuisse bonis*; i. e. 'Tis virtue to abstain from goods that please.

Knowledge is of a middle nature between both these, and yet participates with them both. It is not wholly exercised with good, nor wholly taken up with evil, but it knows both good and evil. Before man fell from his innocency, he knew nothing but good; but as his ambition was to know evil with it,

so to know evil was his punishment. In this he thought to have become like God, and he became indeed like the devil. It hath cost the elect part of mankind many a sigh, many a groan, and many a tear, this knowledge of evil; for the refused part, it costs them their eternal souls. But here comes in the blessed remedy, brought by Jesus Christ to his chosen, that they cannot but know both good and evil; yet the good they know shall do them good, but the evil they know shall not bring evil upon them. For they know the evil, to avoid it; and the good, to embrace it, and so come to be saved by it.

2. There can be no full satisfaction or consolation of the mind in any knowledge, but the knowledge of Jesus Christ. The ancient poets had a strange fable of their Sphinx, which they feigned to be a monster of divers forms; with the face of a virgin, the wings of a bird, and the talons of a griffin. This thing did set upon all travellers that passed by, and propounded to them certain riddles, which he received of the muses. These, if the miserable captives could not resolve and interpret, he would presently tear them in pieces. The country being a long time thus plagued with him, proffered their kingdom of Thebes to that man that could expound his riddles; for if one of them were answered, the monster had no more power, but forfeited his life. Œdipus, a man of lame feet, but of an ingenious head, accepted the condition, undertook the challenger, and got the kingdom. He resolved the riddle, slew the monster, and laid his body upon an ass for triumph.

To make some profitable use of this fiction, conceive here, first, by Sphinx, man's natural knowledge: this is a monster of divers shapes, being so metamorphosed and transformed by sin. It hath the talons of a griffin; catching and tenacious hooks, that will take hold of any thing. It hath the wings of a bird; for knowledge flies from man to man by discourse, as a bird cuts the air from place to place: the communication of science, is as the kindling of one light at another. It hath the face of a virgin, so beautiful and amiable that every man is in love with it. Sphinx had his riddles from the muses; and the sententious axioms of a sublime knowledge are wrought out with much study and contemplation. That monster devoured those that could not unfold his riddles; so human knowledge hath made a prey of fools. It was more policy than power, whereby divers men got a principality among the heathens; they that could get a dominion over men's minds by their wits, might soon prevail to acquire a sovereignty over their bodies. A twofold condition was propounded with Sphinx's enigmas; to him that could not expound them, death; to him that could, a kingdom. Secondly, the Œdipus that undertakes to clear these riddles, invented by the wit of man, is the Christian.

Man hath his knowledge from nature, the Christian his from grace; the one is from earth, the other from heaven. Religion is the science of souls, whereof God is the Teacher. Œdipus had lame feet, but an intelligent head: the Christian is slow in the pursuit of worldly things, but for spiritual things he hath a clear understanding. What can the naturian ask him, which he cannot answer? What is the most glorious thing of the world? Humility. What is the richest? Charity. What is the wisest? Seasonable silence. What is the subtlest? Simplicity. What is the strongest? Patience. What is the freest? The service of God. What is the best builder? Faith; for that lays the foundation in heaven. What is that which can reduce things to nothing? Repentance; for that can take away sin, as if it had never been. As Œdipus overcame

Sphinx, put him to death, and laid his carcass upon the back of an ass: so the knowledge of Christ vanquisheth all natural wisdom, resolving all her subtle questions with divine answers; then puts her to death, nails her to the cross of Christ, mortifies her by repentance, lays her carcass upon an ass, shows her the folly of her former condition, exposeth her to her own contempt: so she willingly yields herself captive to the conquering knowledge of Christ.

But all this while what was the riddle of Sphinx to Œdipus? What is that creature, which immediately after his birth goes upon four legs, next upon two, then upon three, and last of all upon four legs again? He answered, Man: which in his very infancy crawls upon all four; not long after stands upright upon two feet; growing old, he leans upon a staff, and with it supports himself, so that he may seem to have three feet; at last, in his decrepit years, his strength so fails him, that he falls grovelling again upon all four, and lies bedrid. There might be another riddle propounded to us, and that a more mystical one. What is that creature, which was condemned ere he was born; which must be twice born ere he can live; which gets life by dying; which lives by the life of another, not by his own; which cures all his own diseases with his own tears; which is of mean and poor parentage, yet heir to a crown; which hath his body on earth and his Head in heaven; which can see an object that is invisible; which though he be dust and ashes, is partaker of a nature that cannot die, even of God himself? As the former was a man, so this is a Christian. First, condemned ere he was born; because he was conceived in sin, Psal. li. 5: nor only so; but he sinned in Adam, and for that was justly condemned in the beginning of the world, though he did not till toward the end of the world. Secondly, born twice ere he can live: for "Except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," John iii. 3, 5. If he be not regenerate, he does not live in grace, without which there is nothing but death; for otherwise he is dead in sins and trespasses. Thirdly, he gets life by dying; by mortification and dying unto sin, he gets vivification and living unto grace; yea, and by the death of his body, he gets the life of glory. Fourthly, he lives by another's life, not by his own. "Now live not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life I live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God," Gal. ii. 20. Fifthly, he cures all his diseases by his own tears; sins are our sicknesses; and the medicine that heals us of them, is the tears of repentance. Sixthly, he is of poor parentage, yet heir to a crown. We are the children of sinful progenitors by nature, yet by adoption in grace the inheritors of a kingdom. Being "joint-heirs with Christ," Rom. viii. 17, it is his Father's will to give us the kingdom, Luke xii. 32. Seventhly, he is a member of that body on earth, whose Head is in heaven: so we are members of the church militant below, yet Christ is our Head triumphant above. Eighthly, he can see an object that is invisible; so it is expressly testified of Moses, Heb. xi. 27. Ninthly, he is made partaker of a nature that cannot die, though he be dust and ashes. We are mortal in the condition of our bodies, yet "partakers of the Divine nature" by union with Christ, 2 Pet. i. 4. This is indeed a riddle to flesh and blood, a paradox to mere human capacity; the best candle in the philosopher's study could not give light enough to resolve it. Only the Christian knows it, and feels it, and really verifies it. Such blessedness comes by the knowledge of Jesus Christ.

"Of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." Thus far I have spoken generally, now particularly. The

object of our knowledge is the Son of God; who is here set forth by four attributes. First, Lord. Secondly, Saviour. Thirdly, Jesus. Fourthly, Christ. The first a name of dominion and greatness; the next, of compassion and goodness; the third, the name of his nature, Jesus; the last, the name of his office, Christ. For the two latter, because I have elsewhere treated of them, and they may seem to be comprised under the two former; (for what is Jesus, but a Saviour? and what is Christ, but Anointed? Now he was anointed to be a Priest, a Prophet, and a King; to all which, Lord is applicable. Aaron was no less, though a priest. My lord Elijah, says Elisha to him; yet Elijah was but a prophet. That it is ascribed to the king, no question; Our lord the king. Every lord is not a king, but every king is a lord;) therefore I reduce the four into two; Lord and Saviour; and in both these relations we must know him, or not look to be saved by him. Not Lord only, without Saviour; there is no comfort in that: not Saviour only, without Lord; there is no manners in that. In the severing of them, we shall either forget his dignity, or our own duty. There is a pronoun that wants upon each of these titles; an emphatical one, and by no means to be omitted; *our*. It is this *master* that does all the good, both in respect of God's honour, and our own happiness. We acknowledge him our Lord; this tends to God's glory: we believe him to be our Saviour; this tends to our own felicity. A Lord ungodly sinners confess him: a Saviour the very devils cannot deny him. Yea, they go further; the Lord, and the Saviour, they both acknowledge him. The Lord, the Lord of lords; an absolute and independent Lord; that hath a dominion over the princes of the earth, and principalities of hell. Kings and emperors are his subjects; at his frown they all tremble: others do not more fear them, than they fear him. With his breath he can dissolve them to dust, and with one word cast them down to torment. By him they hold their crowns, and must put them off when he calls for them. Crowns, and heads too, are at his command. "The Lord said unto my Lord," Psal. cx. 1. The Lord; so far a reprobate may go in his confession. So much honour he will give unto Christ, as to call him, The Lord. But not, My Lord: this he sticks at: for then his obedience and voluntary subjection must come in. The Lord let him be, but not my Lord at any hand. Many shall cry at the last day, Lord, Lord, Matt. vii. 22; but there is no *our* put to it. The Lord he must needs be, but their Lord they cannot say he hath been. So, The Saviour goes easily down with them; "For there is none other name under heaven whereby we must be saved," than Jesus, Acts iv. 12. This the devils know to their vexation, that he hath, and doth, and will save millions, though they be none of that number themselves. *Saviour* they must acknowledge; but *our* they despair of. Indeed profane transgressors would fain, with the substantive noun, join the possessive pronoun, and with Saviour couple *our*; their Saviour they call him, and theirs they would have him. But they separate Lord from Saviour, and so have right to neither. Both these titles belong to the same Person; the Lord and Saviour is but one Christ. Those that God hath joined together, let no man put asunder. Before I come to speak of these titles in special, let me consider two observable things in them. First, the position or order. Secondly, the composition or juncture of them.

1. For order of placing them, Lord is set before Saviour; and with good reason. Let us not think him a titular Lord, that hath some under him, and others above him; but one that commands in chief: Lord paramount certainly. Now such a lord is a

prince; and a prince gives laws, and those laws must be kept. Here let us pause awhile, and consider, have we kept the laws of this Lord? We are his vassals; have we done what he commanded us? No such matter: nay, we have done the contrary; not only passing by observance of the law, but running into contempt of the king, yea, into the crime of high treason. We have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and we have done those things which we ought not to have done. But what! are the laws of this Lord null and void? Are they not obligatory? Yes, as there be rewards promised to the observation, so there be punishments threatened to the transgression of them. Do this and live: do it not, and perish, Gal. iii. 12; Gen. ii. 17: these laws we have not kept, not a man of us; what then should keep us from perishing? If the Lawgiver were flexible, and might be won to remit offences, either by man's entreaty, or his own partiality, there were some hope of escaping that dismal sentence. But this Lord is just, even justice itself; and in justice can bate nothing of the penalty, but will see it executed to the full rigour. In what case are we now? Die we must; who should save us from it? Yes, yet there is comfort; for this Lord is also a Saviour. And well is it for us, that he is a Saviour; how desperate were our estate otherwise! But Lord, first, that we may know our sins, and what we have deserved by them. This is no slight punishment, not a censure to be bought out with money, nor an imprisonment to be worn out in time: but death; and this not a short one, where a man is not six minutes a dying; but an everlasting one, where a sinner lives a dying for ever: a death not of the body only by some painful violence, but of body and soul too by fiery torments. This is our doom for the breach of the law of our Lord: it is time now to seek about for a Saviour; and blessed be God, we have one whom we look for.

Therefore is Lord placed first, that we might see in what need we stand of a Saviour: and it is a right method, that humiliation should go before comfort, and sorrow prepare us for joy. Among all Christ's converts, none loved him dearer than Mary; the more bitter her penance, the sweeter her forgiveness; and the greater her pardon, the stronger her affection. Luke vii. 47. Thus the law of our Lord prepares us for the gospel of our Saviour. The law is a glass that shows us our sin, and the gospel is a glass that shows us our remedy. There we find Christ a Lord, here we find him a Saviour; there pronouncing death against us, here suffering death for us; there presenting himself in his glorious majesty, here in his gracious mercy; there as a Lion condemning the world for sin, here the Lamb of God taking away the sins of the world, John i. 29. "Consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver," Psal. l. 22: there a terrible Lord. "This is a faithful saying, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," 1 Tim. i. 15: there a merciful Saviour.

Thus this title, Lord, calls upon us for repentance; as we call upon this Saviour for forgiveness. Methinks I see sorrow sitting in the soul, destitute of all comforts; like a sick man, given over by his physicians: they have ministered divers medicines to him, and made many experiments upon him; and finding all to fail of wished effect, they even leave him to nature, to live or die at her pleasure. Such is the case of a humble and broken-hearted soul, that hath received the sentence of death in herself, and is condemned by the verdict of her own conscience. She looks to her riches, and finds that those bribes will not be taken; to her friends, and

perceives them to be in as much danger as herself; to her old companions, carnal delights, the common refuge of melancholy sinners, and sees them running from her affrighted, like rats from a house on fire. Pleasure, like Orpah, kisses indeed, but parts: only grief, like Ruth, weeps for her, and tarries with her. No joy will down, till there be hope of a pardon. During all this humiliation, and mourning, and running down of tears, Christ shows himself a severe Lord, exacting his debts to the full. But when she is thoroughly mortified, then he changeth his form and presents himself a Saviour to her; bids her look upon his cross, and there find all her debts discharged, and herself acquitted for ever. Woe to them that come to the sight of their sins without this Saviour! for that is as if a man should waken out of a melancholy dream in the dark; there is no spark of comfort. "But I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you," John xvi. 22. In the coming of Jesus there is joy, unspeakable joy: which neither the world can give, nor can the world take away.

2. For the union or conjunction of them; both are combined in one Person. In Lord, greatness; in Saviour, goodness: both make but one Christ. Will to save, because a Saviour; power to save, because the Lord; both are concentrated in one Jesus: there may be a Lord, which is no Saviour; but there can be no Saviour, which is not Lord. Power without will, is an unkind ableness; will without power, is an unable kindness. Both together in one man, is for the honour of him that hath them, and for the good of such as need them. If Christ had not been Lord, he could not; if not a Saviour, he would not, have satisfied for our sins. If not Lord, and such a Lord as was the Lord of lords, even the infinite God, he could not have paid a ransom that must be of infinite value, or else not pass current for our redemption. If not a merciful Saviour, he would never have submitted himself to such a condition, as to take on him our nature; and in that nature to suffer such torments as mere man could not have endured. It was a wonder that he made us; more, that he made himself for us; but most of all, that he unmade himself, that he died to save us. He not only made man for himself, but he made himself man for man. The Maker was Lord, the creature man; two natures are united in one Person; so the Son of God is Lord and Saviour. In the one nature, we contemplate his dominion; in assuming the other, his compassion; in both we find our salvation.

As Lord, he could not die for us; as man he might: as man, he could not satisfy for us; as God he might: he must be both, or no Saviour. In his death, his Lordship concealed itself: many of his servants, the martyrs, seemed to have more cheerfulness in their death, than their Lord had in his. They were known to be men, therefore had the strength of God: Christ was God, therefore left like a man. They died more than men, because they were filled with the power and Spirit of God: Christ declared himself to be God, in doing the works of omnipotent God; therefore he was also declared to be man, in the weaknesses of men. Those streams of grace were always at high tide in him; yet he seemed both partly to his own sense, and to the senses of the beholders, a forlorn creature. This caused him to cry, "My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Matt. xxvii. 46. Natural affection in him cried, My God; sensible, Why hast thou forsaken me? Not that these two, Lord and Saviour, could then part; God and man could not be sundered. In the extremity of all his sorrows, his manhood did not lose the union, but the vision of his Godhead.

His soul, by the union of the Deity, had a glorious state; though, by the union with his body, it was full of anguish. As there is no contrariety between the hate of one thing and love of another, between the ignorance of one thing and knowledge of another; so nor between the sorrow of Christ's soul for our sin, and the joy of that soul in the vision of God. Our sins upon Christ, were not in their proper element, therefore he felt them in their weight and heaviness: as the shadow of the earth obscures the moon, so did the world's sin darken Christ's soul.

When he was to act the Saviour's part, he did not lay by the Lord quite; for the manhood could never have borne those unspeakable torments, but for the supportation of the Deity. But the Lord did hide himself from the manhood, during the sad time of that expiation; so that it might say with Mary, "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him," John xx. 13, nor what is become of him. They were then, and are still, united in one person: distinguish them we may, divided they can never be. Neither must we fix our minds upon Lord only, without Saviour; which is the way to desperation; nor upon Saviour only, without Lord; which is the way to presumption. Dejected sinners think upon Lord only, and leave out Saviour; profane sinners think upon Saviour only, and forget their Lord. The one without the other, is but half a Jesus; and we must rely upon a whole one, that is both Lord and Saviour. I am he that for mine own sake will blot out thy transgressions, Isa. xliii. 25. Though for no one's sake, for nothing's sake, as thou art a just Lord; yet for thine own sake thou forgiveest sins, as thou art a merciful Saviour. This Lord as he is God, satisfied himself in that capacity as he is man, for the sins of all believers. Therefore, Lord, do not so remember thyself to be a Lord over me, as to forget to be a Saviour unto me; nor let me so remember thee to be a Saviour unto me, as to forget that thou art Lord over me. But as thou art both these in one infinite Person, so be thou both to my soul, in thy mighty power, and merciful salvation. I come to the particulars.

1. He is Lord, not only as God, but as Christ. All power is given unto him in heaven and earth, Matt. xxviii. 18. Kings may talk of their large territories, but what command have they in heaven? Christ is Lord of heaven too. In heaven and earth he is Lord, but hath he no power on the sea? Is that privileged or exempted from his dominion? No, he doth what he pleaseth in heaven, earth, in the seas, and all deep places, Psal. cxxxv. 6. Princes are potent, but yet they cannot do all they would; this Lord can. Heaven, earth, and sea are his; but is hell or the grave excluded? No, he hath "the keys of hell and of death," Rev. i. 18; even thither his Lordship reaches. To him must all knees bow, and all tongues confess that he is the Lord, Phil. ii. 10, 11. All must confess it, either from the depth of their heart, or from the heart of the deep. Saints and angels do, in the heights; devils and reprobates do, in the depths; and shall mortal sinners in the middle way deny it? No, acknowledged he will be, either on earth with comfort, or in hell with torments; here cheerfully, or there upon the rack; either they shall joyfully sing out, or painfully roar out, this confession. He is the Lamb of God, the Saviour of the world; yet take heed of angering him: for if his wrath be kindled, yea, but a little, how soon do men perish! But blessed are they that trust in him, Psal. ii. 12. If he be angered, there is no escaping his hands as he is a Lord, but by running into his arms as he is a Saviour. "Our God is a consuming fire," Heb. xii. 29: as he is a wall of fire

about them that serve him, so a consuming fire against those that provoke him. When he is angry, all our days are gone, Psal. xc. 9. With one word, Let there be a world; nay, with one thought of this Lord cast toward it, (for his speaking in the creation was but a thinking,) he made all of nothing; and can he not reduce all to nothing if he will? Is not the recalling of that word, the withdrawing of that thought, in the sequestering of his providence, enough to annihilate them? Shall ants, and bees, or lions, contest with their Maker? Shall any one rational ant, (the wisest philosopher is no more,) or any roaring lion, (the most ambitious and devouring prince is no more,) or any hive of bees, (the most politic councils and parliaments are no more in respect of him,) presume to stand without him? What are armies on the land, if this Lord be not their General? What are navies on the sea, if he be not their Pilot?

When this Lord is angry, he shall not need to hiss or whisper for the fly, for the wasp, or hornet. Nay, he shall not need to whisper for them abroad, or to call in foreign enemies; for we have locusts enough at home, swarms of caterpillars to devour us. Nay, we will devour one another when he stirs us up. As this Lord is impartial, so are his judgments; there is no respect of persons with him, whether in his favour or his anger. He will wound the hairy scalp of him that goeth on in his wickedness, Psal. lxxviii. 21. Be it bald or hairy, it is no defence against the blows of the Almighty. No head-piece, but "the helmet of salvation," Eph. vi. 17, can ward his blows. He can break the covered as well as the naked head; wound the armed as easily as the bare breast. The mitred, and the turbaned, and the crowned head, that lifts up itself against Christ, lies as open to his judgments, as his that must not put on his hat, as his that hath not a hat to put on. We know by woeful and bleeding experience, that he can call up damps and vapours from below, and pour down putrid delusions from above, and bid them meet and condense into a plague; and that such a plague, as shall not only be incurable, but unquestionable; both inexorable, and indisputable. It shall not only not admit a remedy when it is come, but not give a reason how it did come. The cause could not be found out by the most learned physicians, the effect was felt by the labouring patients. Oh happy they that found him their Saviour! that though their bodies were cut off by burning fevers from the earth, yet their souls might escape the burning flames of hell.

Lord, therefore, let us acknowledge him; for it will go wrong with us, when we shall be driven to complain, "Other lords have had dominion over us," Isa. xxvi. 13. Tyrants are cruel lords, and woe to the people under such an authority! for there it is crime enough to be innocent, where the tyrant is pleased to interpret innocence for a crime. Sins are worse lords within us, than those tyrants without us; our goods, possessions, and lives are under the command of those oppressors; but sin is a usurper over our souls. Satan is a bloody lord: he is so far from mercy in killing, that he would not give a man leave to pray for mercy ere he must die. These be cursed dominions: from such lords this Lord of heaven and earth evermore deliver us.

2. Saviour; this comes well after Lord; there is small comfort in that title, till Saviour be put to it. There is no Saviour but he, Isa. xlv. 21; Hos. xiii. 4: no name but Jesus carries any salvation in it. The prophets foretold it, the evangelists demonstrate it, the apostles preached it, the better part of the world received it, and all they believe it that shall be saved. He came to save, and what did he refuse to do or

suffer, that he might save? "Made all things to all men," 1 Cor. ix. 22, was more true of the Master than of the servant. Made poor for the poor, rich for the rich. Lazarus so poor that he begged crumbs; Christ, then in his poverty, sent him to heaven by his angels. Zaccheus rich, and gave the poor a large contribution; Christ was richer than he, and gave him salvation, Luke xix. 9. Made hungry for the hungry, and thirsty for the thirsty. The disciples were hungry in the field, their Lord in the wilderness. The Samaritan woman thirsts, and Christ thirsts too: they both meet at Jacob's well. The apostles feast, and he feasts with them. Mary weeps for the loss of her brother, and Jesus weeps too. He is the door to them that would enter, the way to them that would walk, a light to them that would come out of darkness, bread to the hungry soul, and wine to the thirsty. All his actions showed him to be a Saviour, his passion proved it. When he first shone forth into the world, like the sun at his first rising, he drew all eyes after him; his miraculous cures drew patients, his Divine oracles drew auditors; both together drew the admiring multitude after him by troops. They followed him as a Saviour, through deserts and mountains, over land and seas. All his actions were so many characters, out of which the simplest capacity might spell a Saviour. But at his death, he wrote a letter of love to us in his own blood: the cross being the paper, the spear his pen, his blood the ink, and the contents, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," 1 Tim. i. 15. He came into the world to save sinners; yea, and he went out of the world to save sinners. His coming in was but the purpose; his going out, and so going out, was the performance. He meant it when he came in, but he despatched it as he went out. All his life was a furtherance, but his death did the deed; that saved us. His resurrection crowned the deed; he "was raised again for our justification," Rom. iv. 25. His ascension crowned that; for then "he led captivity captive," Eph. iv. 8. His glory and session in heaven crowns all; and so crowns him, that all crowns are cast down before him, Rev. iv. 10. Thus his death was the crown of his enterprise, his resurrection the crown of his death, his ascension the crown of his resurrection, his sitting at the right hand of his Father the crown of his ascension; and all these make up a crown for us: through all these journals we may read him Jesus, and that Jesus—

3. Our Saviour; which is the next point. Our, both Lord and Saviour, and both together. It was not so in the old style: in the law it was *Dominus Deus*, The Lord our God, Exod. xx. 2; but Christ hath changed it, and made it in the new style, *Dominus Salvator*, The Lord our Saviour. Saviour stands instead of God; to show that in Christ God is become Saviour. It mends the term, and it mends the matter much, that a just God is become a merciful Saviour. We are bound to Christ, for making such an alteration in God's style, to our unspeakable comfort. Yet were all this nothing (something indeed in itself, but nothing) to us, without this *noster*. This is that pronoun, which like a pipe derives the water of life out of that infinite fountain into our particular cisterns, that appropriates both Lord and Saviour to us; that hand of faith, which with a holy violence seizeth upon Christ, as he lies in the bosom of his Father, and challengeth him for our own: He is my Saviour. Without this *our*, Lord, and Saviour, and all, were lost to us, and we no better than if they had never been. There is no true and full comfort but in heaven, no comfort in heaven without God, no comfort in God without a Saviour, no comfort in a Saviour without *our*; if he be not our Saviour, comfort is far from

us. This gives us a propriety and interest in them all; and not only in them, but in all theirs. For if this Lord and Saviour be ours, he is our Brother; if so, then are we the sons of his Father; and if that, his Father's estate cannot be kept from us: every one must have a child's part; and this part we shall have, yea, and more than a part: "Son, all that I have is thine," Luke xv. 31. If he be ours, all that he hath is ours; and what can we wish more, than all that God hath, all that ever he is worth? The most vast desire will be satisfied with this. If he be a Lord, and a Saviour too, then what the Saviour hath got the Lord will keep. No man can pluck my sheep out of my hands, John x. 28. David redeemed a sheep out of the paw of the lion; yet that sheep might be lost again; there was a time, when David might be absent, when David must be asleep. But Christ is never absent from us; "I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," Matt. xxviii. 20: never asleep; the Keeper of Israel never slumbers, Psal. cxxi. 4. That roaring lion may go about, and seek; but he can never find either time or place, when Christ is absent from his: as he cannot overcome Christ, so he cannot separate us from Christ. Which may well raise up our dejected spirits from the deepest consternation, to a holy cheerfulness and peaceful alacrity; that nothing can separate us from the love of God in Jesus Christ our Lord, Rom. viii. 39. As he is Jesus, to save what was lost; so he is Lord also, to keep what is saved.

4. This makes to our everlasting comfort; for as Lord and Saviour are united in one person, so in no action they are divided. So that the Lord does nothing to his church without the Saviour, nor the Saviour without the Lord. We are not put upon the law whereof the Lord is Judge, without liberty to appeal unto the chancery, where the Saviour sits Judge. We may fall into bitter afflictions, and into the sorrow of all sorrows, the perturbation of conscience; and think that this is the Lord's doing only, as if the Saviour had no hand in it: but these two never part. Divers men may do divers things, but one person can do no action without himself. Christ is Lord of all that thou hast or art; and the proprietary may do what he will with his own; give, or let, or set, or sell. So thy disconsolate heart may suspect, that he hath sold thee to sin, to sadness, to sickness, to error; which are the Midianite merchants that buy up our Josephs, our souls. But this Saviour will never so devest his dominion, or deface his lordship, as not to reserve a power and will in himself to redeem thee, if thou wouldst be redeemed. Our Lord may lend us out, and that even to Satan for a while; who will put us to drudgery enough, and press us to his own wars, to fight against our friends and allies; as he hires soldiers out of England unto the Romish party, to fight against their own country, and (which is worse) sometimes against their own conscience. Thus Paul was lent out to the scribes and Pharisees, to serve them in their persecutions; wherein he pursued those members of Christ to the death, for whom afterwards he willingly lost his life: so our Lord may lend us out. He may let us out for a time, to those that will use us as farmers do their grounds; plough us, and harrow us, and get the heart out of us, by their injuries and oppressions; and reserve himself but a little rent, a little glory in our patience. Thus he let out Job, to all the losses and crosses, to all the sores and sorrows, that Satan could bring upon him: so our Lord may let us out. He may mortgage us to a long sickness, that will drink up our blood, and waste our marrow; or to a shorter but sharper extremity. Either to a three years' famine, or to a three months' invasive

hostility, or to a three days' pestilence: thus he mortgaged David and Hezekiah, two kings and saints: so he may mortgage us out. Our Lord may lease us out for certain years, almost all the time we have in this world; and reserve himself only a last year, a last day, a last hour; suffer us to continue in unrepented sins, till we come to our death-beds, and then reclaim us. Thus he did lease out that thief till he came to the very cross; and then Satan's time in him was expired, and Christ's reversion came in: so our Lord may lease us out. But howsoever he may seem to make over his present estate, he will not sell reversions; though we have long been sinners, he will not sell his future title to us. Whosoever we shall grow due to him, by a new and true repentance, he will challenge his own, and reassume us into his favour, and re-enter us into his revenue. Our Lord will not part with us, our Saviour will not lose us, nor shall we lose him for ever.

This he hath done for us, but now is there nothing to be done for him? Doth he require no duty at our hands? Yes, if he be our Lord, we have cause to fear him, Mal. i. 6; if our Saviour, we are bound to love him, 1 Cor. xvi. 22. Yea, we must do both, and in both respects; love him as our Lord, Psal. cxvi. 1, and fear him as our Saviour. So Peter professed to love him, and by that very name; "Lord, thou knowest that I love thee," John xxi. 15. He is to be feared, even as a Saviour; "There is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared," Psal. cxxx. 4. Though thy friend be never so kind and loving, and apt to remit offences; yet thou hast no ingenuous nature in thee, if thou dost not fear to displease him. There is a love that casteth out fear, and there is a fear that casteth out love. Hearty love banisheth all base fear, and servile fear will be without hearty love. These duties I might more liberally commend to your practice, but I come to that which I take to be more apposite. These two titles more especially exact two other offices from us, service and faith. If he be our Lord, we are bound to serve him; if our Saviour, to believe in him. Whom will a man serve sooner than a gracious Lord and Master? whom will he trust sooner than a mighty Friend and Saviour? As he is our Lord, then, he looks for our obedience; as our Saviour, he deserves our confidence. He is both our Saviour, merciful to save us; and our Lord, just to rule us.

1. Obedience must be given to this Lord; which he respects more than sacrifice; Because, saith Gregory, in victims the flesh of others, in obedience our own will, is sacrificed. Bethany is said to signify the house of obedience; there dwelt Mary, and Martha, and Lazarus, the brother and his two sisters. By Lazarus we may understand humble devotion, by Martha charitable works, and by Mary penitent tears: but all these must dwell in Bethany, in obedience, or else Christ will not come unto them, nor shall they come unto Christ. Humility, diligence, and repentance must keep in Bethany, and not look to be accepted without obedience. There Christ loves them all, John xi. 5; out of that place it is to be doubted that they shall not find such a gracious respect from him. Right obedience doth not regard what is commanded; but contents itself with this, because it is commanded. David was dumb, because the Lord did it, Psal. xxxix. 9; so let there be no dispute, because the Lord bade it. No grumbling at hard precepts, when we know the commander. He that would rather have the command suited to the pleasure of his obedience, than conform his obedience to the pleasure of the commander, shows himself more a lord than a servant. So Solon being asked whether he had given the Athenians the best

laws; answered, Yea, the best of them that they would admit. When we look that the Lord should observe our humours in his injunctions, rather than we yield to his will in our pliability, do we call this obedience? No, but, "My heart is ready," says David. He is the better servant, says Bernard, who shows himself ready before the command, than he who sets himself to obey after the command. The same father sets down this for a rule: In difficult precepts, the obedience is more acceptable than the neglect is damnable; but in light commands, the omission is more damnable than the performance could be acceptable. We have a saying, He is unfit to be a master that hath not first learned to serve. Some think they know the art of obedience without any direction, and will undertake to teach, rather than to learn. But Christ himself was made obedient, before he was advanced to the honour of exaltation, Phil. ii. 8, 9. Though he were a Son, he became a servant, Heb. v. 8.

Our service is required; for if there be none to serve him, where is his lordship? But he hath many; even kings and princes have thought it their greatest honour to be this Lord's servants, and valued this title above their crowns. Christian III., the most Christian king of Denmark, always confessed his sins to one of Christ's ministers on his bended knees; and without regard to matter of state or sovereignty, desired absolution in all humility: at which the preciser spirits of that reformed church stormed: What! no difference betwixt a king and a subject? Will he bring in popery again by his own example? He unmoved replies, that he owed this honour to God, and he would duly pay it: that he must forget himself to be a king, when he comes before the King of kings; that he presented himself, not as a princely commander, but as a miserable sinner; and was absolved, not of man, but of God. The fear of popery must not supplant piety: we ply our prayers, though we do it without beads; instead of a superstitious bead, we let fall a tear. We relieve the poor with our goods, though we abhor the opinion of merits. We come into the temple with reverence and devotion, though not with a ridiculous gesture and superstition. We have our public and personal fasts, wherein we abstain from all sustenance: not as they, who refrain from flesh, and feed on junkets, wherewith their own flesh is more pampered: what is this, but (as it were) to cheat God Almighty? We preserve chastity, though we honour matrimony. They are likely to be more honest men that have wives, than they that without wedlock have their choice of harlots. Blessed be God, we are freed from the papal tyranny, but not from the exercise of virtue. They that live among us otherwise, have shaken off the pope's cords and put on the devil's fetters. Our Saviour then hath not privileged us from obedience to our Lord: nay, by this we know him to be our Saviour, if, as to our Lord, we give him all our service.

2. Our Saviour requires faith; he was therefore sent, that we should believe in him, John iii. 16. As Alexander used to say of his two friends, Craterus and Hephæstion, that Hephæstion loved Alexander, and Craterus loved the king, yet they were both but one man; so obedience gives respect to our Lord, and faith gives respect to our Saviour, yet both look to one and the same Christ. This is the tenure we hold him by, faith; and without this tenure, he is no Saviour of ours. His tenure of us is manifold, ours of him but single. We are his divers ways: by creation, his workmanship, because he made us; by redemption, his purchase, because he bought us; by vocation, his family, because he hath admitted us;

by sanctification, his inheritance, because he possesseth us; by glorification, we shall be of his court, because he will crown us; every way his. He is but one way ours, only by faith. This being then our tenure, and (as St. Paul calls it) our evidence, Heb. xi. 1, it becometh us to look well unto it. What doth our blessed Saviour require of us, for all his infinite favour to us; for all his blood, and pangs, and torment, to redeem us; for all his merits to enrich us; for all his graces to adorn and honour us; for all his glory, wherewith he purposeth to crown us? What does he ask at our hands? No more but to believe on him. It is a very easy request: we can do little, if we cannot put our trust in him, whom we have found so good unto us. It is a duty, which, as Chrysostom observes, naked poverty, despised mediocrity, unlearned simplicity, can all alike easily fulfil. Here is no wearying of the bones with labour, nor breaking of the brains with study, nor distraction of the mind with difficulty, nor emptying the purse of money; no more but only believe. Thou needest not spend thy days in travel by land or sea; as men do to the West Indies for gold, and to the East for spices. What is required of thee and for thee, is within thee: with the heart a man believes. God hath laid up the means of thy salvation within thine own bosom; in order that from whence sin proceeds, from thence might be sought the remedy for sin, as one expresses it.

There be some that seek it without them, in their good works; these think they can keep the laws of the Lord, and never be beholden to this Saviour. They would go the old and natural way to work, What shall I do to inherit eternal life? Matt. xix. 16. They would walk, and work, before they be alive. They suppose they shall not be welcome, except they come with their cost. They would accept of a pardon, if they might pay for it. But Christ scorns a mercenary beneficence; his gifts are free: he bids thee come and buy without money; or else he says, Thou and thy money perish. Did Christ indent with Zacheus for restitution and alms? or Paul bid the jailer first repent, and do good works, and then believe? I deny not that good works are necessary, as being the fruits of faith, the followers of grace, and the forerunners of glory. But when the strict justice of the Lord shall put them in the balance, they will be found too light: put in faith to them, and that makes them up full weight; for faith's sake they are accepted, not for themselves. It is reported that in times of blind popery, they used to paint doomsday on church walls, and God sitting in judgment, and St. Michael by him, with a pair of scales in his hand, to weigh the souls as they came up. The soul and her good deeds were put in one balance; her sins and evil deeds in the other; but the soul proved far too light. Then was our Lady painted with a great pair of beads, casting them into the light balance, to make up the weight. That was a blasphemous fiction: but indeed, if our good works be put in one scale, and our evil deeds in the other, this latter will much overweigh the former; but here put in faith, and this makes it up; not by its own worth or weight, but because it brings with it Christ, and all his righteousness, and puts in, not the mother's beads, but the Son's merits. This is that faith which makes him our Saviour: and this that Jesus which makes us all acceptable to God the Father, through the sanctification of the Holy Ghost our Comforter.

"To him be glory both now and for ever." Christ is the centre; grace from him, glory to him. Blessings come from him, like so many lines from the centre to the circumference; praises return to

him, like so many lines from the circumference to the centre. The former part of the verse was a benediction from heaven to the earth; this latter, a benediction from earth to heaven. That was a gracious descent, this a glorious ascent; grace comes down, glory goes up. That was a contribution of benefits, this a retribution of thanks. In that appeared Christ's bounty, in this man's duty. Grow in grace; that is God's good will to us. To thee be glory; that is our good will to God. He hath given us all the happiness we have, and we will give him all the honour we can. They are unworthy of any favour, that do not thank their Benefactor. So our apostle begins, and ends: he begins with grace from him, chap. i. 2; he concludes with glory to him. As he is Alpha, the fountain from which our grace springs; so Omega, the sea to which all glory runs. The first, in the course of our blessedness; and the last, in the recourse of our thankfulness. We could never have been, much less have been happy, but by him: he can be never the more glorious for us; yet he takes our gratitude in good part when we give it, because he sees we would give more if we had it.

"To him be glory:" so St. Peter shuts up his Epistle: to him, and him only. Who can but wonder at the superstitious impiety and audacious presumption of the Romanists, in joining another with him? So Bellarmine shuts up his controversial disputes, and Tolet his Commentary upon the Epistle to the Romans, with Praise to the Almighty God, and to his most glorious mother! So Pelerin concludes, Praise to God, and to the mother of God, to Mary always a virgin! If we should argue with them in cold blood; first, did any of the apostles thus conclude their Epistles? Doubtless, they all honoured the Virgin Mary; yet they durst not give her the Divine glory. Our apostle's doctrine is, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God," 1 Pet. iv. 11. To join the mother with the Son, in our prayers and praises, is not to speak like the oracles of God. The apostles did not speak so, and yet they spake the oracles of God. They spake by the Spirit; but by what spirit do they speak, and according to what oracle of God, that divide his glory with another? Secondly, though she were the most excellent and most blessed creature on earth, yet she is but a creature; and no creature must share the glory of the Creator. My glory, saith God, I will not give to another; and if to no other, then not to his own mother. And if he will not give it, nor allow it, how dare we give it, without his allowance? When Christ was born, the angels sung, "Glory to God in the highest;" to his Father above, not to his mother below. Our blessed Saviour, as foreseeing this superstition, and on purpose to prevent this inconvenience, thrice spake home against it. "How is it that ye sought me?" Luke ii. 49; roundly telling her, that she hath forgot herself in prescribing him. To the woman that said, "Blessed is the womb that bare thee," he answered, "Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it," Luke xi. 27, 28. As if he would anticipate her conceit of that external privilege. She is still a blessed creature, but not a goddess in being mother of the Creator. He that doth my Father's will, is my brother, and mother, Matt. xii. 50: there he ranketh her with other believers; his brother in the faith is as dear to him as his mother in the flesh. Thirdly, did the Virgin Mary indite the matter they wrote? did she inspire their minds, or direct their pens? Why, then, to her the glory? We never read that Christ made her a partner in the Deity; or proffered her, as Ahasuerus did Esther, or Herod his daughter-in-law, Mark vi. 23, the half of his kingdom. The whole kingdom of glory is hers,

and the whole glory of the kingdom. But Christ hath another glory, proper to himself, and not communicable to any creature; no saint nor angel must be partner with him in this. Let this show them, how they incur the wrath of the Son by the rivalry of the mother; and therefore leave deifying the mother, and cleave only to the Son.

"To him be glory." In the words, which are generally a retribution of praise, there be six particulars:

1. *What* must be given. Glory: not a slight acknowledgment, but a frank and full payment; the best thing that man can give, and God can receive, glory.

2. *To whom* this glory is due. To him, that is, Christ: not to the holiest or highest creature, but to the Lord and Saviour; and good reason. First, in regard of his bounty: he gives grace, and all good things; therefore deserves thanks and glory. Next, in regard of his former humility: he that stooped so low for us, should be highly advanced by us; so he deserves glory.

3. *From whom* must it come? This, though it be not expressed, is implied; they that receive his grace, should return him glory. We have the one, therefore must not deny the other.

4. *How* must we give it? First, by thankfulness in our hearts, there he sees it; next, by chanting it in our mouths, that men may hear it; and lastly, by expressing it in our lives, that all may behold it.

5. *When* must it be rendered to him? Now, instantly, upon every occasion offered: no action of his must pass us, without stirring up our hearts to give him the glory.

6. *How long* must this endure? For ever: this incense must always burn, to the end of the world, and world without end.

First, *What* is this glory? Some resolve it thus. Glory is a continual proclamation of praise concerning some person. Others say it is a loud rejoicing attended with praise. It is due only to virtue; and when it is cast away upon unworthiness, it is but like sunshine upon a dunghill. Glory gives a second life to man. The honour of good men overlives them, as bad men overlive their honour. Praise is unseemly in the mouth of fools, Eccl. xv. 9; and as ill doth it become the back of fools. There are some that overvalue commendable acts; a fault of excess. Others underrate them, and speak of mountains as of hillocks; a fault of disparagement. It is a good rule, To commend sparingly, to blame still more sparingly. There may be a commendation as much guilty of malice, as another is of flattery. We say of the vulgar or popular mouth, that it is a door without either lock or key; soon opened, but not so easily shut. Their tongue is a continual pump, to fetch up the depth of their heart. I deny not, but all virtue is to be praised, and yet it is dangerous for a man to overhear his own praise. He that could have been well contented without it, may yet be transported with it. It is easy to do without praise, as long as it is withheld; hard not be pleased with it, when it is offered. So Augustine. If goodness deserves praise wheresoever it is, in any creature; then much more in Christ, who had it above measure, who is goodness itself. If we so honour a beam, how much more the sun! If we so esteem of water in the cistern, in what account do we hold the fountain? There may be error, or danger, in praising of men; there can be neither in giving glory to God.

1. A man may be proud of praises; like the sails of a ship, when they are puffed up with the winds. Many had been better men, if they had never heard of their own goodness. Therefore the fig-tree would not be advanced above the trees, lest it should lose

its sweetness. But Christ can never be proud of his glory: all our praises come more short of his merits, than earth can be from heaven in distance. To give him due honour, *quomodo sufficit loquens lingua, cum non sufficit obstupescens conscientia?* how can a speaking-tongue be sufficient, when an amazing and overwhelmed consciousness is not so? as Gregory says.

2. Men may be praised without just cause; the report of worthy acts breeds an admiration in common breasts, and admiration breaks forth into praises. Many a gallant commander hath been famous for brave achievements, by the report of his friends at home, that did service little enough abroad. We have known some reputed very rich, that (every creditor being paid) have not been worth a goat. The pure hypocrite is praised for an honest man; but they that once thoroughly try him, will never again trust him. But in Christ there is cause enough to be praised; he is fairer than all the sons of men, than all the sons of God. He is never the better for our honour; we are the better for his. Our praises may show bad men good, or make good men bad. They that are wicked sinners may pass for honest saints, through our commendation; and through our commendation, they that have good parts in them may be puffed up with pride. We may magnify men that are desertless, or extol others till they become desertless; and so by the one occasion their shame, and by the other our own sin. There is no fear of either, in giving glory to Christ.

3. We may praise men in flattery: so the applauding of the hospitable householder, is the parasite's grace before dinner. Some have their common-places of adulation, which they study over instead of their prayers. Some observe the inclination and humour of their patron, and flatter him in that most wherein he thinks himself best. The arch-flatterer of a man is his own self; him they follow as close, as the shadow does the body. This is the way to catch rich fools, not much unlike that odd device of catching dotterels. Others will flatter a man in that, wherein he is most conscious of his own defect; as to persuade a prodigal to the opinion of his thriftiness; which is as if they should tell a cripple, that he goes very straight. They entitle him to that he knows he hath not. Yet there are others that praise men to their ruin; so unseasonably do they honour them, that they irritate contradiction, and procure scorn; for such is the nature of envy, to fret and storm at another's glory. He that praiseth his friend aloud, it shall be to him no better than a curse, says the proverb. Thus you see, that in the praises of men there may be flattery, or malice; which is a sin to the praiser, a prejudice to the praised. None of these are incident to Christ; he cannot be flattered: no praises are hyperboles, where infinite goodness is the subject. For all the glory we give him, he cannot think the better of himself, he may think the better of us. Nor can our praises do him any prejudice, for he fears no rivals. None of the weaknesses incident to men who are praised can occur to God; therefore let us praise him, and spare not. Our mouth may run over with the praises of men, of Christ's it can never be full enough.

4. Man may be praised for that which is not his; as if we should honour the groom for a lord, because he rides upon his lord's horse. Nothing is commendable in any man, but that which is given him, and so given that it cannot be taken away. Our noble blood which we had from our progenitors, may be attained in ourselves. Our riches are called the goods of fortune; and it is a strange fortune, if they tarry with us. Beauty is a spoil for sickness, strength for old age, life itself for death. Thou hast fair

lands; yet the earth thou treadest upon, shall tread upon thee. "Him that escapeth the sword of Hazaël shall Jelu slay; and him that escapeth the sword of Jelu shall Elisha slay," 1 Kings xix. 17; but him that escapeth them all shall death slay. What is more foolish, than to praise in a man what does not belong to him? We have nothing which we can call our own, but our sins; and who will commend us for that, wherein we justly condemn ourselves? But we need not fear to praise Christ; for he hath nothing but that which is properly his own. Who hath given him aught? For of him, and through him, are all things: to him be glory, Rom. xi. 35, 36. That very glory we give him, was his own before; he hath it, we do but acknowledge it. The heart that wisheth it, is his; the lips that speak it, are his; the soul and body that express it, are his: Ye are not your own; but glorify God in your body and spirit, for they are God's, 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20. We do but bring him clusters of his own vine. Indeed, time was when he received something from us, which never was his own; but most certain, he was little beholden to us for it. He took our griefs, and bore our sorrows, Isa. liii. 4; he took them, but we know they were not worth the taking. He accepted our burden, but the bearing of it cost him his life. Thus he did both take the sins and take away the sins of the world, John i. 29. When we transfer them upon his cross, he owns them still; and to acquit us, interposeth himself to that infinite justice: as if he said unto his Father, These sins are not theirs now, but mine. Thus he hath something of ours, which was not his own, for he had no sin of his own: if he had had, what should he have done with ours? But there is no good thing which is not his own; and we give him but his own, when we give him glory. Glory therefore be to him: to him, as our Lord, the highest; to him, as our Saviour, the sweetest. Glory is only fit for him, and he only is fit for glory. If we place this Divine glory any where else, we place it amiss: in peer or prince, we are wrong; in saint or angel, we are not right: it does not like the *ubi*, and will not tarry. Glory and honour know him for their own centre; and will never be quiet, till they come to the throne of Christ.

This makes to their just condemnation that despise Christ; that instead of glory, return him contempt. "Them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed," 1 Sam. ii. 30. But be there any such despise-Christ? Too many; not only the whole world of pagans, but even some that bear the name of Christians. Wherein stands this contempt, that we may avoid it?

1. In not regarding the knowledge of Christ, nor believing his word. "If I tell you, ye will not believe," Luke xxii. 67. Is it not so still? Our hearers seem attentive all the sermon, till the preacher lights on a point that trenches upon their commodity: then I have observed them to hang down their heads in discontent, to pull their hats in their eyes, to turn over the leaves of their unopened Bibles, or to talk with their pew-fellows; as if the preacher's tongue on a sudden was become a Medusa's head, to turn them all into stones: then they whisper, or perhaps jeer. Is not this to despise Christ? "He that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me," Luke x. 16. Is there any glory to him, without honour to his word? Does any man amongst you think the company honours him, when they will not believe him? Out upon that same golden devil, that Diana of the Ephesians, for it destroys many souls! So we cannot preach against sacrilege, this city's copyhold, but, as if the book of God had no such text in it, you

scorn the preacher. "Ye have robbed me in tithes and offerings," saith God by his prophet Malachi, chap. iii. 8. A text then it hath in evidence, and guilty men are in their own conscience; but here is the resolution of it; though Christ tell you so, yet you will not believe him. And there is a sly schismatic, a corrupt collapsed lawyer, to counsel you, like that unjust steward to his lord's debtors, for a hundred to write down fifty, Luke xvi. 6. But you will find in that dreadful day, when you stand naked and trembling before the great tribunal, that this was to cheat Christ of his propriety, not to give him glory. This is one contempt.

2. In forgetting his benefits. The thought of his blessings is out of our mind as soon as the taste is out of our mouth. The first thing that the devil stole from Eve was her memory. "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat," Gen. ii. 16: this freedom she forgot. "But of the tree of knowledge thou shalt not eat," ver. 17: this prohibition she would not remember. "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits," Psal. ciii. 2. Can we move, and forget him in whom we move? The lepers were no sooner cleansed, but gone: only one of the ten returned with his mite of glory, Luke xvii. 18; the rest turned their backs, and away, without bidding Christ farewell. Such men, when they are hungry, may think themselves beholden to God for victuals; but once full, they forget to give him thanks. This is contempt for glory.

3. In perceiving Christ dishonoured, without once being moved. As the chief priests answered Judas, "What is that to us?" Matt. xxvii. 4; so we hear blasphemers tear Christ, and more than betray, even shed his innocent blood, digging into his side with oaths; yet we say, What is that to us? We might as well say, What is Christ to us? what is heaven to us? or what is salvation to us? Indeed, to us the one cannot be without the other. We shall never have part of his glory in heaven, if we do not take his glory's part upon earth. Curse ye Meroz, because they helped not the Lord in the day of battle, Judg. v. 23. They did not maintain his honour here below, they are cursed and excluded from his honour there above. So Gallio; "If it be a question of words and names, and of your law, look ye to it; for I will be no judge of such matters," Acts xviii. 15. If the business concern words, that concerns Christ, what does it concern us? we will not meddle with it. It is good sleeping in a whole skin; yet he that hath an ulcer, thinks it better sleeping in a broken. "Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee?" Psal. cxxxix. 21. Shall I hear my Saviour abused, and hold my peace? No, Lord, if we do not now stand for thee, we shall never be able at the last day to stand before thee. This is another contempt.

4. Not to be affected with the injuries of his church. O Lord, let them that hate thee, flee before thee; let thine enemies be scattered, Psal. lxxviii. 1. Why, are there any professed enemies to God? Yes, "The kings of the earth set themselves against the Lord," Psal. ii. 2. If they are enemies to his church, they are so to him. What to you, to me also, holds with Christ, whether in good or evil done to his members. He that wilfully wounds my finger, is my foe. If the miseries of our brethren do not move us, we have not all one Head, nor are members of the same body. "Why is this come to pass, that there should be to-day one tribe lacking in Israel?" Judg. xxi. 3. We have been cut off by whole tribes, and the blood of Christ's members hath run about the streets, and fallen like dew upon the fields: if our hearts were not set a bleeding for it, Christ takes it as a contempt done to himself.

5. In despising his servants. Is it not a contempt done to princes, the misusing of their ambassadors? "What are we? your murmurings are not against us, but against the Lord," Exod. xvi. 8. In which expostulation, Moses both condemns them of injustice, for it was not he, but the Lord, that afflicted them; and of presumption, in murmuring against Him that was able to confound them. In the one, he would have them see their wrong; in the other, their danger. As the act came not from him, but from God; so he puts it off to God, from himself: Why murmur ye against the Lord? The opposition which is made to the instruments of God, redounds ever to his person. He holds himself smitten through the sides of his ministers. So hath God incorporated these respects, that our subtlety cannot divide them. Oh how hath this nation lost her glory, in denying honour to the ministers of Christ! It is an offence even to them that are the offence of the Christian world; of whom God might say with holy Job, that he scorned to set them with the dogs of his flock, Job xxx. 1. Down goes the gospel, that the law may rise; the pride of that numerous generation is built upon the ruins of the church. First, those sacrilegious sinners make us poor, and then wonder that we are not rich. I hope they have so much Latin, as to understand that *necessitas cogit ad turpia*, i. e. necessity compels to base things. Learning would have maintenance, or else it is in danger to be mischievous. Where wit and poverty meet, they seldom make up an honest man. This was the ground of that scandalous bill, put up against ministers: by consequence they force us to a scandalous life, and then for a scandalous life they censure us. They throw us into the lions' den, and have not so much mercy, like Darius to Daniel, as to say, God help us, Dan. vi. 16. This is to turn Christ's glory into contempt. There is no city that more prides itself in bounty to ministers, than this; you hold yourselves the best benefactors; but no man of understanding will believe you; especially that observes how you have robbed the church's nest, and stolen away her birds by sacrilege, and then stuck down a feather of your benevolence.

6. Not to fly unto God in our distress; this he takes for a great indignity. Indeed, what can be worse, than to forsake God for Baal, God for Behai, Christ for the world? They forsake the living Fountain, for broken cisterns, Jer. ii. 13. Carnal men will make any shift, rather than trouble God; in their sorrows they never look so high as Christ; some lower respects take up their thoughts. They complain that the wind hath spoiled their fruits, the rain hath drowned their fields, a surfeit hath made them sick, the oppressor hath undone them. This is all they regard; to blame fortune, or curse their enemies, or perhaps to tax themselves of oversight: as if there could be any evil in the city, and God had not done it. The Israelites want bread in the wilderness, and repine, "Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in Egypt," Exod. xvi. 3. And if they must die by famine, whose hand was this? Was it not God, that restrained his creatures from them? We can see God in his immediate judgments, but not in those whose second causes are sensible; yet he holds himself equally interested in all. It is but one hand, though divers instruments, wherewith we are smitten. The water may not lose the name, though it come by channels and pipes from the spring. It is the want of faith, that in visible means, keeps us from seeing Him that is invisible. Job does not cry out on the Sabaeans, Chaldeans, on the wind or fire, that they had undone him; he looks higher, and sees another hand above theirs: "The Lord

hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord." Job i. 21. Affliction is a messenger sent on purpose, to remind us of our Maker: then to forget him, is a manifest contempt. Now every contempt is examined according to the degree of the person against whom it is done. To parents, unnatural; to princes, rebellious; to God, most heinous: this is the highest degree of contempt that can be. In all these respects we sin: the world is full of the contempt of God and his Christ: where then is his glory? If we will not be so kind to him, as to honour his name with glory; yet let us not be so unkind to him, as to soil it with ignominy. The Lord hath contempt too, in store for such: He that sits in heaven will laugh them to scorn, Psal. ii. 4; and mock at their calamity, Prov. i. 26. Were they no less than princes that despise him, he will pour contempt upon princes, Job xii. 21. The first offers honour, 1 Sam. ii. 30: to inflict shame, he is driven to it. It is, "Come, ye blessed of my Father;" but, Go, ye cursed, Matt. xxv. 34, 41, not by my Father, but by your own sins. O, let us give him all glory upon earth, that he may give us his glory in heaven.

Secondly, *To him*. Christ is the best good to us, therefore he requires the best good from us. God could give no better thing to us than Christ, nor can we return a better gift to Christ than glory. It is the reflection of his own beauty; the glass wherein he sees his own face. Though from us it be dim, dull, and imperfect, like the small pieces of a broken looking-glass; yet it is all the representation of his Divine excellency which our love and thankfulness can find out: the highest honour, that either Christ can receive, or man can give, is glory. This is no slight or common acknowledgment; not a glory among the sons of men; but above all, men and angels. God hath given him a name above all names, Phil. ii. 9: so he exalted him; good reason so should we. He expects it; let not us frustrate his expectation. Not that he hungers for it; his beams are not the less bright, because we do not commend their shining. No interposition of our neglect, can put that glorious Sun into an eclipse. Our praising of him is but holding of a candle to the sun, in respect of any addition of light. As Augustine saith, To praise a good man, profits, not him that is praised, but those who praise. Not he, but we are the better by it. It were a silly conceit to imagine of God, that he is greedy of glory; for what good can it do him? But this is all we have to give him, and we must give him this or nothing. What can we render him for all his benefits, but praises to his name? Psal. cxvi. 12, 13. David could find nothing else; if he could, he would not have grudged it. Christ hath deserved this glory at our hands in many dear respects.

1. He gives us all our temporal blessings: what good thing have we, which came not from him? Children, those dear pieces of ourselves, those living and surviving reliques of our bodies and names when we are dead, they are the "heritage of the Lord, and the fruit of the womb is his reward," Psal. cxvii. 3. Honour, that advancing of our heads above the vulgar, is his gift: "I gave thee thy master's house" and crown, 2 Sam. xii. 8. Thou sittest in a high place; who lifted thee up thither? who promoted thee to this honour? "Promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west," Psal. lxxv. 6, but from the Lord. Riches are also his gift. Nature reaches out her hand, and gives us corn, and wine, and oil, and milk; but Christ doth fill the hand of nature, and then doth open the hand of nature, that she may rain down her showers upon us. Industry reaches out her hand to us, and gives us the fruit of

our labours; an estate raised by our endeavours, to ourselves and our posterity after us: but Christ's hand doth guide the hand of industry, as a master directs a child to write. He governs our hand when it sows, and when it waters, and still all the increase is from him. Friends reach out their hands to prefer us; but the hand of Christ supports their hands, that support us. God gave Joseph favour in the eyes of his keeper, Gen. xxxix. 21; and Jacob prayed for his sons, that they might find favour in the eyes of Joseph, Gen. xliii. 14. As we cannot see God here but in a glass; so we cannot receive from him but by reflection, and by instruments. Even casual things come from him: and that which we call fortune here, hath another name above. Friends use to give one another tokens of love, for the renewing of their memories in absence; as a ring with a posy in it. When this you see, remember me. All the blessings of Christ are so many tokens of his love to us; we cannot open our eyes, but we must see those tokens; nay, we cannot shut our eyes, but even the sleep and rest that follows, is a token of his favour: "So he giveth his beloved sleep," Psal. cxlvii. 2. Have we so many tokens, that we forget them all? or rather, Christ in them all? When the charitable man gave his poor godson a lamb for a cade, he was thankful to him, and would duly ask him blessing; but when his stock began to increase, and he had gotten a numerous flock of sheep, he grew so rich and proud, that he scorned to ask his godfather blessing any more. He that could remember his benefactor in one favour, in many slighted him. As we wish there was one statute more, to enforce the keeping of all the rest; so would to God Christ would confer upon us one grace more, which might move us to give him glory for all the other. If we can so pass over these common tokens of his favour, yet there is a ring by which we must needs remember him; a wedding-ring, and that with a posy in it; "This do in remembrance of me," 1 Cor. xi. 25. Let us never see this ring, without remembering the charge that goes with it: it is the seal-ring of our marriage; for shame let us not forget our Husband.

2. He gives us all grace, therefore he merits all glory. Grace in the former part of the verse, that is his donation: glory in the latter part, that is our retribution. What can Christ give us here better than grace? and what can we render him better than glory? The former doth require the latter, but the latter cannot require the former. All our praises, could we sing them in the voice of angels, could not make amends for his least bounty to us. Yea, this very ascription of glory is but the effect of grace; we could not so much as praise him for our blessings unless he did bless us with thankful hearts. "Let your light shine," Matt. v. 16: yet the candle cannot shine, except it be lighted. Our hearts must first take fire at his grace, before our works can shine to his glory: the one is inseparable from the other; if Christ have not glory by us, the grace of Christ is not in us. In the same measure are we gracious, that we desire to make him glorious. If we do but honour him as the world doth, we have no more grace than the world hath. But then have we the grace of saints, when we desire and endeavour to magnify him as do the saints. It is his goodness to sanctify us, and it is our office to glorify him; as the sap in the root maintains the tree, and the tree brings forth and sustains the fruit, and the fruit acknowledges the sap in the root. It is the honour of his grace to us, that gives us the grace to honour him.

3. He gives us glory, therefore it is fit that we should give glory to him. I do not mean only the honour of this world, which is also his gift. As

Herod had not only the glory of a kingdom, but also of great wisdom. A king they knew him before, now they take him for a philosopher, or some excellent orator. Sitting on his throne, they only saw the face of a king; but when he had ended his speech, they thought they heard the voice of a god, Acts xii. 21, 22. Neither had Pharaoh so advanced Joseph, nor Ahasuerus so honoured Mordecai, if they had not been destined to this by the purpose of God. Whosoever be the instrument, it is Christ that giveth the advancement. But this is a glory which he communicates even to reprobates: there is a higher glory reserved for the saints. It is some glory to be a man; his very dominion over the creatures is called an honour, Psal. viii. 6; more glory to be a king; and yet more still to be a Christian, and such a Christian as is a saint. A man hath command over the irrational creatures; the whole nature of them is tamed by him, Jam. iii. 7. A king hath command over men, Rom. xiii. 1, all those rational creatures that be his subjects. A saint hath command over his own lusts and passions; a higher sovereignty than all the rest. Men may have the service of the creatures, kings the service of men, saints have the attendance of angels, Psal. xci. 11: "This honour have all his saints," Psal. cxlix. 9. All this glory doth Christ give us in this world; good reason therefore that we should return glory to him. One good turn asks another: glory requires glory; we cannot in equity do less.

But Christ hath another manner of glory in store for us: it is his pleasure to give us a kingdom, Luke xii. 32. "And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them," John xvii. 22. We have a great glory here, but it is from within: "The king's daughter is all glorious within," Psal. xlv. 13. There, above, it shall be also external and visible; for they shall shine as the stars, Dan. xii. 3. Our very bodies shall be made glorious: they are sown in corruption, but raised in glory, 1 Cor. xv. 43; fashioned like Christ's own glorious body, Phil. iii. 21. He that will give all this glory to us, may well look for glory from us. Alas, what is the glory we give him, in comparison of that he gives us? The glory he gives us is real; that we give him, is but votal. He gives us as great glory as we can wish; we can but wish him the glory which he hath. He gives us as much glory as we are capable of; we cannot be so bountiful to him, for he is infinite. Our wish cannot make him glorious, his will makes us so. His is operative, ours but optative. Ours is in desire, his in performance. The glory we give him is his own, he hath deserved it; we cannot deserve the glory he gives us, but it is only of his own free favour. He needs not give it unto us, we are bound to return it unto him. His is voluntary, ours necessary; we can challenge no glory from him, he may challenge all glory from us. If he gives us none, we cannot blame him of unkindness; if we give him not all, we are guilty of unthankfulness. There is obligation enough in his bounty to us, to bind us to give all glory to him. It becometh well the just to be thankful, Psal. xxxiii. 1; it becomes receivers to praise their benefactors. Our humility and dependence upon God shows itself in this grateful acknowledgment, that 'to Christ we are beholden for all things.' "It is good to sing praises unto our God; it is pleasant; and praise is comely," Psal. cxlvii. 1. It is pleasant to God, and it is good to us; both for procurement of the good we want, and for the continuance of the good we have.

We almost deify the artist that hath made some curious and admirable piece; and if any man hath delivered his country from great dangers, his name

is honoured in our chronicles. Christ hath made the world, that magnificent structure; and made man (as it were) the world's lord and master; and does he not deserve glory? Can we consider the heavens, and not say, "O Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!" Psal. viii. 9. Christ hath delivered us from all our enemies, sin, death, hell, the devil; and made us more than conquerors over them, Rom. viii. 37, that were no less than tyrants over us; and does he not deserve glory? Paul could not speak of this mercy without the subjunction of glory, Gal. i. 5; Eph. iii. 21. When we consider how little good and how much evil we deserve at his hands; when we consider how little evil and how much good we receive at his hands; can we do less than give him glory? Christ's benefits are good seed, but they fall upon barren ground, if they do not prosper to his glory. I gave them corn, wine, and oil, multiplied their silver and gold; but they prepared it for Baal, Hos. ii. 8. There was God and Israel; God the Founder, and Israel the confounder: as she gives his glory to Baal, so will he give away her plenty to famine. Such is our ease; Christ rains down manna; we gather it, and eat it, and scarce ever think from whence we had it. We can easily remember to wish for what we want, but we forget to give thanks for what we have. But one of those ten lepers cleansed returned with thanks, Luke xvii. 17: it is ten to one, if any give glory to God. Luck, or wit, or friend, one thing or other, still lies in our way, and takes up Christ's glory ere it can come at him. Job was so poor that he had not a lamb left to offer in sacrifice; yet even then was he rich, because God had taken them all away in one entire oblation, one holocaust or burnt sacrifice: for the fire that burnt up his sheep is said to come from heaven, and it is called "the fire of God," Job i. 16. Yet after all was gone, and Job had nothing left to offer him, he offered up himself, he did glorify God; Blessed be his name. It is not so with us; we are not so poor; we are not yet brought to the dunghill: *Novum versa est in cineres Troja*, Our state does not lie in dust and ashes; we have wherewithal to glorify Christ. Only there be three letters wanting in our alphabet, which spell the best part of us, cov: these hath the world torn out, or obliterated; if we could put them into their place again, all would be right; the glory of Christ should shine forth most brightly, and in all things should he be honoured. For of him are all things, and for all things to him be glory, Rom. xi. 36.

4. Christ is most lovely, and therefore deserves glory. He is fairer than the sons of men, Psal. xlv. 2. Not as carnal hearts esteem of beauty, by their sense and fancy; so the covetous may think him lovely, because he is rich and bountiful; they wish not the riches of his grace, but to be graced with his riches: as if he were Mammon, the god of gold. If he did proffer riches when he proffers righteousness, Matt. v. 6, they would bring good stomachs, hunger and thirst enough. So the epicure may think him lovely, because he always keeps pleasant cheer in his house: The hunter after a banquet utters the sentiments of praise, not upon one that lives well, but one that feeds him well: so Seneca. If the wine he speaks of were the juice of the grape, he could not want customers. It is the brutish error of men, to think the incomprehensible God like that thing which best pleaseth their sensual appetite. So it is thought, that if the irrational creatures could draw a picture of the Divine nature, they would make their own shape the copy. The Laecedemonians, because they were of a warlike disposition, and given to martial affairs, presented all the statues of their gods armed, like commanders and soldiers. The Egypt-

tians did worse, for they painted the angels black, and the devils white; but it was in favour of their own complexion, because themselves were black. So wealthy worldlings may praise Christ for his riches, and secular kings admire him for his sovereignty, and voluptuous men magnify him for his pleasures. But those are gross and muddy conceptions: a good man would not be so commended. Thus Seneca enjoins: Let it be to you as sad to be praised by the base, as if you were praised for (doing) base things. I dare not altogether consent with the philosopher in that; for men may be good, and yet praised of the evil. It is good to be praised, but still better to be praiseworthy. But the children of faith see Christ's beauty with other eyes; they behold him as the Lord and Giver of life, as the Fountain of all grace, as the perfection of all happiness, as a merciful King that smiles upon humble suitors, as a Lamb that shed his own blood to redeem us, as a glorious Sun of favour and pity, that dries up all the tears of repentance; as the God of peace and comfort, that protects us on earth, and will for ever crown us in heaven. This is another motive to inflame our hearts, with a desire to exalt his glory, and to praise his name, because he is lovely.

5. Lastly, his low humiliation deserves glory. It is the promise of Christ, "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted," Luke xiv. 11; and shall not he himself speed so? This was a sufficient cause of his exaltation, Phil. ii. 9: Humility was the deserving of glory, glory was the reward of humility. As by Christ God brought light out of darkness at the first, 2 Cor. iv. 6, so he will bring glory out of humility at the last. Let us look down a little to his descent, that his rise may appear the more glorious. First, the Person was God, Phil. ii. 6; and there is first mention of that high Majesty, to give the more lustre to this low humility. For a man of mean condition to be humble, is no such hard matter; no great praise, if he be; a great fault, if he be not. But for a King thus to stoop, to rise from the royal throne, and fall upon his knees, 2 Sam. vi. 22: this was great humility. Secondly, the freedom of the action: he was not forced to it, but he humbled himself. Simon of Cyrene was compelled to bear his cross, Matt. xxvii. 32, his neck was humbled under it by constraint: his willingly submitted himself to it. The willingness makes it acceptable; to have done it by compulsion, had been miserable. Thirdly, the depth of his humiliation: in his very assuming of humanity, there was great humility. But more, even to "the form of a servant," Phil. ii. 7: as Abigail to David, 1 Sam. xxv. 41, so Christ to his apostles, even to the washing of the feet of his servants, John xiii. 5. Yea, even "unto death," Phil. ii. 8, which is more. This would stagger the best of us; we love humility in a whole skin. Indeed there was no reason in the world that obedience should be put to death; for death is the wages of disobedience; obedience, in justice, is rewarded with life. Add to all this, that it was "the death of the cross," to which he humbled himself. It was the foulest death of all other; the death of malefactors, and of the worst sort of malefactors. So it was not only the form of a servant, but the death of a malefactor. Nor did he only suffer without pity, but not without scorn; his pain was their sport. This were worse than death to a generous and noble spirit; for if it be so miserable to live with infamy, what is it with infamy to die? This was low enough: yet his body must be laid in the grave, one story lower. Yea, he descended into hell, and lower he could not go. All this for us. We have him now at the lowest, and have kept him all this while in the press; it

is now high time that he should come forth in print.

For his humiliation, let him have his exaltation; for the death of the cross, the glory of the Father. See how God doth advance him, from death to life, from shame to glory, from a death of shame to a life of glory, Phil. ii. 9. He was not raised up like Lazarus, to die again; but being raised up, he "dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him," Rom. vi. 9; nay, he hath full dominion over death. Neither did he rise only to the upper face of the earth, but from the earth; from the depths, to the heights; above the clouds, above the stars, above the heavens, and the heavens of heavens. As he descended into hell, that we might never come thither; so he ascended into heaven, to prepare a place for us, where we had no right (before).

This glory hath God given him, but have we no glory to give him for all this? We, for whom he suffered all those torments, can we be empty of his praises? The angels sang, Glory to God on high, when the God of all glory lay low enough. He was then in the cratch, afterwards on the cross, but now is advanced to the crown. Shall they more honour him in his humility, than we do now in his majesty? they in the lowest, than we in the highest? He "remembered us in our low estate," Psal. cxxxvi. 23; and shall not we remember him in his glory? He hath it there, though we should never give it him here. Yet this most royal Prince looks down from his throne to his footstool, to see which of his servants give him most honour, and what requital they make of his favour. Christ seemed to lose his glory, by hanging on the cross; therefore let us make him a coronet of our praises. We took some from him, shall we not wish some to him again for it? That was his ignominy in the lowest; and shall we not give him glory in the highest in lieu of it? Yes, as it was said of Babylon, "How much she hath glorified herself, so much torment and sorrow give her," Rev. xviii. 7; so look how much torment Christ felt, if it were possible, let us give him so much glory. As there was no sorrow like to his sorrow, so let there be no glory like to his glory. It is he which gives us beauty for ashes, and joy for heaviness; that lifts us up from the dunghill, and sets us among princes; that changeth all our tears into comforts; and at last advanceth us from a vale of miseries, to the mount royal of eternal blessedness. Thus he exalts us, and shall not we exalt him? As he was humbled to the lowest, so let our praises lift him up to the highest. Let us sing his praise on earth, so as our songs may pierce the clouds, and enter into the heavens, and become a pleasant incense to the Lord of hosts; that so the glory which we give him below, may make for our souls to his glory above.

Thirdly, *From whom* must this glory come? But here ariseth a doubt, what verb is to be put here; for there is never a verb in the original: whether *est* (is), or *esto* (let it be); whether an indicative, that so it is, or an optative, that so it may be. The former is by way of gratulation, the other by way of exoptation. Christ now hath glory, saith the one: Let Christ have glory, saith the other. That is the voice of confessors, they acknowledge that all glory is his; this the voice of petitioners, they desire that it may still be given unto him: either is the voice of praisers; they praise Christ, and show that he is most worthy to be praised. To him be glory, which is in the form of a prayer, doth well befit the church militant: There is glory, Rev. v. 12, which is a concession of the fact, is more fit for the church triumphant. It is either a praise, or a wish; gratulatory, or apprecatory; and consists in showing that this

glory is his, or in desiring that it may be, and daily more and more be given him. Either is well; but both are best, for both are most true.

1. This glory then must have a whence. As there is *terminus in quo*, i. e. on whom this glory reflects, and in whom it resides; so there must be *terminus a quo*, i. e. from whence it comes; without an emissive term, there can be no receptive term. Who then should give this glory to Christ? For the angels to do it, is no new thing. From the beginning it was their occupation so to do. "The morning stars sang together," Job xxxviii. 7: and what is their song, but "Holy, holy, holy; the whole earth is full of his glory?" Isa. vi. 3. Nor do they sing this only to God in his own nature, but even to God incarnate. So when the angel had done his sermon, the whole choir begun their anthem, Luke ii. 13. They gave him glory when he was in great humility; the cratch was the last word of the sermon, and yet glory the first word of the song; to show that all that external baseness, which seemed to tend to his disgrace, was but the beginning of his glory. All that appeared beneath disgrace, is pronounced glory above, and so celebrated by the holy angels. No sooner was the speech ended, but as if the word cratch had been their rest, immediately the hymn began. It was an anthem that did properly belong to the sermon, and it was a sermon that did properly require such an anthem. And all this to a Babe in the manger; to a Babe and to a God; for he was both. Such hymns and anthems they still continue in heaven: good cause have they to praise the Lord; but why this honour to Christ? Why do they so rejoice at his birth? "He took not on him the nature of angels," Heb. ii. 16: why do they make such ado about it, when it concerns them not at all? I bring you tidings of joy: To you is born a Saviour, Luke ii. 10, 11: he does not say, To us. Yet they do it, not only upon command, "Let all the angels of God worship him," Heb. i. 6, let the whole host of heaven do him honour; but cheerfully and willingly, in relation to us. They rejoice at our conversion, Luke xv. 7: this is angelical. The devil's manner is to grieve at the good of others. If Christ come to save us, they cry out that he torments them, Mark i. 24: this is diabolical. They, in whose own particular this concerns not, rejoice: they for us, and not we (by good inference) for ourselves? The choir of heaven began the song, but to set us in: we are to bear a part, and the chief part, because the best part of it is ours. They took it up, we are to keep it up, and never to let it go down, or die on our hands; but to sing it after the angels below, that we may sing it with the angels above.

2. Thus we have found out the parties to whom this duty belongs; we are they that must give glory to Christ. As for us men, and for our salvation, he exposed himself to ignominy; so from us men, for our salvation, he expects glory. The whence is from the earth, and men the persons from whom this glory is looked for. I deny not but that God made things for his glory, Prov. xvi. 4; and glory he will have in all things that he hath made. "The heavens declare the glory of God," Psal. xix. 1: and, Praise the Lord, O ye heavens, &c. Psal. cxlviii. 4. How should these praise him? The heavens and stars, the earth and seas, fire and vapours, trees and mountains, have no tongues. Dragons and lions, whales and fishes, ravens and fowls, are called upon to praise God; yet they cannot speak. The former cannot speak, because they have no tongues; the latter have tongues, but they cannot speak. Why are all these creatures said to praise God, and bidden to praise him? They cannot do it but by the appre-

hension and expression of man; it is he that carries the tongue for them all. Therefore after the catalogue and list of the creatures, mustered up to God's praises, man is instantly mentioned; and that in all the kinds and conditions of men, kings, judges, old, young. So in the song of those three holy servants of God, after that copious enumeration of the creatures, summoned to this retribution of glory, man is plentifully brought in: O ye children of men, O ye priests, &c. As if all the rest could do nothing without man; and he were not only their interpreter and vocal orator, to tell their meaning, but (as it were) their priest, to offer up their sacrifice of thankfulness to God; and their lord and master, to whom they owe and do service: by which service of theirs to him, they put him in mind of the service he owes to his Maker. If the heavens declare the glory of God, how do they it, but to the eyes of man, and by the tongue of man, for whom they were made? For what end hath man those two privileges above his fellow-creatures, reason and speech; but that as by the one he may conceive of the great works of God, which the rest cannot, so by the other he may express what he conceives, to the honour of his Creator, which the other do not? He that hath ears, let him hear; and so he that hath a tongue, let him speak. With his own precious blood He hath redeemed us, we have cause to do it; he hath furnished us with reason and language, we have means to do it; and if we do it not, the worst will be our own. For Christ will have it done; if we will not, others shall; yea, we ourselves shall, whether we will or no: if not with Jacob, under a shower of blessings; yet with Achan, under a shower of stones. If not with Mary, in a flood of penitent tears; yet with Julian, in a desperate stream of blood. It is woeful, when Balaam's beast must come to speak to her master; when the very sun that shines upon us, and the earth that bears us, shall condemn our silence; and all the creatures shall be called to give in their testimony, that we have not given Christ the glory.

This is no new exprobration of our unthankfulness, by summoning heaven and earth, rocks and mountains, Dent. xxxii. 1, 3; Isa. i. 2. When the trumpet sounds for the publication of God's glory, even they are called in for auditors. They would express if they could, what we can express if we would, even the glory we owe to our Maker. They shall all be witnesses of God's just quarrel against us, for our prodigious ingratitude, Micah vi. 2. The senseless creatures shall have a voice to cry out against sin; whether it be the oppression of man, or suppression of the glory of God, Hab. ii. 11. The Pharisees murmur; what was the cause of their quarrel? The people would give glory to Christ: this they grudge at, this they could not endure. But Christ chokes their clamorous evils, that if the people should hold their peace, the very stones would speak, Luke xix. 39, 40. And indeed at his delivery into the hand of his enemies, when all his disciples fled away for fear, and his dearest friends durst not acknowledge him, the very stones did then confess him; and that in a language not only extraordinary, but contrary to their solid constitutions, Matt. xxvii. 51. His glory then shall not be hid; for if men hold their peace, the very stones shall speak it. From the mouth of infants he will have it; yea, from the mouth of stones; as God is able to raise children to Abraham of the stones of Jordan, Matt. iii. 9. In the body there be several members, and they have all their offices: the eye sees for all, the ear hears for all, the hand works for all, the foot walks for all: so man is the tongue of the world, whose office is to speak for all. The sun doth his office in giving

light, the stars do theirs in giving influence, the sea his in sending abroad springs, the earth hers in yielding fruits: if man do not discharge his office, in glorifying God for all these benefits, all shall speak against him, because he did not speak for all.

3. The saints have ever been most careful of this duty. Elisha to heal the waters of Jericho, calls for a new cruse, and salt in it, and says, "Thus saith the Lord, I have healed these waters," 2 Kings ii. 20, 21. The cruse shall be theirs, the act his, the power the Lord's. Far was it from the prophet to challenge ought to himself. In dividing the waters of Jordan, he does not say, Where is the power of Elisha? but, "Where is the Lord God of Elijah?" In curing the waters of Jericho, he says not, Thus saith Elisha, but, "Thus saith the Lord." He professes that he can do no more of himself, than that salt, than that cruse; only God works by him. Jericho shall know to whom they owe the blessing, that to him they may return the thanks. Thus careful was St. Peter, when he had cured the cripple, that none of Christ's glory might cleave to his fingers, Acts iii. 12. There be those that would still be filching God's honour; like Herod, that was smitten with worms for his labour, Acts xii. 23. He had a worm of pride within him, which engendered the worms that devoured him. There is nothing that the devil can worse abide, than that glory should be given to Christ; he would fain have it himself. How large a proffer does he make for a little worship! Matt. iv. 9. The angels sing, Glory to God on high; but it is the devil's study, to mar the angels' melody, and to bring in his black *Sonetus*; to pull down glory from on high, quite out of heaven, and to confine it to himself in his own hell. But if he cannot have it himself, yet let man take it: any where he is content to see it bestowed, rather than upon Christ. His first incantation was the false promise of a higher glory, Gen. iii. 5; that same "Ye shall be as gods," is not yet gotten out of the ambitious hearts of men. The popish gloss is not reformed yet; that "Our Lord God the Pope" will not be left out. It is a common text in kings' courts, "I have said, Ye are gods," Psal. lxxxiii. 6; but if the next verse be read by the preacher, "ye shall die like men," yet the glass must first be out, and the sermon done before he comes at it. There will be havoc made of peace, religion, and piety, and all to achieve glory. That which the apostles rent their clothes to put from them, Acts xiv. 14, we would rend our very skins to pluck to us. Let God's glory shift for itself, our honour must be preserved. Nay, we are not content with our own allowance, but we must invade God's propriety; out of our own commons, we break into his enclosure; no glory must serve our turns, but his: as if no honour could satisfy the ambitious subject, but the kingdom; it is nothing to be great at court, he must have the crown. But of all breaches of the eighth commandment, there is none like theft; of all thefts, none like sacrilege; of all sacrileges, none like robbing God of his glory. As his glory is a treasure, which he will not give to another; so the very attempt to rob him of that, is a sin to which he hath seldom granted a pardon.

4. Men are commanded to give this glory: but how can they give it? Giving presupposeth having: we have no glory, how then should we give it? We may as well find fire in the bottom of the sea, or a well of water in the body of the sun, as glory in man. Besides, if honour be in the one that honours, then the less is blessed of the greater; so here the Giver of glory should be more excellent than the receiver. But properly, neither can we give it, nor can God receive it: for both he is so infinitely full of glory, that

no more can be added unto him; and we are quite empty, and have not one drop to give him. Yet both we are said to give, and he to receive; we to give what he hath first given us, and he to receive what before he had in himself. It is his grace planted in our hearts, that brings forth the fruit of glory to his name; and if we have the former, we cannot but give the latter. *Suum simile*—it is natural to grace, to beget the like; for the good pleasure of God, to beget good pleasure towards God. If we think to spin this glory out of our own bowels, and thereof to make a garment of honour for Christ, we are grossly deceived; for he will not accept it, he scorns to wear it. So heretics will undertake to blazon Christ's arms, but the device must be their own. These are false heralds; let them keep their honour to themselves. But if out of those innumerable graces, which his Holy Spirit hath set in our hearts, we shall ransack our garden for flowers, and thereof make a garland of thankfulness; this he will accept, and account it an honour to wear. Those coronation flowers of humble gratitude and hearty love, he will stick in his own crown. If we could make a happy marriage between a perfect red (suppose the prince of the land of roses) and a perfect white, (suppose the lady of the nation of lilies,) between the zeal of a religious profession and the innocency of a spotless life, they would beget the best colour; the Lord would be well pleased with us, if we could present him such a glory. But to talk of any glory of our own, or to offer that, were as if the darkness should proffer light to the day, or the dry pit to lend water to the spring. The Lord found us polluted in our blood, Ezek. xvi. 6; there was all our beauty. We come up and are cut down like a flower, Job xiv. 2; there was all our glory. And were not this rich stuff to offer unto Christ? Once we did so, and he was contented with it: our sin was all the favour, and our death all the honour, and our condemnation all the glory we gave him. We lodged him in a stable at his birth, and housed him with contempt all his life, and for a farewell nailed him to the cross at his death; and there we left him. From under all these clouds of abuse, our Sun rose glorious, to his own orb in heaven. Have we no better thing to present him with now? Will no glory yet come from us?

From some, from too many, it will not. We have our irreligious politicians, that think on their own glory, not his. All happy successes they ascribe to their own heads, not to the Head of the church. Perhaps if any thing fall out cross, Christ may be blamed for it. These men do that in earnest, which we have seen boys do in sport; stand on their heads, and shake their heels against heaven. We have our impious blasphemers, that pierce his side with oaths, and swear all his wounds open again. The Jews did but crucify him below, on the earth, when he came to suffer: these crucify him above, in heaven, where he sits on his throne. From such men Christ hath injury and infamy enough, but not one spark of glory. From us yet let him speed better: some glory, yea, all glory, we must give him on earth, or he will give us none in heaven. If we lock up his glory, he will lock us out of his glory. He asks for our glory, and we beg his. *Petimusque domusque ricissim*, Let us give, and we shall receive; as below, grace for grace; so above, glory for glory. You have glorified me by your good works, in the day of thralldom: come now, ye blessed, and I will glorify you by my mercies in my eternal kingdom, Matt. xxv. 34.

But wherein can we glorify him? Not in giving him what he hath not, but in making known what he hath. To publish his glory, Eph. iii. 10, is all that we can do for him; or to magnify his works, Job

xxxvi. 24. To magnify him, is not to do what is great, but to speak what is great. His glory by our praises is not made greater, but more known. Nothing is added to the latitude or extent of it, but to the appearance and manifestation of it. We magnify him, not by increasing the lustre of his glory, but by plucking off the veil of darkness from the faces of sinners. As it is a kind of honour to the sun, when by opening the eyes of the blind, or bringing prisoners out of an obscure dungeon, we enable them to take knowledge of his light. Nor hath the sun so much cause to thank us for this, as they that by this help come to behold the sun. Yet he that is ever infinite, is pleased to enlarge himself by the number of our prayers, and takes our frequent petitions as it were an augmentation of his greatness; as princes are made famous by the multitude of clients. Still, for all this, we are beholden to him, not he to us. That he will suffer us to take his glorious name in our mouths, is a great honour: that he will take his name any ways dignified by our mouths, is a greater honour. Oh what an honour hath God given to men, that they may either speak to him, or speak of him! We are worms, yea, worse by nature; why are we suffered to crawl on his earth? We are serpents, in respect of the venomous corruption of our sins; why are we suffered to hiss?

David professeth himself "a dead dog" to his king Saul, 1 Sam. xxiv. 14; and so doth Mephibosheth to his king David, 2 Sam. ix. 8. Yet David speaks to Saul, and Mephibosheth speaks to David. We have no measure to try any comparison with God; proportion is no measure for infiniteness. Yet let it suffice to our comfort, that God doth not esteem us so little to himself, as a dead dog is to a king. Whatsoever we are indeed, yet his mercy doth make more account of us. The man that hath but a torn cottage to hide his head in; he that hath no cottage, no harbour, but is fain to rest his weary limbs on the cold earth; he that hath no more of this world but a grave; he that hath his grave but lent him, till a better man must be buried in the same grave; he that hath no grave but a dunghill; he that hath no more earth but that which he carries, but that which he is; he that hath not that earth which he is, but even in that is another's slave; yet hath as much proportion to God, as if all David's worthies, all the monarchs of the world, and all those imaginary giants, were kneaded and incorporated into one; and as though that one were the survivor of all the sons of men, to whom God had given the earth. Therefore how little soever we be, though we are as if we were not; yet he that calls things that are not as though they were, gives us leave both to call upon him, and to call upon others to honour him, and puts the promulgation of his glory into our unworthy lips. If we were but mere dust and ashes, we might speak unto the Lord; for the Lord's hand made us of this dust, and the Lord's hand shall re-collect these ashes. The Lord's hand was the wheel, upon which these vessels of clay were framed; and the Lord's hand is the urn, in which these ashes shall be preserved. We are the dust and ashes of the temple of the Holy Ghost; and what marble is so precious? Yea, we are more than dust and ashes; we are our best part; every man is his soul; and being so, the very breath of God, he may breathe back the praises of God. Yea, for this cause he hath his breath given him; and when he fails in that duty, he deserves to have his breath taken from him. It is man's greatest honour, that he may set forth the glory of his Maker; as it was a high credit to him, from whose mouth Cesar condescended to speak throughout the world,

as the heathen said. In this respect every man is a preacher, every creature a text, every occasion a doctrine, every blessing a reason, every thanksgiving a use, men and angels the auditors, and the whole sermon is God's glory.

Fourthly, To him, but *how*? Since we must all give glory to him; all glory, by all means, and at all times; it is requisite that we know how.

1. Justly: for we may not think that we are at any cost with God, or bestow aught upon him out of our own bounty; we owe it to him, and justice requires that we pay our debts. If it be a good will, yet it is due: well taken, when it is freely given; but if not given, strictly to be accounted for. There is nothing for which Christ will reward us, but that whereby his glory is the greater for us. "These are they which came out of great tribulation," Rev. vii. 14; in tribulation they confessed Christ; in the midst of that fiery trial they honoured his name; therefore they stand with joy before his throne. Such is the mercy of our good God, that he gives us a reward for doing that, which without any thanks we are bound to do; as a father gives his obedient son the inheritance, because he is his son, not for his obedience. But the omission of this duty shall be called to a woeful reckoning. "He that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God," Luke xii. 9. His refusal of us, for our neglect of him, is both just and grievous. Because they knew God, and did not glorify him as God, Rom. i. 21, what shall become of them? To be cast out from his presence, and debarred of those infinite joys that accompany it, is the extremity of sorrow. But there is more in it than so, "Depart from me, ye cursed;" there is torment upon torment: Cast that unprofitable servant into outer darkness, where is weeping and gnashing of teeth, Matt. xxv. 30; because he did not glorify God with his talent. It is not then left arbitrary, but imposed as necessary: no indifferent matter, whether we render him glory, or not; but if we do not, we shall die for it. He is a self-willed fool, that will not open his mouth to save his life; but more sottish he, that will not open it to save his soul. This is not therefore matter of courtesy, but of duty; nor a free largess, but a just debt. "Render unto God the things that are God's," Matt. xxii. 21: not give, but render, what is God's; and glory is his without all question. They are mistaken that think their gratitude a gratuity; as if God were beholden to us for rendering him his own. Indeed it is often called a gift, though it be a debt; a gift in respect of our liberal mind, a debt in its own nature. In our common speech we say, What is more due than debt? And again, What is more free than gift? The one doth not destroy the other. Indeed what we frankly pay as a debt, God will graciously accept as a gift. Not that he useth us as we do desperate debtors, glad to take this or nothing; for our Creditor can pay himself at his pleasure. If we do not render him glory with all our hearts, he will fetch it out of our carcasses. Have it of us he will, either in the liberty of this earth, or in the prison of hell; either our pleasure or our pain must pay him. Yet such is his goodness, to accept kindly what we pay heartily, and to take that as a courtesy which is indeed our duty. His wrath is revealed from heaven, against those that withhold the truth in unrighteousness? Rom. i. 18. If we withhold the truth of his glory, it is great injustice.

2. Freely: that is but a sour praise, which is pressed or wrung out, like verjuice from a crab. "I will get me honour upon Pharaoh," Exod. xiv. 17; but no thanks to Pharaoh; he shall get little by it, unless we call plagues and death a commodity.

Foreed praise may be for the honour of the persons praised, but it is nothing to the comfort of the persons who praise. The very devils were driven to acknowledge Christ; their scholars, the sorcerers of Egypt, were compelled to say, "This is the finger of God," Exod. viii. 19; yet they are all of them in hell. This is to give Christ the glory because we cannot do the contrary, to praise him against our wills. There is a confession upon the rack; but commonly execution follows it; and such malefactors have no more favour, than to be had from the rack to the gibbet: God hath a compelling power. Hophni with his flesh-hook could say, Give, or I will take, 1 Sam. ii. 16. So to part with it as one delivers his purse, or as a porter bears his load, groaning under it, is little to our comfort. "Whatever ye do, do it heartily," Col. iii. 23: so voluntarily, as if God had neither racks nor screws to force it out of you. "God loveth a cheerful giver," 2 Cor. ix. 7: if he looks for this in our charity to the poor, much more in our piety to his honour. We call upon you for this tribute, and you put us off till to-morrow, Prov. iii. 28. Favours that come with grudging, are *riscau beneficia*, i. e. they stick to the fingers like birdlime, and will not come off. We are all put into that holy office; Christ hath made us priests to himself, and sent us into the world to preach his glory. If we do it, there is no merit to be talked of, for a necessity is laid upon us, 1 Cor. ix. 16; but if we do it not, there is a woe to be thought of, for a curse will befall us.

Do it then, but do it cheerfully, even with love and good-will; let it be the offering of a free heart. The willingness of the mind, is ever the fat of the sacrifice; and without that, all is lean and dry. I had a holy portion due to God among my goods, I have severed it from the rest, I have brought and laid it upon his altar, Deut. xvi. 13. I have taken my best goods, the love and fidelity of mine heart, and consecrated them to God in cheerful praises. God had touched the hearts of them that honoured the king, 1 Sam. x. 26: so all those that give glory to Christ, have God's stamp upon their hearts. But for those men of Belial, that despise him, and bring him no presents of praises, ver. 27, there is the print of the devil's claws upon them. Praised he ought to be, and that freely; not feignedly, says Bernard, as by hypocrites; not by custom, as by worldlings; not according to our own imagination, as by heretics; not by bodily representations, as by the superstitions; not by compulsion, as by slaves; but with all sincerity and cheerfulness, as it becometh Christians. We need not grudge it, for we are no losers by it. It does not diminish our flocks, nor disfigure our houses, nor lessen our sums, nor disparage our credits, nor impair our healths; nay, it is the only way to conserve all unto us. We are not the poorer, but the richer by this gift. Though we do not condition for the praising of Christ, as Judas did for the selling of Christ, What will ye give me? yet we are sure of a reward: Good servant, the glory of thy Lord hath entered into thee; thou hast loved it in thy heart, and published it with thy lips; now "enter thou into the joy of thy Lord," Matt. xxv. 21. As it was before in the charge, Freely you have received, freely give; so it is now for the reward, Freely you have given, freely receive: as my glory was advanced by you, so be you advanced into my glory.

3. Fervently: there is no thanks to a cold commendation; it is well if it may have a pardon. It has been said, Praise in a grudging mouth differs little from blame. The praise that sticks in our teeth, and is loth to come forth; that pincheth God of his right, as Pharaoh higgled with him about the

release of Israel; Some he shall have, not all; the glory of such a deliverance, another came another ways, is fraud, rather than laud, a secret robbery, rather than an act of justice. When we write to great persons, we rather make their titles excessive, than defective; they take it for a dishonour, if we speak them short; they would not lose one inch of their height. Hyperboles do well, but apostrophes are intolerable. The new lady snuffs to be called mistress. Set up the string of honour as high as you may, as high as the instrument will bear, till it even cracks again; and that sounds well, the music pleaseth us. And shall we bate God of his celsitude? Is any praise too high for him? "His glory is above the earth and heaven," Psal. cxlviii. 13. Above the earth it may well be; for the earth is but the cellar or vault of the world. Indeed here be high places, and high persons, both; the highest places are mountains, and the highest persons kings. "I will ascend above the height of the clouds; I will be like the Most High," said one of them, Isa. xiv. 14. Babylon was the high place, and the king of Babylon the high person; yet he was so modest as to challenge no more but, Like to the Highest, not the Highest. But as high as they are, "there be higher than they," Eccl. v. 8. The glory of Christ is higher than theirs, for it is above the earth; yea, above heaven too.

Most Highest was the ancient style of God: Melchisedek so termed him first, Gen. xiv. 18. Therefore let us give him the highest glory; Praise God in the highest, Psal. cxlviii. 1: so the angels sung, "Glory to God in the highest," Luke ii. 14. All glory is high; yet there is one glory higher than another; and "one star differeth from another in glory," 1 Cor. xv. 41. Glory, like Fame, in the poet, walks on the earth, and hides her head in the clouds. If any be higher, let us give Christ that; praise him in the heights, as high as we can go. Glory itself is an altitude; higher than wealth, higher than pleasure; the highest pitch that man can fly: an eagle for the king. Good reason that we should wish him that is highest the highest thing we have, "Praise him upon the high sounding cymbals," Psal. el. 5; that our voices, and applauses, and thanks may be heard up to the very heavens, and so be in *altissimis* indeed. To shorten the glory of God, is not praise, but sacrilege. To call him only great, happy, wise, good, is but a positive; not enough, if there be a greater, better, wiser, happier, in the comparative. No, give it him in the superlative, in the highest: "Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens," Psal. cviii. 5. With our highest wishes, and highest affections, and highest expressions, and highest endeavours, let us set forth the praise and glory of the most high God, Jesus Christ.

4. Intently, and with an earnest desire to glorify him. Though we cannot go so high as we would, yet let us go as high as we can. I know it is impossible to shoot home to the mark, and to give Christ condign praises; he is worthy of all praise, but no praise can be worthy of him. As his humility was so deep, that we cannot sound it; so his sublimity is so high, that we cannot reach it. Yet let us draw to our utmost strength, and loose the arrows of our praises, so that they may come as near heaven as the arm of flesh can send them; and even that shall be accepted. He does not look for such glory from us as he is worthy to receive, but as we are able to give. Our praises of him are not sins, yet they are not without some touch of sin: praises and infirmities come from us together, but Christ parts them, forgiving the infirmities, and receiving the praises. They are full of weaknesses, yet doth he

not except against them for their imperfections. He takes them well in worth, though there be no worth in them; and vouchsafes them a reward, which had been sufficiently honoured with a pardon. Christ says of Mary's anointing him, "She hath done what she could," Mark xiv. 8: yet this was somewhat, for the ointment cost a round sum: and of the widow's charity, She hath given what she had, Mark xii. 44: and that was but two mites: yet well taken though. The weakness of the deed shall not hinder, if the uprightness of the heart be ready. There may be weakness in the act of rendering glory: but if there be goodness in the desire, the mercy of Christ will look graciously upon it. God's good-will towards us, will accept of our good-will toward him. He is attentive to their prayers, that desire to fear his name, Neh. i. 11: and even for David, whom God commended for a man after his own heart, 1 Sam. xiii. 14; his honest, true heart was the fairest flower in his garden. Every action is measured according to the proportion of the agent: desire in them that cannot speak, speech in them that cannot do, doing good in them that lack strength to suffer evil, finds favour at the hands of Christ. As in extreme sickness, when the tongue cannot utter words, yet the heart venting groans, receives compassion. Though the whole of the man be but the desire of the mind, that will be taken for the deed. Great acts from weak persons, are entertained with wonder. The leper was not praised, because he was well instructed in the law; the centurion was wondered at, because ignorant of the law: yet they both had faith. (Chrysostom, in Matt. viii. 10.) The witty speech of a child is admired; the same falling from the mouth of a man would not be regarded. None returned with thanks but the Samaritan, Luke xvii. 18: if Christ have his tithe out of a strange field, when his own parish pays him none, he may well take notice of it. Faithful observance is most accepted where it is least expected. If they offer gold to the tabernacle, whom we deemed scarce worth goats' hair; if Mary that was so great a sinner, spend more tears upon Christ's feet than Simon, that thought himself so righteous a saint; shall she not be more rewarded? But as there may be a desire without ability, so commonly there is an ability without a desire. Some few would do much for Christ's glory, and cannot; thousands of us can do much for his glory, and will not. These latter rejoice for what they can do, and are in danger of hell; the former mourn for what they cannot do, and are accepted in heaven. God will give glory to that very willingness, which desires to glorify his Son Jesus.

5. Principally; before all others, and above all others. Principally, is not only a numeral, but an ordinal term; signifying both first in number, and chief in order. For precedency, let Christ be the first; and for supremacy, let him be the chiefest. Both; for we know that in civil equipage, some go before who are not the chief, nay, furthest off from the chief: as the fore rank are furthest from the person of the prince, though they go before the prince. And St. Paul in placing those three Divine graces, sets the greatest last; "the greatest of these is charity," 1 Cor. xiii. 13. So the son is set after the brother, yet is dearer than brother; wife after child, yet dearer than child; and friend after all, who is the dearest of all, Dent. xiii. 6. But let Christ be both the first in order, and the first in dignity. Begin thy works with his glory, and so let him be the first of all; reduce all thy works to his glory, and so let him be the chief of all. There be many others to whom we owe honour; but Christ's glory must be set before all, and kept above all. Men have their glory, and

with his allowance: "Honour to whom honour" belongeth, Rom. xiii. 7. There be distinctions of men upon earth; some higher than others: why have we else such diversity of titles? Worship, Lordship, Honour, Grace, Excellency, Majesty, are styles of honour, every one transcending another. There are degrees of glory in the celestial bodies, among the stars. Parents we are commanded to honour; and spiritual parents, good pastors, are worthy of double honour: above all men, honour the king. The politic atheist would have all glory given to the king, and let God stand for a bare name. The sottish Anabaptist would have all glory given to God, and the king to stand for a cipher. These think that God hath not his due honour, unless the king lay down his sceptre; that God and Caesar, Christ and the Christian magistrate, are the whole heaven asunder, and will not come near one another. But Christ says, Give to Caesar that which is Caesar's, and to God that which is God's, Matt. xxiii. 21. He joins them both arm in arm in one verse, and fears not the loss of his own honour by the honour of the prince. This is one difference between the court parasite and the Anabaptistical hypocrite: the former is hot for the things that are Caesar's, and quite skips over the things that are God's: the other stands upon the things of God, and would annihilate the things of Caesar. But both have their due places; for God is the God of order, not of confusion. O ye sons of men, Christ doth not grudge you your honours, why should you deny him his? You may enjoy your Lordships, and Worships, and all your several titles, without his envy: yea, more, he commands men to give you all your due respects; not out of courtesy, for love; nor out of slavery, for fear; nor out of flattery, for gain: but out of duty, for conscience, Rom. xiii. 5. He upholds your names, you may do well to uphold his. The factious sectary, that would bring all things to a parity, thinks that God's glory is not entire, unless Caesar's image be quite blotted out. The profane politician, that would flatter the king into a god, thinks that Caesar hath never enough, till God hath nothing left. As if both could not be preserved in their several rights: as if we must needs so look upon the one, as to lose the sight of the other; and so give ear to the one, as if we never cared for hearing of the other. But Caesar may have his honour without God's prejudice; and God may have his glory without any impeachment to Caesar. Yea, Caesar holds all his honour *in capite*; and as he is the head of his subjects, so Christ is the Head of Caesar. "By me kings reign," Prov. viii. 15: it is Christ's prerogative royal, to be the King of kings. Glory and honour both are in his hand, and at his disposing, Prov. iii. 16.

To speak to us all: God is a careful Preserver of our honours; he hath made a strong fence about our good names; hedged them in with a precept, a precept delivered in thunder, and to be required with rigour: the breach whereof is punishable with quenchless fire: he hath bestowed a whole commandment upon them. He gave but ten in all, and one of the ten he hath set to guard our honours, Exod. xx. 16. We are not only forbidden to speak evil of the ruler, but even of our neighbour. So provident hath the Lord been to preserve our honour. To the conviction of them that stand upon piety to God, and forget civility to men; that think it enough to do some homage to Christ on the sabbath, though they dishonour their brethren all the week. By reason of a sinful custom crept into the world, it is usual for one duty of godliness to devour all her fellows. We cannot raise the price of one virtue, but we must cry down all the rest. Not extol preaching, but prayer

must grow out of request; not bring up alms, and the works of mercy, but presently the works of devotion must be laid down. No way but by the sale of Christ's ointment, to provide for the poor. No way to honour God, but by the despising of men. If we be so pious as to give Christ the glory; then so impious as to befoul the good names of his servants with ignominy. "I am not as other men are, extortioners, adulterers, unjust," Luke xviii. 11. Too many of the pure brotherhood are of the Pharisee's opinion right. No extortioner, no adulterer; as if there was no other way to hell, but by these enormities; as if God could be displeased with nothing but adultery and extortion. But as the Pharisee left out of his catalogue pride; he says, No extortioner, no unjust man; he says not, No proud man: so the precise arrogant dissembler boasts, that he is no adulterer, no blasphemous; but he says not, I am no slanderer. No tongue so bitter as theirs, when they light upon a name that is not in their own register; none makes so deep an incision into the credit of their neighbours. They complain of the profane ones, (as they call them,) that they make drunken catches of them in the taverns: I excuse it not; but by their leave, they make worse libels of good men in their private conventicles. If it be a fault in the other to censure men in their drink, is it no fault in these to speak worse of men at their meat? Why should Ceres have a greater privilege than Bacchus? Why should our names be the fiddles, to draw down their morsels? Why do they blame the papists for slighting the second commandment, when they make no reckoning of the ninth? As they take it ill for others to scandalize them under the name of hypocrites, so let them take heed of scandalizing others with the name of dissolutes. God is tender of all our reputations, why are not we so one of another's? This honour he affords us in our several stations: we have it, and are happy with it. His glory doth not so swallow up ours, but that we are honoured in him, by him, and for him. But then our honour goes beyond the bounds, when it encroacheth upon his glory. It is the presumption, and the ruin of it, to invade Christ's propriety. All our glory is but a beam of his; and shall a poor and small ray brave it out, as if it were the body of the sun? The glory of making all good, the glory of repairing what we had made evil, the glory of disposing all to good, the glory of giving all good, the glory of doing all good; this glory he will not give to another. And he that presumes to take it, when God denies to give it, shall find it too hot or too heavy for him; he shall never carry it to his grave. All the glory we have, is the result of his; all our honour consists in being his instruments: we have the glory that belongs to the instruments, let him have the glory that belongs to the Agent. This is one strong motive to preserve his honour, because he preserves ours. We deserve to live with shame, and die with infamy, if both in life and death we do not give Christ the glory.

6. Entirely; and that two ways. First, on the part of Christ, that he have it all to himself. Secondly, on our part, that we give it to him with all the powers we have. He must have all the glory which can be rendered by our ability.

(1.) It must be entirely his; to him, and none but him. Not to another above him, not to another beneath him, not to another for him, not to another with him, not to another besides him; but only to himself. Glory is not enough, nor glory to God, without to him alone. "To the only wise God be honour," 1 Tim. i. 17. Jude 25. "Not unto us," Psal. cxxv. 1: as if the saints were afraid to touch any

part of it. So we are taught to acknowledge in our prayer, and to pray for that acknowledgment; "Thine is the glory." Thine, and no creature's else. Some creatures may have some glory, but none of Christ's glory: that same Glory in the highest is only his. The angels sung it to him; and if we sing it to any but him, we sing a false note. This was their music to him, when he lay in the cratch; much more now he wears his crown: To Christ, and none but Christ, the glory. No sharers; he will have all, or none. Let petty lords content themselves with a mediocrity of honour; they that have right to none, will take any. Satan was never so audacious, as when he would persuade his Maker to a geniculation, Matt. iv. 9, to an adoration of his creature, of his professed enemy. Never did Christ say, Avoid, Satan, till then. It is a just indignation, that is conceived at the motion of a rivalry with God. Certainly, idolatry is a most dear sin to the devil, or else he would not be so importunate to compass it. How are the papists sure, that they do not make a rival with Christ, when they set an image before their eyes at the time of their worship? Why may not the saint represented in that picture, yea, why may not the picture itself, go halves with Christ in the glory? How is it to him entirely, if either a saint in heaven, or an image on earth, be his partner? And how are they so certain of the constancy of their minds, that no thought of theirs shall ever stick upon the picture? There is flesh in the holiest of them, as well as Spirit; and when the Spirit would give all the glory to Christ, will not the flesh steal away some, to bestow upon the image?

The philosophical opinion of our souls, that they are made of harmony, is little better than a poetical fiction; but the poetical fiction, that the Thebans sprang of the seed of the serpent, and so became warring brethren, is more than a philosophical opinion. For since the serpent beguiled our first parents, the flesh fighteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit fighteth against the flesh, Gal. v. 17: and with this conflict we are born. These twins make a perpetual war within us, and that war makes many wounds, and those wounds will never perfectly be cured, till we are advanced to heaven. Christ may now cover them with his own garments of righteousness, as that king bound up the wounds of his soldiers with his own robe; but they are never thoroughly healed, till we come to that heavenly Jerusalem, which signifies the vision of peace, the beatifical vision of God. And so long as this flesh, this corruption of our nature, sticks to us, we are in danger of making some rival with Christ. Though our grace, the better part, the Israel within us, would give all glory to him; yet within us there is a Philistine faction too, corrupt nature, that will set up their Dagon. Though they cannot agree together, 2 Cor. vi. 14, yet they must dwell together. And Paul does forbid the dominion of the worse, Rom. vi. 12, not the cohabitation of both. David thought it a great woe to dwell in Mesech, Psal. cxx. 5; but it is a far greater woe for Mesech to dwell in us. Yet there it will dwell, till death turns them both out of doors: and sendeth our sin down to hell, to the devil that begot it; and our soul up into heaven, to our Redeemer that bought it. Good cause have we therefore to take heed, lest that our sin betray our grace, and like a sly thief filch away some of that honour we intended to Christ.

Entirely Christ is to have his glory, and entirely he cannot have it if with a partner; and there is no way to set him up a partner, but by idolatry. When St. John had told us, that Christ is the true God, he immediately chargeth to keep ourselves from idols,

1 John v. 21. Methinks this should stagger all those Romists, that have any respect to their conscience, lest in their invocations they should make saints and angels, yea, even dead pictures, rivals with Christ. It is a vain help, to be told that they should not do so: it were a far better course to remove the picture, and so to prevent all danger. As Apelles when he had drawn a picture, would stand close behind the curtains, to listen how the passengers censured it; and according as they found just faults, to amend them. I would to God our superstitious neighbours, the papists, hearing our just censures of their idols, images, and pictures, would even make a clear riddance of them. It is not safe enough to charge those clients, that they never ascribe any honour to such dead representations, but for better security, to cast them for ever out of their devotions.

For ourselves, we are not free from idolatry. It is miserable to see how Satan draws the world insensibly into this sin, which they profess to detest. Those that would rather hazard the furnace than worship gold in a statue, yet adore it in the stamp, and find no fault with themselves. They that would not endure to worship the Virgin Mary's image, though it were in gold; yet having Caesar's image in gold, they fondly worship it. It is easier, says one, to banish idols from the temples, than from our hearts. And what difference is there upon the matter, whether we worship the workmanship of the carver, or of the coiner? whether the painter's pencil, or the minter's stamp, most take our hearts? The papist worships it as it is hung up in his chamber, the worldling worships it as it is laid up in his coffer: both are evil; which is worse? If our hearts be drawn to an over-high respect of any creature, we are idolaters; and idolatry (we know) sets up a rival with Christ; and if rivals be admitted, how does he sit alone in the throne? how is the glory entirely his?

All the titles of God's power have been attributed to potent men by their subjects, saving only his glory. As his greatness, his grace, his highness, his excellency, his majesty, his omnipotency, but never his glory. To some we say, your Honour; to some, your Grace; to a superior, your Highness; to a prince, your Excellency; to the king, your Majesty; and the parasitical Jesuits flatter the pope with his omnipotency: but never hath it been said to any of them, your Glory: this no prince hath taken, no sycophant hath given; as if God on purpose had preserved that style to himself, and not suffered any creature to usurp it: "My glory I will not give to another," Isa. xlii. 8.

Let the application of this be brought home to our own hearts. Christ hath appropriated Divine glory to himself, yet still we are eating at it: we silly and sinful worms will be proffering to pilfer it: they that seek their own glory, John vii. 18, will never seek Christ's. Whereas all should be referred to the honour of Christ, they will refer even his honour to themselves. There is no practice stirring, but such a man must be at the one end of it; and some line of it, how crooked soever, must be drawn to his centre. But Christ will take glory from no hands but the humble; like some mighty prince, that looks for lowliness in his attendants, and will not be served but upon their knees. Our prayers are a part of Christ's glory, and our posture to present them in is kneeling. Haman was proud to his fellow-peers, yet humble to Ahasuerus; but it must be a humble Mordecai, from whom Christ will accept glory. He accepted water from a Samaritan, and kisses from a Mary Magdalene: humble sinners do him more honour than proud saints. There can be no greater

folly, than the arrogation of glory to ourselves: what is it that we can glory in?

[1.] In our wealth? Am I rich? St. Augustine answers him, Thou speakest of that which is thy burden. Will any ass praise his burden? Be silent concerning thy praises, and consider thy miseries. The safest time to praise a rich man, is when he is dead: when neither flattery influences him who praises, nor pride tempts him who is praised. (Ambrose.) Dionysius fell from a tyrant over men, to be a tutor over boys, and so to get his living. Perses' son and heir was fain to learn an occupation, the blacksmith's trade, to relieve his necessity. Henry the Fourth, that victorious emperor, after he had fought two and fifty pitched battles, became a petitioner for a prebend, to maintain him in his old age. Gelinus, that potent king of the Vandals, was so low brought that he entreated his friend to send him a harp, a sponge, and a loaf of bread; a harp to consort with his misery, a sponge to dry up his tears, and a loaf to satisfy his hunger. Yet this is the wind that blows up the world's bladder; wealth is the foundation of secular glory. Evagrius makes it the high praise of the emperor Mauritius, that in the height of all his majesty, he retained his ancient piety. And Thucydides reports it for a strange thing in the men of Chios, that for all their prosperity they were sober. Scarce one of a thousand, on whom present felicity, if it hath smiled, hath not at the same mocked. (Bernard.) Are not these goodly things to glory in? Let the rich man tremble to hear of his own praises; who remembers that he has cause to grieve at what is past, and sees that there remains with respect to the future much for him to fear: so Ambrose, "Honour the Lord with thy substance," Prov. iii. 9: if thou takest this honour to thyself, thou playest the thief with thine own goods.

[2.] In our strength? Alas, it is vanity; the sport of disease; a sorry fever will suddenly throw down an Alexander. I know that much wrong is built on the presumption of power. Let them have might, and they have right enough. To retain what belongs to us, is the part of a private person; to contend for other men's things, is the prerogative of a king; so a heathen writer. They devour a man and his heritage, because it is in their power, Micah ii. 1, 2. Would you have me be contented with mine own? says the oppressor. That is for peasants and base spirits; but to get that by force, which belongs to others, that is gentleman-like. You would have me use my servant well: *O demens, ita servus homo est?* (Juven. Sat. 6.) Is my man a man? Is my tenant my neighbour? Is my neighbour my brother? Doth the senate deny my master the consulship? *Hic ensis dubit*, says Cæsar's soldier. Will not Naboth sell Abab his vineyard for money? Jezebel will help him to it for nothing: a counterfeit hand, with Abab's seal, shall do it. These men will have the law in their own hands; their right hand shall right them. They eat up God's people as bread, Psal. xiv. 4: but it is not so soon digested as eaten; in the end it will choke them. This nettles God, and makes him an enemy. "For the oppression of the poor, I will arise, saith the Lord," Psal. xii. 5. And, Woe to thee that spoilest, for thou shalt be spoiled! Isa. xxxiii. 1. Where will the mighty appear, when the Almighty comes to judgment? They call to the rocks and mountains for shelter; and yet these were no babes, but great, rich, mighty men, no less than captains and kings, Rev. vi. 15. God takes pleasure to cast down the mighty, Luke i. 52: not out of envy to their greatness: alas, the greatest potentates are to him no more than the larger size of worms. But this is the ground of his just quarrel;

they rob him of his glory, and therefore shall taste of his fury. Men may be strong; as when Germanicus had besieged a town, one Pulio in his army, by throwing a stone at a battlement, and overturning it, with all the men upon it, so amazed them with his strength, that they gave up the town. It is reported of Marius, one of the Thirty Tyrants, that he could turn over a loaden wain with one of his fingers. Pliny writes of one Aristomenes, who in a battle slew three hundred Lacedemonians in one day. These were all famous men in their generations; yet their strength was but the strength of flesh, vincible at their best. The strongest man upon earth is but the push of a pike, or the clap of a pistol. Or if they escape these violences, an ague can make them as weak as water, age will shrink their nerves, and dry up their bloods, and consume their spirits; death is stronger than they all. Abimelech was killed by the hand of a woman: so was Pyrrhus. Totilas, that had vanquished Rome, which had vanquished the world, slain by Narses, a eunuch. Such is the mockery of puissance, when God will give it over into the hand of weakness, 1 Cor. i. 27. Take heed, ye potentates, lest while you boast of what you can do if you will, you provoke God to do what he can; to lay you and your principality in the dust. Woe to that mightiness which shall offer to rob Christ of his glory!

[3.] Of our wisdom? Alas, that is a foolish glory; there is no wisdom in it. "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom," Jer. ix. 23. As by way of concession, every greater includes the less; he that can lift a talent, can easily lift a pound; so by way of denial, every greater excludes the less; if nobles may not be let into thy counsel, much less grooms. Wisdom itself is debarred any rivalry with Christ, in matter of glory; what place then is there for strength or riches? Wealth is not comparable to strength: wealth tolls in enemies; but strength can both repel them from entering, and expel them if they be entered. Riches will make the thief more venturous, but seldom do they make the true man more hardy. Therefore the prophet excludes the better at first, that the worse might with less ado be removed. If the more excellent cannot be allowed this liberty, the inferior may not by any reason challenge it. Wealth comes not more short of strength, than strength does of wisdom. "The poor wise man by his wisdom delivered the city;" that was the wise Solomon's observation. "Then said I, Wisdom is better than strength," Eccl. ix. 15, 16; that was his conclusion upon it. Sertorius commanded to be brought forth two horses, the one fat and lusty, the other a poor lean jade; both of them to be broken. He picked out two of his soldiers, the one strong and hearty, the other weak and sickly; to his lean horse he puts the strong soldier, the weak soldier to the pampered horse. The strong man went roughly to work, and thought to do the feat with dead strength; but he both tired himself, and became a mockery to the beholders; the weaker fellow by his sleight and cunning did the deed, and went away with the applause. Strength therefore cannot boast, where wisdom is denied; and where strength cannot prevail, riches hath no hope. The best wisdom is to give all glory to Christ. Pharaoh ascribed great wisdom to Joseph, but Joseph quickly takes it off from himself, and sends it away to the right owner; "It is not in me; God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace," Gen. xli. 16. So Daniel to Nebuchadnezzar; "There is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets," Dan. ii. 28. He blesseth God for the knowledge he had, and so does not deny it; but he returns the praise to him that gave it, ver. 23. It is written of St. Bern-

ard, (In Vita ejus, lib. 3. cap. 6.) that having done many wonders in France, he did thus put off all glory from himself: I have learned in the Scripture, that signs are done either by hypocrites, or by those who are perfect; I am not conscious of being either a hypocrite or a perfect man: let them have a good opinion of me, but give all the praise to God. Hypocrites labour to seem saints, not to be so; but the holy labour to be, more than to seem saints. The kite may fly aloft, but her eye and mind is to the earth: she seems to be a gallant bird at her pitch, till she falls down upon a carrion. Oh how the dissembling zealot makes a show to honour Christ with his lofty profession, as if he were altogether a man of heaven: tarry but a little, throw the bait of glory in his way, and he will stoop to a carrion, and be taken with the pride of his own commendation. They say, there stands a globe of the world at one end of a famous library, and at the other end a skeleton. We need not search long for a good lesson in this library; for though a man were learned in all that he sees in the map of this world, yet he must die, and so himself become a map of mortality. Nothing a man hath wherein he can glory, but Christ will indict him for it, and that of a sacrilegious felony.

To conclude with some use. All the prophets and fathers of the primitive church, used to cry out against those particular sins, wherewith their times were pestered. If I were to touch the sore of the daughter of this people, (we have many sores, from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, Isa. i. 6,) that which doth most rankle and apostemate, it should be this robbing of Christ of his glory, by the proud affectation of our own. And if I should further insist upon it, my argument and text here would bear it well enough. It is an epidemical infection: "Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness," Prov. xx. 6. In a concourse of several companies in this or any other city, still they only that are called appear and answer. If stationers be called, none answer but stationers; at the call of merecers, enbroiderers do not stand up; nor if goldsmiths be named do haberdashers present themselves. But to the proclamation of, O all ye that are good and honest men, approach, we stand up every man of us, none disappears. We are all so proud, that we would be accounted such, though we are not so conscionable as to be such. But if we clothe ourselves with Christ's glory, he will unclothe us of his favour, and then what will become of our honour? Suppose the king should set a subject in his chair of state, give him royal attendants and sumptuous cheer, but withal hang him a naked sword over his head in a twine thread, with the point downwards; would that honour make him merry? Would he desire to be thus seated? Suppose that God should give thee this liberty, and suffer thee to ruffle it in the royal robes of his glory; crown thy head with rose-buds, Wisd. ii. 8, and wash thy paths with butter; or say unto thee, Wrap thyself up in purple and scarlet, and fare deliciously every day; open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it with pleasures; only, you shall never come at me, never see my face; would we think we had a good offer? would we accept the condition? No. "Lord, lift up the light of thy countenance upon us," Psal. iv. 6. Rather let my abode be a prison, a dungeon, a kind of hell; but let the light of thy countenance, O sweet Saviour, shine in at some little cranny; and that shall make it a palace, a court, a very heaven. Let our bread be the bread of affliction, and let our tears be our drink; but let the light of thy countenance shine upon us, and then our bread shall be

transubstantiated into manna, the food of angels; and our water be turned into wine, our tears congealed into pearls, to enrich our consciences with so many heavenly joys. For all this felicity, he asks no more but his glory. When Thales the Milesian had imparted to another philosopher some admirable discourse of heaven, he freed his scholar from all reward but this; that whosoever he divulged this secret, he said, Ascribe it not to yourself, but proclaim me as the discoverer of it. The invention itself he was willing to communicate unto others, but the honour of the invention he would keep to himself. We have received all our wisdom, strength, honour, and wealth from Christ; he requires no more, but that we acknowledge the Author; Take thou the comfort of them, but give me the glory. Lord, the whole world is a great book of thy mercy; every benefit is a lesson, and wheresoever we read it, we will give thee the glory.

(2.) It must be entirely his on our part. We owe both body and soul to his glory for our creation, 1 Cor. vi. 20; and might have paid it; God did not set us up without a sufficient stock to do it. But we must needs be trading with the serpent, for the commodity of forbidden knowledge, and so take in sin for an apprentice; and he cheated us of all, and so quite undid us. So that the statute of bankruptcy was sued out against us, for our Creditor would not be compounded withal; and if we had been sold to our skins, we were not able to satisfy him. We had not wherewith to pay, Matt. xviii. 25; no payment could be made. At last there was a rich and merciful Prince in heaven, that took pity on us: he bought out our bondage, paid our debts with his own blood, and once again did set us up with the wealthy stock of his own righteousness. Thus are we re-enabled to pay him the debt of glory: if we do not, we are worthy to perish: if we break once again, let us never look to be soldered up, Heb. x. 26. Our bodies and souls are his by a double right; therefore, in both let us glorify him. In our souls; "Bless the Lord, O my soul," Psal. civ. 1. With our bodies; giving up them "a living sacrifice," Rom. xii. 1. With both entirely: the whole soul; "I will praise the Lord with my whole heart," Psal. exi. 1: with the whole body, even all our members, not one left out, all that is within us, Psal. cxxxix. 14; ciii. 1. Within and without too: with our hearts, with our lips, and with our hands. The lips without the heart, proves us hypocrites; the heart without the lips, proves us cowards; the heart and lips without the hand, proves us niggards. The heart is the leader, but what glory will there be without followers? Secrecy destroys the nature of glory, for it is something conspicuous: concealed glory is no glory. Therefore the mouth is made to interpret the meaning of the heart: the lips are the trumpet, but it is the heart that gives it breath, and makes it sound forth God's glory. The hands must come in with their part, or the song is marred; neither a thinking glory, nor a speaking glory, will please God without a working glory. The praise of God is thus bred, and born, and brought up: conceived in the heart, born in the lips, and brought up with the hand. A ready heart, Psal. cviii. 1; there it is conceived: a ready tongue, Psal. xlv. 1; there it is born: a ready hand, Psal. cxli. 2; there it is nursed and brought up. As good desires breed it, so good works feed it. If the young and tender grace of thankfulness do not fall into the hands of uberous and fruitful obedience, it will languish and pine away, even to death; and we may say of it, that it was starved at nurse. It is too common for good resolutions, born in our hearts, to die in our hands; and not seldom, the glory of

Christ speeds so with us; we have our well wishes to it, but no works to nourish it; it dies in our hands. So that it is not enough to pray for honest hearts, "Create in me a clean heart," Psal. li. 10; nor for gracious lips, "Open thou my lips," ver. 15; but also for working hands, "Prosper thou the work of our hands," Psal. xc. 17. For we may say of too many, Full of grace are their lips, Psal. xlv. 2; but you see none of it in their lives. Let us consider them all apart, and mark whether, like courtiers in their several offices, they glorify God in their proper places.

[1.] The heart must begin this holy song. Bless the Lord from the ground of the heart, Psal. lxxviii. 26. Make melody in your hearts to the Lord, Eph. v. 19. Otherwise we shall but set forth his praises, as ignorant papists say their Latin prayers, their hearts not knowing what their tongue utters. "Sing ye praises with understanding," Psal. xlviii. 7. The heart bears the inner part, and if that be left out, it disgraceth the music, 1 Cor. xiv. 14. There may be a ready harp, and a ready tongue, and a ready hand, and a ready song; but if there be not a ready heart, no harmony. The heart is a little man within; therefore Peter calls it, "the hidden man of the heart," 1 Pet. iii. 4. There is the hidden heart of a man, and the hidden man of the heart. The former is so hidden, that it cannot be seen; the other will be seen, though it be hidden. The heart lies close in the body, there is no window into it. It may profess holiness, and be believed, because it cannot be discerned; but the man that is the master of his own heart, will make demonstration of his integrity, by good actions. The heart of man is deceitful, Jer. xvii. 9, but the man of the heart seems to dissemble. It is not the former, but the latter, that does the deed, in giving Christ his glory. Indeed, grace is the heart of the heart; and a heart without grace is no better than a man without a heart. Nature hath given us a heart, but grace gives a heart to that heart, which makes it a heart indeed. As one says, The heart of the heart, and the soul of the soul. Therefore lift up your hearts; that is ever the cliff, or first note in the song of praise. "My soul doth magnify the Lord," Luke i. 46; the soul ever leads. The tongue is not enough; that organ would sound but harshly, unless the affection of the soul do give it breath, and the understanding of the soul keep it in tune. They honour God with their lips, but their heart is far from him, Mark vii. 6; but no heart, no harmony. The lips, hands, and feet may be in motion; but if the heart be not amongst them, to regulate their motion, there will be nothing but discord and confusion. Let a deaf stranger, who never saw that sportive exercise before, pass by men as they are a dancing; and because he hears none of their music, he will think them mad. When Christ hears us talking of him, or spending our discourse upon his creatures, without a heart desirous of his glory, he knows us for mere hypocrites. The virgins that press to the wedding, and leave the bride behind them, shall never be welcome to the bridegroom: Where is my bride? will be his first question. If the bride of Christ, our heart or soul, be absent in his solemn services, there is no entertainment for us. Devotion that hath no deeper root than the lips, is like that unprosperous corn sown in the high-ways. Divers great warriors, dying in foreign countries, have yet sent their hearts home to be buried: let us send our hearts up into heaven, whatsoever becomes of our bodies.

[2.] The tongue follows with her part; the only vocal instrument in the concert of man. The heart is the first movable thing, and that sets this wheel a

going. "I believed, therefore have I spoken," Psal. cxvi. 10: if the heart believes, presently the tongue confesses. "My heart is inditing a good matter; my tongue is the pen of a ready writer," Psal. xlv. 1. To sing the praises of the heavenly King, is a good matter indeed; the song is honourable: no sooner can the heart prick the notes, than the tongue is ready to sing them. It can sing at first sight, yea, it can sing by heart. The heart is the most noble part, but not the most able part of man; it hath an affective, not an effective power. Yet as a king, whose bodily constitution is but weak, can move great armies by his authority; so the heart hath command over the strongest members of the body. And as a king cannot subsist but by his subjects, so nor can the heart do any thing but by those instruments. The heart then hath need of the tongue for an interpreter: loose that colt, and let it go, for the Lord hath need of it: but let it not go without a bridle. God will not hear the tongue but by the heart, as man cannot hear the heart but by the tongue. The praises of Christ conceived in the heart, without the utterance of the tongue, are still-born, they never live to speak. Why is our tongue called our "glory," Psal. cviii. 1, but for the setting forth of God's glory? It doth not service enough by calling upon God in our private prayers: "Open thou my lips, and my mouth shall show forth thy praise," Psal. li. 15: he hath not opened our lips, that our mouth might show him his praise, but that it might show forth his praise. Solitude is not much better than a grave: Lord, in the grave no man shall praise thee; and in a wall, in a hermitage, in a separation from all society, no man shall hear us praise thee. What holy use is there of our tongues, but to confess our sins, to inform our brethren, and in all to praise our Maker? But there is a dumb devil that possesseth the world, Luke xi. 14, and stops the mouths of men from those useful and necessary services. It is no small honour whereof that malicious spirit shall rob his Maker, if he can close up the mouth of his only rational and vocal creature; and turn the best of his workmanship into a dumb idol, that hath a mouth and speaks not.

Praise is not more necessary than complaint; praise of God, than complaint of ourselves; yea, in complaining of ourselves, we do no less than give praise to God. There needed no other evidence against Achan, when God had accused him; yet as the sin was hatched in his heart, so Joshua will have it out of his mouth: Give glory to God, Josh. vii. 19. As his honour is blemished by our sin, so the humble confession of our sin makes to his glory. The only amends we can make to God, when we have not had the grace to avoid sin, is to confess the sin we have not avoided. "I am merciful, saith the Lord; only acknowledge thine iniquity," Jer. iii. 12, 13: as if he asked no more. This is the sponge that wipes out all the blurs of our lives. "If we confess, he is faithful to forgive," 1 John i. 9. There is no way to purge the sick soul, but upwards, by casting up the vicious humours wherewith it is clogged. Therefore the devil strives to hold the lips close, that the soul may not disburden itself by confession. We have a tongue for God, when we praise his name; a tongue for ourselves, when we pray and confess our sins, Psal. xxxii. 3—5; a tongue for our brethren, when we inform them in the truth. To fail in these duties, is to yield to the dumb devil. Where do we not find that accursed spirit? He is in the conversation of men, when the tongue belies the heart, flatters the guilty, and forbears reproofs even in the foulest crimes. When the partial judge determines not for truth and innocency, that dumb devil is on the bench. When

the preacher shall humour the times, and adulterate the message of God, he is in the pulpit. When the irreligious juror dares lend an oath to fear, to hope, to gain, he is at the bar. When the conscienceless chapman shall for his penny sell his truth and his soul, he is in the market. Where is the glory of Christ all this while? In that we are dumb; but take us to any thing else, and we have wind at will, and tongue enough. Christ opened his mouth for us, Father, forgive them; yea, he opened his side for us, his very blood did speak, Father, forgive them: and shall we be dumb in his praise? It is an easy labour to speak; for ourselves we can talk fast enough; and are we tongue-tied when it comes to the point of Christ's glory? No; "My lips shall re-joice when I sing unto thee; my tongue shall talk of thy righteousness all the day long," Psal. lxxi. 23, 24.

[3.] The hand must not be left out; in our words men hear his glory, but in our good works they see it. Then doth our light shine indeed, when men see our good works, and thereby glorify our heavenly Father, Matt. v. 16. This is a full evidence: all the sermons of Christ did not move the people so much, as his miraculous works. Healing diseases, ejecting devils, overruling elements, raising the dead; these works convinced them, and they went away glorifying God: We never saw it on this fashion. And when he forbids us the doing of such works to be seen of men, Matt. vi. 1, he does not forbid them to be seen, that God may be praised; but to be seen, that we ourselves may be praised; as St. Augustine expounds it. And as our lips must not be *labra muta*, dumb, so nor our works *opera mutila*, lame and defective. "Should I accept this of your hand? saith the Lord," Mal. i. 13. The best testimony that can be given to Christ, is our holy conversation. Our hands are counted dead in law, because they give nothing. If we do not glorify Christ in our actions, men will never believe our words. Such men are like dissolute choristers, that sing *Gloria Patri* in the choir, but chant *Carmine Bacchi* in the tavern. Let us do something to his glory, yea, do all things to his glory, 1 Cor. x. 31. Defend we the honour of Christ, not only with our speeches, (though they may not be left out, like parentheses,) but with our goods, and our blood, when just occasion calls for them. Thus did the martyrs give him glory, by dying for the witness of his gospel. Rather than Christ should lose his glory, the Christian would lose his life. This makes his praise beautiful; white and red, and in both most lovely: white, in regard to the innocence of the living; and red, in regard to the blood of the dying. If a blow be coming, the arm naturally lifts up itself to receive it, and to defend the head, whereof it is a member. What injury soever is meant to our Head, the Lord Jesus, if we be Christians, we strive to intercept it: and had rather be wounded to death, than the least finger of his honour should be scratched.

Yes, we all pretend a forwardness to this interposition, and say, we would rather lose our life than the least part of our glory. This is a good saying, but all this while where is the doing? Let us hear the bells of Aaron strike on both sides; with a holy profession, which is one stroke; that other stroke of a holy conversation. As we have commonly seen upon those bells that hang out for signs; upon the one side is written, "Fear God;" on the other, "Honour the king." While we only say, we fear God, and glorify Christ, all this while the bell doth but toll, it strikes but on one side; but when we come to honour the king, to do good to all men, which is the practice and exercise of holy works, then the

bell rings out to God's glory, it sounds forth his praises on every side. It is true that our well-doing extends not to God; not immediately, but mediately it does, or at least he so takes it. What you have done to these little ones, you have done to me, Matt. xxv. 40. If we defend not his church, how do we glorify him? They mean small honour to the head, that do not their best to save the body. We have and enjoy plentiful blessings; blessed be his name that gives them to us; but let us eat our sweet pass-over with sour herbs, and be mindful of the affliction of Joseph. Some tribes of the Lord's Israel do not fare so well; shall we do nothing for them, for Christ in them? If Herod was so taken with Herodias' dancing, that he promised her a boon to the one half of his kingdom, shall not we be moved with Rachel weeping, weeping for her children because they are not; and they are not, because bloody Herod hath taken them away? Can we see the church's tears, and not do our utmost endeavours to comfort her? Ephorus an historian, and scholar to Isocrates, had no remarkable thing to write of his country, and yet was willing to insert the name of it in his history; and therefore brings it in with a cold parenthesis: Athens did this famous thing, and Sparta did that; and at that time my countrymen, the Cumins, did nothing. God forbid that England should be so recorded in the Ecclesiastical History, as to have her name put in with a blank: Such a church did thus nobly, and such a church suffered thus pitifully; and at that time my countrymen of England did nothing. I think it would be no more honour for us, so to be put into the Chronicle, than it was for Pilate to have his name mentioned in the Creed. To be more particular; we abound with riches, our brethren are necessitous; we feast upon delicacies, they want bread; we are strong and healthy, they feeble and sickly; yet we are so far from relieving them with charitable deeds, that we scarce vouchsafe them our hearty prayers. Think of it, thou rich churl, from whose iron hands no persuasion can sew a poor alms; if thou wilt not be moved with the compassion of thine own bowels, yet vouchsafe to learn charity by fair examples. There are not only walls upon earth, but a book in heaven, wherein the names of pious benefactors are written. Wouldst thou not be glad at the last day to find thine own name there? Such a man did so much, and such a man gave so much, for the glory of Christ and succour of poor Christians; and at that time thou didst nothing, thou gavest nothing. Something thou hast done to the grief of others, nothing to their comfort; so nothing shalt thou receive to thy comfort, enough to thy everlasting sorrow.

To conclude: Let us sacrifice all we have, all we are, to the glory of Christ. If our lives be not called for, yet our goods may; if we have no goods to give, yet our hearts and lips we have, the poorest among us may give praises to God. And the more he spares us in our blood and estates, the more our tongues are obliged to thankfulness. When tribute was to be paid to Cæsar, and Christ himself was to pay it, rather than fail, the fish shall bring it in his mouth. There is not a fish that swims in our waters so dumb, not a beggar amongst us so poor, but he hath gold in his mouth to pay this tribute: to give praise and glory to Jesus Christ. Gratitude can give eloquence, even where nature hath commanded silence: they are more mute than fishes, that do not pay this tribute of thankfulness. Be we never so rich, we are still begging for more comforts. Blessings we receive, but what blessings do we restore? God looks to be blessed of us, as well as we look to be blessed of God. One of Philip's soldiers, being courteously and plentiful-

ly entertained by his host, where for a good space he was billeted, did yet at his going away beg some of his host's lands; but King Philip branded him with *Ingratus hospes*, i. e. The ungrateful guest; he set that mark on his forehead. If we be still praying for new favours, without praising God for the old, we deserve to be branded with the ignominious title of unthankful clients. Indeed God would have us pray, he commands us to pray, he teaches us to pray, he holds himself honoured by our prayers, he grants the blessings for which we pray; but withal, he would have us pay still as we take up, and clear the old score before we run further in debt. In a word, he looks that we should pay him the rent of thanks for all his favours to us in Jesus Christ.

Fifthly, *When* must this glory be rendered? Now, without any delay. All time is God's, though some be more specially his, as the sabbath is called, The Lord's day. The day is thine, and the night is thine; therefore at all times we are bound to praise him. If we can find a time which is not God's own property, we may take that time wherein to give him no glory. Every work hath its own season, Eccl. iii. 1; only God's work requires every season; especially this work of praising his name. Some actions of God's service may vary according to their occasions: when he frowns upon us, that is a time of mourning; when he smiles, then our hearts are set a dancing, ver. 4. There is "a time to get, and a time to lose," ver. 6; a time to get his favour, and, alas, there may be a time to lose it. There is "a time to rend" our hearts with repentance, and "a time to sew" them up again with faithful assurance, ver. 7. These acts have their several times; but for the promulgation of God's glory, no time is excluded. There is a time to keep it, but no time to cast it away; a time to speak, but no time to keep silence. What! not in adverse fortunes? when the hand of God hath undone us, by losses on sea or land, when he hurls us down from a rich state to beggary, shall we then praise him, then give him glory? Yes, Job did so; Blessed be his name, not only for giving, but even for taking away, Job i. 21. I confess, this is a hard task put upon flesh and blood; to be smitten, and yet to bless; to give thanks for misery. Job's wife could hardly be got to do so, though she dwelt in a family where religion was so truly observed by morning and evening sacrifice, and by a constant devotion; yet her husband's extreme calamity made her so far forget herself, as to say to him, "Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die," Job ii. 9. To curse God, was the way to die indeed, even to be stoned to death, and to end all his miseries with a worse beginning. I know there are some so favourable interpreters of her weakness, that they would fain excuse her; and that from the doubtful acceptance of the word, which signifies to bless, as well as to curse: Bless God, and die; pray for thy dissolution, and cessation of this trouble. But why then does Job reply, "Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh," calling her fool for her counsel? Yes, for even that was a foolish advice: though a desire to be dissolved, only to be with Christ, be a good desire; yet weariness under the cross is base and degenerate cowardice, far from the valour of a Christian. They allege further, that if Satan had power to destroy all that Job had, his goods, his servants, his children, why not also his wife? They answer that she was out of his commission: "Only upon himself put not forth thy hand," Job i. 12: only himself was exempted, and his wife was himself; one flesh. Besides, of her body were the other seven sons and three daughters begotten; for we do not read that Job had a second wife. And lastly, when Job offered

sacrifice, to expiate the sins of his friends, he offered none for his wife; therefore in all likelihood she was holy. Yet against all this it might be said, that she was one flesh with him, not one spirit; many a religious husband is knit to an ungodly wife; and it is the opinion of the fathers, that the devil spared her on purpose to vex him; what tempter could he find more fit than her that lay in his bosom? Nor did her speech a little trouble him; for during all his trial, not one other so hasty a word dropped from him, as to call anybody fool. Besides, which strikes it home, she expostulates with him about his integrity: as if she took it ill that he took it no worse: his patience made her impatient. Oh how rare a grace is it in men, to bless God for their crosses, to kiss the hand that strikes them! "Behold, this evil is of the Lord," says that mad-brained king of Israel; "what should I wait for the Lord any longer?" 2 Kings vi. 33. We are soon weary of our attendance: we can wait at the gates of the Divine bounty, so long as we feel benefits a coming, like insatiate beggars for more alms; but if we be corrected for our unruliness, then, Why should we wait on the Lord any longer? This evil is of the Lord; this evil, this one evil: none of his mercies or good turns are thought on, but this one evil sticks in our stomachs. In unthankful hearts, one of God's afflictions mars the glory of all his blessings. Now therefore we must praise him; now, even in the time of our adversity: for shall we receive good things of God, and not evil? Job ii. 10. None must prevent Christ of his right, which is his glory.

We have three considerations here, or this "way" may be considered in three relations; by way of position, by way of opposition, and by way of composition. First, positively, in the right and true nature of it; what it signifies in itself. Secondly, oppositively, as it is opposed to that external duration after this world, when time shall be no more. "Now, and for ever;" this short now, compared with that long for ever. Thirdly, compositively, as it respects all times and all occasions; every opportunity is a now, and this now is nothing else but opportunity.

I. All the term we have in this world, is but a now: that which was in the morning, is past; what may be in the evening, is not yet come: the former may be already lost, and the future we are not sure of; we can only make much of our now. The time past is irrecoverable, the future to us is contingent, and the very now is slippery and transient: and yet this is all the term we have; we must enjoy this or nothing. Either now or never, is a frequent offer. To call back the elapsed time, is a foolish imagination: to bid the sun, when it is full south, to go back to the east; or when it is noon, to make it but the third hour of the day; who would attempt this but a madman? And as we cannot recall the past, so nor hasten the future. We have planted trees, but we must stay for the fruit until the season comes. When it is ripened of itself, we may reach out our hand, and gather it before it fall off; but we cannot hasten the ripening of it; we cannot make the winter fruit mellow in June. In the curing of a fever, till there be some concoction of the disease, the physicians themselves must be patients. Any disorder of the patient, any pretermission of the physician, may exalt the disease, and increase the violence of it: no diligence can hasten the maturity; they must all tarry the season. And why should we look for that in a disease, which is the disorder, the irregularity, and rebellion of the body, which we cannot find in nature itself. It were scarce a disease, if it could be ordered, and made obedient to our times. The great

lady, in matter of childbirth, cannot put off her ninth month to a tenth; nor hasten it to a sixth, without bearing an abortive issue. Men in authority will not be put to change their seasons; we must take them in their now, or fail of our purpose. We cannot look for this indulgence in time: there is an opportunity, which is the now of time; let slip that, and time will not be at our beck. Oh that such and such sins were to do again! we then would never admit them: this is the language of those who lament in hell. Oh that the time of doing such and such things were come! this is the language of the foolish on earth. "Oh that I were made judge in the land!" 2 Sam. xv. 4. What an excellent judge would Absalom be! But when by offering violence to time, he had screwed out a now for his affected magistracy, he proved an unnatural traitor. Take therefore thy now, the opportunity that God sends thee; use it, and be thankful.

The Scripture is very liberal, when it calls our life a day; for in the day there be twelve hours, saith our Saviour. It is too much to call it an hour, which is but the twelfth part of a day; for in the hour there be sixty minutes. Nay, call it a minute, the sixtieth part of an hour. A minute is little, yet not little enough: we must come to a point, and take that for all the certainty of our allowance; we can be sure of no more than our very now. I will bless the Lord while I live, Psal. lxxiii. 4: and no certain tenure of life more than for a now. The wicked are "brought into desolation, as in a moment," Psal. lxxiii. 19. In a moment, let that be our memento; within the compass of a now we may be gone. That same day of salvation is called but a now, 2 Cor. vi. 2: the day of salvation may be longer to the world, no particular man can challenge more than his now. When was the longest now in the world? In the days of Joshua, when the sun stood still in Gibeon, Josh. x. 13. Why was this extension of time? why this stoppage in the wheels of nature, as if the plummet had been down? It was for that purpose for which our now is here given us, that God might have the glory. Israel was then in pursuit of their enemies; it was the time of execution; they cut them off with the sword, God with hailstones. Had Joshua only respected the slaughter, he knew that God's ordinance from heaven could have done that sufficiently; the sun needed not stand still to direct the shot. God can as well hit as shoot; kill, as hit. But that all nations might know that the same hand commands in earth, in the clouds, in heaven, the sun and moon shall stand still in heaven, while volleys of shot play upon them from the clouds. The whole earth could not see that cloud of hail, which because of the heavy burden flew but low; all the earth might see the sun and moon. All the world must needs be witnesses of that, which the eye of the world stood still to see. Who would not inquire the reason why the sun rested from motion? or what wonderful business was in hand, that he stayed his course to behold it? All was for the glory of God: he never had got himself so much honour among those heathen by one day's work, as he did by that, when the sun and moon suspended their courses, to become spectators, Josh. x. 13, 14. That was a long now indeed; never any like it: a now of twelve hours long, for so it appeared to be; because the sun, which is the measure of time, stood still about a whole day. We cannot look for such a favour, to have our now stretched out to twelve hours; that the sun should stand still in heaven, while we are killing our enemies, and by the sword of repentance doing execution upon our sins. But now, while the word is sounding, let us fall a repenting; and at every mo-

ment, upon every occasion, let us give glory to Christ.

This easily solves that riddle, What is the longest and the shortest, the oldest and the youngest thing in the world? Time: it is the longest, for it reacheth from the beginning of the world to the end: the shortest, for it is but a now; gone in the turning of a hand, in the twinkling of an eye; it lasts but for a moment. The oldest thing, for it is just as old as the creation, as the beginning of the world; it is five days older than man. As time is the register of all things below, so the world is the register of time: it was born on the first day, the first moment of the first morning; older than the sun and stars. Death is grown a very old man, though he hath yet strength enough to kill; sin is older than death, man is older than sin, time is older than man. Yet still is time the youngest thing; it is born and dies within the compass of a now. It makes all things aged, yet is itself never above a minute old. That which was heretofore is not; that which shall be hereafter is not; that which is was not heretofore, nor shall be hereafter. We stand by a river; the present water that is now passing by, was never there before, nor shall it ever return again. Now is all we have; this only is our certain tenure.

2. In respect of opposition to for ever: now let us glorify Christ, as we hope to do it for ever. For this we pray, that his will may be done in earth now as it is in heaven for ever. His will is his glory; and must have the present time here, as it hath the eternal day there. A point may be something to a line, because continued points make a line. Now may be something to a day: though there be many nows in a minute, and many minutes in an hour, and twelve hours in one day; yet still there is a proportion between now and day, because now is a part of the whole. Points enough will make up a line, and store of nows will run out to a full day's length; but there is no proportion between time and eternity; for eternity is not a duration of time, not an extension of time, nor can time be any part of eternity. Now therefore we must glorify him, or not for ever; here below, or not there above. Nay, if we do not glorify him now, he will not glorify us then. Our surest course is to do it now, whilst we may; lest we unhappily wish that we had done it, when we may not. We acknowledge in our prayer, "Thine is the kingdom;" that it is a powerful kingdom, for thine is "the power;" that it is a glorious kingdom, for thine is "the glory;" that it is an everlasting kingdom, "for ever and ever." God, as he is three Persons, hath three kingdoms. There is the kingdom of power and providence; and this we attribute to the Father. There is the kingdom of glory in heaven; and this we attribute to the Son, and to his purchase: "Come, ye blessed, inherit the kingdom," Matt. xxv. 34: he gives it. Between the two, there is the kingdom of grace, which we attribute to the Holy Ghost; because he takes them whom the King of power hath preserved, and the King of glory hath redeemed, and brings them along through the kingdom of grace to the kingdom of glory. The two former kingdoms, of power and of grace, are in this world; but neither of them is of this world, because they both refer to the kingdom of glory. The kingdom of the Father, which is the providence of God, doth preserve us. The kingdom of the Holy Ghost, which is the grace of God, doth sanctify us. And the kingdom of the Son, which is the glory of God, doth crown us. Power and grace are exercised on earth, glory is exhibited in heaven. Though to the saints this world be the way to their kingdom, yet their kingdom is not of this world. "My kingdom

is not of this world," saith the King of all, John xviii. 36: if not his, much less ours. In two of these kingdoms we have our now; for ever, belongs to the kingdom of glory. All the kings in heaven shall glorify Christ for ever there; we that hope for that kingdom, must do it in our now here. The gospel is our now; and this (we know) is called a kingdom, the very kingdom of heaven. First, because it revealeth a kingdom, Rom. xvi. 25, discovers a kingdom before utterly unknown to the world. Secondly, because it prepares us for a kingdom; for only grace can make us fit for glory, Col. i. 12. Thirdly, because it promiseth a kingdom, Luke xii. 32, and makes good that promise. Fourthly, because it rules us as a kingdom, subduing our wills and affections to the obedience of Christ, 2 Cor. x. 5. Our now lies in this kingdom, during the reign of the gospel. As Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and of Cyrus the Persian; so let our goodness prosper under the reign of both these kingdoms; of God the Father, over us in his providence, and of God the Holy Ghost, over us in his grace; that so God the Son may advance us to his glory. Out of this flower now, we may suck a double sweetness; both encouragement, and instruction.

(1.) For our encouragement, it is but a short time that we have to serve; our apprenticeship will soon run out. They that mind their work, and ply their business with delight, never think the time long; as Jacob's service of seven years for Rachel seemed but a few days, Gen. xxix. 20. O God, our age is nothing unto thee, Psal. xxxix. 5; and if we are men after David's heart, as he was a man after God's heart, our sixty years spent in his service, is but like a St. Lucie's day; nay, but as a pleasant dream when one awaketh; a very now, the next degree to nothing. A hackney jade, that knows the shortness of his journey, will scour it away. The hope of a reward in the evening, and rest at night, will make a hireling accomplish his day. How base are we, if we go groaning under our now, and cannot carry our burden one stride! "Yet a little while, and he will not tarry," Heb. x. 37. A very little while indeed; we cannot imagine a less space in time than a now; as we cannot find a less place in the mathematics than a point: put them together, and it is but a point of time. Two things show time to be exceeding precious. First, because they that have lost time, that are swallowed up into the eternity of hell, had rather be owners of one now, of one moment to repent in, than to be lords of the whole world. Secondly, because a very now made use of, a short time employed in the work of salvation, shall gain us an everlasting kingdom. In the doing of evil, as one expresses it, that is short which delights, that is eternal which torments. But in the doing of good, that is short which labours, that is eternal which crowns. The husbandman lies to all the year, for one short harvest; eleven months' labour for one month's profit; and yet that hoped-for profit may miscarry too, either by ill weather abroad, or by vermin in the barn. God hath set us but one month's task for a whole year's harvest: nay, the labour lasts but for a now, the fruit for ever; and it is such fruit as cannot miscarry, joy and glory laid up for us in heaven, Matt. vi. 20. Therefore hath he made our life of labour so short, and our life of rest so long; that we might not grudge to work out our now, for that reward of peace whereof there is no end. "I will run the way of thy commandments," saith holy David, Psal. cxix. 32. It were folly to ask him why he makes such haste, when we know he would fain be at home.

(2.) For our instruction: so must we glorify Christ now in our militant estate, as we desire to do for

ever, in our triumphant estate. The draught and abridgement of heaven is in every sanctified heart upon earth : as it is said of the good prince, that he carries the pattern of his governing the people always about him ; and so rules himself, as he would have them ruled by him ; so the Christian hath ever the pattern of heaven in his conscience, and so lives here as the saints do there. It is true that the glory of heaven is not visible to mortal eyes : "eye hath not seen," 1 Cor. ii. 9 ; yet a man may have the map of a city which he never saw. All Homer's liads have been drawn into a small volume ; we have seen the counterfeit, the image of a king in a little tablet. When a pitched field is to be painted or printed within the compass of a sheet of paper, but a few soldiers can be presented entire, not many stations or postures whole and complete ; but the greater number appear to us only by their heads or helmets, and the several troops or companies by their colours. Yet by this portraiture we may guess at the battle, and conceive the model or platform of it in our imaginations. So though heaven be too immense to be measured by a human line, and none but the angel with his golden reed can mete out the new Jerusalem, Rev. xxi. 15 : yet the just man hath the compendium of it in his breast ; the holiness and peace of his soul is a brief of it ; and his sounding forth of God's praises here, is an echo of the music above. As the joy or triumph for the king's coronation begins at the court, and from thence spreads into the country ; so the hymns of praise harmoniously sung to Christ in heaven, have a reverberation upon earth. St. Paul tells us, that the foundation of that high building is laid here below, 1 Tim. vi. 19 : if no holiness here, no blessedness there. Let us never look for a house above the stars, if we do not feel the groundwork of it in our own hearts. It is a vain fancy, to expect a house without a foundation. The heir-apparent of a kingdom, during his minority, may be brought up in a foreign country ; yet even there he may have the figure of his kingdom in his hand, and the copy of it in his heart. Who doth not pretend to the kingdom of heaven ? Many a one that wants his pattern. Presumptuous hyperbole, dost thou lay title to a kingdom, whereof thou hast no form ? What royal blood runs in thy veins ? What grace and holiness is in thy heart ? Where are those noble actions that become a prince ? There is fulness of joy above ; is thy laughing and singing in a tavern the pattern of it ? There is honour and glory above ; is thy covetous and base drudgery, to scrape together the muck of worldly riches, which should rather be spread abroad to dung the land, is this any pattern of it ? There is music and harmony above ; be thy wanton sonnets and drunken catches any patterns of it ? There is peace and rest above ; is thine idle security and sleepy neglect any pattern of it ? There is beauty and clarity above ; is thy piecing up the defects of nature with art, the laying of vermilion upon dust, or dressing up of mortal limbs in rich and curious attires, any image of it ? There is light above ; are thy works of darkness any reflection of it ? Will a man draw the sun with a coal ? There is perfect obedience above ; is thy rebellion any model of it ? There is pure innocency above ; be thy rapes and rapines, thy rage and cruelty, any resemblance of it ? The language above is the praises of Christ ; are thy oaths, curses, and blasphemies, of a like sound to it ? These sins be rather the image of hell than of heaven. Shall we, like those sun-burnt pagans, that painted the angels black in favour of their own complexion, measure the joys of heaven by our own corrupt and sensual pleasures upon earth ? or think

that the saints there stand affected as we do here ? This were to measure things that are unmeasurable, by things that are measurable, by things that are miserable. This were for heaven to take a pattern from us, not we to take a pattern from heaven ; and to imagine the saints (though in a higher degree) to be of like disposition with us, not we striving to be of like disposition with them. Will the covetous ask, what money there is in heaven ? the purchaser, what land there is to be sold in heaven ? the voluptuous, what dainties there be in heaven ? or the ambitious, what place he may get in the court of heaven ? These are base and brutish thoughts. The model of heaven is within a man's heart ; it "is not meat and drink ; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost," Rom. xiv. 17. There is nothing that I can think of upon earth, that bears any resemblance of heaven, but peace ; there is no war in heaven : and music ; there is an everlastingness of that in heaven. Holiness, obedience, joy, peace, concentrated in the praise and glory of Christ ; this is the pattern and picture of heaven. This if we have in our now of grace, it shall make us blessed in the forever of glory.

3. In respect of composition ; for now, like the eye of a well-drawn picture, looks upon all times, upon all occasions. There is no action but challengeth a now ; no accident but hath the now. Now such a thing is done ; now such an event happened. The good tree brings forth fruit in her season, Psal. i. 3 ; that is the now of it. "Nine hour is not yet come," John ii. 4 : Christ himself tarries for his now. Presently after, he changed the water into wine ; then his now came. *Tempus a temperando* ; because it distinguisheth things in order. "To every thing there is a season," Eccl. iii. 1. It is taken both strictly, and more at large ; in the one sense, it is the daughter of a single moment ; in the other, the sister of a whole life. And thus must it be understood here : let us be giving glory to Christ now, that is, all our life long. So the day of mortality is opposed to the day of eternity : now, in this life ; that for ever, in the life to come. Now therefore is, in effect, always ; we have no time which cannot be called now. When we are young, that is our now ; when we are old, that is also our now ; the age betwixt these, is our now too. David took in all times and seasons to the praise of his Maker. In the morning ; "I will sing of thy mercy in the morning," Psal. lxx. 16 : yea, he prevented the morning, waiting for the Lord "more than they that watch for the morning," Psal. cxxx. 6. In the night ; "At midnight I will rise to give thanks unto thee," Psal. cxix. 62. All the day ; "My tongue shall talk of thy righteousness all the day long," Psal. lxxi. 24. "Seven times a day do I praise thee," Psal. cxi. 164. Very frequently ; "I will bless the Lord at all times : his praise shall continually be in my mouth," Psal. xxxiv. 1. At all times, no hour excluded ; always in my mouth, no occasion excepted. I will sing praise unto thy name for ever. This is the end of our redemption, to serve him "all the days of our life," Luke i. 75 : if all our days, then our days of sadness too : "daily shall he be praised," Psal. lxxii. 15. It is usual, when God crowneth the year with his goodness, and drops fatness upon the pastures, for "the little hills to rejoice on every side," Psal. lxxv. 12 : therefore is great joy compared to the joy of harvest, Isa. ix. 3. But when God restrains these heavenly influences, then the little hills droop on every side ; no fatness, no more rejoicing then. There be too many, that never think of God till dinner time, that they are put in mind of it by the chaplain's saying grace ; and it is somewhat if they mind him then. These are far

from David's "all the day long:" "From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same the Lord's name is to be praised," Psal. cxiii. 3. But what if they should want a dinner, and know not where to get it? not so much food, as would keep life and soul together? How would they praise him then? But for a now give, where would be the now praise? Such irreligious souls know not how to bless the Lord fasting; no devotion with them, but upon a full stomach. Like to those baser instruments, they can yield no music till you have filled them, and even then the sound that comes from them is harsh to all holy ears. Rich men praising, you have store; but show me a wretched man praising. For a "the Lord gave," you have a world of benedictions; but one benediction for a "the Lord hath taken away" is worth them all, Job i. 21.

The Lord looks for glory, not only in fair weather, but even in storms and tempests; not only in high fortunes, but even out of the dust he ordaineth praises. The worldling cast upon his sick-bed, and hopeless of remedy, asks what he should praise God for? O ungrateful wretch, how innumerable are the blessings he hath received of him! and yet does he ask for what he should praise him? That he hath life, and the use of reason, is a blessing. How justly might God have bereaved his body of a soul, his soul of understanding, his understanding of all possibility of comfort! That he hath space to repent, a tongue and time to call upon God for mercy, is a blessing; and far more than God owes him. There are natural medicines for his body; that is a blessing: there is spiritual physic for his soul; a rich blessing. Besides all the former blessings, these he hath in present. As Christ once said to the Jews, For which of my good works do you stone me? John x. 32; so now, For which of my good blessings do you despise me? If he should give us no more, yet reason would make us thankful for what we have received. But to see him give, that does not for the present receive; one that will plead Christ's cause without a fee; one that can say with Job, "Though he slay me, yet I will trust in him," Job xiii. 15; or with those three saints, Though the fire consume us, we will serve him, Dan. iii. 18; whatsoever good I want, whatsoever evil I suffer, I will ever give glory to the Lord: here is the heart and voice of a saint. Thus every condition, rich or poor; every state, whether of health or sickness; every place, at home or abroad; every time, prosperous or adverse; every temper, of joy or sorrow; every occasion, of peace or war; every access, of friend or foe; every event, of life or death; is our now, to celebrate the glory of Christ. This circumstance further affords us three instructions.

(1.) Glorify him for the present; that is thy now. Delay is not only danger, but sin. "As we have opportunity, let us do good to all men," Gal. vi. 10. Perhaps that is not a man's will, which is his testament; he would keep that by his will, which he is fain to give away by his testament. We read of one man that did *cunctando restituere rem*, i. e. restore the state of things by delaying: it was but one man, very rare. Thousands for that one, do *cunctando perdere rem*, i. e. destroy the state of things by delay; and that a thing so precious, that the whole world is not worth it. He that makes haste to be rich, shall not be innocent; but he that makes haste to be innocent shall be rich, in the favour and blessing of God. When I read that Christianity is compared to a race, how can I but wonder at them that sit still? He that hath a long journey to go, and but a short time allowed him, cannot well stay to take every acquaintance that he meets by the hand. "He that believeth shall not make haste," Isa. xxviii. 16; not haste to

mend the pace of God's purposes: but he that believeth, will make haste to set forth God's praises. We are discontented if God defers the grant of our prayers; and will he be pleased when we put off the publication of his praises? Shall we say, we will bless God to-morrow, for what he gives us to-day, and think that time enough? Things are acceptable when they are seasonable. Is this all thy succours to the poor beggar, Come again to-morrow? Prov. iii. 28. Alas, his body may die for want of meat, and thy soul may die for want of mercy, before the morrow. Christ condemns the judge that was long ere he did justice, though he did it.

If God's favours were only mere futurities, natural men would cry, We will thank him for them when we have them: as they tarry for his blessings, so he should tarry for their praises. But that the mouth of all wickedness might be stopped, they are enriched with his present benefits, to incite their present thankfulness. Let the same place that is witness of his mercies, be also witness of our thankfulness. "My soul doth magnify the Lord," Luke i. 46: it is doth magnify, in the present; not will magnify, in the future. *Minus ex crastino pendet, qui hodierno mammon injicit.* (Sen.) Be sure to do that good to-day, which thou art not sure to do to-morrow. They that received the word, were the same day added to the church, Acts ii. 41: the same day. Zaccheus made haste to receive Christ, Luke xix. 6: the same hour. "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace," Luke ii. 29: the same moment, that was Simeon's now. This same day let us join ourselves with the church in the praises of Christ; this same hour let us receive him joyfully into our hearts; this same moment, in our very now, let us depart from sin, and fall to repentance. Let us be sudden in our turning to Christ, for he will be sudden in his coming upon us. "The day of the Lord cometh as a thief in the night," 1 Thess. v. 2. Oh how should this menace thunder-strike the secure sinner, that the dreadful Judge shall surprise him suddenly! Let the swearer tremble; for while he is rapping out a volley of oaths, God's hand may stop his blasphemous mouth, with those wicked speeches in it: he may die blaspheming; God may smite him suddenly. The intoxicated body may throw out a drunken soul into the bosom of the prince of darkness, when he disgorgeth his surfeited stomach; as the poet describes one bleeding to death, *Purpuream vomit ille animam*, He sends forth his purple soul: (Virg. Æn. 9.) the Lord may smite him suddenly. The vain-glorious boaster, so ambitious of titles, that, like Herod, he hath not the modesty to refuse "the voice of a god," when it is put upon him, may immediately be smitten by an angel, Acts xii. 23, and feel both his honour and life worm-eaten: the Lord may smite him suddenly. The sacrilegious withholders of God's dues, and defrauders of their pastors, to the horror of many in this city, may speed like Ananias and his wife, Acts v. 5: the Lord may smite them suddenly. The covetous worldling, while both his hands are raking in mammon, may fall into the hands of fatal destruction: the Lord may take him away suddenly. All impenitent sinners may share in this one phrase of wretchedness; God may smite them suddenly. He will make his name glorious, Psal. cii. 21: if thou refuse to honour him with a gracious life, he will honour himself upon thee by a fearful death. We have heard of some dying with curses in their mouths, instead of prayers: what was the reason, but that they were more used to cursing than to praying? Be careful therefore of thy now; glorify God while thou hast time: for as it is usual with him to make up for the delay of punishment by the hea-

riosity of it; so not rare, to punish the delay of repentance with impenitence. Our nature is dull to goodness; but wherefore serve the spurs of diligence? We cannot, as Ambrose observes, form nature for ourselves, but we can diligence. As Paul being sent into the church to preach Christ, so we being sent into the world to praise Christ, had need of an Ananias to excite us, "Why tarriest thou?" Acts xxii. 16. Let us never confer with flesh and blood about the convenience, Gal. i. 16, when we are called to celebrate God's glory.

(2.) Being entered into this holy course, let us follow it. The celyptic line of his praise must run quite through the zodiac of our life; our whole now must be spent in his holy service, our now in the full latitude of it. So long as we have any blessings on earth, let the earth ring with the praises of the Founder. Shall we think any now sufficient? We have not done it before, we never mind it hereafter; only now for a girl we will be hot upon the business. Must all our thankfulness be despatched in a moment? That which is but for a moment, is indeed of no moment. But "blessed is he that doeth righteousness at all times," Psal. cvi. 3. "Every day will I bless thee, and praise thy name for ever and ever," Psal. cxlv. 2. The day will have an evening; if his praise should last no longer, the night would bring in silence: nay, but "for ever and ever;" the glorious day of eternity hath no night. "While I live will I praise the Lord: I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being," Psal. cxlvi. 2: not only while I live, for this life will have an end; but while I have any being, that can never have an end. To continue in giving glory to Christ, is no less requisite than to begin: though the beginning be more than half, yet the end is more than all. The God of all perfection looks, that the last of our life should be the best of his glory. The philosopher being asked in his old age, why he did not give over his practice, and take his ease, answered, When a man is to run a race of forty furlongs, would you have him sit down at the nine and thirtieth, and so lose the prize? We do not keep a good fire all day, and let it go out in the evening when it is coldest; but then rather lay on more fuel, that we may go warm to bed. He that slakes the heat of his zeal in his age, will go cold to bed, and in a worse case to his grave. Wary travellers ride fair and softly when they come near their journey's end; but if we lag so in the way of godliness, we shall never come to the expected end of our journey. The eternal God, though he passed over infinite millions of generations, before he came to a creation of the world; yet when he began, did never intermit his work, but continued it day to day, till he had perfected the whole: and then he rested, depositing it in the hands of a sabbath. It should not be long before we enter into the vineyard, (no hour prescribes unto God, yet God prescribes an hour to us, and that the first hour of our day,) the sooner the better; but being once entered, we must intermit no labour, never give over working till our sabbath comes, that eternal rest in heaven.

In the institution and bringing on of his church, God proceeded by degrees. First, he began with the law of nature, a rule ingrafted in our minds: but the characters of that being almost worn out by the custom of sin, he wrote his law in tables, legible to their eyes, and durable to time, incapable of alteration: but because this law could not save them, he promised a Messiah; and yet perceiving that men would not sufficiently rely upon his promise, he gave them types, and ceremonies, and sacrifices, prefiguring their expected Messiah. This was not yet enough, therefore when the fulness of time was come,

he sent his Son, Gal. iv. 4; which was so much the more perfect than all the rest, as the substance is more than the shadow: still the most perfect came at the last. So what degrees of goodness soever we have passed through, God looks (after his own example) that our best shall come at last. "Cleave unto him, that thou mayest be increased at thy last end," Eccles. ii. 3. Decrease of life, must have increase of righteousness. Other men set forth the good wine at first, but thou hast kept the best wine till the last, John ii. 10. Hypocrites from hot become lukewarm, from lukewarm become cold. Their wine turneth into vinegar; for at first it was mingled with water, and no more wine in it, than would give it a colour. But the right Christian vents his best wine at last, the stars of his graces shine brightest in the evening of his life. Samson slew abundance of Philistines in his life-time, but more at his death, Judg. xvi. 30. Daily are the faithful killing up the Philistines, mortifying their sins all their life; but on their death-bed they kill them all; far more dying, than they did living. Let us frame the desires of our hearts, all our speeches and actions, to give glory to Christ, so long as our now lasts, till our mortal days be ended. And when we have no more now left to do it in here, we shall be blessed to do it in that eternity hereafter.

(3.) That we may the better perform it, while in this world, God hath wrapped up his glory in every creature; not as fire in flint, which appears not without some violence; but as light in the sun, which is not only visible itself, but making all other objects visible. So easily may we see his glory in every creature, that we cannot see the creature but through his glory, as we can see nothing but by the light. He hath so folded up his glory in them, that we must annihilate them before we can destroy his glory: nay, when the creatures shall be dissolved, yet his glory will remain clear and entire. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but his glory shall never pass away. As the artificer wrought his own name so cunningly in the shield of Minerva, that it could not be picked out, unless there were a dissolution of the whole frame: more inviolably is the name of God wrought in all things, in our bodies, in our souls; and those bodies and souls must be reduced to nothing, before his name can suffer diminution. Nay, when those bodies are turned to dust, and those souls sent to their own place, his most honourable name will still stick upon them; either the name of Saviour in their salvation, or the name Judge in their just confusion. It is an observation in philosophy, that if the motion of the heavens should cease, there would be no generation of things upon earth. The flowers which we see here below, are begotten of those flowers of light, the stars we see above. The earth, the lower millstone, that lies still; the sun, that higher millstone, that runs round, and keeps the other in heat: both must concur to the preparing of bread for us. The earth is as the wife, the sun as the husband; she cold, he of a power to give heat: the wife without the husband, the husband without the wife, cannot beget children; by the marriage and uniting of this couple we have our fruits. The sun, the father of them, is more noble; but the earth cannot be left out for procreation. God, that made both the earth, the sun, and stars, is of more powerful operation than they all: our natural hearts are as the cold and barren earth; from that Sun of righteousness comes all the influence of grace: the cause of fructifying is in him: he gives the whole operation of being, or doing good. If we do not return him all the glory, the wife is worthy to lose her husband, the earth to want her Sun, the soul to be deprived of her Saviour. As when the king removes,

the court follows; and when the court is gone, the hangings and stately furniture is taken down: so if through our unthankfulness, God removes from our heart, where he once kept his court, his graces will not stay behind; and if they be once departed, down go the hangings and ornaments of peace and prosperity: all the noble virtues leave us; it may be our sins, the black guard, will tarry with us. Our apostle begins this Epistle with a salutation, wherein he wisheth grace and peace unto us: so Paul continually joins them together. As grace and peace salute together, so grace and peace bid farewell together. Grace and peace will take no pleasure to stay after glory; and glory will not stay when sin is placed in the chair. At the birth of Ishabod, away goes glory. If sin be once born, and dandled, and made the darling, our soul, the woeful mother, may weep, cry, and complain, "The glory is departed from Israel," 1 Sam. iv. 22. She shall not only cry in this sorrow, but die in this sorrow; the child to which she gave life shall be her death; her lying-in shall prepare for her laying-out; from the bed of her delivery she is delivered over to the bed of the grave. Such an unhappy issue is sin, and above all sin the robbing Christ of his honour, that it destroys its own mother. At the nativity of unthankfulness, the soul is left forlorn of comfort and succour: for grace, and peace, and glory forsake her altogether.

But let the glory of Christ be our delight; let us more rejoice in doing him honour, than in our own salvation. Let the covetous repair to their riches, like birds to their nests; and the lustful to their brothels, like flesh-flies to the larder; the ambitious to their honours, like butterflies to a poppy; the strong to their holds, as snails creep into their shells; the learned to their arts, as bees to their hives; atheists to their sensual refuges, as dogs to their kennels; and politicians to their wits, as foxes to their holes: the holy soul will know no other sanctuary but Jesus Christ. I met with an apologue, and it is this: A stationer hung up in a mart, the pictures or small printed counterfeits of men famous in their kinds; among which, he had also the picture of Christ. Divers men bought according to their several fancies. The soldier buys his Cæsar, the lawyer his Justinian, the physician his Galen, the philosopher his Aristotle, the poet his Virgil, the orator his Cicero, and the divine his Augustine; every man after the addition of his own heart. The picture of Christ hung by still, of less price than the rest. A poor chapman, that had no more money than would purchase that, bought it, saying, Since each man hath taken away his own god, give me, friend, my own Christ. I speak not for his picture painted to the eyes, but for his lively image to be placed in our hearts. The affianced virgin hath the picture of her beloved, drawn in a little tablet, which she wears in her bosom, next to her heart. There let us have the image of Christ; not limned in our chambers, but fixed in the inner chamber of our hearts. She makes much of every token sent her from her beloved, and rejoiceth in the sight of them, and memory of him, upon all occasions: every blessing is a token of Christ's love to us; in the fruition of any of them, let us remember Him whom our soul loveth, and set forth his glory.

Lastly, *How long* must this reddition of glory last? For ever. So far is eternity beyond the capacity of man in his militant estate, that we want language to express it, and a name how to call it. Various are the interpretations of this *τὸ αἰῶνα αἰῶνος*. Junius renders it, *Ad tempus sempiternum*: i. e. For an eternal time: there is indeed a *sempiternum* above, but no *tempus*: time is swallowed up in everlastingness.

Some say, *in seculo*, i. e. for ages; and to make it more complete, others add to it, and make it up in *secula seculorum*, i. e. for ages of ages. Indeed they had no reason to pinch it of measure, whereas it is for ever. Divers phrases abbreviate it, none can make it too long. *Seculum* some derive a *sequendo*, i. e. from following, as if it signified only a succession of times. Others more probably, a *secundo*, because it cuts off: as *secula* (which comes from the same root) signifies a scythe or sickle, to cut down the grass and grain of the earth. It is generally taken for an age; but of what dimension, there is difference of opinions. But whether we take it for thirty, or for a hundred, or for a thousand years, still it is but a time, and what is time to eternity? Hierome and Montanus read, *In diem æternitatis*, i. e. For the day of eternity; which is both more precise as to the letter or sound, and more full as to the sense. Eternity is without time, and day excludes night; there is no night in heaven, but altogether day; no time is there, but altogether eternity. Nor is it only *in diem æternam*, but *in diem æternitatis*, for the fuller exposition of it. I know that, for ever, is divers ways taken in the Scripture.

1. For the life of man. Samuel a priest to the Lord for ever, 1 Sam. i. 22; yet this ministry was but during his life; death determined his priesthood.

2. For the year of jubilee. The servant whose ear was bored, shall serve his master for ever, Exod. xxi. 6; yet at the year of jubilee he was to return to his own family, and to be free, Lev. xxv. 10.

3. To the first coming of Christ. "My covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant," Gen. xvii. 13. You shall keep the feast of the passover by an ordinance for ever, Exod. xii. 14. The garments of Aaron are said to be a statute to him for ever, Exod. xxviii. 43. Circumcision, the passover, Aaron's priesthood, the sacrifices and ceremonies, were all said to be a law and an ordinance for ever; yet we know that Christ did put an end to them all. For circumcision, Gal. v. 2, and the passover, 1 Cor. v. 7, the sacrifices, Heb. x. 9, and ordinances, Col. ii. 14, are all taken away by Christ. They could not last for ever; for they were at first to die, and now they are deadly.

4. To the second coming of Christ; that is, the end of the world. "Thou art a priest for ever," Psal. ex. 4; and, "He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever," Luke i. 33. Yet of that priesthood, and of that kingdom, there shall be an end, when Christ hath delivered up the kingdom to God the Father, 1 Cor. xv. 24. His sacerdotal office shall cease, when there be none left to intercede for, all his members being in heaven. Jonah in the deep complained, that the earth with her bars shall cover him for ever, Jonah ii. 6; yet that could but have reached to the resurrection; then earth and sea must give up their dead. For ever, in all these places, is taken for a long space or lapse of time; but this for ever, here, is a duration without end.

Observe, 1. The difference between the King of heaven and the kingdom of heaven: either of them hath an eternity, but the King's eternity exceeds. God's eternity is the duration of an uncreated being; our eternity is but the duration of a created being. God was King when there was no heaven, for he made heaven; and of necessity the Maker must be before the work. Heaven, and the angels and saints who dwell in that court, had a beginning, though they shall have no end; but God hath neither end nor beginning. The heavens contain us, they cannot contain him: nay, he contains the heavens. Time was but a little breath of his mouth, and all the wheels of time but the motion of his finger. Eternity

is his nature: he is perfect eternity itself; and the continuance of the world is but a shadow or abridgement of it, far shorter than himself. He lays his hands upon both ends of everlastingness, comprehending it within his infinite eternity, and eternal infiniteness.

2. The difference betwixt this now and for ever. Now hath both a beginning and an end; for ever hath a beginning, no end. Now is spun out by degrees; for ever is perfect at once. Of nothing we become children, of children men, of men aged, and in age (if not before) we must die; one now brings us into this world, another now carries us out. In the orb of this for ever, there is no increase and decrease, no infancy and age, no growth and death; all are perfect at once, all shall continue perfect for ever. As for death, he may here ramble abroad, and deal about his bloody and fatal blows; and heaven is quite out of his reach. In that upper world, death hath nothing to do; his power, his credit is lost there; above they laugh at his fury. Our now here hath many alterations; it is subject to changes and chances. Stay but a now, and the greatest man of the East is become a beggar; but another now, and the healthiest man droops; this minute he was well, and he is ill this minute. He feels a sudden change, and alteration to worse, and cannot tell the cause, nor call it by any name. This variable, and therefore miserable, condition of man, was not imprinted by God; for as himself is immortal, so he put a beam, a coal of immortality into us. This by our obedience we might have blown into a flame, but by our sin we blew it out. We beggared ourselves by hearkening after false riches; we infatuated ourselves by listening after false knowledge. So that now we do not only die, but die upon the rack, die by the torment of sickness: and because we fear sickness and death, we are even sick before sickness comes, and die before death comes. For the very jealousy and preapprehension of sickness and death, is an antedating of sickness and death. We make ourselves sick before we are so, and are ready to die ere death comes at us. We are not sure we are ill; but by feeling of our pulse, one hand asks the other how we do. We die, and cannot enjoy death, because we die in the torment of sickness: we are tormented with sickness, and cannot stay till the torment comes; but make ourselves sick with presages, and even die of suspicion. These mutations and miseries are involved in our now; none such belongs to for ever. In heaven there is no sin, therefore no sickness; no sickness, therefore no death; but for those three incidents of our now, three beatitudes in for ever; for sin, grace; for sickness, glory; and for death, life and immortality.

3. The difference between the saints militant and those triumphant; between us in our now, and them in their for ever. We have the battle to fight; they have fought it, and are conquerors. We are troubled with temptations; they tread the tempter under their feet. We have the bitter cup of affliction to drink; they are past it, and filled with comfort. We have our degrees to take in the rough school of the cross, they are perfect and complete doctors. We have but the grace, they have the glory of saints. We have an apprenticeship to serve under our good Master Christ, they are free-men of the new Jerusalem. We are heirs of the same kingdom, but yet in our minority; they are possessed of the inheritance. We live below, in the vale of miseries; they above, in the mount of blessedness. We have the earnest of heaven, they are stated in the whole bargain. We are upon the way, they at their journey's end. Our race is to run, they have got the prize. We are pil-

grims in this world, they are at home in their own country. We seek "for a city which hath foundations," Heb. xi. 10, they have found it. We are in black, our mourning garments; they in white, Rev. vii. 14, the habit of rejoicing. And which is worst, we are haunted with sins; those pernicious heathens cannot be quite expelled out of our Canaan; too often do they draw us into the offence of our Maker, for which our hearts smite us with remorse, and we go heavily all the day long: they above, are rid of all these solicitations, and think this the happiest of all their deliverances, that they are safely delivered from their sins. We sin against the Lord for trifles, they would not offend him for a thousand heavens. This is the sorest inconvenience of our now; not so much that it is a vale of miseries, as a vault of sins. The good soul had rather suffer the evil that displeaseth her sense, than do the evil that displeaseth her Maker. Here we have continual work for repentance: oh how much of our time is spent in undoing that by sorrow, which we have done amiss by sin! In our house sin continually makes dust, and repentance must be the besom to sweep it. In heaven there is nothing but purity and perfection. Here we give Christ some glory, but it is with the intermission of sleep, and interruption of sin; and too often we dishonour him, which costs us many bitter tears. In that orb of eternity, his praises are perpetually sung, and there is no stay of his glory.

4. There is yet a communion betwixt this now and for ever; the saints that are gone before us, are not perfect without us, Heb. xi. 40. There is an association of both, them above, and us below; a communion of saints. For the militant and triumphant church make but one parish; though this world be scarce the belfry in respect of that upper choir. When Christ was upon the earth, he was not out of his diocese; nor out of his temple, when he was in our flesh. They sing not the praises of Christ alone, we answer them. As when the angels began, "Glory to God in the highest," the shepherds followed, "glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen," Luke ii. 14, 20. The militant church in this joins with the church triumphant: "Therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious name; evermore praising thee, and saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts, heaven and earth are full of thy glory: Glory be to thee, O Lord most High." "The goodly fellowship of the prophets praise thee. The glorious company of the apostles praise thee. The noble army of martyrs praise thee." And not only so, but "the holy church throughout all the world doth acknowledge thee." We have our part, and this hymn must not be sung without us. The epithalamium of that happy marriage of Christ to our nature, was begun by angels; yet there were men on earth that did second them: the song was not let fall, but as it came from heaven to the earth, so was it sent up again from the earth to heaven. The exaltation of our nature in the Son of God, was entertained with angelical anthems. His session at the right hand of his Father, is lauded by the whole choir of heaven; yea, and it is rebounded, rebounded by the saints below. They from the battlements of glory, we from the earth, the pavement of this temple, answer them, "Blessed be the name of the Lord, from this time forth and for evermore," Psal. exiii. 2. This song shall never cease; *now* and *for ever* shall both incessantly give him glory. "They rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty." Rev. iv. 8; no interruption of that music; but still, "Glory be to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost."

How, for a now only? once, and no more? at this hour, and so have done? No, but, "As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be world without end." "Glory in the highest," is the song of my soul in the house of my pilgrimage; I sing it while my heart is devoted to his praise, and my tongue shall speak of his righteousness. We have no angels to sing this "Glory in the highest," and it is music for an angel; but they are well pleased to take us into the concert, to make up the fuller harmony. Yet let us take heed that we do not mar the music. If our breasts be hoarse, and stuffed with the crudities of unrepented sins, our voices will yield but a harsh sound; and God's praises should be sung with a clear breast. As we desire to sing with the saints in heaven, let us live like those saints upon earth. When we have cleansed our hearts from all unrighteousness, and made them temples of the Holy Ghost, then do we rise above ourselves, and approach somewhat near to those blessed spirits. Then are we in state with saints and angels, to magnify the glorious name of Christ. There is joy among those angels in heaven, to hear their songs kept alive upon earth. When the Son of God came down from heaven to earth, and when he went up from earth to heaven, still he was entertained with songs of praise. Let us praise him both for the one and the other here, till we come to sing it in that glorious choir above: no more of wish then, but of fruition, and so of gratulation for ever.

5. This is one sympathy of the church, triumphant and militant: we all agree in this one harmony, of giving glory to Christ. "To him be glory" in our now; and, "To him be glory" in their for ever. Howsoever there may be distance in place, they on high, we below; and difference in grace, theirs perfect, ours inchoate; and difference in glory, they have it in substance, we but in hope; and difference in the effects of faith, we believe what we shall have, they have what they believed: yet in this there is concord and consent; and without much difference, Christ hath his glory both here and there. Though there be a local and ceremonial difference between us, in place and honour; we soldiers in his warfare, they at peace in his palace, like princes in his court; yet still there is a communion of saints, and we are all members of the same Head. Though we be like the feet of the body, nearest to the earth, yet we are parts of the same body; and all of us have but one Head, Jesus Christ. So inseparably are they in heaven united to us on earth, that the church upon earth is called the very kingdom of heaven. "There was war in heaven," Rev. xii. 7. Is not that the place of peace? Was not the dragon long since cast out of heaven? Can he get in thither, to work their disturbance? What, any war in heaven? No certainly, there is all welfare, no warfare. But this heaven is the church militant, and it is honoured with the name of heaven for seven resemblances. First, it shines bright as heaven, Dan. xii. 3. The church, saith Austin, shines with teachers, as the heaven doth with stars. Secondly, in heaven one star differs from another star in glory, so here are different measures and degrees of grace. Thirdly, heaven is incessant in motion, so the church continually moves toward God. Fourthly, heaven gives influence to all lower things, so all good to the world is conveyed through the church. Fifthly, heaven hath none but pure inhabitants, and all the church's children are heavenly. Their treasure is in heaven, Matt. vi. 20. Their desires in heaven, Col. iii. 2. Their conversation in heaven, Phil. iii. 20. The Lord of heaven dwells in them, Eph. iii. 17; and whosoever he is, his very presence makes a

heaven. Sixthly, heaven covers all sublunary things; so the church hath the moon under her feet, she treads upon the world; she is (as it were) shod with the moon, and crowned with the stars, Rev. xii. 1. Seventhly, as Satan is cast out of heaven, so also thrown out of the church: his place was no more found in heaven, Rev. xii. 8. But you will say he rangeth in the world, how then hath he no place? He hath none to do any hurt. If he cannot hurt, he hath no place. He may still have power to tempt, not to hurt: even the devil himself shall work to our good: "The prince of this world hath nothing in me," John xiv. 30. Thus the name of heaven is communicated to us upon earth: so certain are we in our now, to be co-stated in their for ever.

6. This for ever, is the perfection of the glory of heaven. It were a glory scarce worth glorying in, if it did not last for ever. This consummates the joy, that it cannot be lost; it would droop and languish at the very height, if the head of it were not borne up with this for ever. This is the crown of the crown of life, that the kings there shall wear their crowns for ever. The very hope of this, is the best inheritance of the greatest prince upon God's earth: after a kingdom which he must leave, to enjoy a kingdom which shall never leave him; to change a crown of gold for a crown of glory; to change the glory of a crown which must vanish, for the crown of glory which can never be taken from him. Alexander gave away all, and left himself nothing but hope; but it was not this hope. He wept when he heard of another world. He had wasted some time in winning this; and now to hear of another, when he had not gotten all this, it melted his great heart into tears. He thought one world indeed too little for him: this he made account to have wholly his; yet still he wanted a part. But now there was another world, wherein he had no part at all; this made him weep, but he wept as one that had no hope, 1 Thess. iv. 13. No earthly greatness can secure us from treachery and violence. Two of the king's chamberlains conspire against Ahasuerus, Esth. ii. 21. He that ruled over millions of men, through a hundred twenty and seven provinces, cannot assure himself from the hand of a villain. He that had the power of other men's lives, is in danger of his own. Oh blessed they that are possessed of a crown incorruptible, unfadeable, of a kingdom in heaven! No force, no treason can reach thither; there can be no peril of either violence or forfeiture. What ado there is in the world for annuities, for leases of life, of three lives, for freeholds and perpetuities! So undeterminable is the love of this world which determines every minute. We are very earnest and industrious about the continuance of our now; oh that we were half so careful about the assurance of our for ever! "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; eat, drink, and be merry," Luke xii. 19; he was but a fool. But when we have peace, happiness, and glory, (which are the true goods indeed,) laid up for us, not for many years, nor for many ages, but for ever, we may then be merry indeed. The best joys of our souls here, though they be the beams of God's favour, are often clouded. In our fairest day it often rains before night; and our jollity concludes in tears. If we escape outward crosses, yet we cannot avoid sins, and they do (and nothing but they should) set us a weeping. There are neither clouds nor rain in that eternal day above; they have nothing to weep for, therefore no place for tears. The Lord sometimes smiles upon us, and then we say in our prosperity, We shall never be moved, thou hast made our hill so strong, Psal. xxx. 6, 7. But thou didst hide thy face; and then we hang down the head, like

bulrushes in a shower. In heaven the face of God is never hidden; the saints and angels behold it continually, Matt. xviii. 10. This for ever crowns all their crowns, rejoiceth their joys, and even glorifies their glories, by confirming them in blessedness; the assurance that they shall be crowned for ever, blessed for ever, joyous and glorious for ever and ever.

For application of all. We must do what we can, to make the glory of Christ last for ever: not only in his eternity, for that shall be done without us; but in our eternity, which is to be done by us. So let us honour him while we live, that our very memory may occasion his honour when we are dead. "This shall be written for the generation to come, and the people which shall be created shall praise the Lord," Psal. cii. 18. O happy men that do such good works, for which the future ages shall praise him! Nature is pregnant in this office: The outgoings of the morning and evening praise thee; to teach us, neither to lie down, nor rise up, without remembering of our Maker. Day unto day, and night unto night, doth publish it: their language is heard every where, Psal. xix. 2, 3: how much more should we be diligent in the celebration of his praises! "One generation shall praise thy works to another," Psal. cxlv. 4. The faith of Abraham, in not sparing his only son, glorifies God even to this day. The patience of Job proclaims to all the world his honour. The gracious lives of the saints departed, do still magnify him; in every place we hear of them, and are moved to glorify God for them; as if his name had been less famous, if these men had not been, or not been so holy. Not that they could add renown to God, but God renowned himself by them. For if his justice gets honour by a Pharaoh, much more doth his mercy by a Moses. We cannot look upon an hospital or almshouse, but we are occasioned to glorify God, for giving men the grace to do such good works. "Their works follow them," Rev. xiv. 13; yea, and (in another sense) tarry behind them too: the reward goes with them, that their souls may be saved: but the work itself stays behind, that God may be glorified. For this cause we remember in our thanks to God, the Wicklams, and the Suttons, and the benefactors of former ages: blessing him that raised them up, and reflecting all to his honour. Do good therefore, ye rich men, with your goods; and think it not enough to glorify God with your professions while you live, but that God through your occasions may be glorified when you are dead. These are better monuments than your alabaster or marble sepulchres: better than all the elegies of poets, and inscriptions upon your tombs; your lasting good deeds, which be the visible trophies of your goodness: that is your eternity in this world, and by this you shall give glory to Christ for ever. This is that praise of God, which shows that he was the God of your praise, Psal. cix. 1. Build refectories for his members, and temples to his service: you shall die, but these monuments cannot die. If Israel builds houses to his praise, he will dwell in them, and so is said to inhabit the praises of Israel. In our several stations, let us endeavour all ways to glorify him, and in heaven he will glorify us for ever.

"Amen." This is the conclusion of all. Concerning which, some things are observable in the word itself, and some in the sense of the word.

1. It is a word of all languages. Originally it is Hebrew; the Greeks took it up, the Latins followed them, all other nations entertain it, and it shall never be laid down. There be many Hebrew words, which we retain in their proper dialect, without translation of them; as *hallelujah*, *Immanuel*, *nosanna*, *maranatha*, *raca*, *manna*, *monna*, *abba*,

cherubim, *seraphim*; but the most frequent and familiar of them all is *Amen*. It is kept in the original, and not translated, first, to preserve the honour of the Hebrew tongue. As that was the first language of the world, and thought to be still the language of heaven, so it shall have honour in the midst between both these; for all nations shall "speak the language of Canaan," Isa. xix. 18: in time the consent of all nations shall come in, to testify the truth of the gospel. And howsoever it be now a stumbling-block to the Jews, and an offence to the Gentiles, yet the day will come when both Jews and Gentiles shall receive it, and to the word of Christ they shall say *Amen*. Next, it is a pledge to the Gentiles, that there shall be a reingratiating of the Jews. Christians call God, "*Abba*, Father," Rom. viii. 15, in the tongue of the Jews; implying that the Jews shall become Christians. As we received our first faith from them, so they shall receive their last faith from us. It is not then unlawful to use Greek or Latin words in our sermons, whenas we are allowed to use Hebrew words in our prayers. But as we refuse no meat that conduceth to the nourishment of our bodies, so all words are good that tend to the edification of our souls.

2. It is a word of all parts of speech; signifying a noun, a verb, an adverb. First, it is taken for a noun, real and substantial truth: "These things saith the *Amen*, the faithful witness," Rev. iii. 14. All the promises of God are yea and *Amen*, 2 Cor. i. 20. So every evangelist shuts up his Gospel, "*Amen*." So Paul, Peter, and John conclude their Epistles, "*Amen*." So the Holy Ghost seals up the Scripture; the last word of the Bible is "*Amen*;" to show that whatsoever therein is contained, is perfect and absolute truth. Secondly, it is taken for an adverb; so frequently it is used by Christ; *Amen*, *amen dico vobis*; Verily, verily I say unto you. It is sometimes used in the Old Testament; "The woman shall say, *Amen*, *amen*," Numb. v. 22. In divers places of the Psalms; by which some would distinguish them into five books, in imitation of the Pentateuch of Moses; every book containing thirty Psalms, and the number distinguished by *Amens*. It is thus taken an asseveration; some call it *juramentum*, an oath. But that Christ, when he said *Amen*, *amen*, did so often swear or take an oath were hard to affirm. Thirdly, it is taken for a verb; wherein we wish something to be, Deut. xxvii. 15; Neh. v. 13; Psal. lxxxix. 52. Thus it is a note of confirmation, as well as desideration. It is every way a seal to the truth of that which is delivered; The promises of God are *Amen* in Christ, 2 Cor. i. 20: and to the truth of our receiving and believing it; so we shut up our Creed with *Amen*.

3. It is a word of all places; placed in the beginning, in the midst, in the end. In the beginning, to express the truth of that which follows; in the end, to witness the truth of what went before; in the midst it is the truth itself. Christ commonly used it in the beginning of his speech: so he began his sermon to Nicodemus, John iii. 3. And Paul so begins his Epistle to the Galatians, Gal. i. 5. So the Spirit began his letter to the Laodiceans, Rev. iii. 14. In the midst it hath a place also, Rom. ix. 5; 1 Kings i. 36, like a *Selah* in the midst of a Psalm. And in the Lord's prayer, though it be but once mentioned or uttered, and that in the end; yet is it implied in the midst, and belongs to every petition; as well to "*Thy will be done*," as to "*Forgive us our sins*;" as to "*Thy kingdom come*," as to "*Give us our daily bread*." To them all generally we say, and to every one particularly we intend, *Amen*. In the end, it is never to be omitted: whether we pray

alone, or with the congregation, we must conclude with Amen. Every where then it challengeth a room; especially St. John, repeating the words of our Saviour, ever doubles it; Amen, amen. Some would strangely allude it to the age of John: that as in the Greek elements of the word Amen, the numerical letters amount to ninety-nine; so they say, St. John lived ninety-nine years. As those that collect, because the beast's name, Rev. xiii. 18, and Solomon's yearly talents of gold, 1 Kings x. 14, were both of a number, each of them six hundred sixty and six, that therefore antichrist at that time must be as rich as ever was Solomon; they do but invent fantastical dreams, and groundless curiosities. Amen is a word of honour, the voice of faith, and faith presupposeth understanding; not to be used upon every trivial circumstance, with unadvised lips; for through a custom or habit of speaking it, they blunder out Amen at a venture, and not seldom seal a curse to themselves. It cannot be used with too much reverence.

It was a complaint of the Jewish teachers, (Lorin. ex Caminio,) we may too justly transfer it upon ourselves, that the Amen of God's clients in the church is very defective; there is a fault in it that would be amended. One Amen they called *pupillum*; when a man says Amen to he knows not what; he understands not the prayer. Another they called *subreptitium*; when one says Amen before the time comes; he is loth to tarry till the prayers be done. The last they called *sectile*; when a man cuts off his devotion, and divides it into two parts. He sleeps out the first part, and his mind is wandering in the last part; only he awakes in the midst, inopportunately says Amen to that. But a perfunctory and careless Amen, to thy private or the public prayers, will procure thee none of the required blessings; it will bring but sorry comfort to thy conscience. St. Hierome saith, (Præfat. in 2. Lib. Ep. ad Gal.) That in the primitive church, the people's Amen, at the end of public prayer, was like thunder, above the shout of an army in a triumph; that it would almost astonish a man to hear the people resounding Amen. With so subdued a voice do we answer the minister in our suffrages, as if we were afraid that men should hear us; we do but whisper, whereas they did thunder. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh: our praising God with so low a voice, argues a poverty of devotion in our hearts. If we knew what a seal our hearty Amen were to all our petitions, we would sooner rend the clouds, than whisper to our pews so necessary a So be it.

Nor must this only conclude our supplications, but even our gratulations; as well our thanks for what we have received, as our suits for what we would receive. God will not accept of an Hosanna, without a Hallelujah; Amen must seal up both. Be this then the conclusion of our prayers, wherewith God concludes his Scriptures. The first word is "In the beginning;" the last word "Amen." A stately beginning, and a powerful ending. What is more stately than antiquity? That is true, which is first. The doctrine of Moses and the prophets concerning the true worship of God was first; idolatry and Baalism came in afterwards. The doctrine of Christ and his apostles, touching justification by faith, was first; the popish doctrine of merits and satisfactions came in afterwards. What more powerful than the truth? At last it will prevail: all will be Amen, truth, in the end. So the Scriptures have both old things and true things; which are not joined together in any other writings. In human learning, many things are uncertainly true, and more certainly untrue; only the word of God is sealed with Amen. Amen is the end of it, and let us all say Amen unto it.

To set some method in my discourse: Amen is but one word; and it was hard to divide a word. It is an unwarrantable boldness to tear any word in pieces; much more to rend this word Amen, which is the seal to all the rest. Who but a madman would tear the seal of his evidence? Yet though a word may not be divided, it may be distinguished, and that without injury. One word may have divers significations; and though it have but one sound, may bear many senses. It is like manna, which relished to all, according to the delight of every several palate. Many virtues lay claim to this Amen. Desire challengeth Amen, and says, It is mine. Faith lays title to Amen, and says, It is only mine. Thankfulness would engross Amen, as properly belonging to her. We will let them all have it, rather than tear it in pieces, that so none might have it. The root of it is in the heart, and it hath four several branches in the mouth. First, as it comes from a desire of the heart, it is the word of a petitioner. Secondly, as it comes from a persuasion of the heart, it is the word of a believer. Thirdly, as it comes from the joy of the heart, it is the word of a thanksgiver. Fourthly, as it comes from the resolution of the heart, it is the word of a continuer. First, a desire, that so may it be. Secondly, a belief, that so it shall be. Thirdly, a rejoicing, that it is so. Fourthly, a resolution, that so it shall continue. Of these in order.

1. Amen signifies an earnest desire of the heart to obtain some good. When we have expressed with our mouths, what we desire in our minds, we add Amen: So let it be unto me, O Lord. "I come quickly; Amen," Rev. xxii. 20. And lest that Amen should not seem earnest enough, it is seconded by an exegetical instance; "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." The foregoing prayer is a petition, and Amen is a short repetition of it, a brief and abridgement of all that hath been asked. All the requests of a humble client, are thus summed up in a word, Amen. It is a seal put to the end of a conveyance. Prayer is the conveyance of our hearty desires to heaven; this is not authentic without a seal. As God hath regard to all the terms of the conveyance, and ponders all our requests; so in the bottom of the instrument he looks for our seal. If Amen be not set to it, it is but a cold conveyance, and will hardly bring us a good assurance. The redoubled or repeated word, is the ardent desire, says one. So Isa. xxxvii. 17; Dan. ix. 19; Matt. vii. 7. The evils are so hurtful, whereof we beg a removal; the graces so excellent, whereof we pray for a fruition; that we have good cause to be urgent with God, and to put him in mind of that we have asked, by the conclusion with which our prayers are sealed. Amen. We say Amen, O Lord, to our supplications; do thou say Amen to the concessions of them. This is to seal our seal, to set the seal of his merciful grant to the seal of our humble suit. Amen on earth, is sealed and ratified by the Amen in heaven.

2. Amen signifies a persuasion of the heart; not only a desire to have it so, but a belief that it shall be so. And though option and expectation be different acts of the soul, yet they may be at one instant in the heart, and therefore expressed in one word by the mouth: the Amen of prayer, which is a May it be done, and the Amen of faith, which is an It shall be done, do not destroy, but rather assist one another. Faith rouseth up prayer, prayer cheers up faith. "I believed, therefore have I spoken," Psal. cxvi. 10; faith opens the lips of prayer. "I have prayed, that thy faith might not fail," Luke xxii. 32; so prayer keeps faith in heart. Believe, then, that you may pray heartily; pray, that you may believe firmly. Amen answers to both; as one beam

of the sun yieldeth both light and heat; light to our faith, heat and fervency to our prayer. "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you," John xvi. 23. This is the foundation of our Amen. It must rise from a believing heart, and that must needs be an understanding heart. No man will put his seal to a writing, till he understands the contents. Our prayer, without the Amen of faith, is an evidence without a seal. The Amen of our lips, without the intention of what is prayed for in our hearts, is a seal without an evidence. The suffrage of the whole congregation, crying Amen to the public prayers, hath ever been, and is, the laudable custom of all churches. But if the Common Prayer be not in a common tongue, how shall the people say Amen? 1 Cor. xiv. 16. When the priest says prayers in Latin, it is at his courtesy whether he will bless or brand the assembly; and so ignorant persons may say Amen to their own curse. Say his charity is better, yet the unlearned papist is never the wiser. It was a ridiculous observation of the Carnotensian canons, that forbore to shut up prayers with Amen in their churches, because they understood St. Paul to make it belong only to idiots; whereas their assembly consisted of none but noble and learned persons. But Hugo saith well of them, that they have now just cause to take up that again for the contrary reason; and all to say Amen, because there are none but idiots and unlearned amongst them. The Romish priests may conjure, as well as pray, for aught that the vulgar know. And their Amen to the orisons, is but like a song of one tune, and the burden of another; or like the ringing of the saints-bell, after much jangling in the steeple. For though God understands Latin, yet their Latin does not understand God. So we have too many, that huddle up their prayers in a morning, and then think they have served God very well, and are blest for all day. Their minds are busy about one thing, and their tongues talk of another thing; they neither say what they consider, nor consider what they say. So that here is neither hand nor seal, but a mere blank; or a paper scribbled over with nonsense; no man can tell what to make of it. If praying were not an action of the heart, more than of the lips, you have many birds that might be taught to say their prayers.

But when the heart hath indited a good matter, and the tongue hath set it down like the pen of a ready writer, Psal. xlv. 1; then is the seal opportunely put to them both; Amen. Some devotions are delivered, as sermons are taken, in brachigraphy; they love to be short with God, as if it were enough that he knew their meaning. Others are long and tedious, like the prayers of the Pharisees, full of superfluous repetitions and idle misplacings: like anagrams; for as there is a transposition of letters, so here is a misposition of requests: the beginning is where the end should be, and the end where the beginning; so that in the wrong place there is screwed in Amen.

3. Amen signifies the joy of the heart, and so it is a gratulation for some good received. Thus most properly, and according to the genuine nature of it, it is taken here. To God be glory for ever; Amen. We do not only desire that so it may be, and believe that so it shall be, but also rejoice that so it is. St. Chrysostom tells us, that the people in the primitive times, so soon as ever they heard these words uttered, To whom be glory for ever, they presently thundered out Amen. It is the voice of those who congratulate; as when the magistrate hath pronounced, God save the king, the whole multitude shouteth forth Amen. Whosoever we hear any man blessing the name of God, it is a key to open our lips, and a motive to affix

our seal to his praises with Amen. The best way to pledge the king's health, is by our hearty prayers for him; and it is not the least way of honouring Christ, when others have begun his holy praises, to pledge them in our consents, to answer them in our echos, of Amen. "Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!" Psal. cxvii. 8; cxvi. 13. Though we cannot make a long oration of his worthy praises, nor a narration of his great and glorious acts; yet when we hear the preacher declare what he hath done for us, and ascribe all honour to his name, we cannot but know how to say Amen. It is a word neither hard to learn, nor troublesome to remember, nor difficult to pronounce; Amen. All plants receive influence from the sun; only the thankful heliotrope turns itself to the sun, and would fain follow it. If the beams of Christ's graces have thoroughly warmed our hearts, we still look towards him, we rejoice in his blessings, and close up all our praises of him with Amen. All the tribe of Manasseh went not over Jordan; some stayed behind. Manasseh is said to signify forgetfulness: though we forget many of God's mercies and benefits, yet let some tarry behind in our memories, and not pass away without our thankfulness. We have dull hearts, if we can taste the sweetness, and digest the fatness, of his blessings, without returning him continual thanks, sealed with Amen.

4. It signifies the resolution of the heart; that as the glory of God shall continue for ever in itself, so we with all our best endeavours will maintain it; and that as his favours towards us are not mutable, so we will be no changelings in setting forth his praises. Amen is truth, and truth is firm; implying that neither Christ's honour nor our thankfulness are fadeable things; but of a durable subsistence, and such as will last for ever. In witness of which perpetuity, we set to our seal of Amen. There is no question of his glory; all the doubt lies in the perseverance of our grace. The apostles "were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God," Luke xxiv. 53. If we be not always in the temple of God, made by the hand of man; yet we are never out of this temple of man, made by the hand of God. So long therefore as our souls are the priests and our bodies the temples, and these mortal temples contain those immortal priests, let there be offered to Christ the continual sacrifice of thankfulness. Let us draw out Amen to the full length, and evermore sing his praises. When the old man had entertained the gods, and they so liked his hospitality, that they bade him ask what he would, and it should be granted him; he only begged that his little tenement might be turned into a temple, and himself be accepted as the priest, to offer sacrifice to them. Much like to David's "One thing have I desired, that will I seek after;" even to dwell in the house of God for ever, Psal. xxvii. 4. They say, happy are the stones whereof temples are made: God made the whole world a stately temple, wherein he will be worshipped; and to do that, is the perfection of the world. The inferior orbs have their several motions; some are turned this way, and others that way: but the empyreal, the highest heaven, is never moved; the rest of that cannot be disturbed; immobility and immortality belongs to that. So the lower spheres of our soul, our sensitive affections and passions, may be whirled up and down; but let our heart continue firm, and stick fast to the honour of Christ; there let our Amen be laid up for ever. The Amen of mercy, the Son of God, when he undertook the work of our redemption, never gave it over till he came to his *Consummation est*. The temptations of Satan, the

persecutions of the Jews, the afflictions of his body, the passions of his soul, could not call him down from the cross, till he could triumph in his *Consummation est*: then he gave up the ghost, with, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." So when we have continued in his service to the last, speaking and doing, believing and living, to his glory; then may we with comfortable assurance breathe forth our spirits into his bosom; Lord, into thy hands I commend my soul. This is our Amen, and himself say Amen unto it.

To conclude. Hugo Cardinalis hath a pretty observation: That Amen, under the law, was answered to the curses, but not to the blessings; but Amen, under the gospel, is answered to the blessings, not to the curses. For the law, it is plain that there was an Amen enjoined to be said to the curses; and that not in general, one Amen for all; but in particular, every curse must have its several Amen: which we shall find by perusing these places. Numb. v. 22; the woman shall double her Amen. Deut. xxvii. 15—26; "All the people shall say, Amen." But in the next chapter, where the blessings follow, there is no Amen affixed, nor commanded to be affixed to them.

Deut. xxviii. 2—12; no Amen spoken of there. Contrarily in the gospel, to all the blessings there is an Amen, but none to the curses. "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maran-atha," 1 Cor. xvi. 22; a fearful curse, but no Amen to that. But "Grace be with all them that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity," Eph. vi. 24; there is an Amen to that. Thus doth Christ's Amen seal up mercy to us; thus let our Amen seal up glory to him for ever.

To shut up all with this Amen. "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work, to do that which is well pleasing in his sight. Amen." To God the Father, that made me after his own blessed image; to God the Son, that redeemed me by his own precious blood, and called me to be a minister of his holy gospel; to God the Holy Ghost, who hath inspired and enabled me to begin and finish this Exposition; to those three glorious Persons, one only infinite and eternal God, be all praise, all honour, all glory, now and for ever. Amen.

THE END.

[illegible]



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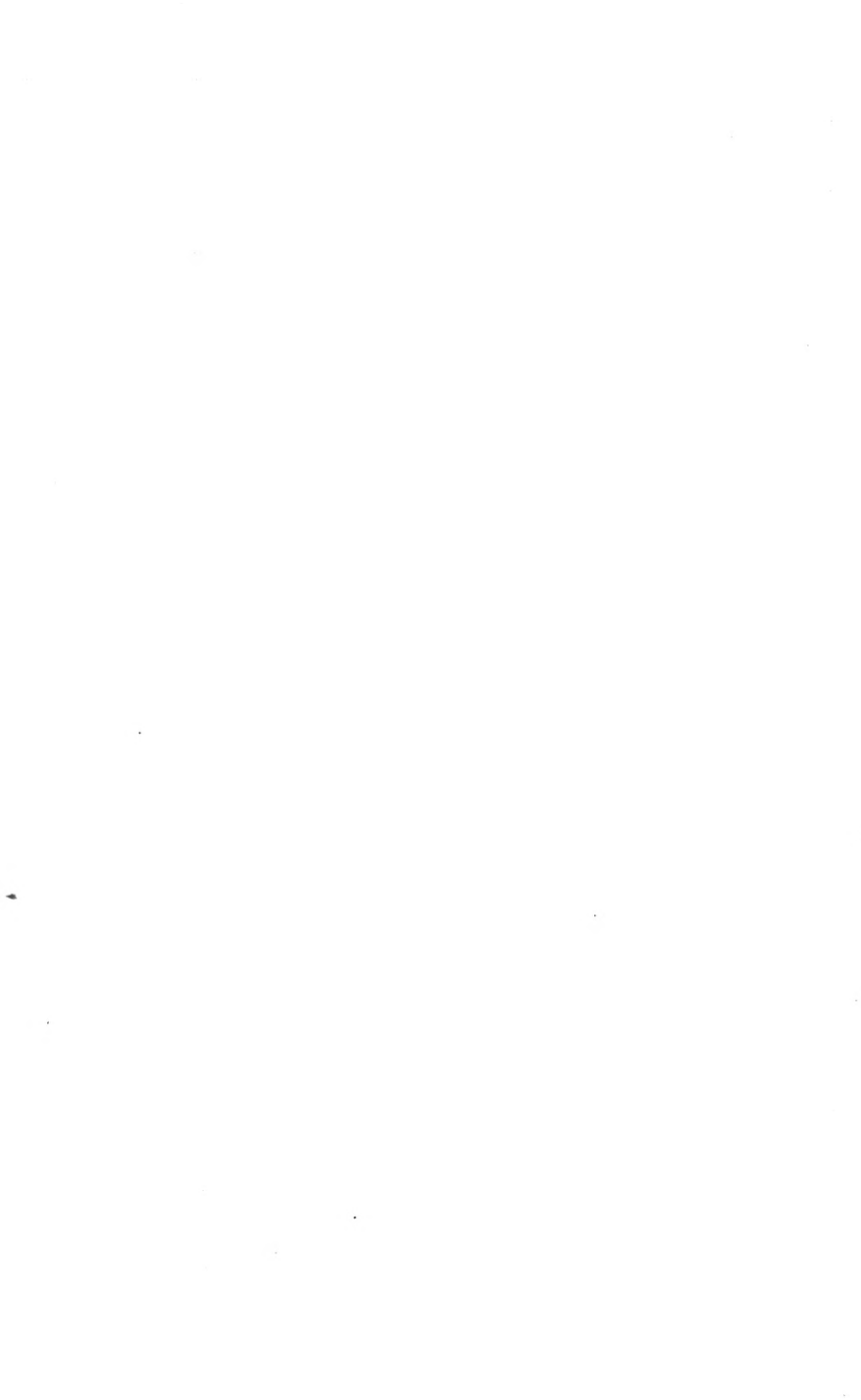
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