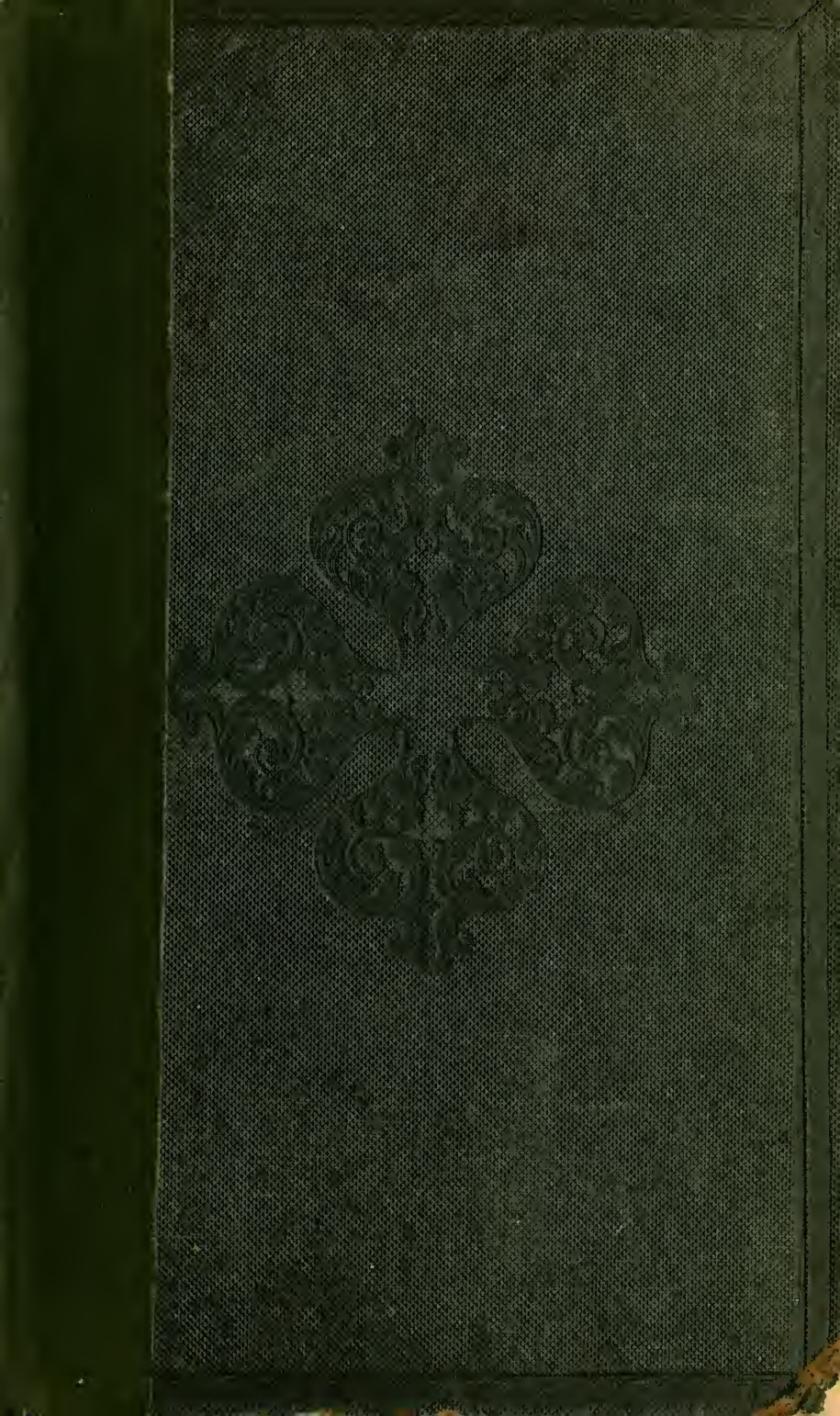

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EXPOSITION

UPON

THE TWO EPISTLES OF ST. PAUL

TO THE

THESSALONIANS.

"THE JEWELL OF BISHOPS, THE WORTHIEST DIVINE THAT CHRISTENDOM HATH BRED FOR SOME HUNDREDS OF YEARS." *Hooker.*

"ONE OF THE GREATEST LIGHTS THAT THE REFORMED CHURCH OF ENGLAND HATH PRODUCED." *Anth. a Wood.*

"THE FIRST, AND INDEED THE BEST, WRITER OF QUEEN ELIZABETH'S TIME, WAS BISHOP JEWELL." *Burnet.*

"THE WORKS OF JEWELL ARE ALL OF THEM MONUMENTS OF THE ZEAL, THE LEARNING, THE FAITHFULNESS, AND THE ENERGY OF THIS ILLUSTRIOUS MAN." *Rev. C. W. Le Bas.*

LONDON:
PRINTED BY NUTTALL AND HODGSON, GOUGH SQUARE,
FLEET STREET.

AN EXPOSITION

UPON THE

TWO EPISTLES OF THE APOSTLE ST. PAUL

TO THE

THESSALONIANS.

BY THE REV. FATHER IN GOD,

JOHN JEWELL,

BISHOP OF SALISBURY.

A New Edition,

CAREFULLY REVISED AND CORRECTED,

BY THE REV. PETER HALL, M.A.,

RECTOR OF MILSTON, WILTS; AND MINISTER OF LONG-ACRE CHAPEL, LONDON.

LONDON:

B. WERTHEIM, ALDINE CHAMBERS,

PATERNOSTER ROW.

M.DCCC.XLI.

1841

PREFACE,

BY THE EDITOR.

THE name of THE APOLOGIST FOR THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND stands justly endeared to every pious and intelligent member of that community; especially in a day when the characters of our ANGLICAN FATHERS and their successors are enduring reproach in the very bosom of an ECCLESIASTICAL ESTABLISHMENT, which they lived to reform by their labours and their prayers, and died to maintain in unabated excellence for the service and welfare of their posterity.

JOHN JEWELL, the youngest son of a poor but highly respectable gentleman, was born May 24th, 1522, at Buden, or Bowden, in the Parish of Berynarbor, Devonshire. After receiving the rudiments of education in the Grammar Schools of Branton, South-Moulton, and Barnstaple, he was admitted, as early as his thirteenth year, a postmaster of Merton College, Oxford. His tutor was, at first, one Peter Burrey, a man of small learning, and rather adverse to the tenets of the Reformation; which hitherto proceeded, under Henry VIII., but slowly, and in the midst of many discouragements and interruptions. But being eventually entrusted to

the care of John Parkhurst, afterwards Bishop of Norwich, he soon began to imbibe the principles avowed by that accomplished scholar and theologian.

From Merton he removed, in 1539, to a scholarship at Corpus Christi; where he passed his degree of B.A. the next year, and commenced the life of a College tutor, and Reader in Humanity and Rhetoric, shortly after. His degree of M.A. he took in 1544.

On the accession of Edward VI. to the throne, in 1546, Peter Martyr was invited from Germany, and appointed Professor of Divinity at Oxford; where Jewell became his friend, and one of the most diligent attendants on his Lectures; assisting him (as on subsequent occasions) in his labours of transcription for the press, and taking notes of the disputation which he held in the Divinity School, in 1549, with Tresham, Chadsey, and Morgan Phillips, on the real presence of the body of Christ in the eucharist.

In 1551, he proceeded to the degree of M.A., and obtained an occupation for the exercise of his ministry in the small rectory of Sunningwell, near Abingdon; at the same time preaching frequently both in the chapel of his College and before the University.

But two years subsequently began the reign of Mary: and Jewell was one of the first of the Protestants of Oxford who fell under the penalty of expulsion through the ascendancy of the Papal party among his associates. From the enmity that raged at Corpus he found a retreat at Broadgate Hall, (now Pembroke College,) in the same University. But hither too his persecutors, with the Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Tresham, and the Dean of Christ Church, Dr. Martial, at their head, pursued him; till, in a moment of irresolution and precipitancy, and

with the fear of torture before his eyes, he was persuaded to attach his signature to a statement of Romish doctrine prepared beforehand for the purpose. The result was such as might have been anticipated. His friends began to doubt him, while his enemies hated and harassed him more than ever; and he was but just in time to escape for his life to Frankfort, where Dr. Sandys, afterwards Archbishop of York; Dr. Horne, afterwards Bishop of Winchester; Sir Francis Knollys, afterwards Lord Treasurer; and many others of the English refugees, had already met. At their solicitation he read, on the ensuing Sabbath, from the pulpit, a recantation of his subscription to the Articles of Popery; saying, "It was my abject and cowardly mind, and faint heart, that made my weak hand to commit this wickedness."

At Frankfort he had not resided long, before he received an invitation from his old and dear friend Peter Martyr; who had also been admonished to retire quietly from England, and was settled, for the present, at Strasburg. Here also Jewell was enabled to renew acquaintance with Grindall, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury; Poynet, Bishop of Winchester; Sir John Cheke, and others of high esteem among the Reformers, who had fled for refuge to the Continent. From Strasburg Peter Martyr removed, in 1556; having succeeded Conrade Pellican as Professor of Hebrew in the University of Zurich; whither he took Jewell with him, and where they found James Pilkington, afterwards Bishop of Durham, residing, like so many of his brethren, till the storm of Papal tyranny and persecution should have passed away. It was probably from Zurich that Jewell made an excursion, for purposes of study, to

Padua; where he obtained an introduction to Signor Scipio, a Venetian, with whom, in 1559, he held a Latin correspondence, concerning the refusal of the Queen and Bishops of England to acknowledge the validity of the Council of Trent.

But the mercies of God were yet alive towards his servants. Before the end of the year 1558, Mary died; and the exiles lost no time in returning to England, and laying their congratulations at the feet of Elizabeth. Jewell was one of the eight divines appointed by the Queen to enter the field of controversy with the same number of the emissaries of Rome at Westminster Abbey: but on the refusal of the latter to abide by the terms arranged, the disputation was broken off. His services, however, were engaged for a Visitation in the West of England, in the character of a Commissioner of the crown for rectifying abuses in the Church.

On his return to London, Jewell was nominated (January 21st, 1560) to the see of Salisbury, vacant, three years before, by the death of John Capon: and on the Sunday before Easter, immediately following his consecration, the Bishop preached his famous Sermon on 1 Cor. xi. 23, &c. at Paul's Cross; wherein he defied all the Papists in the world to produce but one plain and unequivocal testimony to the peculiarities of their Creed from any Council or Father of the Church within six hundred years of Christ, and declared his own readiness, on the production of such authority, to conform directly to the Confession of Rome.

The consternation occasioned in all orders of the English Papacy by this bold and unexpected challenge, was truly wonderful. At home, they were awed to silence: but among the fugitives at Douay, Louvain, and

St. Omer's, the provocation was resented with all the zeal, subtlety, and shew of learning, so characteristic of Romish controversy. First in the list, with an interchange of friendly letters, appeared Dr. Cole, late Dean of St. Paul's; followed, with more violence than effect, by John Rastell, a lawyer. To these succeeded Dorman and Martial; of whom the former was met by Nowel, the latter by Calfhill. But the glory of the contest lay between the Bishop himself and Dr. Thomas Harding of Louvain. The combatants were both born in the same county, both bred at the same school,* and both perfected in education at the same University: both had stood forward as Protestants under Edward, and both had relapsed into Popery before Mary; Jewell for fear, and Harding in the hope of favour and preferment: but Jewell, like Peter, had stumbled but to repent and stand the stronger in the faith he had been tempted for a moment to disown; Harding, like Judas, had fallen, never to rise again.

The APOLOGY FOR THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND was first published, in Latin, in the year 1562, with authority from the Queen, and the sanction of many of

* That is, at Barnstaple. The secret history of many an important transaction in subsequent life (whether of combination or of hostility, whether for good or for evil) might probably be traced to acquaintance formed at schools. Harding, for example, had since been placed on the foundation of William of Wykeham at Winchester, from which seat of learning a remarkable band of Popish malcontents appear to have issued almost simultaneously: including Martial, the persecutor, and Cole and Rastell, the antagonists, of Jewell; Sanders, Harpsfield, and Stapleton, a triumvirate of most learned divines, incessantly engaged in controversy against the Church and government of England; Fowler, the printer of most of the seditious publications of the Jesuits at Louvain; and last, but not least, Garnet, who was executed in 1606, as the agent, or rather, perhaps, the instrument, of the Gunpowder-plot.

the Bishops, as a Confession of faith and doctrine, justifying the secession that had taken place from the court and see of Rome. Besides an English version from the pen of Lady Bacon, daughter of Sir Anthony Coke, and wife of Sir Nicholas Bacon, Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, it was soon translated into the Greek, French, Italian, German, Spanish, Dutch, and Welch languages. Peter Martyr, still at Zurich, lived just long enough to read the volume, which he had received as a present from the author within three months of his decease.

Harding had already published his Answer to the Sermon at Paul's Cross. In 1564 he printed his Confutation of the Apology; to which Jewell (who had received meanwhile his degree of D.D. from the University of Oxford) replied the same year in his Defence of the Apology; a work which was ordered by Queen Elizabeth, Kings James I. and Charles I., and by four successive Archbishops, to be deposited in every parish church throughout England and Wales. Harding again sent forth a Detection of Errors in the Defence, to which Jewell again provided an Answer; both in 1565. Harding had yet another Answer, and Jewell another Reply, in store for another year; which were followed by a Rejoinder, and a Second Rejoinder from the pen of Harding in 1566, 1567. And so terminated a controversy, which, whether the capacity of the men, the aspect of the times, or the importance of the cause at issue, be considered, may well rank as one of the most memorable in the annals of the Protestant Reformation.

In 1570, Jewell undertook the defence of his royal mistress (whom he had attended as President of the disputations at Oxford, in 1566) from the bull of deprivation

and excommunication issued against her by Pope Pius IV. He was also appointed by the Upper House of Convocation, in the beginning of the next year, to take the oversight of printing and distributing a new edition of the Thirty-nine Articles. But the time of his departure was at hand. Spite of a lameness contracted from his youth, he continued preaching the gospel of the grace of God, and exercising the more active functions of his office, to the last; and died at Monkton-Farley, Wilts, Sept. 22nd, 1571, in the 50th year of his age, and the 12th of his Episcopate, universally respected and bewailed, bequeathing the greater part of his estate to clergymen or scholars of small fortune, to his own household, and to the poor of Salisbury. His remains lie interred in the choir of the Cathedral; where is a Library built and furnished at his expense for the use of the Dean and Chapter.

A Memoir of Bishop Jewell was written in Latin, at the request of the University, by Dr. Lawrence Humphrey, Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford, and published in 1573. His works are numerous; including, besides those already mentioned, several that were edited, after the decease of Jewell, by his friend Dr. Garbrand,* to whom he left the chief of his unpublished MSS. Such, for instance, were, a Treatise of the Holy Scriptures, 1582; and, a Treatise of the Sacraments, 1583: both of these were gathered from Sermons preached in Salisbury Cathedral, and have been

* John Garbrand was born in the city of Oxford, and educated at Winchester; whence he succeeded, in 1562, to a fellowship at New College. He afterwards became Rector of North Crowley, Buckinghamshire, where he died in 1589. His books he bequeathed to New College Library.

lately reprinted at Oxford. The Exposition of the Two Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Thessalonians (published by the same Editor, and from the same source) appeared also in 1583; and again, with the addition of an Index, in 1584, 12mo.* These, with Expositions of the Epistle of Paul to the Galatians, the Two Epistles of Peter, the Epistles and Gospels of the Canonical Year, and the Creed, Lord's Prayer, and Ten Commandments, (none of which are now extant,) were likewise taken from his ministrations in the pulpit. The greater portion of his writings were collected into one large volume, with an abstract of the Life of the author by Dr. Thomas Fuller, 1609; reprinted, with a Memoir by Dr. Daniel Featly, 1611 and 1631; and in Latin, by T. Whitaker, at Geneva, 1585.

With the exception of the two scarce volumes published by William Sclater, a Puritan, 1619—29, there is no Exposition on the Epistles of St. Paul to the Thessalonians accessible to the English student. It was therefore deemed a matter of duty to rescue the work of Bishop Jewell (which has not appeared in a complete and separate form for upwards of two centuries and a half) from so unmerited a state of oblivion. The present edition is printed, with the utmost care and precision,† from the folio of 1611, compared with each of the editions published by Dr. Garbrand in 1583 and

* It is also given, but with a variety of mutilations, in the 7th vol. of the Fathers of the English Church, edited by the Rev. Legh Richmond, in 1807-12; and again, in the 11th vol. of the British Reformers, published still more recently by the Religious Tract Society.

† "I am afraid of printers," says Jewell, in a Letter to Archbishop Parker; "their tyranny is terrible."—*Churton's Life of Nowell, p.* 126.

1584. No liberty whatever has been taken, except in the division of the paragraphs, and the transference of the Latin quotations into the notes, leaving the English translations incorporated, as before, in the text. The references to Scripture have been corrected throughout, and a very few remarks, chiefly glossarial, subjoined, with the hope of saving the reader some little trouble occasionally in referring to other books for explanation of an obsolete term or custom.

That the Lord Jesus Christ may vouchsafe His favour upon this and every other effort, however feeble, to promote His glory, and the edification of His church, is the prayer with which the Editor concludes his task.

ERRATA.

Page 193; line penult; for *you*, read *ye*.
—— 197; —— 26; for *Eliza* 6, read *Elizab*.
—— 205; —— 3; for *love*, read *lore*.
—— 211; —— 15, 25, 29; for *every*, read *ever*.

TO THE

RIGHT HON. SIR FRANCIS WALSINGHAM,

KNIGHT;

PRINCIPAL SECRETARY TO THE QUEEN'S MAJESTY,
AND ONE OF HER HIGHNESS' MOST
HONOURABLE PRIVY COUNCIL.

It is now some long time since that learned Reverend Father, Bishop Jewell, delivered unto the people of his charge the Exposition upon the Epistles of St. Paul to the Thessalonians; when many his hearers thought it worthy to be made common, and besought him earnestly (even as since his blessed departure out of this life they have often required me) to publish the same. It is very likely that he would, if he had lived, have perused these his travails, and some others, and have drawn them to the use and benefit of the Church; and rather have spent his time in setting forth matters profitable for all men to understand towards the attainment of salvation, than in following their humour any longer, whom neither the weakness of their own cause, nor the force of the truth, nor the defence thereof by so weighty authori-

ties of the Holy Scriptures, of the ancient Catholic Fathers, and of General Councils, could content, or persuade them to forsake the way of contention, whereunto they were entered, and of troubling the Church of God with their writings against the truth.

This his purpose he partly declared, in giving his last answer to a book written by Master Harding, entitled, "A Detection of Sundry Foul Errors," &c. For answer whereof, he thought not good to charge with number of books, or to encumber the world with needless labours; but only by a short augmentation of his former Defence of the Apology of the Church of England, to discharge Master Harding's quarrels. For reason whereof he saith: "I cannot imagine that any my poor labours shall be able to end these quarrels. For a contentious man will never lack words. I have endeavoured, for my simple part, to say so much as to a reasonable man may seem sufficient. If any thing be left unanswered, either it was nothing, or nothing worth." Wherein he was of like mind unto that famous learned man Master Bucer, who, speaking of the new and fresh supply that is made among the adversaries of our Christian Religion, said thus: *Veteribus respondimus; novos quotidie legimus; nihil adferunt novi: quid ergo faciemus?* Answer hath been made by us to their old writers: we read their new writers which come forth daily, which yet bring no new matter or proofs with them: what then shall we do? What else, but (as he giveth counsel) lay down all affection and favour of parties, and peruse that hath been

said in matter of controversy on both sides, and judge justly of all that is alleged, and with fear and reverence be careful of our own salvation? For, after the truth is once found out, whosoever seeketh farther, seeketh not for the truth, but for error. The Apostle willeth Titus to stay foolish questions and genealogies, and contentions and brawlings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain: and also to reject him that is an heretic, after once or twice admonition. In like case he said unto Timothy: "If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to the wholesome words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the doctrine which is according to godliness, he is puffed up, and knoweth nothing; but doteth about questions, and strife of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, froward disputations of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, which think that gain is godliness: from such separate thyself." 1 Tim. vi. 3—5.

Now, because he himself had some good liking to publish this Exposition, and the matter thereof is so fit for our time, as nothing may be more; and as there is not (as I can learn) any interpreter upon these Epistles, in the English tongue; and his Sermons upon them were the last fruits and travails he bestowed in the cathedral Church of Sarum: I made choice of it among many other excellent monuments of his pains taken in the Church of God, and gave my best diligence to peruse his notes thereupon, and to draw them to some such perfection as might carry to the reader the whole weight

of his matter, without any diminution, even as fully as he declared it, so far forth as the notes, which remain under his own hand, might direct me. The which I most humbly commend to the favourable protection of your Honour: whom I beseech so to accept my simple endeavour herein, as I have been careful to answer your Honour's commandment, in giving forth some part of his labours to light.

In this discourse, as there are many good things faithfully declared, the use and practise whereof is common to your Honour with all Christians: so are there two matters, the one of usury, the other of Antichrist, (this is, of the bane and poison of the commonwealth, and of the infection and decay of the Church,) wherein he bestowed more pains to open them, and make them manifest, that all men might know and abhor them, and beware of them. What hath been wrought by these two mischiefs to the undoing in conscience and substance, and to the utter destruction of the souls and bodies of many thousand subjects of this realm within these late years, it is, to the grief of all good men, too well known.

If, therefore, in the duty of a good Bishop, he, standing in his watch, hath descried these enemies to all civil and Christian estates; and if now, so many years after his entrance into rest, by these means he call upon your good Honour to step forth in fresh courage into the battle of the Lord of hosts, and to use and employ the

great gifts of wisdom and authority which God hath bestowed upon you, and to excite and stir up others the worthy and notable captains set over the people, to be a fenced wall between them and these so perilous monsters, and dangerous enemies: what remaineth, but that your Honour put to your hand, and do that for the comfort of God's people, which, besides her excellent Majesty, and her Honourable Council, no other can do, in giving life to all such laws, which have been devised by men of great godliness and experience, and have been confirmed by high authority, to the suppression of usury, and to the setting forth of God's glory? The God of glory, and of power, who hath called your Honour to His service in high place, strengthen you to do His will, and grant you many prosperous days, to the comfort of his Church and his commonwealth!

Your Honour's most humble to command,

JOHN GARBRAND.

THE

FIRST EPISTLE OF ST. PAUL

TO THE

THESSALONIANS.

CHAPTER I.

VERSE 1.—*Paul, and Sylvanus, and Timotheus, unto the Church of the Thessalonians, which is in God the Father, and in the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace be with you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.*

THE apostle Paul preached the Gospel of our Saviour Jesus Christ unto the Thessalonians, as he did also in other places, from Jerusalem round about to Illyricum. But his travel had not like success in all places. For, in Damascus, the governor of the people under King Aretas laid watch in the city of the Damascenes, and would have caught him. (2 Cor. ii. 32.) At Lystra, they stoned Paul, and drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead. (Acts xiv. 19.) At Philippi, he and Silas were drawn into the market-place unto the magistrates, and accused that they troubled their city; they were beaten with rods, and cast into prison. (Acts xvi. 19.) The Corinthians received the doctrine of the Gospel, and made much of the professors thereof. But they fell soon from their good beginning. They walked like men in envying, in strife, and divisions. Some called themselves after Paul, some after Apollos, some after Cephas, and some after Christ. They stirred conten-

tion about meats: they abused the Lord's Supper: and they were doubtful of the resurrection of the dead. In like manner the Church of God, which was gathered at Rome, grew proud and high-minded, and boasted themselves over the Jews. The Galatians forsook the good way of the Gospel, whereunto they were called, and wherein they did walk. They gave ear to false prophets. Therefore the Apostle telleth them, "I am in fear of you, lest I have bestowed on you labour in vain." (Gal. iv. 11.)

But the Thessalonians, after they had heard the glad tidings of the Gospel, they received it greedily, and laid it up close and safe in their hearts. Albeit the Jews withstood them and vexed them sore, albeit false brethren used divers secret means to draw them from the love of the truth; yet they kept still their stedfastness, and could not be driven from their faith, neither by cruelty of persecution, nor by subtilty of crafty persuasion.

Paul, being at Athens, a place far distant from thence, sendeth Timothy to know in what case they stood: so careful was he for that house which he had built; for the fire which he had kindled; for the grafts which he had planted; and for the children which he begot among them. When Timothy made report of their constancy, that they continued stedfast in those things which they had learned, he writeth this Epistle to commend them, and to exhort them to abide stedfast in their faith: that they become not like the foolish Israelites, which longed after the flesh-pots of Egypt, and were unmindful of their deliverance from bondage under Pharaoh: that they return not like filthy dogs to their vomit, and like unclean swine to their puddles of mire: that they look not back again, after they have put their hands to the Lord's plough, and so make themselves unworthy the kingdom of God.

He giveth many lessons and instructions to godliness: that they would walk worthy of God, and bring forth the

fruits of the Gospel. There were among them, that lived idly, and did trouble the Church without a cause; whom he reproveth, willing them to be quiet, and to meddle with their own matters, and work with their hands. Others mourned over the dead without measure, even as if they had no hope; whom he instructeth in the resurrection, and comforteth with the speech of the blessed coming of our Lord, when we which live shall be caught up to meet him, and so we shall ever be with the Lord. Others reasoned fondly of the latter day, when it should be; when the Son of God should appear, and when the world should have an end; as if man might reach to the knowledge hereof. But them also he reproveth, and warneth, that they take care rather to watch and look for the Lord's coming, that they may be found ready, having their loins girded, and their lamps burning.

Many are desirous to see the countenance of St. Paul; to see his sword, or the relics of his blood, which was shed at his death, or of his upper garment, or of his coat, or of the hair of his head: and for purpose to see such things, many take painful pilgrimage to far places, where they are deceived. How much better may they be satisfied by reading the story of his life set down in the Scriptures! In these his Epistles, written to the Churches of God, he is to be seen in more excellent show than when he was yet in body. For here is to be seen his heart filled with the Holy Ghost, and the care which he had for all saints: how he did travail in birth of them again, that Christ might be formed in them, and how he did wish himself separate from Christ for their sake. The matter of this Epistle is plain, and treateth not of deep and profound mysteries. The manner of utterance which the Apostle useth, is open and evident; so that the whole Epistle is full of sweet and wholesome doctrine, wherein the simplest may find great comfort.

Paul, and Sylvanus, and Timotheus.—These two were com-

panions unto Paul in his journeys, and in the work of his ministry, whom here he joineth in his letter to the congregation at Thessalonica, to witness their consent and agreement with him: that they all, with one mouth, and with one hand and heart, set forth the glorious Gospel of our Saviour Christ; and that therefore they also, which are called to the fellowship of the Gospel, should be like-minded, being one body and one spirit in Christ Jesus, and the children of one Father, in whom there is no dissension, but all peace, and consent, and unity.

Unto the Church of the Thessalonians, which is in God the Father, and in the Lord Jesus Christ.—There are sundry sorts of churches. There is a church of the wicked, whereof the Prophet saith, "I have hated the assembly of the evil, and have not companied with the wicked." (Psal. xxvi. 5.) Two hundred and fifty captains, men of renown, and famous in the congregation, joined themselves to Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. But Moses said unto Korah, "Thou and all thy company are gathered together against the Lord." (Num. xvi. 11.) The builders of the great Tower of Babel were many in number, and consented to that they had imagined to do, thereby to get them a name; but the Lord did confound their language, and scattered them upon the face of the earth. (Gen. xi. 7, 8.) The Scribes, and Pharisees, and High Priest held a council, and conferred among themselves; but against the Lord, and against his Christ. (Acts iv. 26.) John is commanded to write unto the angel of the church of the Smyrnians: "These things saith He which is first and last, which was dead, and is alive:—I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan." (Revel. ii. 8, 9.) They revile you, and speak all manner of evil against you for my name's sake. They charge you with teaching false doctrines, and say you have departed from the church; that they are the seed of

Abraham, the children of promise, the true worshippers of God, and which walk in the steps of their forefathers. But their boast hereof is vain. It profiteth them nothing that Abraham was their father, that the covenant was made with them, that they were circumcised, that a law was given unto them. Let them not trust in their fathers; let them not trust in lying words, and say, 'The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord, this is the Temple of the Lord.' If they were Abraham's children, they would do the works of Abraham. If God were their Father, then would they love Christ his Son, and seek to set forth his glory. If they were of the sheepfold of God, they would hear his voice. They are of their father the devil, and the lusts of their father they will do. They are in name the servants of Christ, but serve Antichrist. They call themselves Jews, but are the synagogue of Satan. "For," saith the Apostle, "he is not a Jew, which is one outward; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew which is one within; and the circumcision is of the heart, in the spirit, not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God." (Rom. ii. 28, 29)

Of those which are such, Leo saith:* 'Ye arm yourselves with the name of the church, and yet ye fight against the church.' And Chrysostom saith:† 'The name only of Christ doth not make a Christian, but he must also have the truth of Christ; for there are many which walk in the name of Christ, but few which walk in his truth.' It is therefore manifest, as Lyra saith,‡ 'that the church is not among men, by reason of any ecclesiastical or secular authority or dignity: because many princes and high-priests, and others

* Ecclesiæ nomine armamini, et contra ecclesiam dimicatis?—*Leo, Epist.* 83, *ad Palestinos.*

† *Hom.* 19, *in Matt. in opere imperf.*

‡ *Lyra in Matt.* xvi.

of the inferior sort, have forsaken the faith.' Though they pretend show of holiness, though they draw to themselves credit by long continuance, though their numbers be great, and they consent together: yet, if they have forsaken the faith; if they hold not the truth of Christ; if they fight against and persecute the church; if their circumcision be not the circumcision of the heart, and in the spirit; if they hear not the voice of the Shepherd; if they love not Jesus Christ the Son of God, and set not forth his glory; if they seek to stop the course of the Gospel; if they seek to get a name among men; if they resist Moses and Aaron; they have only a painted vizard, and carry only an empty name of the church: they call themselves so, and are not.

But the Church of God is in God the Father, and in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is the company of the faithful, whom God hath gathered together in Christ, by his word, and by the Holy Ghost, to honour him, as he himself hath appointed. This church heareth the voice of the Shepherd. It will not follow a stranger, but fleeth from him: for it knoweth not the voice of strangers. Of this church St. Jerome saith:* 'The Church of Christ, which containeth the churches through all the world, is joined together in the unity of the Spirit, and hath the cities of the Law, of the Prophets, of the Gospel, and of the Apostles. This church goeth not forth, or beyond her bounds, that is, the holy Scriptures.' It is the pillar of the truth; the body, the fulness, and the spouse of Christ; it is the vine, the house, the city, and the kingdom of God. They which dwell in it "are no more strangers and foreigners, but citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the

* Ecclesia Christi, in toto orbe ecclesias possidens, Spiritûs unitate conjuncta est, et habet urbes Legis, Prophetarum, Evangelii, et Apostolorum. Non est egressa de finibus suis, id est, de Scripturis.—*Hieron. in Mich. lib.* 1. *cap.* 1.

Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the head corner-stone, in whom all the building coupled together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord." (Ephes. ii. 19—21.) This church "Christ loved, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify it, and cleanse it by the washing of water through the word; that he might make it unto himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy, and without blame." (Ephes. v. 27.) Such a church was the Church of God at Thessalonica: such a church are they, whosoever, in any place of the world, fear the Lord, and call upon his name. Their names are written in the book of life. They have received the Spirit of adoption, by which they cry, Abba, Father. They grow from grace to grace, and abound more and more in knowledge and in judgment: they cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light: they are made absolute and perfect unto all good works. They are evermore comforted in the mercies of God; both by the holy Scriptures, wherein God declareth his gracious goodness towards them; and by the Sacraments, which are left unto the church to be witnesses and assured pledges for performance of the promise of God's good-will and favour towards them.

Grace be with you, and peace, &c.—God give you the forgiveness of your sins, and the peace and comfort of your conscience. God let all his blessings fall upon you, that you may see the riches and the treasures of his mercy; that you may be filled with all fulness in the Spirit; that you may behold the glory of the kingdom of God; and those things may be revealed unto you by his Spirit, which he hath prepared for them that love him. Without this grace you can do nothing: you can neither feel the burden of your sins, nor seek to be eased of them, nor perceive when they are forgiven: you cannot rend your heart, and set apart from you the vanities and lusts of the flesh, which

doth evermore fight against the soul: you cannot discern the word of God, and by it enter the way to everlasting life: you cannot abhor that which is evil, and cleave unto that which is good. Without the grace of God, you cannot continue stedfast and constant in faith, and in hope of the mercies of God through our Saviour Jesus Christ.

VERSE 2.—*We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers;*

3.—*Without ceasing, remembering your effectual faith, and diligent love, and the patience of your hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God, even our Father:*

4.—*Knowing, beloved brethren, that ye are elect of God.*

5.—*For our Gospel was not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know after what manner we were among you for your sakes.*

We give thanks, &c.—Paul teaches what is the office of a good minister. He must ever carry in remembrance the state of the congregation, over which the Lord hath placed him. He must give thanks to God in their behalf, and pray for them; that God will bless that which he hath begun, and confirm them unto the end, that they may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ: that he will behold them from above, and bless his inheritance, and guide the sheep of his pasture.

Your effectual faith.—Faith is not idle: it worketh, and is forcible; it breaketh out like fire; it is always fruitful through love. Faith without works is no faith: it is dead, and bringeth death.

And diligent love.—Love is painful, and full of travail: it thinketh not evil; it seeketh not her own things; it is bountiful. This love had the Thessalonians to the saints of God, which suffered affliction in all places for the Gospel's sake. Many were spoiled of their goods, cast out of their houses,

and banished from their country: even as at this day, for the like cause, many of our brethren, the good servants of God, are driven into banishment, cast into prisons, put to the sword, or consumed in fire, in those places where the god of this world hath so blinded their eyes, that the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should not shine upon them. It is high time, in such cases, for charity to show herself. She cannot dissemble, nor despise the tears of her brother. It showeth forth as the morning light: it taketh from herself, to relieve them which are in need: it dealeth bread to the hungry, and bringeth the poor that wander unto her house, and covereth the naked, and hideth not her face from her own flesh. Unto them that have this love, the Lord giveth his blessing: "Blessed is he that considereth the poor and needy; the Lord shall deliver him in the time of trouble." (Psal. xli. 1.) And Christ saith: "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall find mercy." (Matt. v. 7.)

And the patience of your hope.—How many are the troubles which the children of God suffer in this life! Let us behold the times which were before us. Abel was innocent and just, yet was he slain by the hands of his brother, and without a cause. The prophet David saith of the prophets and holy men of God; and the same words saith the apostle of the Church of Christ under the Gospel: "For thy sake are we killed all the day long: we are counted as sheep for the slaughter." (Psal. xliv. 22. Rom. viii. 36.) Jeremy saith: "Thy word is unto them as a reproach." (Jer. vi. 10.) And again: "For thy sake I have suffered rebuke." (Jer. xv. 15.) What villanies were brought against our Saviour Christ! They reproached him in speeches, brought false accusations and false witnesses against him, and killed the innocent, in whose mouth there was found no guile. When St. Paul appealed to the witness of Timothy, who did fully know his doctrine, manner of living, purpose,

faith, long-suffering, love, and patience; and that he knew also the persecutions and afflictions which came unto him, and which he suffered at Antioch, Iconium, and at Lystra; after he had thus remembered his persecutions, and his own innocency, he saith: "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution." (2 Tim. iii. 12.)

What then hath the godly to lean unto, but hope? The prophet David, therefore, said: "Though I should walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me." (Psal. xxiii. 4.) Therefore said Job: "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." (Job. xiii. 15.) For he that putteth his trust in the Lord shall never be confounded. In this hope spake St. Paul: "Christ is to me, both in life and death, advantage." (Phil. i. 21.) Again: "Whether we live or die, we are the Lord's." (Rom. xiv. 8.) And again: "God forbid that I should rejoice, but in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." (Gal. vi. 14.) And to the Romans he saith: "There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." (Rom. viii. 1.) This is the foundation of faith, even a strong rock which shall continue for ever. Neither tribulation, nor anguish, nor persecution, nor famine, nor any danger, can remove the faithful from this hope.

But the wicked and unstable fall from their hope, and their fall is miserable. They have heard the word of God that teacheth unto salvation, but did not regard it; they have forgotten the works of the Lord, and received his grace in vain. For when they have heard the word, the devil cometh, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved; and the end of these men is worse than the beginning.

It was not so with the Thessalonians. They received the word of God willingly, and it was fruitful in them; so that thereby they increased in faith, in love, and in hope. Their faith the Apostle calleth forcible or effectual; their love dili-

gent and painful; their hope mighty, through patience, whereby they overcome all manner of dangers: and rejoiceth on their behalf, because he found so great success of his travail in the Gospel amongst them.

Knowing that you are elect of God.—You were blind; the children of wrath; without understanding, without God, and without hope. But God hath had mercy upon you, and hath given you grace to know your calling. Herein it appeareth that you are the chosen of God, and of the flock of Christ. "My sheep," saith he, "hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall any pluck them out of mine hand." (John x. 27.)

For our Gospel was not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance.—That you have yielded obedience unto the word, and that my ministry hath been effectual amongst you, it cometh not of any power in yourselves, or in me; it is the work of God. He hath blessed my ministry, he hath blessed your hearts. It is the gift of God, lest any man should boast thereof. Hereof he speaketh to the Corinthians: "Who is Paul, then, and who is Apollos, but the ministers by whom ye believed, and as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase." (1 Cor. iii. 5.) It is he which hath the key of David, which openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth. Without him we can do nothing. He guideth us, and all our counsels, and leadeth us into all truth. "No man can come unto me," saith Christ, "except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him." (John vi. 44.) And by the prophet Ezekiel God saith: "I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit will I put within you. I will put my Spirit within you, and will cause you to walk in my statutes; and you shall keep my judgments, and do them." (Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27.) And by the prophet Jeremy: "I

will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts." (Jer. xxxi. 33.) Therefore David maketh his prayer: "Teach me, O Lord; give me understanding; and I will keep thy law." (Psal. cxix. 33, 34.)

The words of the preacher enter in at the ear: the Spirit of God conveyeth them into the heart. Augustine saith:* 'The Gospel is declared: some there are which believe, some there are which believe not. They which believe, hear it inwardly by the Father, and so learn it. They which believe not, hear it only with their outward sense, and not with inward feeling; and therefore learn it not. As much as to say, To them it is given to believe; to the other it is not given.' In the Acts of the Apostles, Lydia, a woman of the city of the Thyatirians, heard the preaching of the Apostle Paul: but it is said, "Whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things that Paul spake." (Acts xvi. 14.) The people which said unto Peter and the other apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" did hear all the words of Peter: but they had another teacher that gave force unto the word, and made it fruitful in them; and, therefore, it is said, "They were pricked in their hearts." (Acts ii. 37.) This also appeared in the disciples which walked towards Emmaus: they heard Christ open the Scriptures unto them; they reasoned with him; yet, until their eyes were opened, they knew him not. (Luke xxiv. 27.) His word crept into their ears; but it was the Spirit of God which wrought within them, which inflamed their hearts, and made them to know him.

Thus God blesseth his word, and maketh it yield fruit in such measure as his wisdom hath appointed. His blessing

* Auditur evangelium; quidam credunt, quidam non credunt. Qui credunt, intus à Patre audiunt, et discunt; qui non credunt, foris audiunt, intus non audiunt, neque discunt. Hoc est, illis datur ut credant, illis non datur.—*De Prædestinat. Sanctorum, cap.* 8.

appeareth greater, when many are converted; yet is his word all one, and the power thereof no whit shorter, when it is utterly refused, or received but of few. "Surely," saith God, "as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it fruitful, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to him that eateth: so shall my word be that goeth out of my mouth. It shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I will, and it shall prosper in the thing whereunto I sent it." (Isa. lv. 10, 11.) It is the word of the living God, which is blessed for ever. And blessed is that heart, which can receive it; which God instructeth, and giveth knowledge of his word; which doth so learn it, that he is assured of the truth thereof, and nothing doubteth but it is indeed the word of life; which saith thereof, This is the way, in which if I walk, I shall certainly go forward to the city of my God: this is the truth; if I hearken unto it I shall never be deceived. Whosoever findeth himself endued with this grace, he doth as plainly and evidently judge of the words of God, and try out the truth thereof, from the devices and doctrines of men, as a man of clear eye-sight is able to judge of colours, and to know one colour from another. Yea, in this is the knowledge of that more certain; because colour doth fade and alter, and many times one colour thereby weareth like another: but the truth of God doth never alter. It continueth one through all ages. It is the word of everlasting life. Heaven and earth shall perish, but one tittle thereof shall not be lost. The truth of God shall be established for ever. The humble shall hear it, and be glad.

As ye know after what manner we were among you for your sakes.—You know how I behaved myself, and after what manner I have lived among you. You know my first coming and entry unto you. You know what doctrine I have taught, and what hath been my conversation of life.

I never deceived any, nor offered wrong unto the simplest. I sought not you nor yours, but those things which are Jesus'. I have lived by the labour of my hands; in watchings, in hunger, in cold, and nakedness. God hath ordained, that they which teach the Gospel should live by the Gospel. Who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? But I have not used this liberty; for I have a great care, lest by any means I should offend you. Yet would I never flatter any in that thing they had done amiss: I never spared to rebuke ill. If I should fear, or seek to please men, I were not the servant of Christ. I seek not mine own glory, but the glory of him that sent me; who also hath made me a minister of his Gospel. I have forsaken all things, my goods and life, my flesh and my body; and am daily in perils, compassed daily by persecution, and see death daily before mine eyes, for the love I bear to you, and for the care I have of the church. You are the Lord's sheep, I am your shepherd; you are the house of God, I am your builder; you are God's orchard, I am your overseer and workman. I shall give an account for your souls. You know how tenderly I have loved you in the Lord. Your grief hath been my grief, your joy hath been my joy. I have prayed for you day and night, and have given thanks to God for you, and rejoiced in your behalf. What is more dear to a man than life? yet have I desired to yield up my life, that you might live. I have been ready to suffer death, if thereby I might do you good. These things you cannot but remember; your conscience beareth me witness, that I have thus lived among you for your sake.

VERSE 6.—*And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, and received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost.*

He commendeth the godly for the practice of that which they have learned and seen in him; in that they have received

the Gospel, and framed their lives accordingly, and have continued stedfast in the same in the midst of persecution. Herein he doth not only lay out himself and the other apostles for an example, but telleth them that this way is also trodden out by our Lord himself: who, as he is the way, and the light that lighteneth every man which cometh into the world, so did he bear his cross, and did lay down his life for his sheep. Therefore he said to his disciples: "The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple to be as his master is, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more them of his household!" (Matt. x. 24, 25.)

But this is reckoned unto them for happiness. "Blessed are you, when men revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you, for my sake, falsely. Rejoice and be glad, for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." (Matt. v. 11, 12.) They slew them, and drowned them; hewed them with swords, and cut them in pieces with saws. "If any man," saith our Saviour, "will follow me, let him forsake himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." (Matt. xvi. 24.) So far must the children of God be from the love of this world; in such sort must he forsake his own life, and endure affliction, that will come unto Christ.

In the old law, the priests went on, and carried the ark before; and the people came after: in token that they should give good example, and the people should follow them. The priest was appointed to be a shrill trumpet sounding in the ears of the people; and the people were commanded to prepare themselves for the battle of the Lord of hosts. Therefore saith St. Paul, So have I followed the Lord, and so have you followed me, and received the word, not in affliction only, but in much affliction. Where he describeth

the unmerciful hearts, and tyrannous hate of the wicked against all those that follow the Lamb, and receive the word of God with gladness. No torment so cruel, no device so strange, no manner of death so horrible, which hath not been, or which is not, laid upon them. Their bodies be cast into prisons: they are stript out of their houses, and spoiled of their goods. Thus do the enemies of God work tyranny and much affliction unto the godly. They consume their bodies in fire, shed their blood without measure, throw out their bones and scatter them upon the face of the earth: and this do they, not as against murderers, robbers, adulterers, or such like; but only because they receive the word, and bear a love to the truth, and cannot deny the power thereof.

With joy of the Holy Ghost.—This is that which passeth all natural sense and wisdom. Many seem to take in good part, and abide patiently, afflictions, loss of goods, imprisonment, and loss of life. But no man can rejoice in the suffering of these things, but the child of God: no man but he, whom Christ hath chosen out of the world; but he, whose name is written in the book of life; but he, in whom the Spirit beareth witness with his spirit that he is the child of God. He knoweth that through many tribulations he must enter into rest. He knoweth the wicked could have no power over him, unless it were given them from above. He knoweth that all is done for the best, to them that love God; and that could God dispose means, if it were so expedient, to bring to nought all the devices of the ungodly.

When the servants of God were cast into the hot burning furnace, because they would not worship the golden image that the king Nebuchadnezzar had set up, who would have thought that the fire could not burn? or that their bodies should not have been consumed? Yet did God in the midst of the fire preserve them, so that "not one hair of their head was burnt, neither were their coats changed, nor any smell of

fire came upon them." (Daniel iii. 27.) Let us never forget this notable example of God's power to deliver his servants, that we may ever be earnest and careful to profess our faith in Him, and to strive unto the death for the setting forth of his glory.

It fareth even so with the children of God in the persecution of this world. Troubles, miseries, and adversity compass them, as the fiery furnace compassed those three men of God. But God covereth them with his mercy, as with a cloud, that nothing shall hurt them. I say not, all that stand in like defence shall, in like sort, be so preserved, that their bodies shall not be pierced: for God suffereth the wicked to destroy and kill his servants, and to consume their bodies to dust and ashes. Yet are his servants warned not to fear them. When the Apostles were beaten, because they had spoken in the name of Jesus, "They departed from the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer rebuke for his name." (Acts v. 41.) "We rejoice," saith St. Paul, "in tribulations; knowing that tribulation bringeth forth patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." (Rom. v. 3—5.)

The comfort which is given in this case to the godly, is hidden within them. For "to him that overcometh shall be given a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." (Rev. ii. 17.) "The afflictions of this present time are not worthy the glory which shall be showed unto us." (Rom. viii. 18.) When our Saviour did see the time of his passion draw near, he said to his disciples, "You are they which have continued with me in my temptations: therefore I appoint to you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on seats, and judge the twelve tribes of Israel." (Luke

xxii. 28—30.) And in his sermon upon the mountain he saith, "Blessed are they which suffer persecution for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. v. 10.) The case shall be altered. It shall be between them and their persecutors, as it was between Lazarus and the rich man. When the wicked and cruel tyrants shall see them in the presence of the throne of God, because "they came out of great tribulation, and have washed their long robes, and have made them white in the blood of the Lamb;" (Rev. vii. 14.) the God of Abraham shall say unto the wicked, Sons, remember that you in your lifetime received your pleasures, and likewise these men pains: now therefore are they comforted, and you tormented. They are taken out of affliction into rest, from their bonds into liberty, out of prison into a kingdom, out of misery unto glory, from life unto death.

The promise of this comfort is often renewed. The prophet David saith: "They that sow in tears, shall reap in joy." (Psalm cxxvi. 5.) Our Saviour telleth his disciples, "Ye shall weep and lament, and the world shall rejoice; and you shall sorrow, but your sorrow shall be turned to joy." (John xvi. 20.) St. John heard a voice from heaven, saying, "Blessed be the dead, which hereafter die in the Lord: even so saith the Spirit; for they rest from their labours, and their works follow them." (Rev. xiv. 13.) He is commanded to write unto the angel of the Church of the Smyrnians: "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer. Behold, it shall come to pass, that the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that you may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life." (Rev. ii. 10.) Thus God suffereth his servants to be sifted, and to be tried as pure gold in the furnace; and receiveth them as a sweet-smelling savour of burnt-sacrifice. And this is it, whereof the Apostle putteth the Thessalonians in remembrance; that they are strength-

ened by the Holy Ghost, not only to abide such afflictions as they suffer because they have received the Gospel, but also to rejoice, because they are assured, whatsoever shall happen unto them, they be the children of God.

VERSE 7.—*So that you were as examples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia.*

8.—*For from you sounded out the word of the Lord, not in Macedonia and Achaia only; but your faith also, which is toward God, spread abroad in all quarters, that we need not to speak any thing.*

9.—*For they themselves show of you what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how you turned from idols to God, to serve the living and true God;*

10.—*And to look for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus, which delivereth us from the wrath to come.*

The countries round about them were drawn, by the example of the Thessalonians, to believe the Gospel preached unto them. You are, saith he, as the bright sun-beams: they behold you, and rejoice of you, even as of the morning light. You are an holy city set upon an hill; you cannot be hid: your faith is a pattern of faith, your life is a pattern of life, unto them. They have learned of you how to guide their ways. You have called them back from error, and from ungodliness, to serve the true and living God. You are made unto them a sweet-smelling savour of life unto life. For so it hath pleased God to make his Gospel known in all places through you, and to make you the builders of his Church. When they behold your godly conversation which is in Christ, they are ashamed of themselves. When they behold your light, they find fault with their own darkness. O, say they, this is a holy people, this is a people that feareth God: let us hear them what they teach; let us lead our lives in holiness and righteousness, as they do.

Let us, by hearing these words, enter into ourselves. God hath given his light to shine upon us; he hath blessed us

with the knowledge of his Gospel. Let us take heed we turn not the light into darkness, nor the truth of God into lies. Many thousand eyes are set upon us, to look upon and behold us. Let us be an example of godliness. Let us be as a light to them that yet abide in darkness. Let not the name of God be evil spoken of through us. His name is holy. "Woe be unto the world," saith Christ, "because of offences: for it must needs be that offences shall come, but woe be unto that man by whom the offence cometh. Whosoever shall offend one of these little ones, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." (Matt. xviii. 6, 7.) It were better for that man, if he had never been born: for the blood of them that perish by his offence, shall be required at his hands. The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against those that are such, because they withhold the truth in unrighteousness. The kingdom of God shall be taken away from them, and given to a nation that will bring forth the fruits thereof.

It followeth: *From you sounded the word of the Lord, not in Macedonia and Achaia only, &c.*—If a man carry in his hand a lighted burning candle, it giveth not light to him only that carrieth it, but to all those which be in the house; and they also see it, which are without. Even so, if any be the child of knowledge, and carry about him the light of God, he doth not only taste of the comfort thereof himself, and work comfort to those that appertain to the Church of God; but lighteneth also the hearts of pagans and infidels which are abroad. Such as are bathed or perfumed with precious ointments, or powders, have not only the pleasure to themselves; but the savour thereof casteth itself out, and is pleasant to all those which stand by. The Gospel is the light of God; it shineth in the darkness of this world: it is the sweet incense and savour of God; wheresoever the breath thereof is received, it bringeth life.

But your faith also, which is toward God, spread abroad

all quarters.—As the lightning is seen from one part of the air to the other, and as the sound of great noise spreadeth itself far and wide; so doth the light of good conversation in the godly show itself forth. And therefore he telleth them they have filled all the country of Macedonia with knowledge, and with wonder, at their faith and stedfastness in the truth. As if he had said, Great is the renown of your king Alexander, and your country is famous. He hath overrun the whole world, and subdued it. He hath conquered Greece, Asia, Arabia, Phrygia, Armenia, Scythia, and India. Kings and princes fell down before him: the whole world stood in awe of his name. Yet Alexander had but the power and force of men. He had great treasures of gold and silver; he had numbers of horses, and camels, and elephants; he had swords, bills, spears, and darts, and such-like artillery and armour. These were the things wherewith he overcame his enemies: hereby both he and his people were renowned.

What then may be said of the battle which you have fought? or of the victory which you have gotten? You have won that Alexander could never win. You have overcome yourselves; you have overcome the world. He conquered the bodies of many, and had them at commandment; but their souls stood out, and would not be conquered. You have subdued your souls, and brought them to the obedience of the Gospel. You have overrun all the country, and triumphed among the people. And all this is brought to pass without force, without policy, without armour, without artillery, only by your patience and suffering for the Gospel's sake.

That we need not to speak anything.—To make the commendation of their faith more evident, he telleth them the fame of their zeal and constancy is known in all places. Whithersoever I go, saith he, they know you, and speak of

you, and hearken to you. Hereby appeareth how needful it is, that chief towns and cities be well governed, that vice in them be severely punished, that virtue and godliness be maintained, and the people instructed, because the examples of such places do spread abroad in all quarters nigh them.

They themselves show of you, what manner of entrance we had unto you.—After what sort you received me, and how dear I was unto you. All places were laid and beset for me, to seek my life; but you enlarged yourselves toward me, and took me in. When I was in prison, you came to me, and feared no man; you were not ashamed of my bonds: you were ready to lose your own lives to serve me. This is spoken of to your great praise.

And how you turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God.—Here are set down, in few words, the sum and parts of Christian religion. The first is, to forsake all idols, to turn from them: then, to turn unto God, and to put all our trust in him: lastly, to serve the living and true God. The service of God and idols cannot stand together. No man can turn unto God, that turneth not from idols. This is a wonderful effect of the Gospel, to forsake idols and serve God. To leave customs, and the usage of forefathers, and give ear to the truth; to love from the heart that which thou didst sometimes hate, and to detest from the heart that which thou didst sometimes love; is strange and wonderful. But to do this for Christ,—which was born of poor Mary; whom the wise, and learned, and mighty men of this world despised; which was crucified and hanged between two thieves; whom they scorned upon the cross,—to follow, or believe, or put trust in him; to call him the power and the wisdom of God; to confess him to be, in whom all Israel shall be blessed, and in whom all the world shall be saved; to give body or life for his sake,—is a strange miracle. No king, no prince, no law, no wisdom of man can work this, and

bring it to pass. This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes. And this doth he in those only, which receive the word of the Gospel with joy of the Holy Ghost.

And to look for his Son from heaven, whom he raised, &c.— The holy Scriptures do not only teach us to turn unto God; but also what it is that God giveth unto all them which seek him, even that they be delivered from the wrath to come; and for whose sake he delivereth us,—for Jesus his Son, whom he raised from the dead. Therefore he telleth them, howsoever they be received or despised as foolish among men, if they continue in the things which they have learned, they shall be wise unto salvation. That therefore they lift up their heads, and look for their Redeemer; that they say, Thy kingdom come, and, Come, Lord Jesus: because he is appointed by God to be the Judge of the quick and the dead; and shall come in the glory of his Father; and delivereth from the wrath to come all those that trust in Him. For among men there is none other name given under heaven, whereby we must be saved. This is the depth of all knowledge, and the comfort which passeth all understanding, that, against all temptations and afflictions which oppress our conscience, or vex and trouble our bodies, we may grow strong by faith in the Son of God, Christ Jesus, and ascertain ourselves of his coming from heaven for our deliverance.

CHAPTER II.

VERSE 1.—*For you yourselves know, brethren, that our entrance unto you was not in vain.*

HE taketh witness of them, of his diligence and pains taken in the fulfilling of his ministry; seeing it hath so good success among them, that they, by the preaching of the Gospel, have forsaken superstition, and are turned unto, and do now serve, the true and living God, and do believe forgiveness of their sins, and deliverance from the wrath to come, by Jesus Christ.

It is a great and deadly smart to the faithful servant of God to see the people wilful, and to despise the word of their salvation. Hereof Isaiah complaineth: "I have spread out my hands all the day long to a rebellious people, which walked in a way that was not good, even after their own imaginations." (Isa. lxv. 2.) They stopped their ears and would not hear, nor be reclaimed, nor return, that they might be saved. And Jeremiah: "Oh that my head were full of water, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people; for they be adulterers, and an assembly of rebels!" (Jer. ix. 1.) Sword and destruction cometh upon them, and they will not see. Oh that they would give ear and repent in time! Again: "My people is foolish, they have not known me: they are foolish children, and have no understanding: they are wise to do evil; but to do well, they have no knowledge." (Jer. iv. 22.) David crieth out: "O ye sons of men, how long will ye love vanity, and seek after lies?" (Psalm iv. 2.) Why forsake you the truth of God, and have no regard to his mercy? So our Saviour mourneth over Jerusalem: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the pro-

phets, and stonest them that are sent to thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, as the hen her brood under her wings, and ye would not!" (Luke xiii. 34.) How carefully and tenderly have I sought thy salvation! How often have I called upon thee, sent unto thee my servants, and poured out my blessings before thine eyes! So bitter and mournful a thing is it to all those that seek the glory of God, to see no fruit follow of their labours; to see the people continue ignorant, and wilful, and to seek their own destruction.

Therefore they turn themselves unto God, which is the Father of lights, and God of all comfort, in whose hand are the hearts of the people, that his word may have free passage and be glorified: that God will open unto them the door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, and publish the secret of the Gospel boldly: that he will give power to his word declared by them, and assist them with his Holy Spirit: that he will open the eyes of the people, that they may see; and turn their hearts, that they may be converted. So did David make his prayer: "Open thou my lips, O Lord, and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise." (Psalm li. 15.) Albeit my mouth is simple, and rude, and barbarous; yet, if thou wilt, it may be an instrument to declare thy glory. "Then shall I teach thy ways unto the wicked, and sinners shall be converted unto thee. Be favourable unto Zion, build the walls of Jerusalem." (Vers. 13; 18.) Thus do they lift up their hands and call unto God, that he would send down his light into the hearts of the people, that, what they hear, they hear not in vain, but may receive it, and understand it, and keep it: for unless God direct the heart, and make it fit to receive instruction, the preacher, though he be never so desirous to do good, doth labour in vain.

God only disposeth the ways of men; it is he which trieth the corn from the chaff. He knoweth whom he will bring

to be of his fold, and make to hear his voice. Many times he blesseth his word with great increase among them which at the first despise it, and entreat cruelly the preachers and messengers thereof. When Paul disputed, and exhorted the Jews and the Grecians at Corinth, and found little fruit of his labour, and that there were few or none that liked his doctrine, and many enemies which resisted and blasphemed it, he purposed to depart and go away from them. "Then the Lord said unto Paul in the night by a vision, Fear not, but speak, and hold not thy peace: for I am with thee, and no man shall lay hands on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city." (Acts xviii. 9.) They shall hear thee; if not now, yet they shall hear thee at some other time. They shall bear thy sayings in mind. I will be with thee: I will open their hearts, and make them obedient to the Gospel; and they shall be turned unto me. Thou shalt see the fruit of thy labour, and that thy coming unto them hath not been in vain.

VERSE 2.—*But even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated at Philippi (as ye know), we were bold in our God, to speak unto you the Gospel of God with much striving.*

The story of these his persecutions is written in the sixteenth of the Acts. He was stripped naked, and scourged with rods, and cast into prison, and put in hazard of life. (Acts xvi. 22—24.) Yet notwithstanding he were thus evil entreated at Philippi, when he came to Thessalonica he was nothing discouraged, but proceeded more boldly than before, and went into the synagogue of the Jews, and disputed three Sabbath-days, and taught them that Christ is that Messiah, even the Son of God. (Chap. xvii. 1—3.)

But, that we may the better conceive how mightily God worketh, and what great strength he giveth to weak creatures, when he appointeth them to set forth his glory, let

us behold this boldness of the Apostle in speaking the Gospel unto them. To whom did he speak? To the Jews, the enemies of the cross of Christ. Where? Not in hugger-mugger,* and in corners, but openly in their synagogue; for he feared no man. What time chose he? Then, when all the Jews were assembled together. How often? Three Sabbath-days together. In what city? In Thessalonica, the greatest and most famous city of all that country. How was he entreated? There arose great trouble and contention: they resisted him, spake against him, and sought to destroy him. For what cause? what had he deserved? what had he taught? The Gospel of God and of Christ, of the kingdom and of the life to come; the Gospel in which God offereth his grace, and reconciliation, and comfort, and peace, and salvation.

Who would think such joyful tidings should not be welcome? What eye would not willingly open itself to behold the brightness of the sun? What ear will refuse to hear God speak? But it hath always been so. There have ever been some that have loved darkness rather than light. The world shall never be without some Annas, or Caiaphas, or Judas, or Pilate. The children of the devil shall always set themselves against the children of God.

The cause of tumults and troubles proceedeth not from the Gospel. The Gospel of Christ is the Gospel of peace. But the enemies of the Gospel are stirrers of unquietness, and inflamers of war. Abel was simple, Cain spiteful; Jacob smooth, Esau rough and hairy; David gentle, Saul cruel; Joseph innocent, his brethren wicked, and fell upon him; the Apostles humble in heart and peace-makers, the Pharisees blood-thirsty, and sought to put them to death. The like examples are before us this day. The whole world is in an uproar, and great troubles and afflictions are in all places. No man is able to declare the misery

* *Hugger-mugger;* sometimes written *hucker-mucker,* or *hoker-moker;* means a place of darkness or secrecy.—EDITOR.

thereof. Let no man therefore slander or forsake the Gospel. It hath been so from the beginning, and from time to time.

Such troubles, confusion, and misery, are wrought, not by the Gospel, or them that receive the Gospel, but by those which resist it. They practise all means, and turn all things upside down, rather than it should take place. The wicked are angry therewith, they gnash their teeth and consume away. This is the cause for which "the children shall rise against their parents, and shall cause them to die." (Matt. x. 2.) Cain murdered Abel, because God had respect unto Abel and to his offering. Esau could not abide Jacob, because Isaac had given him his blessing. The brethren of Joseph sought to make him away, because God had a favour unto him. Saul was wrathful against David, because God gave him great gifts of courage, and strength, and wisdom. The Egyptians loathed the children of Israel, because they were God's people. The Galatians resisted Paul, because he preached the truth. "Therefore," saith St. Paul, "we labour and are rebuked, because we trust in the living God, which is the Saviour of all men; especially of those which believe." (1 Tim. iv. 10.) Likewise saith our Saviour: "They shall excommunicate you; yea, the time shall come, that whosoever killeth you, will think he doth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father nor me." (John xvi. 2, 3.)

Even so standeth it with the Church of God this day. There is nothing new that is under the sun: whatsoever is done now, hath been done before. Who will lift up his eyes, and look to the doings of men, shall see Cain rise up against Abel, Esau against Jacob, the cruel brethren against Joseph, Saul against David, Pharoah against Moses, the Egyptians against the people of God, the High Priests and the Pharisees against Christ, and all that will be his disciples. They change peace into war; they turn judgment into gall, and the fruit of righteousness into wormwood;

they resist the truth of God, to establish devices and doctrines of men. But, blessed be God! they shall not prevail. He giveth us peace. He hath made us turn our swords into mattocks. He hath taught us altogether with one mouth, and one heart, to praise him, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. His truth is mighty, and shall prevail.

VERSE 3.—*For our exhortation was not by deceit, nor uncleanness, nor by guile:*

4.—*But as we were allowed of God that the Gospel should be committed unto us, so we speak, not as they that please men, but God which trieth our hearts.*

God (saith he) hath chosen me from my mother's womb, and set me apart to the office of an Apostle. He hath appointed me to carry his name before the Gentiles. Therefore, as he hath given me charge to preach the Gospel, and to bring the people unto him from the power of Satan, so I speak truly, faithfully, sincerely, not as the words of men, but as the words of God. I have used no deceit, nor taught you to follow traditions of men, instead of the commandments of God. In like sort saith he to the Corinthians: "I have received of the Lord that which I also have declared unto you." (1 Cor. xi. 23.) And again: "We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you through us." (2 Cor. v. 20.) For this cause he saith unto them, "Seeing that we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not; but cast from us the cloaks of shame, and walk not in craftiness, neither handle we the word of God deceitfully: but in declaration of the truth we approve ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God." (2 Cor. iv. 1.) In these speeches he asketh credit, because of his upright handling of the word; and chargeth the false prophets for marring the word of God with unclean and deceitful corruptions and glosses.

In foreign countries, women that have no natural beauty

of their own, use to paint and colour their faces that, whereas they lack beauty indeed, yet they may seem beautiful. Even so is it oftentimes in matters of religion. Such as hold not the true religion, as it is taught by the word of God, and hath been practised in those churches which the Apostles planted, and among those Christians which lived nighest unto that time when the Apostles preached; because they know their religion which they profess now will not agree with that, they deal deceitfully and with guile. These be false Apostles, and deceitful workmen. They beguile our senses, and blind our eyes. They call us to worship an idol, instead of the true and living God. They lead us out of the light into darkness, from the truth into error, from knowledge unto ignorance. They forbid lawful matrimony, and call it filthiness; and allow open stews and harlots, as a thing which nothing impaireth their holiness.

I will not speak all that I might, nor in such sort as the matter occasioneth. Yet can I not but say somewhat of their spiritual craftiness, in abusing and beguiling the people of God.

The Egyptians furnished richly, and decked their churches beautifully, and all in the honour of a cat! Many things among these men carry great shew of holiness, which are nothing else but cloaks of their shame, and manifest proof that they are not allowed of God, but are crept in by deceit and by guile.

Single life carrieth a fair shew. But, O merciful God! what shame and villanies have been covered with this cloak. Pius Secundus saw somewhat, when he said,* 'As marriage was taken away from priests upon great considerations, so now upon other greater considerations it were to be restored to them again.' Jerome saw somewhat when he wrote

* *Platina in Pio II.*—Pius the Second was Pope from 1458 to 1464. —EDITOR.

thus:* 'You may see some (that pretend gravity) are girded, and go in black, and have long beards, who can in no wise leave the company of women, but keep house with them, and banquet with them: they take young maids into their service, and do all things as if they were married, save that they lack the name of marriage.' 'They teach chastity,' saith Origen,† 'and yet keep not chastity.' And Epiphanius,‡ 'They refuse marriage, but not lust or pleasure.'

Images are fair and beautiful. The churches are decked and beset with them. But they are a cloak of shame. They are set in place of teachers. The priests are ignorant, and live in idleness, and send the people to learn at pictures. They call them laymen's books. Yet, "What profiteth the image?" saith Habakkuk; "for the maker thereof hath made it an image, and a teacher of lies." (Habak. ii. 18.) And Jeremy saith, "The stock is a doctrine of vanity." (Jer. x. 8.)

What is their meaning to speak and pray in the Church in a strange tongue? This is a cloak of their shame. Their priests be so unlearned, they can scarce understand English; yet they save their credit, seeing they are able to read Latin. And hereby they cover all their blasphemies and superstitions, because the people cannot understand, and therefore not reprove them.

I speak nothing of their relics, pilgrimages, purgatory, and such other cloaks of shame which they use to hide their covetousness, and thereby draw unto themselves the riches of the whole world. They cannot say with the Apostle, "Our exhortation was not by deceit, nor uncleanness, nor by guile."

* Videas nonnullos accinctos renibus, pullâ tunicâ, barbâ prolixâ, à mulieribus non posse discedere, sub eodem manere tecto, simul inire, convivia: ancillas juvenes habere in ministerio, et, præter vocabulum nuptiarum, omnia esse matrimonii.—*Ad Rusticum Gallum.*

† Castitatem docent, et castitatem non servant.—*Orig. Tract.* 24 *in Matt.*

‡ *Epiph. contra Origenian. Hæres.* 42.

I know there are some that lay it unto our charge, as the false apostles did unto Paul, that we use the word of God deceitfully. They find fault with our translations of the Scriptures. They spare not to say, there be a thousand faults in the New Testament. Yet would they never set down five hundred, or one hundred, or fifty, or twenty-five, or five.*

If there be errors in the translation, I know they were men which translated it, and might err like men. May no translation be allowed, that is not altogether perfect? As if the Greek translation were without fault, or as if many faults were not in the common Vulgar translation in Latin, or in the translation of Jerome. What then? must the Greek translation be forbidden? must Jerome's translation, or the Vulgar translation, be forbidden? As for the old Latin common translation, though many learned men have shewed the gross errors thereof, yet have they well provided for it in the council at Trent: 'Let no man dare or presume,' say they,† 'by any manner of colour, to refuse the old common translation of the Bible.' Yet is no translation of ours so corrupt, as that which they have thus privileged. But if it were true, which they falsely report; reason would they did correct the errors, and so set it abroad. But thus they bear you in hand, that they may bring you in hatred of it, and pull you from the reading of the Scriptures. I will not say in what sort they abuse the word of God. What speak I of abusing? Nay, they do manifestly against, and contrary to, the word.

The word of God teacheth us forgiveness of our sins by the blood of Jesus Christ once offered: they teach contrary, that the same blood is daily offered, and Christ as often new-born, as pleaseth the priest to say mass. The

* See Tindal's Preface to his New Testament.—EDITOR.

† Ne quis veterem Vulgatam editionem rejicere quovis prætextu audeat, vel præsumat.

word of God forbiddeth to make any graven image, to bow down to it or worship it: they teach contrary, that images are to be worshipped, and even with such honour as is due to the patterns themselves. The word of God teacheth us to pray in a known tongue: they teach the contrary, and account it for heresy to pray in a known tongue. The word of God chargeth all states of men to be subject to their prince or higher power: they withdraw their obedience unto civil magistrates, and teach the people to resist authority. Erasmus saith,* in his notes upon these words of Christ, "Let these go their way:" (John xviii. 8.) 'I know a divine of great fame and account for his learning, which did wrest these words of Christ, to defend the immunity or lawless estate of clergymen. But this did he *ridiculè*, fondly or peevishly,' saith Erasmus.

It would be over long to declare unto you the foolish, or rather blasphemous, applying of the Scriptures, to approve their gestures at mass, and the sovereignty and chiefty that they challenge. One of their bishops, in the late council of Trent, said of Paulus Tertius, then Pope,† 'The Pope, which is the light, is come into the world;' which are the words of the Evangelist, declaring the Godhead of Christ.

By these few, it may appear how unjustly they charge us with corrupting the word of God; and how truly this fault is to be laid unto them, which either abridge the sense of the Scripture, or reach it further than it yieldeth, or utterly refuse to stand to the authority thereof; and in no case can like that the people of God should read the Scriptures; and have adjudged them heretics, and consumed their bodies in the fire, which have defended in speech, and sought to maintain, the doctrine of truth set down in the holy Scriptures.

* Novi quendam magni nominis theologum, &c.—*In Erasmi Annotat. in Joh.* xviii.

† Papa lux venit in mundum.—*Cornelius Episc. Bitont.*

The Apostle saith, *he was allowed of God.* They that enter into the ministry, must be allowed, not of men only, but of God: therefore, whosoever taketh that charge over the people, must look narrowly into himself, and see whether his calling be of God. If he have not a testimony that God hath called him inwardly, all other outward calling is to small purpose. God is a righteous judge. He will say to the conscience and to the heart of such a one, Friend, how camest thou in hither without thy wedding garment? who brought thee in? Give an account of thy stewardship: thine account is great.

And because some are this day to be admitted into this office, let us pray unto God for them, that God will allow them; that he will give them hearts to conceive, and tongues to speak the truth of God: that they may be the servants of Christ, and disposers of the mysteries of God: that they may be the salt of the earth, and the light of the world: that they may lay out the Lord's money to his advantage, and so it may be said unto them, "Thou hast been faithful in little, I will make thee ruler over much; enter into thy Master's joy." (Matt. xxv. 21.)

VERSE 5.—*Neither yet did we use flattering words, as you know, nor coloured covetousness; God is record:*

6.—*Neither sought we praise of men, neither of you nor of others.*

The servant and messenger of God must so speak, as God speaketh. God speaketh deeply, and to the heart. He lanceth the spirit, and woundeth the inward parts. He biddeth Isaiah show the people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins. God himself saith: "I visit the sin of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me." (Exod. xx. 5.) Again, he saith: "If ye shall despise my ordinances, either if your soul abhor my laws, so that ye will not do all my commandments, I will set my face against

you, and you shall fall before your enemies, and they that hate you shall reign over you." (Lev. xxvi. 15.) But unto those that repent them of their sins, and turn unto him, God saith: "Turn unto me, and ye shall be saved." (Is. xlv. 22.) Again: "Thou disobedient Israel, return, saith the Lord, and I will not let my wrath fall upon you." (Jer. iii. 12.) So must the minister of God. He must shew forth the mercy of God, and not hide his judgments. He hath the Lord's business in hand; he may not do it negligently. A flatterer maketh it his greatest care to please men: he seeketh their favour; he feareth to displease, and dareth not speak that that will be evil taken. When he seeth a thief, he runneth with him, and is partaker with the adulterers: he soweth pillows under the arms of sinners. Whosoever saith Nay, his Nay is ready: and if any say Yea, he is ready to say Yea. He changeth often as the weathercock. He dareth not strive against the stream. His heart is at the will of others. He seeketh some gain: he seeketh his own glory, and not the glory of God.

They which are such, are called in the Scriptures, hirelings, dumb dogs that cannot bark. They deny God, betray his truth, and deceive the people. They lock up the truth in lies. Of such the Spirit of God saith: "Woe unto them that have a double heart, and to the wicked lips." (Eccles. ii. 12.) And: "A double-minded man is inconstant in all his ways." (James i. 8.) And: "He that is not with me, is against me; and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth." (Luke xi. 23.) And: "How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal be he, then go after him." (1 Kings xviii. 21.) And again: "What communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial?" (2 Cor. vi. 14.) Cursed is he which flattereth the people, and is unfaithful in the Lord's work.

Nothing is so requisite in the steward of God, as that he

be found faithful, and that he speak those things whereunto the Lord hath sent him, boldly: that they keep not back the message given them of God, nor fear to do their errand, for any malice of men. "Who is it," saith St. Peter, "that will harm you, if you follow that which is good? Notwithstanding, blessed are ye, if ye suffer for righteousness' sake: yea, fear not their fear, neither be troubled." (1 Pet. iii. 13, 14.) If the Apostle speak this comfort to all Christians which have a care to serve God, and thereby exhorteth them to stedfastness, and to sanctify the Lord in their hearts, and to be ready to give an account of their faith, and of the hope that is in them; how much more ought preachers, and they which are appointed to the ministry, lay aside all fear and flattery of men! "Woe unto them that go down into Egypt for help. The Egyptians are men, and not God; and their horses flesh, and not spirit: and when the Lord shall stretch out his hand, the helper shall fall, and he that is holpen shall fall, and they shall altogether fail." (Isa. xxxi. 1; 3.)

Christ telleth his disciples, they are salt, and they are light. Salt must needs be sharp to a rotten wound: light must needs be painful to a sore eye. A good physician must needs trouble and disquiet his sick patient, before he can heal his disease: and a good surgeon must needs lance and rip up festered wounds. We are surgeons, we are physicians. The word of God is committed unto us, that by us it might be applied to season the earth, and that the light thereof should shine forth in all the world. "Cry out aloud, lift up thy voice as a trumpet." (Isa. lviii. 1.) If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?

When God had called Jeremiah to the office of a Prophet, and said, "Thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee, shalt thou speak:" he said further, "Fear not their faces, lest I destroy thee before them. For behold this day I have made thee a defenced

city, and an iron pillar, and walls of brass against the whole land." (Jer. i. 7; 17, 18.) Thou shalt not bend, thou shalt not yield. Thou shalt be a consuming fire; they shall be stubble before thee. Likewise, saith God to Abraham: "Fear not, Abraham; I am thy buckler, and thine exceeding great reward." (Gen. xv. 1.) When Moses sought to refuse the message, and thought himself over simple to go unto Pharaoh, God answered, "Certainly I will be with thee." (Exod. iii. 12.) And after, he saith: "I have made thee Pharaoh's God; he shall tremble and quake at thy voice." (Exod. vii. 1.) So saith Christ: "What I tell you in darkness, that speak you in light; and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye on the houses. And fear ye not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." (Mat. x. 27, 28.)

The consideration hereof ever moved the Prophets and Apostles to warrant their sayings with authority from God, and to set apart all fear when they spake in his name. When Ahab reproved Elias, "Art thou he that troubleth Israel?" he answered, "I have not troubled Israel, but thou and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim." (1 Kings xviii. 18.) The prophet Isaiah is bold with the princes of Judah and Jerusalem, and saith: "Hear the word of the Lord, O princes of Sodom! harken unto the law of our God, O people of Gomorrah!" (Isa. i. 10.) John the Baptist nothing feared to tell Herod, a mighty prince, "It is not lawful for thee to have her to wife." (Matt. xiv. 4.) "If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold," saith Balaam, "I cannot pass the commandment of the Lord, to do good or bad of mine own mind: what the Lord shall command, that same will I speak." (Num. xxiv. 13.) Moses was bid to tell Pharaoh: "The Lord God of the Hebrews hath sent me unto thee." (Exod. vii. 16.) Christ calleth James and John, the sons of

Zebedee, Boanerges, which is, the sons of thunder ; because they should not flatter, but raise tempests, and lighten and thunder in the ears and hearts of their hearers.

St. Paul saith : " I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." (Rom. i. 16.) It is the word of God, and shall endure for ever. He hath not given us the spirit of fear to flatter, but the spirit of might and of power, to speak roughly and courageously, where occasion so requireth. And therefore saith he : " If I would please men, I were not the servant of Christ." (Gal. i. 10.) But I preach God's doctrine, and not the doctrine of men : I seek to please God, and not men.

The Pharisees sought to please men, and to deceive the people. They taught them to walk in the ways of their forefathers ; to believe as they believed, to do as they had done. They flattered them, and said, You are the Church of God, you are God's people, you are the sons of Abraham, you cannot err, you cannot be deceived. They that in this sort flatter the people, and deceive them, they serve not Jesus Christ, but their belly, and through flattery and fair speech seduce the hearts of the simple.

Nor coloured covetousness.—The Scribes and the Pharisees devoured up widows' houses, under pretence of their long prayers. They prayed, and made money of their prayers. They gave alms, and made money of their almsgiving. They fasted, and made money of their fasting. This did the Scribes and the Pharisees. Their doings continue still. They be dead, their name is taken away ; but their profession abideth. As they made gains of their prayers, and alms, and fasting; so do some now make great gains, and wax rich, under pretence of holiness. They have brought in a profession of wilful chastity, and forbidden marriage in some whole estate of men. No doubt chastity is a holy thing. But they have given licence for money, to such as would, to forsake their vow of chastity.

They have forbidden to eat certain meats upon certain days. God left meats as free to the choice of every man, as he left his sun to shine freely to the use of all men. And they make free liberty for money, to eat what every man liketh. They make money of purgatory, money of pardons, and money of their masses. They make money of Peter and of Paul, of the Apostles and Martyrs, and of Christ himself. These are they of whom St. Peter speaketh: "Through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandize of you." (2 Pet. ii. 3.) One saith of them:* 'The court of Rome careth not for that sheep that hath no fleece.' I will not lay forth at large, how they do all things for covetousness. I have no pleasure in speaking ill. God grant us to deliver the Gospel aright, that we use not the truth of God for a cloak of covetousness!

Neither sought we praise of men, neither of you nor of others.—This is another hindrance of the course of the Gospel, when the ministers thereof love the praise of men more than the praise of God. "How can ye believe," saith Christ, "which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh of God alone?" (John v. 44.) How far the Apostle was from this ambition, it appeared: for he was reviled and evil spoken of, and counted the filth and outcast of the world.

VERSE 7.—*When we might have been chargeable, as the Apostles of Christ: but we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children;*

8.—*Thus being affectioned to you, our good will was to have dealt unto you, not the Gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us.*

9.—*For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail: for we laboured day and night, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, and preached unto you the Gospel of God.*

* Curia Romana
Non captat ovem sine lanâ.

10.—*You are witnesses, and God, how holily, and justly, and unblameably, we behaved ourselves among you that believe.*

I might have required meat and drink, and other things necessary, at your hands. For who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? Who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? Who goeth a warfare at any time of his own cost? Who muzzleth the mouth of the ox, that treadeth out corn? We plant the vineyard of the Lord of hosts. We feed Christ's flock. We go to warfare, and stand in the watch and defence of your safety. We are the poor oxen that tread out the corn, which will feed you to salvation. We are your servants: we labour to do you good: we are ordained to minister in the Church of God. It were great reason we should reap your carnal things, which have sown to you spiritual things. The workman is worthy his wages. Yet taught I the Gospel freely, and without reward; and was ready to give my blood, my life, and my soul out of my body, for your sakes. What could you ask of me more? What greater gift could I bestow upon you?

VERSE 11.—*And ye know how that we exhorted you, and comforted, and besought every one of you, (as a father his children,)*

12.—*That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you to his kingdom and glory.*

I took care of you as of mine own soul, and dealt with you by all ways of comfort, and exhortation, that you would take heed unto yourselves and your calling. I did put you in mind, that you were placed in the midst of the unfaithful people, which knew not God; and that they watched you and your doing: that their eye was upon your household, your wives, your servants, and your children; upon yourselves and your words, to espy if they might find any occasion to speak evil of you. I did beseech you by the glorious

coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, that the name of God might not be ill spoken of through you. You cannot deny this. You must needs confess you have thus been taught. Ignorance cannot be your excuse. What remaineth then, but that you perform it? For, "The servant that knoweth his master's will, and doth not do it, shall be beaten with many stripes." (Luke xii. 47.)

As a father his children.—What manner of care is it that the father taketh of his children? Many men are fathers of children: but what man taketh the care he ought to take for them? Pastors or teachers of the people should be affected towards their people, as fathers are to their natural children.

Let such as are fathers, and have children, know in what sort they must be careful. Your children are a good blessing of God; they be members of the body of Christ, and the sons of God. The kingdom of heaven belongeth to them. God hath appointed his angels to guide and lead them, and to shield them from evil: and their angels be in the presence of God, and do behold the face of their Father which is in heaven. They be fresh plants of the Church. Who knoweth what necessary instruments they may be in the commonwealth, and in the house of God? It is not enough to feed them, and to nourish their bodies with necessary sustenance; for this do the heathen that know not God, and the savage and brute beasts, and the birds which have no understanding. They breed up their young ones, and are tender and painful to provide for them. The ass, though she be dull,—the bear and lion, though they be wild and cruel,—yet seek they far and near to get wherewith to help their young. Therefore, if there be any, or can be any, which doth forsake and leave his own, he is more beastly than the foolish ass, and more unnatural than most cruel bears, and lions, and tigers.

But in this part men are, for the most part, over careful.

For this cause many build their houses with blood, and seek possessions by iniquity: they join house to house, and field to field, and will dwell alone upon the earth: they oppress the poor and needy, and do wrong to the widow and the fatherless: they make money their God, and spoil one another: and all to provide for their children. This is the cover and cloak for all their mischief,—They may not leave their children unprovided. Unhappy are the fathers, which in this sort care for their children by the ruin and spoil of the needy and innocent, and so break the commandment of God; because their portion shall be with the wicked in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone: and unhappy are their children, because they are partakers of their father's wickedness, and therefore shall also be partakers of punishment with them. The prophet David saith: "I have seen the wicked strong, and spreading himself like a green bay tree. Yet he passed away, and lo! he was gone; and I sought him, but he could not be found." (Ps. xxxvii. 35, 36.) His root was deep, his stock strong, his branches broad, he spread over and shadowed the whole country; yet he passed away. He departed; his sons died; his house soon decayed, and his name was in little time quite forgotten.

Oh how much better, then, is it to furnish the minds of your children, and to instruct them in godliness; to teach them to know God, to lead their life virtuously, and to rebuke them and correct them for dealing ill!

The beginning of wisdom is the fear of God. Let them then learn what that good and acceptable will of God is. Shew them the way in which they should walk, that they go neither to the right hand nor to the left. The word of God is pure, and giveth understanding to the simple: it is a light to their footsteps: it teacheth those that are young to amend their ways.

When Christ came into Jerusalem, the young children received him. They cried, "Hosanna to the Son of David!

Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord!" Christ giveth witness of them: "By the mouths of babes and sucklings, hast thou set forth thy praise." (Mat. xxi. 15, 16.) The words of the little and simple children were able to confound the wisdom of the Pharisees. Thus were they taught from their cradle; so careful were their godly parents for them.

Contrariwise, they cannot have any wisdom, that despise the law of the Lord. They become blind, and wicked, and abominable in all their ways. They have no sense nor feeling of the will of God. They cannot know light from darkness, nor God from Belial. Such were the little children that mocked the prophet Elisha, and said to him, "Come up, thou bald-head; Come up, thou bald-head." (2 Kings ii. 23.) Their bringing up was no better. Their wicked fathers had taught them nothing else but wantonness. But the wrath of God fell upon them, and there were destroyed, by two bears, two and forty of them.

Another care which a father ought to have of his children, is to lead them up in the study of virtue, and of godly life. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." (Matt. v. 8.) They which keep not this way, are the children of wrath. Herein standeth the whole profession of a Christian life. "For God hath not called us to uncleanness, but unto holiness." (1 Thes. iv. 7.) This is the will of God, and this is our promise made unto him, that we serve him in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life; that we increase in virtue, and grow from grace to grace.

A good and loving father, which sendeth his son to a dangerous journey, either by sea or land, first instructeth him with advice, and telleth him in what sort he shall avoid peril. Take heed, saith he; the way is perilous which thou must pass. The sea is terrible. The waves rise up as high as heaven, and by and bye thou shalt see a pit as low as hell. The sands may swallow thee, the rocks may destroy thee. Thou shalt pass by huge mountains, and

through wildernesses, where thieves will assault thee. Thy heart will quake. Thou shalt cry for succour, and find no man to help thee. In these and these places hath many a good man's child been cast away. Oh take heed, my son; thou art the staff and the comfort of mine age: if aught come to thee otherwise than well, I shall soon afterwards end my days in sorrow.

If a father be thus careful, that his child should escape worldly dangers, he must be more careful of spiritual dangers; in which, whatsoever is lost, is lost for ever. Therefore, thus will he say to him: Oh my son, understand what God hath done for thy sake. Take heed to thyself. The world is all over strewed with snares. The devil rangeth, and seeketh whom he may devour. Give no ground to him, but resist him, and he will flee from thee. Be strong in faith. The name of the Lord is a strong tower of defence. Call upon him in the day of thy trouble, and he will deliver thee. He will give thee of his Spirit.

Take heed, my son, and be not deceived: let no wilfulness cast thee away. If sinners entice thee, be not a companion of them in wickedness. Fashion not thyself to the likeness of this world: for the world passeth away, and the lust thereof. He that loveth this world, the love of God is not in him. Be not like unto them that perish. Thou wast conceived and born in sin; thou art by nature the child of wrath. But God made thee meet to be partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light, and hath delivered thee from the power of darkness, and hath translated thee into the kingdom of his dear Son. Receive not this grace in vain. Cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light. Be renewed in thy heart and in thy spirit, that it may appear I have been careful for thee. Thus a good father seeketh to train up his son, and to nurture him.

Besides these, fathers must also be careful for their

children, to give them correction and chastisement. God knoweth the mould of man's heart. He seeth our inward parts. He hath said it in the beginning: "The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth." (Gen. viii. 21.) He did see that "all the imaginations of the thoughts of his heart were only evil continually." (Gen. vi. 5.) Behold man's nature, and consider it even from our first birth. How full of affections, how wayward, is the young child which lieth in the cradle! His body is but small, but he hath a great heart, and is altogether inclined to evil. And the more he waxeth in reason by years, the more he groweth proud, froward, wilful, unruly, and disobedient. If this sparkle be suffered to increase, it will rage over, and burn down, the whole house. We are not born good; but by education we are changed, and become good.

Therefore the wise man saith: "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it away from him." (Prov. xxii. 15.) And again: "The rod and correction give wisdom: but a child set at liberty maketh his mother ashamed." (Prov. xxix. 15.) And in the same chapter: "Correct thy son, and he will give thee rest, and will give pleasures unto thy soul." (ver. 17.) He that spareth the rod, hateth the child: for, "If thou bring up thy son delicately, he shall make thee afraid; and if thou play with him, he shall bring thee to heaviness. Bow down his neck while he is young, and beat him on the sides while he is a child; lest he wax stubborn, and be disobedient unto thee, and bring sorrow to thine heart," saith Solomon. (Ecclus. xxx. 9; 12.)

Who hath not heard the story of Eli and of his sons? It is worthy to be remembered for ever. He had shrewd* children; they feared not God, but brake his commandments, and offended the people. Their father heard of their doings, but took no care for it: he suffered them, and let

* *Shrewd*, i. e. naughty, mischievous, troublesome.—EDITOR.

them alone, so long, that God grew displeased thereat, and called unto Samuel, and said: "Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, whereof whosoever shall hear, his two ears shall tingle. In that day I will raise up against Eli all things which I have spoken concerning his house: when I begin I will also make an end. And I have told him that I will judge his house for ever, for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons ran into a slander, and he stayed them not." (1 Sam. iii. 11—13.) And it came to pass shortly after, "The ark of God was taken by the Philistines, and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phineas, died." And Eli also, "when he heard the report thereof, fell from his seat backward, and his neck was broken." (1 Sam. iv. 10—18.) Such shame and confusion came upon him. This was the hand and judgment of God: in sparing his children, he cast away his children and himself altogether.

But Job dealt far otherwise with his children; his eye was upon them, and he took care lest they should offend God. He sanctified them, and offered burnt-offerings for them daily: "for Job thought, It may be that my sons have sinned, and blasphemed God in their hearts." (Job i. 5.) Therefore he prayed for them. My sons, saith he, are young and tender, and lack discretion. The ways wherein they walk are slippery; they may soon be deceived, and run into danger. O Lord! be thou their guide; be thou unto them a tower of defence; let thy Holy Spirit go before them, to direct them in all their ways. So mindful was he of his children.

Infancy is the first part of our life, and, as it were, the foundation thereof. Where a virtuous and godly childhood goeth before, there a godly and virtuous age followeth after. Contrariwise, when the fathers are not careful to teach their children to know God, and to know themselves; when they do not breed them up in virtue, nor reprove them when they do amiss; they become corrupt in their under-

standing, and abominable in their doings, void of all knowledge and grace, and of reverence, or feeling of nature.

VERSE 13.—*For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, that, when you received of us the word of the preaching of God, ye received it not as the word of men, but as (it is indeed) the word of God, which also worketh in you that believe.*

As the minister's duty is to teach the word of God, and divide it aright, without deceit or guile; so ought the people to receive it with reverence, and to give obedience unto it. But herein have we not power of ourselves; our readiness cometh of God: unless it please God to work within us, and to remove the vail, and to mollify our hearts, whatsoever we hear, it moveth us not, it helpeth not our unbelief, it bringeth us not to the obedience of Christ.

If an earthly prince speak or send message unto us, we give all show of reverence, and hear him with all diligence. This word is not of flesh and blood: it proceedeth not from kings or emperors, or from parliament, or from councils of men; but from God the Father, and from Jesus Christ. When this word is read, princes and emperors stand up, and lay down their sword, and uncover their head, and bow their body, and do reverence: because they know it is the word of God, which God himself uttered; that it should be as the dew of heaven to moisten our souls, as a well of water springing up to everlasting life, as a savour of life unto life, and the very power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. Without this word, we can receive no comfort; we cannot see the light, nor grow in faith, nor abide in the Church of God. It is the word of reconciliation: by it God maketh atonement between himself and the sons of men.

Therefore, when the Epistles, the Psalms, the Chapters, and the Gospel, are read in our hearing, let us remember

whose word we hear. Let us think thus with ourselves: These are the words of our gracious God: my God openeth his mouth from heaven above; he speaketh to me, that I may be saved: he speaketh to me, to keep me from error; to comfort me in the adversities and troubles of this life, and to lead me to the life to come.

What is the cause, why so many so little regard the word of God? why they doubt it, and suspect it? why they are so soon weary of it, and bear it not that reverence that belongeth to it? Because they think not, neither from whom it cometh, nor with whose blood it is sealed, nor to whose benefit it is written. Let us not be ashamed to give place to the word of God; to awake our senses, and to submit them, and our wisdom, and learning, and bodies, and souls, unto it. Let us not harden our hearts. Let us humble ourselves before God, and say, "Behold here am I; let him do to me as seemeth good in his eyes." (2 Sam. xv. 26.)

Which also worketh in you that believe.—Whosoever heareth the words of God, and doeth them not, shall be likened to a foolish man that built his house upon the sand. "If ye know these things," saith Christ, "blessed are ye if ye do them." (John xiii. 17.) The same word of God, which Paul taught the Thessalonians, which was preached by Peter and the rest of the Apostles to the faithful, which Christ received of his Father, and delivered to his Church, is this day, by the mercy of God, purely and truly set down unto you. By it you are required to amend your lives, and comforted in the promises of God to the forgiveness of your sins. If there be any, in whom it worketh not this effect; if there be any, which (though they hear it) believe it not, nor are thereby renewed in their minds; it is a token that they have not received the love of the truth of the Gospel: they despise the word of salvation, and it shall judge them in that day.

VERSE 14.—*For, brethren, you are become followers of the churches of God, which in Judea are in Christ Jesus; because ye have also suffered the same things of your own countrymen, even as they of the Jews:*

15.—*Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and God they please not, and are contrary to all men;*

16.—*And forbid us to preach unto the Gentiles, that they might be saved, to fulfil their sins always: for the wrath of God is come on them to the utmost.*

Wherein became they followers? In suffering as they did. This is the badge and cognizance of the sons of God. Christ saith: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." (Luke ix. 23.) They followed others, not in pleasure and glory, but in trouble and persecution: for that was the way of the prophets, and apostles, and of Christ himself.

Isaiah the prophet was cut in sunder with a saw. What more cruel death? His body was rent, his bowels torn; and yet he not quite dead. In such sort it liked the cruel tormentors to sport themselves. Why? what had he done? He was a prophet. They needed no other matter against him: it was enough that they found him to be a prophet. Jeremiah was stoned to death. Wherefore? Because he called the people to repentance, that they might be saved: because he was a prophet. Amos was slain with a bar; poor old man! no reverence given to his grey head, no regard or pity was taken of him. Wherefore? Because he rebuked iniquity: because he was a prophet. Zechariah was slain when he was in his prayers, and doing sacrifice in the holy place, between the entrance and the altar. Wherefore? Because he declared the truth: because he was a prophet.

This hath been the malice and hatred of the devil. The prince of the darkness of this world hath raged so, even from

the beginning. By this means he hath sought to deface the truth and glory of God, and to establish his own kingdom in shedding the blood and murdering the saints of God.

The churches of God in Judea were miserably vexed and afflicted: they were hated of all men, and counted unworthy of life. Wherefore? Because they turned to the true and living God, and did believe in the name of Jesus Christ. Therefore they were stript, spoiled, headed, quartered, drowned, burned, and put to most reproachful death. Who would become their followers? Who would willingly learn to be so persecuted, and made gazing-stocks to all the world? Yet this discouraged not the Thessalonians. They were a thousand miles distant from Judea, but were joined in fellowship of the Gospel, and in brotherly love, unto them. They heard of their mildness and of their constancy, and were stirred up by their example. They did hearken after them, and were careful for them as for their brethren, and the members of the same body.

You have heard what numbers of late have been persecuted and put to death among us. Wherefore? Because they turned from idols to serve God as he hath commanded, and did put their trust in him. You have heard how patiently and meekly they went to their death, and what a plentiful harvest God hath raised of their blood. For the death of his saints is precious in the sight of the Lord. Their blood cannot be spent in vain. We must remember their patience and zeal, and the cause why they suffered. We must not despise, or set light by the Gospel of Jesus Christ, for which they so joyfully gave their lives.

And it is not enough that we be mindful of such examples as we have had at home. We must also carefully consider of other churches abroad. God hath kindled a fire: he will have it burn. Oh, what torments do our brethren daily suffer! What cruelty is devised daily against them! I

speak not of death only, but of rackings, and wonderful extremities more painful than death. Wherefore are these things done unto them? Because they are turned to the true and living God, and believe in the name of Jesus Christ. Some they hang by the hands, and draw up with a pulley, and bind great weights of lead at their heels to rend them, and tear their bodies asunder. Some they have tied unto great pieces of timber, and have put fire at the soles of their feet. They have opened their mouths, and made them draw in lawn into their body; a thing most cruel, and yet which they have practised: the manner whereof hath been thus reported. They lay it so far in the mouth, that a man's breath easily draweth it into his body, and so it is conveyed into the stomach. When it is well settled, then cometh the tormentor, and taketh the lawn by the other end, and rasheth it suddenly with such a force, as it seemeth he doth pluck out the very heart and entrails; such a rare and strange kind of cruelty, as is not practised upon the most notorious rebels and traitors. As for death, forty or fifty at one time have been heaped together, and burnt in one fire. They have set upon the servants of God, and compassed the church where they have assembled together to pray unto God, and murdered them in their innocency, while they lifted up pure hands unto God. The French king, by the counsel of such as hate the Gospel of Christ, sent his cruel soldiers, and murdered his subjects at Valois.* He overthrew their houses, burnt their town, destroyed man, woman, and child, spoiled their corn, and turned their trees upside down. He wasted, defaced, and

* The Waldenses had suffered, in 1540, a fierce and sanguinary persecution under Francis the First of France; and the most horrible cruelties were still in practice by the Spanish Inquisition against the Protestants of Flanders. The massacre of St. Bartholomew had also taken place in 1572.—EDITOR.

unpeopled it: not for that they were thieves or rebels, but because they believed in the name of Christ. Consider how many are murdered in Flanders, and in the kingdom of France. They are not so far from us, as Judea from Thessalonica: they join next unto us. God is blessed in his saints, and holy in all his works. No cruelty is able to quench his truth. There is no counsel which shall prevail against the Lord. He giveth increase, and placeth children instead of their fathers. The more are slain by the enemies, the more spring up by the working of his Spirit. The more are hewn down, the more multiply. We may not be strangers in this case. It behoveth us to consider the afflictions of our brethren. They belong unto us. We must pray to God for them, that he will put an end to their miseries: otherwise, we have not the Spirit of God; we bear no love, nor care for his house.

Of your countrymen.—This was the greatest and heaviest part of their troubles. For what a heart's-grief is it to the father, if his son rise up against him: or to the son, to see his father ready to betray him, and to seek his blood! Where this is done, he will say: 'O father, I am thy son; alas! what have I done to have thy displeasure? Death is bitter, but thy displeasure is more bitter than death. It were a cruel thing that any man shall kill another: what is it then, if thou shouldest kill thine own child? Yet, if thou be so bent, take my life and spare my conscience: spare my soul, that I may deliver it up into His hands that hath given it me. I would be obedient unto thee, thou art my father: but I may not disobey God; He is the Father of fathers. He hath said: "He that loveth father or mother more than me, he is not worthy of me." (Matt. x. 37.) It is a miserable case when persecution groweth so hot, that the child is driven to forsake his father, or the father his child: yet so doth the world blind many, and Satan so possesseth their hearts, that he turneth their love into hatred, and shutteth

their senses, and choketh and dammeth up the springs of nature. They become so blind, and so unsensible, that they neither feel their own flesh, nor know their own blood. They think, in so doing, they do God good service. They are enemies to the truth. They are the enemies of the cross of Christ; their end is destruction.

And forbid us to preach unto the Gentiles, that they might be saved.—This is the end whereunto the Gospel is given, that the people should be saved. St. Paul saith: "God will that all men shall be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth." (1 Tim. ii. 4.) Therefore our Saviour appointed his Apostles to this office of preaching his word, saying, "Go and preach the Gospel unto all nations:" (Mark xvi. 15.) "Go unto the lost sheep of Israel." (Matt. x. 6.) He saith: "It is not the will of my Father that one of these little ones should perish:" (Matt. xviii. 14.) "Whosoever believeth and shall be baptized, shall be saved." (Mark xvi. 16.) St. James exhorteth the faithful: "Receive with meekness the word that is grafted in you, which is able to save your souls." (James i. 21.) By it we hear the sweet voice of our Saviour: "Come unto me, all ye that travail, and be heavily loaden, and I will refresh you." (Matt. xi. 28.) By it we hear the merciful calling of God: "Turn unto me, and ye shall be saved." (Isa. xlv. 22.) By it we are warned to depart from the company of such as are enemies to the truth; and to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness: "Save yourselves," saith St. Peter, "from this froward generation." (Acts ii. 48.) By it we are taught to believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God: that his name is Jesus, because he shall save his people from their sins: and that there is not salvation in any other besides him. For faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. This is therefore the duty of the preacher, to preach unto the people, that so they may be saved; that they may know

the ways of God, that they may repent them of their sins, and be renewed unto godliness.

Who would think there were any that would hinder the course of the Gospel, or forbid to preach it unto the people? The Apostle here layeth that fault to the Jews, that they "forbid him to preach to the Gentiles." The same fault Christ found in the Scribes and Pharisees: "Woe be to you, interpreters of the law; for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that came in ye forbade." (Luke xi. 52.) Such there have been always, and such there are now. Oh, say they, why should the people know these things? what should they meddle with the Scriptures? Let them do their business, and apply their occupations. It is not reason, nor fit, that every one should be learned. When they think they know somewhat, they become proud, and devise heresies, and maintain them. As if God had not left them to instruct the people: or as if the holy Scriptures, and not the malice of Satan, were the cause of heresies.

But God hath said: "Gather the people together; men, and women, and children, and thy stranger that is within thy gates: that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the Lord your God, and keep and observe all the words of this law." (Deut. xxxi. 12.) The prophet David thought it meet the people should know the Scriptures: therefore said he, "Blessed is that man whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and in that law doth exercise himself day and night." (Ps. i. 1, 2.) And again: "Wherewith shall a young man redress his ways? In keeping thy words." (Ps. cxix. 9.)

When Christ himself came first into the world to plant his church, he vouchsafed the poor and simple the knowledge of his truth, and shewed it first unto them. The first that had tidings of his birth were not Scribes and Pharisees, but a company of poor shepherds. The first that received his Gospel, and taught it in the world, were not doctors or

learned men, but fishers, and toll-gatherers, and of base condition. The first that met him with triumph at Jerusalem, and sang Hosannah, were not bishops and priests, but babes and infants. They that followed him most, and believed, were not the greatest men of power and policy, but such as the Pharisees termed a cursed people, which knew not the law. The first that told the Apostles the resurrection of Christ, were not the sagest and wisest men, but two or three silly women. The first that were converted to the faith after his resurrection, were not any of the great, learned, or otherwise esteemed and known among the people, but about three thousand poor, silly, simple men, so base and so out of knowledge that not one of their names could ever be known.

Why should any man resist the wisdom of God, and deny the people the bread whereon they should feed; the light by which they may safely walk; the hearing and reading of the word, by which they may be turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God? They have cruel hearts, and are enemies to the glory of God, and to the salvation of his people, which in such sort deny them the knowledge of the Scriptures.

To fulfil their sins always.—They have refused the word of reconciliation; they are not contented that they have stoned the prophets, and killed them that were sent to them, but they yet resist the holy Gospel, and devise means to keep all others from the comfort thereof. This is a token of God's heavy displeasure upon them, that they repent not of their former evils, but grow worse and worse.

When the Scribes and Pharisees seemed to mislike the cruelty of their fathers, and said, if they had been in their days they would not have been partners with them in the blood of the prophets; our Saviour maketh their hypocrisy known, that herein they should be like to their fathers, (for they should kill and crucify the prophets and wise men, and scourge them in their synagogues, and persecute them from

city to city;) and said to them, "Fulfil ye also the measure of your fathers." (Matt. xxiii. 32.)

The cause of this judgment of God, in giving over the wicked to increase the heap of their sins, the Apostle setteth down to the Romans: "As they regarded them not to know God, God delivered them up to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient." (Rom. i. 28.) For so he sometimes punisheth our sins, and suffereth the wicked to heap sin upon sin, that so their damnation may be the greater.

For the wrath of God is come on them to the utmost.—Though God be patient and long-suffering, because he would have all men come to repentance; yet, in whom his mercy taketh no place to work their amendment, upon them he poureth out his wrath and indignation to the utmost. He meaneth not that all the whole nation of the Jews were so cast out of the favour of God, that never any of them shall be saved; for in another place he saith, "Hath God cast away his people? God forbid: for I myself am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away his people which he knew before." (Rom. xi. 1, 2.) But miserable shall be their end, and a terrible damnation shall they have, whosoever withstand the truth of God, and to the rest of their wickedness join such a hatred and despiteful contempt of the poor and simple sort of the people, that they keep them from the wholesome words of doctrine, and forbid such as are willing to preach unto them. This is their condemnation, that light came into the world, and they loved darkness rather than light. "They persecute us," saith St. Paul, "and forbid us to preach unto the Gentiles, that they might be saved; to fulfil their sins always: for the wrath of God is come on them to the utmost."

VERSE 17.—*Forasmuch, brethren, as we were kept from you*

for a season, concerning sight, but not in heart, we enforced the more to see your face with great desire.

18.—*Therefore we would have come unto you, (I Paul, at least once or twice,) but Satan hindered us.*

He told them before how dearly and tenderly he loved them; exhorting, comforting, and beseeching every one of them, as a father his children. He taketh care lest by any means they should doubt of his great good-will towards them; and therefore doth both witness the same, and shew them through what cause he hath staid from them. Such a zeal and care had he over the people!

O in what case then are they, that are careless and make no regard of the people of God; which hunt after many livings, and bend not themselves to do good; which serve their own belly, and seek to be rich, and eat up the people of God, as if they were bread! They cannot say they have a desire to see the face of their flock, and that their heart is with them. Howsoever they find time for other matters, they can never take time to know their sheep, and to do the work of their ministry among them. They care not for them: they think not of them. They plant not, they water not, they watch not; they give no warning of the dangers at hand: they teach them not to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts; and to live soberly, and righteously, and godly in this present world.

It were happy if all such were removed out of the church of God. They destroy the souls of many, and lead them to destruction by their negligence. What account shall they give unto God for the souls of their brethren? Where shall they stand, or what will they say, when he shall bid them make a strait account of their stewardship?

This is the practice of Satan. He useth all means to snare us, and withdraw us from that blessed hope. Sometimes he letteth the increase of the Gospel, by raising up tumults and disquieting the church of God, and stirring the

hearts of such as are in authority to persecute by all means the teachers of the Gospel of Christ. Again, when God giveth peace and quietness to his church, he leadeth the overseers of the people to a forgetfulness of their duty; to seek the pleasures and delights of this life, and to have no regard of the work of the Lord. Such occasions the devil seeketh, to hinder our salvation, and to withstand the truth and glory of God.

VERSE 19.—*For what is our joy, or crown of rejoicing? are not even you it, in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?*

20.—*Yea, ye are our glory and joy.*

The greatest comfort to him that laboureth, is to see that his labour cometh to good effect, and worketh that which he purposed. He hath before approved his diligence, and shewed the mercy of God in making his word fruitful, by opening their hearts that it might sink into them, and take root in them. Therefore now he exhorteth them to continue stedfast, that so he may present them unto God, and be partaker with them of everlasting glory.

This ought to be the care of all such which are ministers: they should seek, above all things, to bring the people to such perfection of understanding, and to such godliness of life, that they may rejoice in their behalf, and so cheerfully wait for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER III.

VERSE 1.—*Wherefore, since we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to remain at Athens alone:*

2.—*And have sent Timotheus, our brother, and minister of God, and our labour-fellow in the Gospel of Christ, to stablish you, and to comfort you touching your faith.*

I KNOW your faith in Christ Jesus is many ways assaulted. The envious man will take all occasions to sow darnel among the Lord's corn: he will seek to take away the good seed that is sowed in your hearts. You are dear unto me; your wounds are my wounds, and your grief my grief: therefore, since I myself am hindered that I cannot come unto you to be with you in your afflictions, I send unto you my fellow-labourer in the Gospel. I have but one with me, whom I love tenderly, and trust him as mine own soul: him I send unto you. I leave myself destitute, and without a companion, among the infidels here at Athens, in a city much given to idolatry, and which cannot abide the name of Christ. Thus have I burthened myself to relieve you, and taken from myself to comfort you. I have been careless of myself, and careful for you, and for the church of God which is among you.

The Apostle had sent Timothy to other places: to the Corinthians and to the Philippians. He always found him constant in faith, and zealous to do good unto the saints; and now commendeth him to this congregation, and calleth him "brother, a minister of God, and his labour-fellow:" that so they might conceive his great care for them, which sent so worthy a man unto them; and also that they would esteem him, and have him in reputation; to hearken

unto Timothy, and to do in all things as he should direct them.

Such as St. Paul nameth Timothy, should all they be which are sent unto the people. They must hold the faith of Christ unfeignedly, and profess it boldly: they must be called and hallowed of God to his service; and must not be idle, but painful, and labouring to build up the house of God, and to gather in his harvest: that they may truly be called the ministers of God, and labourers in the Gospel.

They that are called to this service must not think it enough that they serve God as other trades do: for princes, and all sorts of people, owe service and homage unto God, to serve him in holiness and righteousness all the days of their life. This service of godly conversation and obedience must ministers also most carefully perform: but the especial service which belongeth to their calling, is to carry the ark of the covenant before their people; to do their message truly when they are sent; to teach, to instruct, to exhort, to comfort, to rebuke, in season and out of season; to plant, to weed, to graft, to shrid;* to hold up their hands, and to pray for the people: to do this service for kings, for subjects, for rich, for poor, for the wise, for the simple, for the godly, and for the wicked; to establish them, and comfort them touching their faith.

Paul calleth himself often the servant of God, and the servant of our Lord Jesus Christ. He rejoiceth in this service, and reckoneth it in part of his glory. If we consider the pains and travails which he took, we shall know what diligence all others that are called to the same service ought to shew. Thus he writeth of himself: "I am debtor both to the Grecians and to the Barbarians, both to the wise men and to the unwise. Therefore, as much as lieth in me, I am ready to preach the Gospel to you also that are at Rome."

* To *shrid*, or *shred*; i. e. to pluck, as fruit: (see 2 Kings iv. 39.) here, to lop off rotten and unprofitable branches.—EDITOR.

(Rom. i. 14, 15.) Again: "Though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all men, that I might win the more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win the Jews; to them that are under the law, as though I were under the law, that I may win them that are under the law. I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some." (1 Cor. ix. 19, 20; 22.) Again: "We preach not ourselves, but Jesus Christ the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." (2 Cor. iv. 5.) Again: "We are reviled, and yet we bless; we are persecuted, and yet suffer it." (1 Cor. iv. 12.) I serve not myself, saith he, but God; I serve not to seek mine own affections, but to set forth his glory. Thus in his own example he teacheth us that in the service of the Church of God we must endure all pains, and not refuse to follow our calling for any reproach, or shame, or villany, which may be wrought against us by men.

VERSE 3.—*That no man should be moved with these afflictions: for ye yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto.*

Think not that you shall enjoy the pleasures of this world, if you be the faithful servants of Christ. Christ shed his blood for thee, that thou shouldest not refuse to give thy blood for him. Drink the cup of bitter gall, whereof Christ began to thee; and carry thy cross, that thou mayest follow him. If thou be ashamed of the cross, thou art ashamed of Christ: if thou be ashamed of Christ, he will be ashamed of thee before his Father in heaven. The cross cannot hurt thee, for Christ hath sanctified it in his blood.

Behold not the sword which striketh thee; but think on the crown of glory which thou shalt receive. Gold is clearer, after it hath been put into the fire: be thou gold, and the fiery persecution shall not hurt thee. Let not the fear of death put out thy faith. Trust in the Lord; be strong

and he shall stablish thy heart: be rooted and built in Christ, and stablished in the faith. Then shall thy heart rejoice, and no man shall take thy joy from thee.

VERSE 4.—*For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulations; even as it came to pass, and ye know it.*

God giveth us warning to be ready to suffer afflictions for his name. "My son, if thou wilt come into the service of God, stand fast in righteousness and fear; and prepare thy soul to temptation." (Ecclus. ii. 1.) And in the Proverbs: "My son, refuse not the chastening of the Lord, neither be grieved with his correction: for the Lord correcteth him whom he loveth, even as the father the child in whom he delighteth." (Prov. iii. 11, 12.) "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten," saith Christ. (Rev. iii. 19.) Therefore the apostle telleth the Hebrews, "If you be without correction, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." (Heb. xii. 8.) In the tenth of Matthew our Saviour warneth his disciples hereof, "Behold, I send you as sheep in the midst of wolves." (Matt. x. 16.)

Thus God schooleth and nurtureth his people, that so through many tribulations they may enter to their rest. Frankincense, when it is put into the fire, giveth the greater perfume; spice, if it be pounded, smelleth the sweeter; the earth, when it is torn up with the plough, becometh more fruitful; the seed in the ground, after frost and snow and winter storms, springeth the ranker; the nigher the vine is pruned to the stock, the greater grape it yieldeth; the grape, when it is most pressed and beaten, maketh the sweetest wine; fine gold is the better, when it is cast in the fire; rough stones with hewing are squared and made fit for building; cloth is rent and cut, that it may be made a gar-

ment; linen is bucked,* and washed, and wrung, and beaten, and is the fairer.

These are familiar examples to shew the benefit and commodity which the children of God receive by persecution. By it God washeth and scoureth his congregation. "We rejoice," saith St. Paul, "in tribulations; knowing that tribulation bringeth forth patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed." (Rom. v. 3.) The power of God is made perfect in weakness; and all things turn unto good to them that fear the Lord.

VERSE 5.—*Even for this cause, when I could no longer forbear, I sent him that I might know of your faith, lest the tempter had tempted you in any sort, and that our labour had been in vain.*

6.—*But now lately when Timotheus came from you unto us, and brought us good tidings of your faith and love, and that ye have good remembrance of us, always desiring to see us, as we also do you:*

7.—*Therefore, brethren, we had consolation in you in all our affliction and necessitude through your faith.*

8.—*For now are we alive, if ye stand fast in the Lord.*

9.—*For what thanks can we recompense to God again for you, for all the joy wherewith we rejoice for your sakes before our God;*

10.—*Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might accomplish that which is lacking in your faith?*

The Apostle continueth in declaring his earnest affection towards them, and how greatly he rejoiced to hear of their constancy in the faith, and of their love and agreement together. For he feared it might have happened to them, as it

* *Bucked;* that is, thrown into the tub.—EDITOR.

had done to others. He preached to the Galatians, but they gave ear to false apostles, and went back from that he had taught them. "I am in fear of you," saith he, "lest I have bestowed on you labour in vain." (Gal. iv. 11.) And, "Ye did run well: who did let you, that you did not obey the truth? It is not of the persuasion of him that calleth you." (Gal. v. 7, 8.) The devil hath bewitched you, and beguiled your eyes.

Such is the subtilty and the power of Satan in the children of disobedience. Judas was an apostle, equal with Peter and the other apostles. The devil entered into his heart and bewitched him, and then he became the child of destruction. Julian the apostate was a Christian, and a reader in the church, but became an enemy of Christ: and when he was stricken in the field by miracle from heaven, he threw up his blood in defiance of Christ: so had the devil bewitched him, and changed his heart to wickedness.

It might have been that their weakness should in like sort have been overcome, when the tempter tempted them: and so the gold which he had left with them might have been turned into dross, and the light into darkness, and the kingdom of God taken away from them. For then had his labour been in vain, and they had received the word to their own damnation. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment given unto them.

The devil is the tempter. His strength and practice is not always by force of arms, but by subtile persuasions, and other slights. He reasoneth with Eve, why she would not taste of the apple, which was sweet, pleasant, and delicate; and telleth the poor woman God did nothing but mock her: for God knew, what day they should eat thereof, their eyes should be opened, and they should know as much as God. He came to Christ, and said, "Command that these stones

be made bread :" (Matt. iv. 3.) and, " Cast thyself down, if thou be the Son of God :" (ver. 6.) then thou shalt be worshipped, and taken for a great prophet. He tempted David after this sort : Why wilt thou serve God ? he hath advanced thine enemies, and hath forsaken thee and left thee in misery. " I fretted," saith David, " at the foolish : these are the wicked, yet prosper they alway, and increase in riches. Certainly I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency : for daily have I been punished, and chastened every morning. Mine heart was vexed : so foolish was I, and ignorant ; I was a beast before thee." (Ps. lxxiii. 3 ; 12—14 ; 21, 22.) He tempted Job, the faithful servant of God, and told him that he was righteous, and holy, and gave alms, in vain ; that God had no regard to his prayers, and would not hear them.

This tempter waiteth all occasions to draw us from our faith and stedfastness in the Lord ; yet is he never so busy, as when any persecution is raised against the truth : then is he in his ruff.* Then playeth he his part, and leaveth nothing undone whereby he may move us to forsake the truth. Wilt thou, saith he, be so foolish to lose thy life, and knowest not wherefore ? Art thou wiser than thy forefathers ? Why shouldest not thou be contented to do as thy father and mother, and friends and kinsfolks ? Thinkest thou they have not as good care of their souls, as thou hast of thine ? Wilt thou make them Pagans and Infidels ? Dost thou think they are damned ? Be wise, and cast not thyself away. Flesh is frail ; life is sweet ; death is dreadful : but to die in the fire ; to be burned alive ; to see thy arms and thy legs quite burnt from thy body, and that yet thou canst not die : this is most terrible : thou canst never abide it. Behold so many kings and princes, noblemen, cardinals,

* In his *ruff;* that is, in his best state and attire : " transformed into an angel of light." (2 Cor. xi. 14.)—EDITOR.

bishops, doctors, and learned men, and whole kingdoms and countries, of the contrary opinion. Be not wilful. Think not thyself wiser than all the world. What were it for thee to come to the church, and to shew thyself obedient, and to do as others do? It is a small matter to look up and hold up thy hands at the sacring.* If it be an offence, thou shalt be excused, because thou art forced to do it by authority. God is merciful; he will forgive thee. Thus and thus doth Satan tempt us; and sifteth us, to lead us from our steadfastness. These devices he practised of late days before our eyes, with many constant professors of Christian religion: but through the mighty power of God they quenched all his fiery darts, and through many tribulations entered into glory.

Thanks be to God, which doth make us able through his grace, not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for his sake! He is faithful, and will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able; but will even give the issue with the temptation, that we may be able to bear it. He hath bidden us call upon him in the day of trouble, and he will deliver us. "Commit thy way unto the Lord, and trust in him," saith the prophet, "and he shall bring it to pass." (Ps. xxxvii. 5.) "I have set the Lord always before me, for he is at my right hand: therefore I shall not slide." (Ps. xvi. 8.) And again: "The Lord is with me: therefore I will not fear what man can do unto me. It is better to trust in the Lord, than to have confidence in princes." (Ps. cxviii. 6; 8.)

When our Saviour foretold his disciples of the troubles to come, he also maketh comfort to them of the strength and the help which they shall receive of God, saying, "When they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall

* The *sacring;* or consecration of the host, in the Romish service of the mass.—EDITOR.

speak: for it shall be given you in that hour what ye shall say." (Matt. x. 19.) He telleth them by whom they shall be persecuted; "Ye shall be betrayed also of your parents, and of your brethren, and kinsmen, and friends:" and in what sort; "They shall lay hands on you, and persecute you, and deliver you to the synagogues, and into prisons, and bring you before kings and rulers:" and for what cause; "For my name's sake." (Luke xxi. 16, 17.) Then, what the godly in this case must do; "Fear them not: he that endureth to the end shall be saved." (Matt. x. 22; 26.) Last of all, he promiseth to be with them, and to strengthen them; "This shall turn to you for a testimonial. Lay it up therefore in your hearts, that you premeditate not what you shall answer: for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, whereagainst all your adversaries shall not be able to speak nor resist." (Luke xxi. 13—15.)

Thus were the things spoken of long before, which we have seen lately done. Whosoever will set down the story thereof, now they are passed, must needs declare it in the manner as it was forespoken. Their own kinsfolks and friends betrayed many, and brought them to the bishops, who delivered them into prisons, for the name of Christ, and for the love of his truth. The blessed witnesses, or martyrs, of God feared not, but endured. Many were simple young men, young maidens, men and women of great age, labouring men, and men of occupations: yet God gave them such a mouth and such wisdom, as all their adversaries were not able to speak against it, nor resist it. Who readeth that Scripture diligently, and considereth this story of our time advisedly, cannot but confess that the light of God's Gospel is come among us: and that we are they upon whom the latter end of the world is come, and in whom he doth show forth the great might of his power.

Therefore such temptations as Satan useth, cannot make the man of God fall from his anchor-hold. His hope is

safely laid up in his breast. He knoweth in whom he putteth his trust, and therefore saith, I presume not of knowledge: I esteem not to know any thing, save Christ Jesus, and him crucified: I believe not in my fathers; I reverence them, and love them, but I believe only in God: I fear not the sword, I fear not what man can do unto me; but I fear him that can kill my body and soul. It is better for me to abide the fire, and lose my life, that I may live for ever, than to deny God for safeguard of my life, and be cast into hell-fire. If there be so many partakers of their errors, and so few that cleave to the truth, the multitude of them shall not save me: and it is no trial of God's truth, whether it be received of many or of few. Cardinals, and bishops, and doctors, may be wise and learned: so were Annas and Caiaphas, the High Priests, and Scribes, and Pharisees, which did put to death the Lord of glory. I dare not do ill, because other men do it: I dare not tempt God. My conscience is truly assured by God's word, what is idolatry and the dishonour of God. If I should come into the church, and make such shows as you advise me, and be partaker with idolaters, I should do hurt to others in mine ill example: I should do against mine own conscience; which would be a heavy witness against me, both while I live in this world, and in the dreadful day of judgment.

VERSE 11.—*Now God himself, even our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, guide our journey unto you.*

12.—*And the Lord increase you, and make you abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you:*

13.—*To make your hearts stable and unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with his saints.*

I have planted you; you are my children, whom I have

begotten in Christ. I love you, and have care over you. I have an exceeding desire to see your face; but Satan hath withstood my purpose, and found means to keep me from you. I commit my voyage to God; if it please him that I may come unto you, to rejoice with you, and comfort you. He knoweth what is good for me, and what is profitable for you. The cause is his own. He will do all things to his glory. He will tread Satan under our feet. We cannot purpose and dispose of ourselves. "I know that the way of man is not in himself, neither is it in man to walk and to direct his steps." (Jer. x. 23.)

The Lord increase you,—in all godliness, that you may abound more and more, even as you have heard of us how you ought to walk. You are but a little flock; God increase your number, and make all them partakers of his kingdom with you, which hear of your faith and conversation in Christ.

To make your hearts stable and unblameable;—That nothing move you or trouble you: that your hearts and consciences be quiet: that you may stand upright, and shew yourselves in great confidence before his judgment-seat: that when you shall see God's hand stretched out, and his plagues prepared against the wicked, you be not afraid. This is the haven of rest, whereto no man cometh but he that hath a quiet conscience: this is the tabernacle of the Highest, wherein they shall dwell; this is the holy mountain, wherein they shall rest, that walk uprightly, and work righteousness, and speak the truth in their heart.

Here let us consider the rages and tempests of a troubled mind, and of an unquiet conscience: which knoweth that God is an avenger of all wickedness, and that death is the due reward of sin; which acknowledgeth himself to be a sinner, and findeth no way how he shall escape hell-fire. This man, when he thinketh with himself of these things, he cannot but be amazed and disquieted above measure. The

sound of the trumpet is ever in his ears; he heareth the voice of the Judge, saying, Stand forth, sinner. Now, declare how thou hast used thy body; give a reckoning of thy whole life. Then his conscience beginneth to quake and tremble. Then he needeth no witness to accuse him, nor judge to condemn him; he is both witness and judge against himself.

The danger hereof may somewhat appear in those which are taken, and prisoned, and arraigned before a judge. When he knoweth himself guilty, heareth the evidence proved against him, seeth the judge severe to deal justice without mercy, and therefore is assured of death; what grief and torment feeleth he at heart! what would he not give, what would he not do, to escape the danger?

But the danger whereunto God judgeth us is greater, and the manner of his judgment is straiter. Here, the judge may be deceived, he is but a man: but there, God is the judge, who is the searcher of the heart and reins, and no man shall be hid from his heat. Here, nothing can be done without evidence, without witnesses and proof: before God, he that hath offended shall accuse himself. This is the case of conscience. Itself is witness, itself calleth for judgment to condemnation. His conscience shall make the sinner say, I have offended against God: I have despised his word, and would not give ear to learn it. I would not know the time of God's mercy, and of my visitation. I lived in fornication, and committed theft, and kept wrongfully other men's goods. I was disobedient to parents; nurtured not my children in the fear of God; kept not my heart from doing iniquity: I abused my goods, my wits, my senses, and the good grace of God. I have sinned against heaven and against God, and am not worthy to be called his son. The wrath of God is worthily fallen upon me, hell-fire is my meed. The mercy of God cannot save me, for my sin is greater than that it can be forgiven. Mine own heart

and conscience, heaven and earth, the angels and archangels, God himself, and Christ the Redeemer of them that believe in him, are against me. I cannot cast mine eyes to any place, but ever I see my damnation before me. Then doth he tremble with agony, and stand in fear. His heart dasheth and beateth, as the waves of the sea. He feeleth uproar, war, lightning, thunder, death, and hell in his heart. He shall fly, when no man followeth him. He shall say to the hills and rocks, Fall on me, and hide me from the presence of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.

Such is the terror of an unquiet mind. Though all the princes in the world would join themselves to do it, the wicked can never enjoy peace. God keep us far from such agonies, and give us pure hearts and clear consciences!

CHAPTER IV.

VERSE 1.—*And furthermore we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you in the Lord Jesus, that ye increase more and more, as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God.*

2.—*For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus.*

WE command you not, nor use any force; but intreat you with all patience and meekness, that ye will love your own souls, and think and do those things which please God. You are they to whom the promise was made. God hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light. He

hath not dealt so with every nation, neither have they known his judgments.

We come not to you in our own name. We have charge to preach the gospel to all nations. Therefore we speak unto you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We shew you the way, that you may walk in it: we declare unto you the will of God, that you may be saved. "For yet will the Lord wait, that he may have mercy upon you; and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have compassion upon you," saith the prophet Isaiah. (Isa. xxx. 18.)

We have opened unto you the whole treasure of God's mercy. We have led you to the throne of grace, and made you see the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world. We have preached unto you remission and forgiveness of your sins through his name. If you have heard us, and believe, you shall be saved. If any man preach unto you otherwise than that you have received, let him be accursed.

How ye ought to walk and please God.—It is not enough that ye believe: ye must also walk and live according to knowledge. This is the will of God: "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath ordained that we should walk in them." (Eph. ii. 10.) "For the grace of God hath appeared, that bringeth salvation unto all men, and teacheth us that we should live soberly, and righteously, and godly in this life; looking for the blessed hope, and appearing of the glory of the mighty God, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ." (Tit. ii. 11—13.)

In this sort hath our teaching been among you: that you might shew forth your faith by your works; that it availeth you nothing to say you have faith, if you have no works; because the faith that hath no works, is dead. This we are taught by the words of our Lord Jesus. He saith: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord,

Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth my Father's will that is in heaven." (Matt. vii. 21.) Again: "Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire." (Matt. iii. 10.) "The servant that knoweth his master's will, and doeth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes." (Luke xii. 47.) Thus hath our Lord commanded us to be like our Father which is in heaven; to let our light so shine before men, that they may see our good works. Thus the Apostle taught: thus the church of God this day teacheth. It requireth faith, as the instrument and means, to apply the merits and passion of Jesus Christ for our salvation; and good works, as fruits and witnesses of our faith.

Whosoever learneth aright, and believeth the Gospel as he ought, groweth and goeth forward from virtue to virtue. If he were ignorant before, he cometh thereby to knowledge: if he were weak, he groweth in strength: if he were wicked, he turneth unto godliness.

VERSE 3.—*For this is the will of God, even your holiness: and that ye should abstain from fornication*

4.—*That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in holiness and honour.*

God requireth true and unfeigned holiness. "Wash you," saith the Prophet Isaiah, "make you clean; take away the evil of your works from before mine eyes; cease to do ill." (Isa. i. 16.) This is the commaandment of God, that so we should be partakers of his heavenly nature. "As he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation," saith St. Peter. (1 Pet. i. 15.)

Abstain from fornication.—Nothing so much hindereth true holiness, as fornication, uncleanness, wantonness, and uch like. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication, sinneth against his own body. God is the avenger of such: he will judge the adulterers

and fornicators. Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor adulterers, nor wantons, nor lechers shall inherit the kingdom of heaven.

Know to possess his vessel.—That is, his body. And the body is the temple of the Holy Ghost; as he saith to the Corinthians: "And therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, for they are God's." (1 Cor. vi. 20.) In this body we shall rise out of our grave, and appear before the judgment-seat of God; in this body we shall sit upon the twelve seats, and judge the twelve tribes. God shall crown it with glory and honour. Keep this vessel clean, it is precious: keep it in honour, keep it in holiness. Make not the member of Christ a member of the devil: shame not your bodies, shame not yourselves.

VERSE 5.—*And not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God.*

Give not yourselves over to filthy affections, as the horse and mule which have no understanding, and as the Gentiles which have no fear of God's judgment. Their heart and mind is unclean: they know not God: they know not themselves: they know not the difference of this life, and of the life to come. Therefore they know not sin; or if they know it, they refrain it not: but follow the lusts of their corrupt nature, and give themselves to wantonness, to work all uncleanness, even with greediness.

Thus the Apostle setteth down what is the fruit of ignorance; and whereto a man groweth, that knoweth not God. That devotion, therefore, which some say is the daughter of ignorance, hath no likeness with true holiness. "For this is life eternal," saith Christ, "that they know thee to be the only very God, and, whom thou has sent, Jesus Christ." (John xvii. 17.)

VERSE 6.—*That no man oppress or defraud his brother in*

any matter: for the Lord is an avenger of all such things; as we have also told you beforetime, and testified.

Let no man defraud his brother, neither by false weight, nor by false measure, nor by lying words. Let your measures, and weights, and words be true: let your gains be just and true, that God may bless them. His blessing will make you rich; and whatsoever he blesseth not, shall waste and consume, and do you no good. Do unto others as you would they should do unto you. This is true dealing, and upright.

If thou speak more than is true, if thou take more than thy ware is worth, thy conscience knoweth it is none of thine. God will destroy all the workers of iniquity. He that delighteth in sin, hateth his own soul: the mouth that accustometh to lie, slayeth the soul.

Defraud not thy brother: he is thy brother, whether he be rich or poor; he is thy brother, and the son of God. Wilt thou do wrong to thy brother? wilt thou oppress the son of God, and that even in the sight of God? God is his Father; he will not leave it unpunished in thee. If he be simple and unskilful, abuse not his simplicity. God is the God of righteousness: deal justly, that thine own conscience accuse thee not.

Teach not thy sons nor thy servants to deceive others, and to gain by wickedness. After they have learned of thee to deceive others, they will deceive thee also. Job prayed daily for his children. Be thou also careful that thy children and servants deceive no man, nor hurt any: their sins shall be laid to thy charge.

Why askest thou of God that he will feed thee, and give thee thy daily bread; and waitest not upon his will, but feedest upon the bread of iniquity? This meat will not nourish thee; this wealth will not stand by thee: for God will not prosper it. The wise man saith: "The bread of deceit is sweet to a man, but afterward his mouth shall be

filled with gravel." (Prov. xx. 17.) Ill-gotten goods have an ill end. God hath said by the Prophet Haggai: "Ye have sown much, but ye have brought in little: ye brought it home, and I did blow upon it." (Haggai i. 6; 9.) We have examples hereof daily. We have seen great heaps of wealth suddenly blown away, and consumed to nothing; great houses decayed, and the hope of the wicked quite overthrown.

Here will I speak somewhat of the unhappy trade of usury; because therein standeth the most miserable and shameful deceiving of the brethren. I will not speak all that may be said, for it would be too long, and over wearisome. I will have regard of that shall be agreeable and profitable, and behoveful for you to hear.

And that you may the better consider hereof, and see the whole matter of usury, I will shew you, first, what usury is: then, whence it springeth, and what are the causes of usury: thirdly, what cometh of it, what hurt it worketh to the commonwealth; and I will lay forth such reasons as may make any good man abhor it: then I will declare what the holy Fathers, and the Apostles, and Martyrs, and Christ, and God himself, have thought and spoken of usury.

1. Many simple men know not what is usury, nor never heard the name of it. The world were happy if no man knew it: for evil things do less harm when they be most unknown. Pestilences and plagues are not known but with great misery. But that you may learn to know it, and the more to abhor it, this it is:—

Usury is a kind of lending of money, or corn, or oil, or wine, or of any other thing, wherein, upon covenant and bargain, we receive again the whole principal which we delivered, and somewhat more for the use and occupying of the same: as, if I lend one hundred pounds, and for it covenant to receive one hundred and five pounds, or any other sum greater than was the sum which I did lend. This is that, that we call usury:

such a kind of bargaining as no good man, or godly man, ever used; such a kind of bargaining as all men that ever feared God's judgment have always abhorred and condemned. It is filthy gains, and a work of darkness: it is a monster in nature; the overthrow of mighty kingdoms; the destruction of flourishing states; the decay of wealthy cities; the plagues of the world, and the misery of the people. It is theft; it is the murdering of our brethren; it is the curse of God, and the curse of the people. This is usury: by these signs and tokens you may know it: for wheresoever it reigneth, all those mischiefs ensue. But how, and how many ways, it may be wrought, I will not declare: it were horrible to hear: and I come now to reprove usury, and not to teach it.

2. Let us see then what is the cause hereof, and whence it groweth; who is the mother, the nurse, or the breeder of usury: for it groweth not everywhere, nor among all men. Many hate it, and detest it, and had rather die than live of such spoil. It is not of God; for God straitly forbiddeth it: neither is it found among the children of God; for love seeketh not her own profit, but to do good to her neighbour.

Whence then springeth usury? Soon shewed. Even thence, whence theft, murder, adultery, the plagues and destruction of the people do spring. All these are the works of the devil, and the works of the flesh. Christ telleth the Pharisees, "You are of your father the devil, and the lust of your father you will do." (John viii. 44.) Even so may it truly be said to the usurer, Thou art of thy father the devil, and the lust of thy father thou wilt do, and therefore thou hast pleasure in his works. The devil entered into the heart of Judas, and put in him this greediness and covetousness of gain, for which he was content to sell his master. Judas' heart was the shop, the devil was the foreman to work in it. St. Paul saith: "They that will be rich, fall into temptation and

snares, and into many foolish and noisome lusts, which drown men into perdition and destruction: for the desire of money is the root of evil." (1 Tim. vi. 9.) And St. John saith, "Whosoever committeth sin, is of the devil." (1 John iii. 8.) Thus we see that the devil is the planter and the father of usury.

Covetousness, desire of money, insatiable greediness, deceitfulness, unmercifulness, injury, oppression, extortion, contempt of God, hatred to the brethren, and hatred of all men, are the nurses and breeders of usury. It springeth from Satan; and groweth, and is watered, and fed, and nourished, by these cruel and damnable monsters.

3. Let us see farther what are the fruits which come of usury: for perhaps it doth some good, and you may think that many are the better for it. These therefore are the fruits. It dissolveth the knot and fellowship of mankind: it hardeneth man's heart: it maketh men unnatural, and bereaveth them of charity and love to their dearest friends: it breedeth misery, and provoketh the wrath of God from heaven. It consumeth rich men, it eateth up the poor; it maketh bankrupts, and undoeth many households. The poor occupiers are driven to flee, their wives are left alone, their children are helpless, and driven to beg their bread, through the unmerciful dealing of the covetous usurer.

When David layeth out the wickedness of the country where he was persecuted, he saith of them,* "Usury and deceit departeth not from their streets;" (Psalm lv. 11.) one seeketh to spoil and eat up another. These are the commodities and the fruits of usury. Such is usury in the midst of a city: and such good it worketh, as fire doth when it is set to the roof of a house; or as the plague doth when it is taken to the midst of the body, and toucheth the heart.

We have heard whence usury springeth, and what hurt it

* Non defecit usura, et dolus in plateis eorum.

doth: which whosoever considereth, may find cause enough to loathe it, and forsake it. One asked of Cato, 'What it was to commit usury?' 'What is it,' saith he again, 'to kill a man?' He that is an usurer, is a murderer. The same Cato saith, 'Our fathers punished a thief with payment of the double of that he had taken; but the usurer was always condemned to pay four times the value.' They were wise men: they thought that an usurer was much worse than a thief. For a thief is driven by extremity and need: the usurer is rich, and hath no need. The thief stealeth in corners, and in places where he may be unknown: the usurer openly and boldly, at all times and in any place. The thief, to relieve his wife and children: the usurer, to spoil his neighbour, and to undo his wife and children. The thief stealeth from the rich, which hath enough: the usurer, from the poor that hath nothing. The thief fleeth, and will be seen no more: the usurer standeth by it, continueth, and stealeth still; day and night, sleeping and waking, he always stealeth. The thief repenteth of his deed; he knoweth he hath done wrong, and is sorry for it: the usurer thinketh it is his own, that it is well-gotten, and never repenteth nor sorroweth; but defendeth and maintaineth his sin impudently. The thief, if he escape many times, becometh profitable to his country, and bestoweth himself painfully in some trade of life: the usurer leaveth his merchandise, forsaketh his husbandry, giveth himself to nothing whereby his country may have benefit. The thief is satisfied at length: the usurer hath never enough. The belly of the wicked will never be filled. As the sea is never filled with water, though all the streams of the world run into it; so the greediness of an usurer is never satisfied, though he gain never so unreasonably. The sea is profitable: the usurer is hurtful and dangerous. By the sea we may pass, and come safely to the haven; but no man passeth by usury without loss or shipwreck.

4. Now hear what the godly and learned Fathers of the Church have thought of usury. No doubt they were godly men, and wrote hereof as God had inspired them, and as others before them had done.

Augustine saith :* 'What shall I speak of usury, whereof the laws and judges require that restitution be made? Is he more cruel which stealeth something away from the rich man, or he that killeth a poor man with usury?' Mark this. An usurer, saith Augustine, is cruel. Why? He killeth. Whom? The poor man, whom in charity he is bound to relieve.

Ambrose hereof saith : † 'He that lacketh wherewith to keep life, payeth you usury. What heavier case may there be? He seeketh to be healed, and you poison him; he asketh you bread, and you give him a knife; he desireth you to set him at liberty, and you bring him to further bondage.' And again : 'Thou, usurer, growest wealthy by other men's heaviness : thou makest gains of their tears and weeping : thou art fed with their hunger : thou coinest thy money of the skins of those men whom thou destroyest. How thinkest thou thyself to be rich, and yet beggest an alms of him that is poor?' And the same Father saith further, ‡ 'Whomsoever it is lawful to kill, thou mayest lend him thy money to usury.' For he that taketh usury, killeth without a sword. These be holy Fathers, and worthy of credit : they shew us that usury is as bad as to kill and murder a man wilfully.

Chrisostom likewise : § 'God hath forbidden that no man

* Quid dicam de usuris, quas ipsæ leges, &c.—*Aug. Macedon. Epist.* 54.

† Usuras solvit, qui victu indiget : an quicquam gravius, &c.—*Lib. de Tobiâ, cap.* 3.

‡ Ab hôc usuram exige, quem non sit crimen occidere.—*Ibid. cap.* 15.

§ In his sensibilibus pecuniis prohibuit ne quis usuram acciperet, &c.—*Hom.* 41. *in Gen.* xviii.

shall take usury, in this sensible, or common, money. Why? Because either of them is much hindered: he that oweth money is made poorer; and he that lendeth it, by this kind of enriching himself, increaseth the number of his sins.' Again he saith:* 'Even as a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump of dough, even so usury, when it cometh into any man's house, draweth all his substance, and changeth it into debt.'

He that is an usurer, wisheth that all others may lack, and come to him, and borrow of him; that all others may lose, so that he may have gain. Therefore our old forefathers so much abhorred this trade, that they thought an usurer unworthy to live in the company of Christian men: they did excommunicate him. They suffered not an usurer to be a witness in matters of law; they suffered him not to make a testament, and to bestow his goods by will. When an usurer died, they would not suffer him to be buried in places appointed for the burial of Christians. So highly did they mislike this unmerciful spoiling and deceiving our brethren.

But what speak I of the ancient Fathers of the church? There was never any religion, nor sect, nor state, nor degree, nor profession of men, but they have disliked it. Philosophers, Greeks, Latins, lawyers, divines, catholics, heretics, all tongues and nations, have ever thought an usurer as dangerous as a thief. The very sense of nature proveth it to be so. If the stones could speak, they would say as much.

Therefore our Saviour saith, "Do good, and lend, looking for nothing again." (Luke vi. 35.) He saith not, Lend, and look not for your principal again: but, Look for no gain thereby; look not to receive more than thine own for the use and occupying of it. Defraud not another: thou would-

* Sicut fermentum modicum, quod mittitur in multam farinam, totam conspersionem corrumpit, &c.—*Hom.* 12. *in Matt.* v.

est not another should defraud thee. Oppress him not; have pity on his wife and children: thou wouldest not have thy wife and children undone.

In Leviticus God saith, "If thy brother be impoverished and fallen into decay, thou shalt take no usury of him, nor vantage; but thou shalt fear thy God, that thy brother may live with thee." (Lev. xxv. 35, 36.) God saith, Thou shalt take no usury. And he hath power and authority to command. And in Exodus: "If thou lend money to my people, to the poor with thee, thou shalt not be as an usurer unto him, ye shall not oppress him with usury." (Exod. xxii. 25.) Shew them mercy for my sake: they are my people. I can enrich him; I can impoverish thee. I set up, and throw down, whom I will. When thy neighbour needeth thy help, and seeketh comfort at thy hands, afflict him not as an enemy, oppress him not like a tyrant.

Ezekiel the prophet setteth down the wrath of God against usurers: "He that hath given forth his money upon usury, or hath taken increase, shall he live? He shall not live," saith the Lord. (Ezek. xviii. 13.) He shall perish in his own sin; his blood shall be upon his head. Therefore, when he reckoneth the offences of Jerusalem, and declareth the heavy plagues that are prepared against that wicked city, he saith, "Thou hast taken usury and increase, and thou hast defrauded thy neighbours by extortion, and hast forgotten me, saith the Lord God. Behold, therefore, I have smitten mine hands upon the covetousness that thou hast used." (Ezek. xxii. 12, 13.) Thou hast done injury to my people, that thou mightest make thine own gain. Thy wrongs and oppressions done by usury rise up into heaven: therefore I will gather thee, and blow the fire of my wrath upon thee, saith the Lord.

Thus hath God spoken, even the Lord of heaven and earth, which can scatter thy gold in the wind, and blow it to nothing. Thus he speaketh to thee, that hearest and readest

his word, which knowest that his will is thou shouldest not lend thy money to usury. Thou dost oppress, saith he. Whom? Thy brother; for whom Christ vouchsafed to shed his blood. And what brother? Him that was poor, which came to thee for need, to seek thy help. How? Wickedly, closely, falsely, craftily, deceitfully, like an hypocrite, under colour to do him good. Wherewith? With thy money, thy gold and silver, which God hath given thee to relieve the poor and needy withal.

God hath said, Thou shalt not take usury. And what art thou, that despisest the voice of the Lord? Whose words wilt thou hear, that wilt not hear the word of God? Remember the words; you cannot forget them. Thou shalt not take usury of thy brother; he is poor, and fallen into decay: thou shalt not be an usurer unto him; thou shalt not oppress him with usury. For it is cruelty and abomination in the sight of God; therefore will God pour out his wrath, and consume the usurer. He shall not enter into the tabernacle of the highest; he shall have no part in the kingdom of Christ and of God; but shall be cast out into outward darkness.

But some will say, All kinds of usury are not forbidden: there may be cases where usury may stand with reason and equity. And herein they say so much as by wit may be devised to paint out a foul and ugly idol, and to shadow themselves in manifest and open wickedness. Whatsoever God saith, yet this or this kind of usury, say they, which is done in this or this sort, is not forbidden. It profiteth the commonwealth; it relieveth great numbers. The poor should otherwise perish: no man would lend them.

By like good reason, there are some who defend theft and murder. They say there may be some case where it is lawful to kill or to steal; for God willed the Hebrews to rob the Egyptians, and Abraham to kill his own son Isaac. In these cases, their robbery, and the killing of his son, were lawful. So say they. Even so, by like reason, do some of

our countrymen maintain concubines, courtesans, and brothel-houses, and stand in defence of open stews. They are, say they, for the benefit of the country; they keep men from more dangerous inconvenience: take them away, it will be worse. Although God say, "There shall be no whore of the daughters of Israel, neither shall there be a whore-keeper of the sons of Israel:" (Deut. xxiii. 17.) yet these men say all manner of whoredom is not forbidden; in these and these cases it is not amiss to allow it.

God said to Saul, "Go and strike Amalek, and destroy ye all that pertaineth to them, and have no compassion on them, but slay both man and woman, both infant and suckling, both ox and sheep, both camel and ass." (1 Sam. xv. 3.) So strait and precise was God's commandment. Forth marcheth Saul; setteth upon his enemies: God assisteth him, and giveth him the victory. When he took Agag prisoner, and saw him to be a goodly tall gentleman, he had pity on him, and saved him alive; and the best and fairest of the sheep, and oxen, and other cattle, he did not destroy: although he knew well that God had commanded him to kill man and beast, every one without exception. Then came Samuel unto him, and said, Oh, why hast thou not done as thou wert commanded? Here let us mark the wicked answer of Saul in defence of his wilful disobedience. It had been great pity to have slain Agag, so comely and tall a gentleman: I have taken him, and kept him prisoner. And if I should have destroyed this goodly cattle, they had come to nothing: it was better to save them for the victualling of my soldiers; and the fairest of them may be offered in sacrifice. So brake he the commandment of God, under pretence of doing honour to God. But Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great pleasure in burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as when the voice of the Lord is obeyed? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice; and to disobey his holy will, is to renounce and forsake him.

So may we say to the usurer: Thou hast devised cases

and colours to hide thy shame; but what regard hath God to thy cases? what careth he for thy reasons? The Lord would have more pleasure, if, when thou hearest his voice, thou wouldest obey him. For what is thy device against the counsel and ordinance of God? What bold presumption is it for a mortal man to control the commandments of the immortal God, and to weigh his heavenly wisdom in the balance of human foolishness! When God saith, Thou shalt not take usury, what creature of God art thou which canst take usury? When God maketh it unlawful, what art thou, O man, that sayest, it is lawful? This is a token of a desperate mind. It is found true in thee, that Paul said, "The love of money is the root of all evil." (1 Tim. vi. 10). Thou art so given over unto the wicked mammon, that thou carest not to do the will of God.

Wilfulness and presumption are tokens that such men are impudent, and past shame. He that offendeth of simplicity, may find mercy; but they which of pride and boldness go against the known truth, and do that thing which they know to be ill, and devise shifts to colour that which all reason and learning of God and men, and nature itself, have condemned, they are fallen into temptation and snares, and into foolish lusts which drown them in destruction.

God is the Lord: we are but servants. He hath made us, and not we ourselves: we are but as clay in his hands. We cannot repeal the law that God hath established; we must obey it. We may not do the things that seem good in our own eyes; they may deceive us: but we must do whatsoever God biddeth us to do, and forsake to do those things which he forbiddeth.

Thus much for an entry to those, which can bring so good reasons for so ill a matter.

Many defend their usury by that liberty which they think they have, to use their goods in such sort as seemeth best to themselves, and is most to their advantage. May I not, say they, do with mine own goods what I will? This

would they not say, if they were of Him, which hath said by his holy Apostle, "Let every man, as he hath received the gift, so minister the same one to another, as good disposers of the manifold grace of God." (1 Peter iv. 10.) It is the law of nature, that no man abuse the things that are his, to the hurt and hindrance of another. May a man take his own dagger, and therewith commit murder? or may a man take of his own fire, and therewith burn his neighbour's house? He that saith, "Thou shalt not kill," hath also said, "Thou shalt not steal; thou shalt not commit usury; thou shalt not defraud thy brother in bargaining." He is not unrighteous, that he will judge the murderer, and will not condemn the usurer. In that day the usurer shall know whose money it was wherewith he defrauded his brother. His money shall not help him; he shall have no shift to convey himself from the wrath of God; he and his money shall perish together.

But the usurer will say, The poor man came to me; I was not in haste to seek him; he named his case to me; I took pity of him, and lent him money: since then, he and all his have been the better. Here you shall see the great kindness and pitiful heart of this rich usurer. He draweth his purse, giveth out his goods, and helpeth the poor; and the poor is much eased by him. But, alas! what help is this? Even such as he findeth, that, in the midst of his fit of an ague, drinketh a great draught of cold water. No doubt he is refreshed, and cooled, and for that present time much the better: but after a while, when his heaves renew, the heat increaseth; his heart panteth, his pulse beateth, his mouth is dry, his tongue burneth, he is more terribly tormented than ever before. So fareth it with him that borroweth money upon usury. He looketh in his hand, and seeth somewhat: it is not his own; yet is he refreshed therewith, and much eased. The year passeth, the day of payment draweth on, the creditor calleth for money: then, then the heart beats, and fits and agonies begin to grow;

then must pot and pan trudge to redeem his body ; then he feeleth more cruel torments than ever before.

Thus doth the gentle usurer help to relieve the poor in time of his necessity : as if a man would cure a sore finger by cutting off the arm ; or as if he would cure the blemish of the eyesight by the pulling out the eyes ; or as if he would quench thirst by giving poison to drink ; or as if, to save one from drowning in a boisterous tempest, he would cast him over the boat into the sea.

The scorpion embraceth a man sweetly with his legs, but in the mean while striketh him deadly with his tail. His face looketh amiable ; his tail poisoneth. So an usurer looketh fair, and giveth good words ; but at the end he undoeth.

Who is stung by an adder, he perceiveth no hurt ; but feeleth a gentle beating of his veins with some delight, whereat he rejoiceth. After this he falleth into a slumber ; then the poison worketh, overcometh him, and killeth him. Even so he that borroweth upon usury, findeth himself wonderfully amended, and rejoiceth ; but he is stung, and hath a deadly stroke. The poison will grow over him ; he shall die in a slumber, and be undone before he is aware. So necessary is an usurer for to relieve the poor and needy, as rust is to help iron, and as the moth is to help a garment ; it eateth him through from one side to another. Therefore saith Ambrose :* ' Such are the benefits that you rich men bestow ; you give out little, and require much again. Such is your kindness, that you undo them whom ye help.' And thus much of the ease that poor men find in borrowing upon usury. They are bitten, and stung, and eaten up, and devoured by it. Most men confess that this kind of usury is forbidden, because it relieveth not, but spoileth and con-

* Talia sunt vestra, divites, beneficia ; minus datis, et plus exigitis. Talis humanitas, ut spolietis etiam dum subvenitis.—*Lib. de Tobiâ ; cap.* 3.

sumeth. God take the liking of it out of all men's hearts! Then shall they be the better able to judge of the other sorts, which they yet think allowable.

What if one rich man lend money to another? What if a merchant take money to usury of a merchant, and both be the better, and both be gainers? Here is no sting nor biting. What shall we think of this? What if a thief or a pirate take usury of a pirate or a thief, and both be partakers of the gain, and be both of them holpen? Let no man mislike the comparison: for, as I said before, a pirate or a thief is not so noyful * as an usurer. Here, say you, he that lendeth is a gainer, and he that borroweth is a gainer: it doth good to both. If both be gainers, who is the loser? For usury never passeth without working loss. Take this as a rule: There is never usury without loss.

Here I pray you to lend me your minds, and consider what I say. A merchant taketh up of his neighbour a hundred pounds, and must answer again a hundred and ten pounds. He bestoweth it all in corn, and buyeth for his hundred pounds a hundred quarters of corn: he sendeth it to the market; the people have need of it, and buy it. If he sold it for eight groats a bushel, he might make up his hundred pounds, and be a gainer. But unless he make up a hundred and ten pounds, to discharge his usury, he must needs be a loser and undone. But undone he will not be: he will rather undo many others. Therefore he setteth price at three shillings the bushel; and so maketh his money, and payeth the usurer, and saveth himself, and is no loser. Who then payeth the ten pounds? who is the loser? Any man may see. The poor people which buy the corn. They find it, and feel it, in every morsel they eat. Thus, if the merchant borrower be not hindered by the usurer, yet the people that buyeth his wares are plagued. Thus it is no hard matter to find, that, howsoever usury be used, it is

* *Noyful*, or *noiful;* (from the verb, to noy, or noie:) hurtful. —EDITOR.

always dangerous, and beguileth the people, and is therefore the destruction and overthrow of the commonwealth.

But, saith he, why should I not make money to yield me gains, as well as my wares? I lend my shop for a year, or two, or three; so many pieces of velvet, satins, taffeta, grogram, camlet, hollands, &c.: and for the use he shall pay me by the year forty pounds, and in the end restore me my shop, so many pieces of velvet, &c., so long, so broad, of the same making, so good, so fine, as were the other. This, saith he, is lawful; therefore the other is lawful.

No, no; this is not lawful. It is not lawful so to set out thy shop. It is usury: it is forbidden. But he that taketh the shop, shall be a gainer. Who shall be the loser then? They that buy the wares, must needs buy at the dearer price. We may not allow one ill thing by the allowance of another. He should rather say, Usury taken upon wares is not lawful; therefore, usury for bare money is less lawful. Jerome, upon Ezekiel, saith:* 'Some think there is no usury but in money. This did the Holy Scripture foresee, and therefore taketh away the increase or gains in any manner of thing; and requireth that thou receive no more than thou didst deliver.'

An occupier waxeth old: his occupying is done. He hath in stock two hundred pounds: he cometh to a young man, wise, of good credit, and of honest dealing, and saith, I give thee this money freely, it shall be thine for ever upon this condition, that thou give me twenty marks by the year during my life. This may be done; it is no usury. Wherefore? It is a plain gift, with a condition. The principal is gone from me for ever: I have no right unto it; it is none of mine. If I die to-morrow, before I receive any penny, my executors cannot claim any thing. But in usury it is

* Putant quidam usuram tantùm esse in pecuniâ: quod prævidens Scriptura divina, omni rei aufert superabundantiam, ut plus non accipias, quàm dedisti.—*Lib.* 6. *in Ezech.* xviii.

otherwise: the usurer requireth his whole sum again, and somewhat more for the use and occupying. Therefore this is a gift, and not usury.

Again: I lend my neighbour twenty pounds until a day; he hath it freely and friendly, without any usury. Yet I say to him, Neighbour, you must needs keep day, for the next day after I must discharge a pain;* I stand bound for a payment: I have no more but this, which you borrow: if I miss, I forfeit five pounds; I pray you be careful for it. The day cometh, and my neighbour cometh not: I lack my money, and, because I lack it, I lose five pounds. He cometh afterward, and offereth me mine own money: then say I, Neighbour, I have lost five pounds by your negligence and slackness; I hope you will not suffer me to be a loser for my gentleness. This is interest, it is no usury.

Here, by the way, you may learn wherefore it is called *interest:* because he may say, *Interfuit meâ habuisse,* It behoved me, it stood upon me, to have it; and now by your default I sustain loss. It is good to know the one from the other. This kind of dealing is interest, and not usury. In usury, I seek to be a gainer: in interest, I seek only to be no loser; gain or profit I seek none. And hereof I may lawfully seek to be answered: it standeth with equity, and conscience, and good reason. This is interest, and no usury, that a man who requireth no gain should seek to save himself harmless.

Bear patiently with me, if I be long. My desire is, you should understand this whole matter, and be able to know one thing from another: that so no man may excuse his usury by name of interest; and others be not offended, nor reckon all men to be usurers which lend forth their money, or any ways dispose of their stock.

A poor orphan, left in his cradle, hath a hundred pounds

* A *pain;* i. e. a mulct, or penalty. *Gentleness,* a few lines afterward, means civility.—EDITOR.

stock. This stock may be put out to usury, and the usury is allowed. This is a deed of charity; it is no usury, as shall appear: for if the hundred pounds should lie still without increase, and be bestowed from year to year to the use of the child, the whole stock would be spent before the child should come to years. But if the stock be put to occupying, and into an honest man's hands, something will grow to the relief of the orphan, and yet his stock remain whole. This is charity, to relieve the infant that cannot relieve himself. The like is in using the stock of a man that hath not his wits, and is not able to dispose of his goods. Or if a merchant, by sickness, or maim, or any other hindrance, be not able to follow his business, he desireth another to use and occupy for him, and do with his stock as it were his own, only to maintain him with the increase thereof. This is not usury. Why? Because he that taketh the stock of the orphan, or of the madman, or of the diseased merchant, is not bound to answer all adventures and casualties that happen: as if to like use I take a stock in cattle, and they die without my default; or a stock in money or wares, and the wares be burnt by fire, or the money stolen without my default; I am not bound to answer the principal. Therefore it is no usury.

But he that taketh money to usury, whether he gain or lose, or whatsoever happen unto him, he must answer the whole stock he borrowed. And this it is that undoeth so many, and maketh them bankrupts. But this happeneth not in this case. He that occupieth the orphan's money or stock, is charged only to use it as his own, and no otherwise. If it perish, or decay, or miscarry without his default, he is not bound to answer it. Therefore, as I said, it is no usury.

Yet, say they further, for defence of usury, It is suffered in other countries: in France, Spain, Italy, Rome, &c. the laws permit it. And what law doth suffer it? I trow not the law of God, for that law straitly forbiddeth it. But

what speak I of the law of God? The civil law condemneth usury, the canon law condemneth it, the temporal law condemneth it, and the law of nature condemneth it. And how is that sufferable by any law, that by so many laws is condemned? or how is he worthy to live among men, that despiseth the authority of so many laws? or what will you judge of that man, that will be tempered and ordered by no law? neither by civil, nor by canon, nor by temporal; nor by law of nature, nor by law of men, nor by law of God? I say not, How may we think him to be a man of God? But, How may we think such an one to be a man? For it is the part and duty of a man to be ruled by law and reason.

But it is everywhere, and therefore to be suffered. Too true that it is common everywhere: would God it were false! It undoeth all the world. So the devil is everywhere, and suffered: so are the stews suffered in France, Spain, Italy, Lombardy, Naples, Venice, and in Rome. Rome is called the holy city: the most holy hath his seat there; and yet suffereth he the stews in Rome. So were the Canaanites among the people of God, and suffered; but they were as goads in their sides, and as thorns in their eyes. As these were suffered, and as the stews are suffered, and as the devil is suffered; so, and no otherwise, are usurers. Such good, and no better, do they. For they are the children of the devil: their houses be the shops wherein the devil doth his work of mischief. They be Canaanites, and enemies of God's people: they be goads in our sides, and sharp thorns and prickles in our eyes. God grant that the law may espy them; and the people abhor them; and they may repent, and loathe their wickedness!

Some other are bold to take authority for usury from Christ himself. He saith: "The kingdom of heaven is as a man, that, going into a strange country, called his servants, and delivered to them his goods: and unto one he gave five talents, and to another two, and to another one; and said unto them, Occupy until I come." (Matt. xxv. 14, 15.) The

first did so; the second accordingly: they increased his stock, and are commended for their usury. The third wrapt his talent in a napkin, and kept it together. His master returned, and chid him, and said: "Wherefore gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required it with vantage?" (Luke xix. 23.) Therefore usury is allowed by the mouth of Christ. The two first are commended, not for any thing else, but for the gain they made by usury: the third is rated and rebuked, not for theft nor adultery, but because he laid not out his stock to usury.

What! and is usury allowed? and allowed by the witness of Christ? How can that be? For Christ, as we heard before, doth plainly forbid it. How is it then? what is the meaning of this parable? This it is: When Christ delivered his Gospel unto his disciples, he gave them charge to be diligent, and to multiply and increase the number of them that should believe. To this purpose he saith, Be as careful in this business for the glory of God, and the salvation of your brethren, as worldly-wise men shew themselves in seeking wicked mammon. Behold the usurers, they occupy their stock, and make it grow; and so of five pounds make ten, and of ten make twenty pounds: and so they become rich. So deal you in the gifts and knowledge that God hath bestowed on you: give them to the exchangers; put them out to usury; increase the Lord's stock. If they be diligent and faithful in the things of this world, how much more ought you to be so in heavenly things?

This, therefore, is the meaning: Covetous men, and the children of this world, be wise in their generation. You are the children of light; be you also wise, and do you so likewise in your office and service, as you see them do. So he saith: "Behold the fowls of heaven; learn how the lilies of the field grow." (Matt. vi. 26; 28.) What of this? The lilies are but grass: the fowls of the air are but birds.

The mercy of God, in his providence and care, wherein he giveth us all things needful, is made plain by example of these, and thereby our distrust and overmuch carefulness reproved. So doth Christ speak this parable of the usurer, that, as he is diligent in doing ill, so we should be painful and ready to do well.

But shall usury, therefore, be lawful, because Christ draweth a comparison, or maketh an example, by an usurer? If it were so, we should do many things otherwise than well. For in the Scriptures we are oftentimes required to take example of those things which are ill. In the sixteenth of Luke, Christ biddeth his disciples take example of the unfaithful steward, to be provident and careful as he was. Doth he therefore commend the falsehood of the steward? or shall falsehood therefore be lawful? St. Paul saith: "The day of the Lord shall come, even as a thief in the night." (1 Thess. v. 2.) Is theft therefore lawful? St. James saith: "The devils believe, and tremble." (James ii. 19.) Take example of the devils. They believe; but their bare, vain, and dead faith, in which they can do no good, cannot serve them. Even so shall not your faith, if it be dead, and void of all good works, save you. God himself, to reprove the unthankfulness and forgetfulness of his people, which did so often forsake him, and followed Baal and Ashtaroth, saith in this manner unto them: "What nation did ever forsake their gods?" (Jer. ii. 11.) Doth he in this speech approve that the idols of the heathen are gods? or because God taketh example of idolatry, shall idolatry therefore be lawful? He biddeth his servants to be as faithful, and willing, and ready to serve Him, the God of heaven and earth, as the Gentiles were in service of their idols, the works of their own hands. As God did will the Israelites to take example of the idolaters; and as Christ biddeth take example of the false steward; and as James of the devils: so is this parable an example of that which is commendable, that is, the dili-

gence of the servants. Usury is no more allowed by this, than idolatry, and falsehood, and the devil is by the other.

Some will say, I have no trade to live; I must needs give my money to usury, or else I must beg. This is it that I spake of: this sheweth that despair and mistrust in the providence of God is the mother of usury. If this were cause why he should be an usurer, if this be well spoken for defence of his wickedness, why may not the thief, or the bawd, or the enchanter, by like answer, excuse themselves, and stand in defence of their doings? Augustine therefore saith: * 'The usurers are bold to say they have no other trade whereby to live. So will the thief tell me, when I take him in his theft: so will he say, that breaketh into other men's houses: so will the bawd say, that buyeth young maidens to use them to filthiness: so will the wicked enchanter, that selleth his sin. If we reprove any of all these, they will answer, that this is their maintenance, and that they have not any other way to live.' But again he saith:† 'As if they were not therefore most worthy to be punished, because they have chosen a trade of wickedness to live by; and will maintain themselves by that thing, wherewith they displease Him, by whom all are maintained.' How much better would it be with them, if they did serve God truly in such place and calling, wherein they might most set forth his glory, and do such things as should be profitable to themselves and others?

The servant of God knoweth there is no want to them that fear him. He knoweth the Lord hath care over him, and therefore casteth his care upon the Lord. He saith, as

* Audent etiam fœneratores dicere, non habeo aliud unde vivam, &c.—*In Psal.* cxxviii.

† Quasi non hoc ipsum in illis maximè puniendum est, quia artem nequitiæ delegerunt, unde viverent, et inde se volunt pascere, unde offendant eum, à quo omnes pascuntur.—*Ibid.*

the Prophet: "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall want nothing." (Ps. xxiii. 1.) And, "The Lord is the defender of my life; of whom then shall I be afraid?" (Ps. xxvii. 1.) "I trusted in thee, O Lord, and said, Thou art my God; my times are in thy hand." (Ps. xxxi. 15.)

Thus much I thought expedient to speak of the loathsome and foul trade of usury. I know not what fruit will grow thereby, and what it will work in your hearts. If it please God, it may do that good that I wish. I have done my duty: I call God for a record unto my soul; I have not deceived you; I have spoken unto you the truth. If I be deceived in this matter, O God, thou hast deceived me. Thy word is plain: thou sayest, "Thou shalt take no usury:" thou sayest, "He that taketh increase shall not live." What am I, that I should hide the words of my God, or keep them back from the hearing of his people?

The learned old Fathers have taught us, that it is no more lawful to take usury of our brother, than it is to kill our brother. They that be of God, hear this, and consider it, and have a care that they displease him not. But the wicked, that are no whit moved, and care not what God saith, but cast his word behind them; which have eyes, and see not, and ears, yet hear not; because they are filthy, they shall be filthy still. Their greedy desire shall increase to their confusion; and as their money increaseth, so shall they increase the heaps of their sins. Pardon me, if I have been long or vehement. Of those that are usurers I ask no pardon.

I hear that there are certain in this city, which wallow wretchedly in this filthiness, without repentance. I give them warning, in the hearing of you all, and in the presence of God, that they forsake that cruel and detestable sin. If, otherwise, they continue therein, I will open their shame, and denounce excommunication against them, and publish their names in this place, before you all; that you may

know them, and abhor them, as the plagues and monsters of the world; that if they be past all fear of God, they may yet repent and amend for worldly shame.

Tell me, thou wretched wight of the world, thou unkind creature, which art past all sense and feeling of God; which knowest the will of God, and doest the contrary: how darest thou come into the church? It is the church of that God which hath said, "Thou shalt take no usury;" and thou knowest he hath so said. How darest thou read or hear the word of God? It is the word of that God which condemneth usury; and thou knowest he doth condemn it. How darest thou come into the company of thy brethren? Usury is the plague, and destruction, and undoing of thy brethren; and this thou knowest. How darest thou look upon thy children? thou makest the wrath of God fall down from heaven upon them; thy iniquity shall be punished in them to the third and fourth generation: this thou knowest. How darest thou look up into heaven? thou hast no dwelling there; thou shalt have no place in the tabernacle of the Highest: this thou knowest. Because thou robbest the poor, deceivest the simple, and eatest up the widow's houses: therefore shall thy children be naked, and beg their bread; therefore shalt thou and thy riches perish together.

But Christ saith: "The hour shall come, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear it shall live." (John v. 25.) Zacchæus was a receiver of tribute, and was rich, when he received Jesus to abide in his house: "He stood forth, and said unto the Lord, Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor: and if I have taken from any man by forged cavillation, I restore him four-fold. Then Jesus said unto him, This day salvation is come into this house, forasmuch as he also is become the son of Abraham." (Luke xix. 8, 9.) God may make his word work so in the hearts of usurers, that they may also receive Jesus, and forsake usury, and restore four-fold, if

they have deceived any, and so may also receive salvation. Let us increase in that usury, which is to the glory of God. He hath given us knowledge, and many excellent graces: let us put them forth, let us occupy that talent which he hath left us. He will return: the day of His coming is at hand: he will require his talents; we must answer them. Let us restore them with increase, that our service may be allowed, and we received into his tabernacle.*

VERSE 7.—*For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.*

8.—*He therefore that depiseth these things, despiseth not man, but God, who hath even given you his Holy Spirit.*

Let every man possess his vessel in holiness and honour; for this is the will of God. Hereto are ye called: "I am the Lord your God," saith he; "be sanctified therefore, and be holy, for I am holy." (Levit. xi. 44.) So our Saviour to his disciples: "Be merciful, as our Father also is merciful." (Luke vi. 36.) Unmercifulness, cruelty, uncleanness, fornication, usury, and such like, are not of God. They answer not their calling, that commit any manner of sin. "If any man, therefore, purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the Lord." (2 Tim. ii. 21.)

It behoveth every man, when he is in secret and alone, to bethink himself whereto God hath called him. The magistrate thus: I am called to do justice, to be merciful to the widow, to have pity upon the fatherless; I am the

* The length and severity of the remarks here applied to the subject of usury, will occasion less surprise, when it is known that to such a pitch had the exorbitancy of the brokers advanced in the days of Jewel, that *five per cent. per month* was not an uncommon rate of interest required of those who borrowed, whether for the use of money, or of other commodities of traffic. As regards the lawfulness of lending money, on a fair and moderate scale of compensation, (with reference more especially to Deut. xxiii. 19, 20, and similar passages,) the reader may consult Baxter's Christian Politics, and Paley's Moral Philosophy.—EDITOR.

minister of God for the wealth * of them that do well, and to take vengeance on him that doth evil. The minister and preacher thus: I have charge given me to lead the people of God to the way of righteousness; I am called to do the work of an Evangelist, to preach the word in season and out of season, to shew the people their offences, and to reprove them with all earnestness, to teach them that they deny all ungodliness, and turn wholly unto God: "for necessity is laid upon me, and woe is me if I preach not the Gospel." (1 Cor. ix. 16.) The subject must thus think with himself: I owe obedience to my sovereign; I must be subject not because of wrath only, but also for conscience' sake; if I resist, I resist the ordinance of God, and shall receive to myself damnation.

It behoveth all men, when they feel themselves led to any evil purpose, to bethink themselves: Alas, what mean I? why should I do it? this is not the will of God: God hath not called me to uncleanness, but unto holiness: God is my God, I am his creature, I must serve him with my heart. "The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears open to their prayers: but the face of the Lord is upon them that do evil." (Psalm, xxxiv. 15.)

He therefore that despiseth these things, despiseth not man, but God.—Alas, what are we? We are but unprofitable servants. We are the voice of the crier in the wilderness: by us it hath pleased God to make his name known through all the world. We are your brethren, and poor servants for Christ's sake: we are your helpers, by whom you are called to the faith. We preach not ourselves, but Jesus Christ: we speak unto you in the name of God. If you despise us in doing this service toward you, you despise not us, but you despise God who hath sent us, and God can in due time avenge your unthankfulness.

Who hath given you his Holy Spirit.—You have received

* *Wealth;* here used (as in the Liturgy of the Church of England) for general weal or welfare.—EDITOR.

the Spirit of wisdom and understanding: you know these things are true; you cannot deny them. If you shall now offend, you shall offend against God's Spirit, which is given unto you.

VERSE 9.—*But as touching brotherly love, you need not that I write unto you: for ye are taught of God to love one another.*

Love is the bond of unity, of perfection, of knowledge, of wisdom, and of all godliness. Paul, the more to set forth the sweetness and comfort thereof, calleth it brotherly love. Brethren are bound to love one another. God, and nature, and bringing up, do bind them. Many brethren have endangered themselves, to save their brethren. It were a monster in nature, that one brother should kill another. You are all brethren, and have one Father, even God: how then can you hate and trouble your brethren?

Hereto Christ calleth us: "A new commandment give I you, that ye love one another: as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." (John xiii. 34, 35.) Hereof the Prophet David saith: "Behold, how good and how comely a thing it is, brethren, to dwell even together!" (Psalm cxxxiii. 1.) There is peace, there is comfort, there is heaven, there is God himself among them. This is the duty of the children of God, to love together, as the parts and members of one body, as brethren, and as the sons of one Father.

Here let us consider one great disorder among us that are Christians. If an action or matter at law grow between man and man, then forthwith is the bond of brotherly love broken: they are no longer friends. If he stand against him in suit of law, he will have no more to do with him, will not pray with him, nor drink in his company, nor talk together with him. Whensoever he seeth him, his heart riseth at him,

as if he did see his enemy. This should not be so: it is a disorder in Christian behaviour.

Next after the Gospel, the law is the greatest comfort that God hath given to the sons of men. It remedieth injuries, and giveth to every man that is his. He that goeth to a judge, goeth to him that is the minister of justice, and that sitteth in the room of God to do right: for the seat of justice is the seat of God. If there were no law to be ministered, but every man might do what he would, and reckon all his own, whatsoever he could get or come by, what a life would it be? How should any man be master of that he hath? Who can imagine what injuries, cruelties, murders, and streams of blood would follow? Thanks be unto God, who in mercy hath given us a law, and justice to guide us by! Let us be content to seek help at this law without wrath or malice: let us come to it, as we would come to our father: let us ask counsel at it, as we would at the mouth of God. As every man thinketh it lawful to use his own, or to require his own; so let every man be content to leave that he holdeth, when law saith it is none of his.

The law is no breach of charity; it is the bond and knot to keep men in love. A son may attempt law with his father, yet do it in such duty as becometh a son. A subject may attempt law with his prince, and yet love and reverence his prince as becometh. Who useth the law otherwise, doth abuse it. All strife and contention must be laid aside. Love may avoid wrong; love may require right; love may stand forth, and seek defence before a judge.

"Love is patient and gentle; it envieth not, it doth not boast itself, it is not puffed up, it disdaineth not, it seeketh not her own things, it is not provoked to anger, it thinketh not evil, it rejoiceth not in iniquity, but it rejoiceth in the the truth: it suffereth all things, it believeth all things, it hopeth all things, it endureth all things." (1 Cor. xiii. 4—7.)

Such is the nature of love; such it is, wheresoever it is, when it seeketh right, when it defendeth itself against challenge of doing wrong.

VERSE 10.—*Yea, and that thing verily you do unto all the brethren, which are throughout all Macedonia: but we beseech you, brethren, that you increase more and more.*

You love the brethren; not only those that are with you, and whom you know, but all, whatsoever they be, and in what place soever, though ye know them not. Some love none but such as are of their sort, and devotion, and sect, and fellowship. If any be of another mind than they are of, they cannot love them. This love is not of God; it is carnal, and proceedeth but from the flesh. Whosoever carrieth the name of Christ, is our brother; we must love him for Christ's sake. Christian love doth love those that are enemies, and do not love us: it blesseth them that speak ill of us, and prayeth for them that persecute us.

Oh that these words of Paul might truly be spoken of us; "As touching brotherly love, we need not write unto you!" (ver. 9.) Oh that God would touch our hearts with his Holy Spirit, that we were all so knit together, and loved one another, as he hath commanded us! Then should we feel that peace, that passeth all understanding: then would it appear how joyful a thing it were for brethren to dwell together in unity: then should we taste of the comfort of the sons of God.

And alas! what is our life, or what is our profession, without love? What is the sun without light? what is the fire without heat? "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels," saith the Apostle, "and have not love, I am as sounding brass, or as a tinkling cymbal. And though I had the gift of prophecy, and knew all secrets, and all knowledge, yea, if I had all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and had not love, I were nothing." (1 Cor. xiii. 1, 2.)

That you increase more and more.—Men of this world seek to increase in their wealth and riches: they never think their store so great, but it may abide to have more laid to it. Wicked men stand not at a stay: they cease not to do ill; they heap sin upon sin, and draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin with cart ropes, until they come to the height and extremity of wickedness. Do you increase in every thing that is good? "The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power." (1 Cor. iv. 20.)

A child that stayeth at one stature, and never groweth bigger, is a monster. The ground that prospereth not, and is not fruitful, is cursed. The tree that is barren, and proveth not,* is cut down. This must all know, men and women, and babes and infants. They must all walk on still in the way of godliness, and increase and go forward therein. Unless we go forward, we slip back. If we wax weary to do the work of God, God will forsake us.

VERSE 11.—*And that ye study to be quiet, and to meddle with your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you;*

12.—*That ye may behave yourselves honestly towards them that are without, and that nothing be lacking unto you.*

Let no man among you be a busy-body in other men's matters. Be not eaves-droppers, and hearkening what is said or done in your neighbour's house. Wide ears and long tongues dwell together. They that love to hear all that may be told them, do also love to blab out all they hear.

Study to be quiet, and meddle with your own business.—The church of God is as the body of man. In a man's body every part hath its several office; the arm, the leg, the hand, and foot, do that whereto they are appointed: and doing the same, they live together in peace. But if the

* *Proveth*, i. e. improveth, or beareth, not.—EDITOR.

arm would take in hand to do that is the duty of the leg, or the foot that is the part of the hand, it would breed great disorder in the whole body. So if every man in the church of God seek to do that to them belongeth, the church shall flourish and be in quiet. But when every man will be busy and take upon him to look into other; when every private man will govern, and the subject take in hand to rule the prince; all must needs come to wreck and decay. Busybodies ever find fault with their brethren and neighbours, with the state, the clergy, the commonwealth, the church, the government, and with the prince. They are an unquiet kind of men, ever looking for that they may mislike, and never contented. From these men come privy whisperings, slander, backbiting, mutinies, conspiracies, treasons, deposing of princes, and utter decay of commonwealths. These are the fruits of curiosity.

And to work with your own hands.—God hath ordained that all sorts of men should labour, and eat their bread in the sweat of their brows. And here the Apostle doth not only charge them to work, but that they work with their own hands. Thou that hast hands, and settest them not to work, thou that abusest the grace of God by thy idleness, shalt give an account thereof.

What filleth your prisons? What dubbeth* and enricheth your gallows, but idleness? When your children come to these places, and see they must live no longer, whereof complain they, but of idleness? Then they curse the time, and their father and mother that brought them up in idleness.

Though kings, and princes, and counsellors, and preachers, and magistrates dig not, and plough not, nor do any handywork, yet they break not therefore the commandment of God; they break not this rule of the Apostle. The head

* To *dub*, is, properly, to appoint or furnish.—EDITOR.

walketh not as the feet, nor travaileth as the hands: yet is it not idle.

There is no labour comparable to the labour of a prince: day and night, sleeping and waking, he is full of cares, and full of pains. The nobleman and magistrate, if he regard his country, be careful for the laws, aid the poor, repress tyranny, comfort the weak, punish the wicked, is not idle. The minister, if he apply his book, be diligent in prayer, exhort and teach, publicly and privately, is not idle. These labours are greater than all the labours of the body.

VERSE 13.—*I would not, brethren, have you ignorant concerning them which are asleep; that ye sorrow not even as other which have no hope.*

14.—*For if we believe that Jesus is dead, and is risen, even so them that sleep with Jesus will God bring with him.*

Herein standeth the comfort of Christian religion. Were it not for the hope of the second life, the godly in this world were in worse case than the dumb and brute beasts. When Christ appointed his disciples to go and preach, he said, "I send you as sheep in the midst of wolves. They will scourge you. You shall be hated of all men." (Matt. x. 16, 17; 22.) As the Gospel increased in any place, these words were fulfilled. The godly were put to death for the name of Christ. The father did see his son slain before his face, and the son his father cruelly tormented. Hence grew great mourning and heaviness. Oh, said they, he was a reverend sage father: oh, he was a wise young man, learned, zealous, and a great stay in the church. Why would God take him before his time? There is not now any one left, whom we may behold, or hear, or follow. We are left comfortless, and without hope. After this sort it is likely the Thessalonians mourned, when they beheld the persecution of the church of God among them. Herein they grew towards mistrust, and to be like the heathen which had no hope.

St. Paul thought good to reform this error. And because this abuse grew of ignorance, for that they knew not the happy estate of such which die in the Lord; he saith, I would not have you ignorant what is become of them, and what God hath done for them. He hath tried them as gold, and hath made them worthy for himself. Therefore you ought rather to rejoice: there is no cause at all of mourning.

When Christ saw his disciples heavy and sad, because of his departure, he said: "If ye loved me, ye would verily rejoice, because I said, I go to the Father: for my Father is greater than I." (John xiv. 28.) I shall sit at the right hand of my Father in glory; then shall every knee bow unto me, and every tongue shall confess my greatness. Therefore if ye loved me, you would rejoice in my behalf. It is ignorance that maketh you heavy, because you know not whither I go.

When Joseph was sold into Egypt, good father Jacob thought he was dead, and therefore mourned day and night. Nothing could comfort him. Alas, saith he, that I have lived to see this day! O Joseph, my son, my son Joseph, oh that I might give my life to redeem thee! Now shall my hoary head go down to the grave in heaviness. But when he heard that Joseph lived, and did see him with his eyes; when he did see that he was a prince, next in place to the king, and had all the country at commandment; then he knew he had mourned without a cause. Then his heart leapt within him, his eyes gushed out with water, he wept for joy. Ignorance, as we see, made him heavy: knowledge of the truth, as it was, rejoiced his heart, and made him glad.

There is great error, and darkness, and ignorance, in man's life. We rejoice when we have cause to mourn, and mourn many times when we have cause to rejoice. Therefore, he saith, I would not have you ignorant. Be not de-

ceived. God hath given you eyes to see the right way: God hath given you ears to hear counsel; and a heart to know reason, and to understand and judge. God hath given you the Scriptures, and by them the knowledge of his will. He hath given you a face to look up to heaven, and the Spirit of life hath he poured into you, that you should not by any means be deceived.

That ye sorrow not as other that have no hope.—He doth not forbid natural affection. Our parents and our children are dear unto us: they are our flesh and blood, and the chief and principal parts of our body. Any part of our body cannot be cut off, but we shall feel it. The father, if he feel not the death of his son; or the son, if he feel not the death of his father, and have not a deep feeling of it; he is unnatural.

David mourned for Jonathan. (2 Sam. xviii. 33.) The whole land mourned for Josias. (2 Chron. xxxv. 25.) Paul saith, God have mercy upon Epaphroditus, (he was sick, very near unto death;) and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. (Phil. ii. 27.) If God had taken Epaphroditus out of life, no doubt Paul would have sorrowed. What need more examples? Christ mourned for Lazarus, and shed tears for him: "then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him." (John xi. 36.)

We are not, therefore, forbidden to mourn over the dead; but to mourn in such sort as the heathen did, we are forbidden. They, as they did neither believe in God, nor in Christ, so had they no hope of the life to come. When a father saw his son dead, he thought he had been dead for ever. He became heavy, changed his garment, delighted in no company, forsook his meat, famished himself, rent his body, cursed his fortune, cried out of his gods. O my dear son, saith he, how beautiful, how learned, and wise, and virtuous wast thou! Why shouldest

thou die so untimely? why have I offered sacrifice, and done service to my gods? They have made me a good recompense. I will trust them no more, I will no more call upon them. Thus they fell into despair, and spake blasphemies.

Therefore, saith Paul, you may mourn, as did the holy men of God: but in such sort as the unfaithful sorrow for their dead, you may not mourn. You are the sons of the holy fathers: fashion not yourselves therefore like to the heathens; do not as they did, neither in feasts, nor in marriages, nor in your attire, nor in your mourning, nor in your pastimes. But behave yourselves as becometh the children of the Most High.

But why may not Christians mourn, and continue in heaviness? Because it is no new thing for a man to die: because he goeth the way of all flesh. Again; they that depart this life are not dead: they are not gone for ever, as the heathen imagined. They are laid down to take rest quietly for a time. The death of a godly man is nothing else but a sleep. So saith our Saviour of Lazarus; "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth: howbeit, Jesus spake of his death." (John xi. 11; 13.) So it is said of Stephen: "And they stoned Stephen, who called on God, and said, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had thus spoken, he slept." (Acts vii. 59, 60.)

Whosoever dieth in the peace of conscience, he may say, I will lie down and take my rest. Thus doth the man of God repose himself. For Christ is unto him, both in life and in death, advantage. He saith with the Apostle: "Whether we live, we live unto the Lord; or whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord's." (Rom. xiv. 8.) He goeth into his grave, as into a bed: he forsaketh this life, as if he lay down to sleep. He shall shake off his sleep, rouse himself, and rise again. As we wake out of sleep, we know not how; so

shall we rise again, though we know not how. As we are much refreshed, and our bodies strengthened by sleep: so shall we rise again in much more strength, and our corruption shall put on incorruption, and our mortality immortality. So often, then, as we go to our beds, let us think of our resurrection from death. Who is sorry to go into his bed? What father lamenteth to see his child lie quietly, and take his rest? Why then should he so mourn for his death? wherein God dealeth mercifully with him, and doth translate him to the glory of the sons of God: where is no death, nor fear; but we shall be made like to the angels of God.

The body rotteth in the ground; yet God preserveth it, that it shall not perish. His spirit shall return to it again, and it shall live. God is able to bring this to pass: he hath promised so to do: he hath done it already, and will do it again. "When Christ came near to the gate of the city of Naim, there was a dead man carried out, the only-begotten son of his mother, which was a widow: and much people of the city was with her. And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not. And he went, and touched the coffin; and they that bare it stood still: and he said, I say unto thee, young man, arise. And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother." (Luke vii. 12—15.) Lazarus was laid in his grave; he had been four days dead; his body did stink. Yet when "Christ cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth; then he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with bands, and his face was bound with a napkin. Jesus said unto them, Loose him, and let him go." (John xi. 43, 44.) St. Matthew saith: "The graves did open themselves, and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many." (Matt. xxvii. 52.) These few stories

witness unto us the rising again of our bodies unto life. But what do I speak of the bodies of men? They are the houses of God, the temples of the Holy Ghost; God hath appointed unto them a kingdom.

Who considereth not the swallows and other birds? They sleep all the winter long; but when the spring cometh, they come to life again, and are seen abroad. What creature so little, so vile, and so little worth, as the fly? Yet, by those so base and contemptible things, doth God teach us to know ourselves and our estate. The greatest part of the winter they are as dead: they creep into chinks and corners, as into their grave, and lie there without life, without feeling. Prove it who list, shall see it so. The body is dead, the wings moulted. Yet the very same fly, so little and so vile, shall be restored again at the spring, and shall live in the warm weather, and have the same wings, and the same feet, and the same body. If we be hard of belief, to give credit to the word of God, these are manifest proofs to teach us the resurrection of our bodies. If God do so much for the flies, which are so vile a creature, how much rather will he quicken us again, whom he hath chosen out of this world to live with him for ever!

The word of God is almighty: he shall but speak, and it shall be done. The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall return to life. "I am sure," saith Job, "that my Redeemer liveth, and that I shall rise out of the earth in the latter day, and shall be covered again with my skin, and shall see God in my flesh: whom I myself shall see, and mine eyes shall behold, and none other for me. This is my hope laid up in my bosom." (Job xix. 25—27.)

St. Paul willeth Timothy never to forget his doctrine: "Remember that Jesus Christ, made of the seed of David, was raised again from the dead, according to my gospel." (2 Tim. ii. 8.) This is the foundation, the beginning and the ending of religion: "If the Spirit of him that raised up

Jesus from the dead, dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies, because that his Spirit dwelleth in you." (Rom. viii. 11.)

This is an Article of our faith. We believe the resurrection of the body; even of this body, in which we live, and which we carry about with us. All flesh shall see the salvation of our God. This is the hope of Christians, the resurrection of their flesh: "Set your affections on things which are above, not on things which are on the earth. For ye are dead," saith the Apostle, "and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, which is our life, shall appear, then shall ye appear with him in glory." (Col. iii. 2, 3.)

Therefore let not your hearts be dull through unbelief. As God was able to save the bodies of his servants, that they were not hurt in the fire; as he was able to keep Jonas safe in the whale's belly: so can he preserve our bodies safe in the earth. Yea, much better: because the fire naturally consumeth, and the fish's belly destroyeth, those things which they raven;* but the earth naturally preserveth that which is earthly.

As our God is of power to divide the waters, to make the sea stand like a wall, and give passage to his people; as he can change the course of the heavens, and make the sun go back; as he can draw water out of the hard rocks: so is he of power to raise our dead bodies again unto life. If he made the earth, the water, the air, the heavens, and all creatures in them, of nothing; he is much more able to restore again those bodies which have been. "We look," saith Paul, "for the Saviour, even the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, and make it like his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself." (Phil. iii. 20, 21.)

The Prophet Isaiah comforteth the people of God in their

* To *raven;* to devour as prey: whence, *ravening*.—EDITOR.

afflictions. "Thy dead men shall live; even with my body shall they rise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust: for thy dew is the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." Again: "The earth shall disclose her blood, and shall no more hide her slain." (Isa. xxvi. 19—21.) Therefore, saith our Saviour: "This is the Father's will, which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." (John vi. 39.) Again, he saith: "The hour shall come, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice: and they shall come forth, that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; but they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of condemnation." (John v. 28, 29.) And again: "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, shall live; and whosoever liveth, and believeth in me, shall never die." (John xi. 25, 26.)

For if we believe that Jesus is dead, and is risen; that he was delivered to death for our sins, and is risen again for our justification: if we believe that he is ascended up into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God his Father: he will also raise up our mortal bodies, and bring us with him. "Now, Christ is risen from the dead, and was made the first-fruits of them that sleep." (1 Cor. xv. 20.) He is our Head, we are his body: we are flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone. He hath given us his Spirit to dwell in us: "But if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, the same is not his." (Rom. viii. 9.) Christ, our Head, liveth: his body then cannot be dead: "Where I am," saith he, "there thall also my servant be." (John xii. 26.) "Wherefore, if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall live also with him." (Rom. vi. 8.)

What then shall become of the infidels, which have no faith, which have not the Spirit of God? Shall not they rise again? Yes, verily; they shall rise, but not with Christ: they shall not rise the resurrection of the just.

Some shall rise unto life, some unto death : some to salvation, others to damnation : some to glory, others to shame. " We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every man may receive the things which are done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or evil." (2 Cor. v. 10.) The wicked shall rise up again with their bodies, and their portion shall be with the devil and his angels. They shall come forth of their graves to the resurrection of condemnation. Their body and souls shall be cast into hell-fire. Their worm shall never die : their fire shall not be quenched. It had been better for them they had never been born.

VERSE 15.—*For this say we unto you by the word of the Lord; that we which live, and are remaining in the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them that sleep.*

16.—*For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, and with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God : and the dead in Christ shall rise first.*

This that we declare unto you is not of ourselves ; it is the truth of God : it shall stand good, and be found true for ever. God will raise our bodies out of the grave, and restore them from death to life. You may not reason how, or in what order, this shall be done ; or who shall be the first, or the second, or the third, that shall rise up in the resurrection. Such questions are unfit, and not to be moved : " We shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." (1 Cor. xv. 51, 52.)

At that hour, some shall be alive, and some shall be dead. For he shall come to judge both the quick and the dead. *We that are remaining in the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them that sleep.* Neither is their part better in the resurrection, that shall then be found alive ; nor their part worse, that have been dead many years before. For they which were dead shall as soon be partakers of the glory of the sons of God, as the other.

Touching the state of men that shall live in the end of the world, Christ saith: "As the days of Noah, so likewise shall the coming of the Son of man be." (Matt. xxiv. 37.) I doubt not but you remember the story, what dreadful plague of rain and tempest fell, when all the world was drowned and destroyed with water. Vice and ungodliness increased, and all flesh had corrupt his way upon earth. They had no shame; there was no fear of God before their eyes. God's wrath was kindled against them. He sent Noah, a preacher of righteousness, to reform them; to tell them of the destruction at hand, that they might repent and be saved. But they regarded it not: they laughed Noah to scorn, and grew desperate, and continued in sin. Suddenly all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened. As they were eating and drinking, buying and selling, building, purchasing, stirring, and travelling; as they were in the midst of their joys, and travails, and pleasures; the rain came upon them, and the floods grew so great that it destroyed the whole world, except Noah and a few of his company: their lands, their goods, cities, castles, nor any other their pleasure or wealth, could save them. So shall it be in the coming of Christ.

As it was in the days of Lot, and as it befel to Sodom and Gomorrah: they lived and increased in filthiness: their hearts were blind, and regarded no counsel: their bodies were filthy: their souls, their lives, their houses and cities were full of filthiness: the angel of God departed from them: Lot went out from among them: and fire came down from heaven, and consumed them to ashes, and carried them down quick into hell: there was no father left to lament his child, no child left to lament his father: so shall it be at the coming of Christ. He shall come as a thief, suddenly, when no man looketh for his coming: he shall come at such season, when men's hearts will be asleep, and think not of him.

St. Peter saith: "There shall come, in the last days, mockers, which will walk after their lusts, and say, Where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers died, all things continue alike from the beginning of the creation." (2 Pet. iii. 3, 4.) They scorn the threatenings of God's judgment. When shall the world come to an end? We have winter and summer, rain, snow, day and night, as before. The sun keepeth his course: the floods run: the trees bear fruit: all things are as they have been. I, saith Peter, know this; that God hath made the heaven and earth, and all the furniture in them. They are his creatures: he doth hold them up, and preserve them by the power of his word. When God shall withdraw his word, they shall decay, and have an end.

As for our Lord, he shall come, and not tarry. At his coming, heaven shall depart away as a scroll that is rolled; the elements shall melt with heat; and the earth, with the works that are therein, shall be burnt up, and consumed before his face. Deceive not yourselves with lying words. For when you say, Peace, peace, and all things are safe, then shall sudden destruction come upon you. "Then two men shall be in the fields: the one shall be received, and the other refused. Two women shall be grinding at the mill: the one shall be received, and the other refused." (Matt. xxiv. 40, 41.) So shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

The number of the faithful that shall remain at his coming, shall not be many. So saith Christ; "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" (Luke xviii. 8.) St. John, prophesying of that day, saith: "The sun was as black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon was like blood." (Rev. vi. 12.) The beauty of the church shall be defaced, the light of the Gospel shall be put out. Then shall few be left of those that shall behold the glory of God. These shall give witness unto the truth. And albeit

they be but few, yet are they enough to condemn the ungodliness of the wicked. We shall not go in routs:* for we shall be but few. We shall then be in the body, and live in this world, and look up, and see these things: yet when the Lord shall come, we shall not prevent them that sleep. Although we live, and they were dead, yet shall they be as ready as we.

Why? *For the Lord himself shall descend with a shout, &c.* Here is laid before us the true manner of the terrible judgment of God. For our better understanding, let us compare heaven with earth, and the judgment of God with the judgment of men. The judges sit on high, accompanied with noblemen, and justices, attended on with constables and bailiffs, and the state and presence of the country. The thief is brought forth pinioned, and bound in chains and fetters. The poor wretch standeth in great fear: his conscience accuseth him, and saith, Thou didst steal, thou art worthy to die. The voice of the judge is as a blast of thunder, the face of the judge terrible to him as hell-fire.

But the innocent, that is wrongfully imprisoned, and hath not offended, he seeth himself clear, (his conscience excuseth him,) and therefore rejoiceth at the coming of the judges. He thought it long before they came. These, saith he, will strike off my shackles, and set me at liberty. Their voice unto him is as the voice of life: he beholdeth them, and they are as the angels of God.

Such shall be the shew and sight of the Son of God. He shall come down with majesty from heaven: the trumpet of God shall sound, and be heard from the one end of the heaven to the other: and whosoever shall hear it, shall quake for fear. Then shall he be the Judge over all flesh. Then he shall shew himself to be King of kings, and Lord of lords. Then shall he not come in humility, meekness, and mercy; but with dread and terror of judgment and

* *In Routs;* that is, in crowds.—EDITOR.

justice : not with twelve poor Apostles ; but with twelve thousand angels to attend upon him : not in the preaching of the Gospel, and calling sinners to repentance ; but in the sound of a trumpet, wherewith all the corners of the earth shall be amazed. Then shall he not say, Come unto me, all ye that travail, and be laden, and I will refresh you : I am sent to the lost sheep of Israel. He shall not say, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do : but, You have been ashamed of me and of my word before men : therefore now will I be ashamed of you before my heavenly Father.

Then shall they that despise the word of God, know what they despised ; and the blasphemers shall reap the fruit of their blasphemy. Then the careless shepherd, which hath not fed the Lord's sheep, but neglected them, and left them at all adventures ; which hath betrayed his flock, and given them to be a prey unto the wolf; shall receive a just reward for his treason. Then the adulterer, oppressor, and usurer, shall have their life laid open before them. Then shall every eye see him. "They shall see him, whom they pierced through." (Rev. i. 7.) They shall see his wounds, which they did not regard. They shall see his sword ready drawn to slay all his enemies, and shall fall down for fear of him that sitteth upon the throne, and of the Lamb.

But the hearts of the righteous shall rejoice. They shall lift up their heads, and see him in whom they have trusted. Then they shall say, This is the day which the Lord hath made ; let us rejoice and be glad in it. Come, let us rejoice unto the Lord : let us come before his face with praise : let us sing loud unto him with psalms. Such shall be the state, and countenance, and honour, and majesty of our God, when he shall come down from heaven for our deliverance.

And the dead in Christ shall rise first.—The earth shall open, and yield forth her dead bodies : that so they may be ready, with us that remain, to go before the presence of our Judge.

Which are dead in Christ.—Who are they? They whom he chose out of this world, and which have chosen God for their portion; whom God hath sealed unto the day of redemption: which have said, Christ is to me, both in life and death, advantage; and I live, not I now, but Christ liveth in me: and again, Whether we live or die, we are the Lord's: which say, I have bound myself to serve the Lord all the days of my life.

They are dead in Christ, which commend themselves wholly unto him, and say, O Lord, in thee have I trusted, let me never be confounded. I desire to be loosed, and to be with Christ. Into thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit; thou hast redeemed me, O Lord of truth. To be short, whosoever liveth in the Lord, he dieth in the Lord. He in whom Christ liveth; which hath a taste and feeling of Christ in His heart: he that rejoiceth in Christ, and looketh for that blessed hope and appearing of the glory of the mighty God, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ: he is a sheep of his pasture, he is a member of his body, he is the apple of his eye: he liveth and dieth in Christ. Blessed is he that so liveth, and so dieth: for he shall rise with Christ in the resurrection of the righteous, and shall have his part in the land of the living.

VERSE 17.—*Then shall we, which live and remain, be caught up with them also in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord.*

18.—*Wherefore comfort yourselves one another with these words.*

We which shall see all these things, shall also be caught up ourselves. But here you must note, that Paul speaketh not this of his own person, and of them that lived in his time, as if they should continue alive unto the end, or that the world should have an end before they should die: but he sheweth what shall be the state of such, whosoever shall

then remain alive. And again, mark, that he saith not, We, which live and remain, shall die forthwith, or our bodies shall be turned into dust, and so our souls alone go to meet the Lord: but, whether we be standing or sitting, doing well, or ill occupied, we shall be caught up. For the trumpet shall suddenly blow, and then the dead shall rise, and we shall be changed.

So saith St. Paul, "Behold, I shew you a secret thing: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, shall they that are dead arise, and we shall be changed." (1 Cor. xv. 51, 52.) This our mortal body shall be changed, and shall put on immortality: this corruptible body shall be changed, and put on incorruption. Christ will change our earthly bodies to the likeness of his glorious heavenly body. Then shall our flesh be pure, and heavenly, and spiritual; and we shall be able to behold the glory of God. "Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up into victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" (1 Cor. xv. 54, 55.)

To meet the Lord in the air, &c.—This is a comfortable end of all troubles and persecutions, which the godly suffer in this life, that they be received into the glory of God, and that both their body and soul doth live with him, and enjoy his presence for ever. Then shall they eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God. They shall hunger no more, nor thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. Then shall they feel those joys, which eye hath not seen, nor ear hath heard, nor hath entered into the heart of man. Such an end shall they have, whosoever fear the Lord.

Comfort yourselves one another with these words.—You see the turmoils and troubles of the world, what vexations and afflictions Satan raiseth up against all those that will live

godly. Open and notorious sinners are forborne; theft, adultery, usury, extortion, wilful murder, rebellion, treason, are many times pardoned and unpunished: but true religion, which is the turning from idols to serve the true and living God, and faith in Jesus Christ, that by him we shall be delivered from the wrath to come, findeth few friends, and seldom escapeth without strange and most cruel torments.

What is this, but to crucify the Lord of glory, and to set Barabbas, a murderer, at liberty? David saith: "The kings of the earth band themselves, and the princes are assembled together against the Lord, and against his Anointed." (Ps. ii. 2.) They seek to spoil the vine of the Lord, and to destroy his little flock. They use all means to put out the light of the Gospel. But be you of good cheer; continue you stedfast in the truth: your redemption is even at hand. You shall be caught up into the clouds to meet the Lord, and so shall abide with him for ever. Let every neighbour comfort his neighbour, and every father his child: let us all one comfort another with these words.

CHAPTER V.

VERSE 1.—*But of times and seasons, brethren, you have no need that I write unto you.*

2.—*For ye yourselves know perfectly, that the day of the Lord shall come as a thief in the night.*

3.—*For when they shall say, Peace and safety, then shall come upon them sudden destruction, as the travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape.*

WHEN the disciples came unto Christ apart, and said, "Tell us when these things shall be, and what sign shall be

of thy coming, and of the end of the world:" he answered, "Take heed lest any man deceive you." (Matt. xxiv. 3, 4.) "It is not for you to know the time or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power." (Acts i. 7.) "For of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son himself, save the Father. (Mark xiii. 32.) Vex not your spirit in vain: seek not for that you may not know; you shall not be able to find it.

Therefore saith Paul: I need not to write of times and seasons, in which these things shall be done. Yourselves have been taught the word of God; you have learned what his will is. You know the day of the Lord shall come upon you as a thief. And how cometh a thief? Not in the day-time, not when a man hath company about him, not when he is watched: but in the night, in the darkness, when all light is out, when the good man of the house taketh his rest, when the servants are asleep. Even so, when the light of the truth is taken away, when the heart of the good-man of the house is at rest, and his eyes are darkened that they cannot see, and all his senses drowned in worldly pleasures; when we care for nothing, and think of nothing; when we say, Peace, and safety: then will the Son of man come to judgment, then shall destruction suddenly fall upon us. Therefore let us be ready; for in the hour that we think not, will the Son of man come. (1 Thess. v. 1—8.)

Mark what Paul saith, Ye have no need that I write unto you of times and seasons: and that our Saviour saith, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons. What may we think then of them that write books and almanacks, and say, Such a year, and at such a time, Christ shall come; and with these speeches fray* and mock the world? Paul was the apostle of Christ, an elect vessel of the Holy Ghost: he said, I have no need to write of it; you cannot know it.

* *Fray;* i. e. frighten.—EDITOR.

What need is there now that such books and pamphlets should be written? Why should the world be troubled with such vanities?

Spare me your patience, and give me leave a little to deal with these wizards. Tell me, thou that dost measure and behold the compass of heaven, and markest the conjunctions, and oppositions, and aspects of the stars; and by that wisdom canst foretel the things that shall be done hereafter: where learnest thou this skill? how comest thou by this deep knowledge? Paul was taken up into the third heaven, and heard words which cannot be spoken, which are not lawful for man to utter: yet he knew not this secret, nor might not know it.

What art thou then? art thou greater than the Apostle of Christ? hast thou been taken up into some place higher than the third heaven? hast thou heard such words, as are not lawful to utter? If it be so, why dost thou utter them? Wilt thou take that upon thee, which the holy Apostle dareth not? Art thou of God's privy council? The angels and archangels know not hereof: and shall we think that thou knowest it? art thou wiser than an angel? Consider thyself: thou art a miserable man; thy breath fadeth as the smoke; thou art nothing but dust and ashes: thou canst not attain to the knowledge hereof.

And what is that which thou boastest? the knowledge of that terrible day, when all flesh shall appear before the Judge; even of that time, which God hath put in his own power! O vain man, thou knowest not thine own day, thou knowest not when thy soul shall be taken from thee! By what helps and means camest thou unto this knowledge? by reading the writings of the Apostles? by reading the Gospel of Christ, or any part of the word of God? No, God wot, thou hast no great skill in this learning. Thou hast it from Manilius, Maternus, Albumazar, or Haly. What is Manilius, Maternus, Albumazar, and Haly? What are

they, but heathens, painims,* and infidels? Were they not void of all knowledge of God? were they not the enemies of the cross of Christ? These never believed in God: how could they then know that day, when he would judge the world? Let thy common reason reform thee: can Saturn and Mars know this, when the angels of God cannot know it?

To what end write they thus? to give a token of their knowledge? Nay, hereby they proclaim and publish their folly, and want of knowledge. These two hundred years, there have ever been some, which have adventured to tell such news, and to say, In this year, or that year, you shall have doom's-day; such a day will Christ come to judgment, and the world shall have an end. They have appointed many such years, and days, and hours. The years be gone, the days be past, and the hours be slipt away; but the world abideth, and giveth witness of their folly.

But the meaning of these men is good: hereby they move the people to repentance: for, when men think the end of the world is at hand, they will bear the less affection to the things of this world. This is not the way to teach repentance, and amendment of life. The people may not be taught by lies and fables. If this had been good for them, God himself would have used it. God grant them grace to repent, which thus presume of knowledge, and reach so high, and yet know nothing.

Let us yet reason further with them. How have they

* *Painims;* that is, Pagans. Caius Manilius, author of the Astronomicon, is supposed to have flourished at Rome under Augustus. Maternus Firmicus, a philosopher of the age of Constantine, or somewhat later, wrote a treatise "de Nativitatibus," printed by Aldus Manutius in the year 1501. Albumazar was an Arabian physician of the 9th century, and a voluminous writer on astrology. The work of Abu Hasen Haly, "de Judiciis Astrorum," was first published at Venice in 1485.—EDITOR.

this knowledge? of certainty, or by conjecture? If of certainty, then it must needs be so, it cannot fail, nothing can let it. But you will say, it is a conjecture; it may so be, and it is likely: for such a day shall be a conjunction of Saturn and Mars in a fiery house, and therefore all things shall be consumed with fire. Alas, what hath Saturn or Mars to do with the day of the Lord? They are but creatures, they are no gods. They are stars made to give us light: why should they lead us into darkness? In the day of the Lord they shall be melted, and perish with fire. Why then trouble they the world with such vanities, and set those things down for truth, whereof they have no certainty, but only a guess and conjecture?

And what time chose they to cast abroad these news? The same in which the Gospel, through the mercy of God, is well known of most men. Even now tell they these tales, when all men know that Christ saith, the angels in heaven know not of that day and hour. The angels behold the face of God, and stand in his presence; yet know they not the day of the Lord. This is a secret, which God revealeth not unto any.

Children can reprove this folly in them, and say,

"Mitte arcana Dei, cœlumque inquirere quid sit:"

'Seek not to know the secrets of God, nor what manner thing the heaven is.' Know thyself, that thou art but a mortal man, crawling on the ground like a worm. He that will stare upon the sun, may be blind, and lose his eyes. God hath given thee knowledge in measure: thou canst not know as much as thou wouldst. Know that is fit for thee to know, and speak that is lawful to be spoken. Think of the commandments of God, to follow them. Search not into his works, to be curious in them: for he that is curious in searching the majesty of God, shall be oppressed and confounded by his glory.

Thus much we may well know, that the Lord will come; that all flesh shall appear before him; that the world, the heaven, the earth, the sun, and the moon shall have an end: that the day of the Lord shall come suddenly, as a thief in the night. This warning God hath given us, that we should not be taken unawares, but that we repent, and stand in readiness, and watch, and pray, that we may be caught up into the clouds to meet our Redeemer.

VERSE 4.—*But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should come on you, as it were a thief.*

5.—*Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day; we are not of the night, neither of darkness.*

6.—*Therefore let us not sleep as do other: but let us watch, and be sober.*

7.—*For they that sleep, sleep in the night: and they that be drunk, are drunken in the night.*

8.—*But let us, which are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and the hope of salvation for an helmet.*

9.—*For God hath not appointed us unto wrath, but to obtain salvation by the means of our Lord Jesus Christ;*

10.—*Which died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.*

Your conversation is in heaven, from whence you look for the Saviour, even the Lord Jesus Christ. You were once in darkness; but now you are light in the Lord: walk as children of light, approving that which is pleasing to the Lord. That day shall be dreadful, and come suddenly upon the wicked: but to you it shall not seem sudden, which fear the Lord, and put your trust in him, and take all care to be in readiness at his coming. Arm yourselves strongly: the enemy seeketh to overthrow you. Your enemy is the devil, with all his force. Your strength standeth not in your own prowess, or manhood, but in the mighty power of God. Put on therefore the breastplate of faith and

love: he that believeth, shall be saved; he that abideth in love, abideth in God; and whosoever putteth his trust in him, shall not be confounded.

Here I may take occasion to say somewhat of the troubles of war, how Satan seeketh by it to disquiet the Church of God. Who hath not heard what force is this day raised in this realm? who hath not heard of it? But let it not trouble you. God will turn all to his glory. I love not to speak of such things: yet somewhat I must speak thereof; the time enforceth me.

This is the first disturbance and breach of that blessed peace, in which God hath so long and so quietly preserved this realm, since the time that her Majesty came to the crown.* It giveth great occasion to the enemy to break in upon us: it is the spoiling of our country. The barbarous soldiers rush into men's houses, and take out what they list. They draw their sword, bend their force, join themselves to war against the Lord, and against his anointed. They have torn, and defaced, and burnt in fire the Holy Bible, the Gospel of our salvation; and would set up the loathsome service of the mass.

What hath the word of God offended? Why should it be torn in pieces? why should it be burnt? What word is in it, which is not the word of life? It is the power of God unto salvation, to them that believe. And where should the word of God have place, where should it be heard, but in the Church of God? O cursed hands that so despitefully rent it! Woe worth† that unhappy fire that burnt it!

As for the mass, would God they that so much desire it, knew what it is! Would God they knew how the people of

* For some account of the rebellion, raised by the Papists in the North of England, and headed by the Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland, in the year 1569, the reader may consult Strype's Annals, vol. ii. p. 2.—EDITOR.

† *Worth*; a verb, signifying *betide*, or *befall*. "Woe worth the day" occurs in the English version of Ezek. xxx. 2.—EDITOR.

God are mocked by it, and how the precious blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ is blasphemed by it! Would God they knew how grievously God is offended with them in this thing, wherein they think they please him so highly! But the mass and God's word cannot dwell in one house together: the one is so contrary to the other.

God forgive them, and lay it not to their charge; for they know not what they do. They are driven on to work the things which others have most wickedly devised. There is no doubt but God will confound their enterprise. For this is his own cause: this quarrel is picked against his Church, and against the knowledge and setting forth of his Gospel; and therefore against the setting forth of his glory. Only let us lift up our hands unto heaven, and call for help from above. Let us say unto him, "Rise up for our succour, and redeem us for thy mercies' sake." (Psalm xliv. 26.) Let us say, "They have cast thy sanctuary into the fire, and razed it to the ground, and have destroyed the dwelling-place of thy name. Arise, O God, maintain thine own cause: remember thy daily reproach by the foolish man." (Psalm lxxiv. 7; 22.) Let us say, Save, O Lord, Queen Elizabeth thy servant: establish that good thing which thou hast begun: open the eyes of all people, that they may see thy saving health, and enjoy it through hearing thy Gospel, which thou hast made known unto us: save thy people, which trusteth in thee, and break the cords of the wicked in sunder. Let us comfort ourselves with these words, that God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by the means of our Lord Jesus Christ. He hath overcome the world: let us be of good cheer. And let us walk as the children of light: let us walk honestly, as in the day. Then, whether we wake or sleep, whether we live or die, we shall live together with him.

VERSE 11.—*Wherefore exhort one another, and edify one another, even as ye do.*

This is the bond of true love and Christian friendship, that every man be careful of his brother, as of himself: that every man exhort and teach the things that are good, and rebuke others in ill: that every man seek to bring home the ost sheep, and to restore him to his Master. Therefore Christ saith: "If thy brother trespass against thee, go and tell him his faults, between him and thee alone: if he hear thee, thou hast won thy brother." (Matt. xviii. 15.) For what knowest thou, whether thou shalt save thy brother? "Brethren," saith St. James, "if any of you have erred from the truth, and some man hath converted him, let him know that he which hath converted the sinner from going astray out of his way, shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." (James v. 19, 20.)

Therefore saith the Apostle: *Exhort one another, and edify one another.*—Let the father exhort his son; O son, walk uprightly before God, live honestly and virtuously in the sight of all men, do those things that are good: thou art the child of God, be holy in spirit, and holy in body, because He is holy. Say to the adulterer, O brother, be not deceived. Whosoever is an adulterer, hath no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God: God hath said of them that are such, They shall not enter into my rest. Say to the swearer, O take not the name of God in vain: for God will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain. "He that sweareth, and nameth God continually, he shall not be faultless. A man that useth much swearing shall be filled with wickedness, and the plague shall never go from his house;" (Ecclus. xxiii. 10, 11.) nor from his cattle, nor from his corn, nor from his servants, nor from his children, nor from himself: his house shall be full of plagues. Say to the usurer, O hear the voice of the Lord; thus saith the Lord, before whom thou shalt stand to give an account of those things which thou hast done in this life: "Thou shalt not give thy money to usury." (Lev. xxv. 36, 37.) He that careth not for these words, but doth otherwise, shall not

escape unpunished. Say to the rich man; O put not your trust in riches. Lay up your treasure in heaven: lay it up in the bosom of the poor, and it shall make intercession for thee. Put thy trust in the living God, which giveth us abundantly all things to enjoy. Thy house, thy land, thy money, thy gold and silver, shall not continue: thou shalt go the way of all flesh, and thy riches shall not be able to deliver thee in the day of wrath. Say to the learned man, to the wise man, and to the man whom God hath endued with worldly power: What hast thou, that thou hast not received? Be not high-minded: it is the gift of God; it is not thine. Thou shalt give a reckoning of all that thou hast received. Abuse it not to the dishonour of God. It is of charity that I speak unto thee. Thou art my brother; God hath a care over thee: it is his will that one of us should exhort another. Oh, why should thy life give offence to any man? why should the name of God be ill spoken of through thee? He hath made thee to be a vessel of honour; thou belongest to his fold: why shouldest thou be lost, and perish in thy wilfulness?

VERSE 12.—*Now we beseech you, brethren, that ye know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you;*

13.—*That ye have them in singular love, for their work's sake. Be at peace among yourselves.*

They which exhort you, and warn you, and are over you in the Lord, they be shepherds, and husbandmen, and watchmen for you. They feed the Lord's flock, plough the Lord's ground, and watch the tower of the God of hosts. You are God's sheep; ye must be fed, else you cannot live. You are a field; you must be ploughed, else you will be overgrown with brambles, and stand unfruitful, and lie waste. You are the Lord's tower; you must be watched, else the enemy will break in upon you, and so you should be de-

stroyed. They labour and travail in your behalf: they must give an account for your souls. They are ambassadors sent from God: they come to tell you the truth: they preach not themselves, but Christ Jesus: they speak to you in the name of the Lord. Although you reckon them fools, unlearned, and simple, they are the messengers of the great King, even of him that is Lord over all. St. Paul saith: "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." (1 Cor. i. 21.) The heavenly treasure is brought to you, in poor, broken, earthy vessels. The vessels are simple, but the treasure is heavenly. The messenger is weak, but his word is the word of life, which can cast down every high thing that is exalted against the glory of God. Whatsoever they seem to you, they are the eyes of the Church, and the mouth of God. Christ saith unto them, whom he appointeth to his ministry: "As my Father sendeth me, so send I you." (John xx. 21.) They have the same commission, be they never so poor. "He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me: and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me," saith Christ. (Luke x. 16.)

Some there are that thus say; O that I might hear Christ, or Peter, or Paul; I would verily believe what they should preach. This is fondness, and curious vanity. For whensoever thou dost hear the minister of God break unto thee the word of life, and teaching thee the truth of the Gospel, thou hearest Paul, and Peter, and Christ himself. If thou despisest the word of God spoken unto thee by him, and the grace which God offereth thee by him, thou despiseth Christ himself, and heapest up the heavy displeasure of God against thee. God will give thee over into a reprobate mind: thou shalt have eyes, yet shalt not see; thou shalt have ears, yet shall not hear: thou shalt die in thy sin. It shall be easier for Sodom at that day, than for thee. Therefore acknowledge them, give credit to their message; they watch, and take pains for you.

What shall we say of them that labour not? that do neither teach, nor exhort, nor reprove, nor correct? that have no care to do their message, and no regard to the people? What may I say of such? God himself saith: "They are dumb dogs, and cannot bark: they lie and sleep, and delight in sleeping: they all look to their own way, and to their own advantage, and every one for his own purpose." (Isa. lvi. 10.) Christ calleth them thieves and robbers. They are unsavoury salt, profitable for nothing, but to be cast forth, and trodden under the feet of men. "Woe is unto me," saith St. Paul, "if I preach not the Gospel." (1 Cor. ix. 16.) Woe to the servant that wrappeth his talent in a napkin, and increaseth not his master's gain. God grant such idle and slothful ministers grace to know their office, and to do it! If not, God give the people grace to know them, and shun them, and to fly from them!

That ye have them in singular love, for their work's sake.— He telleth Timothy, "The elders that rule well, are worthy of double honour; specially they which labour in the word and doctrine." (1 Tim. v. 17.) Reverence them, and love them. Love them for your own sake: you have life and comfort by them. Honour them for their office' sake: they are your fathers, they have begotten you in Christ, they carry the keys of the kingdom of heaven, they are the stewards of God's house, and the disposers of his mysteries. Honour them, and love them, for God's sake: he hath sent them, and hath put his word in their mouth. He hath said to them, Go ye into all the world, preach the Gospel unto every nation. Go, speak to the heart of Jerusalem, that they may feel the weight of thy words, and repent. Love them therefore; for they love you in Christ, and are ready to give their lives for your sake. The Galatians so reverenced and loved St. Paul, that he saith; "Ye received me as an angel of God: for I bear you record, that, if it had

been possible; ye would have plucked out your eyes and have given them me." (Gal. iv. 14, 15.)

Be at peace among yourselves.—You are the sons of God. God is the God of peace. Discord, contention, and unquietness are fit for the children of Satan. Live in godly unity, as becometh the children of peace.

VERSE 14.—*We desire you, brethren, that ye admonish them that are unruly: comfort the feeble-minded: bear with the weak: be patient toward all men.*

15.—*See that none recompense evil for evil unto any man: but ever follow that which is good, both towards yourselves, and towards all men.*

There are some which walk among you inordinately: they break the bond of peace; they sow divisions and discord between the brethren; they draw disciples after them, and disquiet the church of God: they command that hath been forbidden by God, and forbid that God hath commanded. Warn them that are such; say unto them, as did St. Paul to the Corinthians: "We have no such custom, neither hath the church of God." (1 Cor. xi. 16.) Woe to him by whom offence cometh! Say unto them, as Joshua said to Achan: "Inasmuch as thou hast troubled us, therefore God will trouble thee this day." (Josh. vii. 25.) After this sort admonish them and lay open their wilfulness and blasphemy before their eyes: that they may see the blindness of their hearts, and in what sort their life is disordered; and so repent, and be saved.

But what greater disorder can there be than that of theirs, who have this day assembled themselves in force and in armour? which have lifted up their sword against their sovereign, and disturbed the peace of this realm, and have misled the people, and sought to overthrow the church of God? Let us admonish them, if we may speak with any that are so ill-disposed, and shew them the danger that hangeth over their

heads. Let us say to them, Thou hast done wickedly in the sight of God; thou hast resisted the ordinance of God, because thou hast resisted the power which he hath ordained: thou hast stricken with the sword, therefore thou shalt perish by the sword: thou hast disquieted the Israel of God, therefore God shall disquiet thee. Such rebels are unruly: they rise up against their prince, as did Dathan and Abiram against Moses: they advance themselves against God, as did Lucifer, therefore shall they be cast down alive into hell.

Comfort the feeble-minded,—and those that be heavy in heart; which suffer imprisonment, and live in poverty, and are grieved, and cannot help themselves. Say unto them, as St. James: "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised them that love him." (James i. 12.) Say unto them, as St. Peter: "This is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully." (1 Peter ii. 19.) Comfort them with the words of the prophet: "They that sow in tears, shall reap in joy." (Psalm cxxvi. 5.) Comfort them with the words of Christ: "Blessed are ye which weep now, for ye shall laugh." (Luke vi. 21.)

See that none recompense evil for evil to any man.—Though you suffer many things at the hands of the wicked, yet you may not be followers of that evil which is in them. "Avenge not yourselves, but give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him: if he thirst, give him drink." (Rom. xii. 19, 20.) Herein shall it appear if we love our neighbour as ourself: if we patiently abide injuries, and seek to do good to them that grieve and oppress us. "I say unto you," saith Christ, "love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that hurt you, and persecute you: that

you may be the children of your Father that is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to arise upon the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and unjust." (Matt. v. 44, 45.)

VERSE 16.—*Rejoice evermore.*

The joy of the wicked shall have an end. They rejoice in their goods, in their wisdom, in their peace and worldly safety, and in the multitude of their children, or descent of their pedigree. This joy is transitory; it fadeth and abideth not. "The world passeth," saith St. John, "and the lust thereof." (1 John ii. 17.) They rejoice in their wickedness; the lute and the harp, the tabret, and pipe, and wine are in their feasts; but they regard not the work of the Lord. They eat up the people, as it were bread: they do whatsoever they can devise against the servants of God. But the latter end of their joy shall be heaviness, as it is said: "Woe be unto you that laugh now, for you shall weep and lament." (Luke vi. 25.)

But the joy of the righteous is everlasting. Their heart shall rejoice, and no man shall take their joy from them. They have comfort in this, that their names are written in the book of life. They know the Lord is at hand, therefore they are careful for nothing, but rejoice always in the Lord. St. Peter therefore saith: "You are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, which is prepared to be shewed in the last time: wherein ye rejoice, though now for a season (if need require) ye are in heaviness, through manifold temptations." (1 Peter i. 5, 6.) Again: "Ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and glorious; receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls." (ver. 8.) This is the happiness, the joy, and the comfort, that the godly have, and which shall continue with them.

VERSE 17.—*Pray continually.*

It is the part of a good Christian, and a wise man, to

know himself; and to know the nature of this flesh, which we bear about with us, which fighteth always so mightily against the spirit: to know the waywardness and crookedness of our heart, and the weakness and vanity of our mind. Many are so far from this, that they think all their ability is of themselves. I have, saith he, judgment; I have the light of reason, I have sense, I have understanding and counsel, and the ordering of mine own way. Thus say they that neither know God, nor themselves.

But we must humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, and acknowledge that we are nothing. We must confess, with St. Paul: "I know that in me, that is to say, in my flesh, dwelleth no good." (Rom. vii. 18.) And again: "It is not in him that willeth, nor in him that runneth; but in God that sheweth mercy." (Rom. ix. 16.) Our Saviour saith: "That which is born of the flesh, is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit, is spirit." (John iii. 6.) And God aith: "The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth." (Gen. vi. 5.) He hath made us, and not we ourselves: he knoweth us, and not we ourselves. This is his saying, and his judgment of us. This we find true. For our will is froward, and our understanding blind. Therefore saith the prophet: "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself, neither is it in man to walk and direct his steps." (Jer. x. 23.) And Solomon: "The steps of man are ruled by the Lord: how can a man then understand his own way?" (Prov. xx. 24.) And the prophet Jeremiah: "Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are you in my hand, O Israel." (Jer. xviii. 6.) I mould you, and form you to my glory.

When the apostle putteth the Corinthians in mind of that good success which God gave unto his ministry among them, he saith: "Such trust have we through Christ to God: not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God." (2

Cor. iii. 4, 5.) Christ sheweth this to his disciples: "I am the vine, you are the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." (John xv. 5.) To the Philippians * saith Paul: "It is God which worketh in you both the will and the deed, even of his good pleasure." (Phil. ii. 13.) It is God that disposeth our goings, and turneth our hearts as seemeth best to him. He is able to make of the stones in the streets children unto Abraham: he is able to take away our stony heart, and to give us a heart of flesh.

The consideration hereof leadeth us to seek help and comfort by prayer at the hand of God. And then, because we stand in continual need of God's help, either to give us something that is good, or to deliver us from that is evil, the apostle biddeth us pray continually.

The ears of the Lord are open to the prayers of the righteous. Therefore Christ saith: "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." (Matt. vii. 7.) God will give you your heart's desire. "Let us therefore go boldly to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." (Heb. iv. 16.)

David prayed unto God: "Open thou mine eyes; lighten my darkness; direct my feet into the way of peace; incline my heart, O Lord, unto thy testimonies; stablish, O God, that which thou hast wrought in us; take not thy Holy Spirit from us; be thou our helper in troubles; O forsake us not utterly." He found no way to attain unto knowledge of the will of God, unless God would open his understanding, and endue him with his Spirit. Faith is the gift of God, or else was the Apostles' prayer in vain: "Increase our faith." (Luke xvii. 5.) Our Saviour teacheth us to pray in this

* The old editions concur in referring the passage by mistake to the Epistle of Paul to the Colossians.—EDITOR.

manner; "Hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done:" (Matt. vi. 9, 10.) because, without the grace and mercy of God, we can do nothing to the setting forth of his glory.

VERSE 18.—*In all things give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus towards you.*

These three are the badges, or cognizance, of a Christian soldier: to rejoice in the mercy of God; to be fervent in prayer: and to give thanks to God in all things. The heathens, which have no part in the kingdom of Christ, are thankful for their life, and liberty, and wealth, and glory, and worldly prosperity. But Christians ought to be thankful in persecution, in thraldom, in adversity, in shame, in misery, and in death itself.

Who would think that a lion, which by nature is fierce and cruel, should yield forth honey? Yet Samson found honey in the body of a lion. (Judges xiv. 8.) Who would think it likely that a man should be preserved in the belly of a fish? Jonas was swallowed up of a whale, and yet not hurt. (Jonah ii. 10.) Who would think that a man might be saved in the midst of burning fire? Yet the three servants of God walked in the fire safely, and came safe forth again. (Dan. iii. 27.)

"We know," saith the apostle, "that all things work together for the best, unto them that love God." (Rom. viii. 28.) The apostles rejoiced in their persecution, that they were counted worthy to suffer rebuke for Christ's sake. And Paul speaking of this perfection in the godly, saith: "We rejoice under the hope of the glory of God. And not so only, but also we rejoice in tribulations." (Rom. v. 2, 3.)

Who hath not heard of the patience of Job? His herds of cattle were driven away; his houses consumed with fire; his children slain; his body stricken with a scurf, or manginess: his wife loathed him, and his friends forsook him.

What did Job in all these miseries? What thought he? or what spake he? Let his patience in suffering, and his words of thanksgiving, teach us how to bear adversity. "The Lord," saith he, "hath given, and the Lord hath taken it: blessed be the name of the Lord." (Job i. 21.) Again: "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." (Job xiii. 15.) Who is able to express the manly comfort of his heart, which said, I will trust in him though he kill me? He is my God, I am his creature. His will be done. I will always give him thanks, and praise his holy name. By these we are learned to give thanks in poverty, in afflictions, in misery, and in all things, though they are heavy and grievous unto us.

What are we then, that are neither thankful for riches, nor for health, nor for our pleasures, nor in the abundance of all things? yea, which abuse the good gifts of God, to dishonour God, who hath given them unto us? The earth is the Lord's, and all that therein is: the world, and they that dwell therein. He openeth his hand, and filleth all things living with his good blessing. Let us look up into the heavens: there is God, the Father of lights, from whom every good and perfect gift cometh: there is our Redeemer, Jesus Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. When we turn in our beds; when we see our fare, and the furniture of our table; when we see our servants and children about us; when we see our money, and houses, and lands; let us think with ourselves, how many good men, and faithful servants of God, lack the same, and have not received these blessings in such measure as we. In all these things God speaketh to us, and saith, I have given them thee; thou hast them at my hands; use them well, and be not unthankful.

If I would stand herein, and declare what causes we have to give thanks unto God, I should never make an end. There is no beast on the ground, no fish in the sea, no bird

in the air, no star in the heavens, no leaf of the tree, no corn in the field, no sand on the shore, no drop of water, no sparkle of fire, but God hath created them all for the sons of men. So much are we bound always to give thanks to God, and to say as the prophet: "O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the the world!" (Psalm viii. 1.) Let us confess before the Lord his loving-kindness, and his wonderful works before the sons of men.

But who is able to render thanks sufficient to God, for that he giveth us the knowledge of his Gospel, and maketh us know the secrets of his will? This is a great blessing, and far above all the other comforts of this life. They that have not this, are in darkness and in the shadow of death. To be short; even in death we have to praise God: we must say, I thank thee, O God, for thou hast delivered him from the body of this death; thou hast translated him unto thyself, that so he may remain with thee in thy glory. Thus, whithersoever ye turn, what state or part of life or death soever ye consider; whether it be trouble or peace, things present or things to come, heaven or earth, life or death, you shall always find causes to be thankful.

VERSE 19.—*Quench not the Spirit.*

He meaneth by the Spirit, the gifts and graces of the Spirit. The Spirit of God is the Spirit of wisdom, and the Spirit of truth. "No man," saith St. Paul, "can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." (1 Cor. xii. 3.) Again: "The Spirit helpeth our infirmities." (Rom. viii. 26.) And again: "The same Spirit beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." (ver. 16.) It is he that leadeth us into all truth; that openeth our hearts to understanding, and guideth our feet into the way of peace. O, saith he, despise not the wisdom of the Spirit: refuse not his help, but seek it that you may be strengthened. Comfort yourselves in his testimony of your

adoption. Quench not the light he hath kindled in your hearts. Disdain not his leading: abuse not his mercy: abuse not the time of your visitation, Let not so great mercy of God be bestowed on you in vain. Fulfil not your own wills: abstain from fleshly lusts. Walk in the Spirit. Desire the best gifts, and "let every man, as he hath received the gift, so minister the same to another, as good disposers of the manifold grace of God." (1 Peter iv. 10.)

VERSE 20.—*Despise not prophesying.*

Prophecy is the preaching and expounding of the word of God: and he is called a prophet, and doth prophesy, that openeth unto us the will of God. This is not meant of fond and vain and lying prophecies, as were those of Merlin, and such like, which tell you tales of lions, and bears, and goats; of the sun, of the moon, and many strange devices. Such prophecies must be despised: they are words of darkness, and forged by the devil to make uproars, and to beguile the people.

But, *despise not prophesying.*—That is, despise not to hear the word of God: turn not away thine ear from understanding. God giveth power to his word, that it may work according to his good pleasure. It will let thee see the weakness of thine error, and settle thee in the way wherein thou shouldest walk. If it had been dangerous for the people to hear the preaching of the Gospel, he would not have sent his apostles into all the world. If Lydia should not have liked to have heard Paul prophesy, how might she have known God? If those great numbers which heard Peter, and were converted, had despised prophesying, and would not have heard him open the Gospel unto them, they had never considered the great mercy of God, nor sought to be instructed in their salvation. Faith cometh by hearing. This hath been the means by which Christ hath given knowledge to kings, and princes, and all nations. "It hath pleased

God," saith St. Paul, "by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." (1 Cor. i. 21.)

Despise not then to come to the church of God, to pray in the congregation of the faithful, to hear the Scriptures of God read and expounded; it is the blessing of God offered unto thee. Where there is no prophecy, the people perish. He that despiseth it, shall be despised of the Lord: he shall be cast into darkness, because he would not delight in the light.

VERSE 21.—*Try all things, and keep that which is good.*

Try all things.—God hath given you the spirit of discretion, and of judgment. Be wise, and know what is that good and acceptable will of God. Be not deceived with words of man's wisdom. Let not the baseness or simplicity of any cause you to refuse the message which he bringeth: and carry not yourselves to liking of all that whatsoever shall be told you of such as bear great shew and countenance. This was it that deceived the people of God; they gave ear to false teachers, which led them to worship the works of their own hands. Therefore they said unto the stone, Thou art our father, thou hast delivered us: they fell down before it, worshipped it, believed in it: they slew the prophets of God, and stoned to death such as were sent unto them.

The Scribes and Pharisees seemed so grave and wise, that the people thought nothing good but what they allowed. They were altogether appliable* to believe, to do, to speak, and to think, whatsoever the Pharisees willed them. Christ saith unto them: "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing; but inwardly they are ravening wolves." (Matt. vii. 15.) St. John therefore saith: "Dearly beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: for many false prophets are gone out into

* *Appliable;* i. e. pliable, or ready.—EDITOR.

the world." And further directeth us how we should try them: "Hereby shall ye know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God." (1 John iv. 1, 2.) Again, hereby may you try them: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that continueth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not to house, neither bid him God speed." (2 John 9, 10.) Hereby St. Paul requireth the Galatians to try between him and the false apostles: "If any man preach unto you otherwise than that ye have received, let him be accursed. For now do I preach man's doctrine, or God's?" (Gal. i. 8; 10.) The Sadducees erred touching the resurrection, because they searched not the Scriptures. God teacheth us, by the prophet Isaiah, to make trial of teachers and doctrines: "When they shall say unto you, Enquire of them that have a spirit of divination, and at the soothsayers which whisper and murmur; should not a people enquire at their God? from the living to the dead? To the law, and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." (Isaiah viii. 19, 20.) Paul putteth Timothy in mind wherefore he left him at Ephesus; "to command some, that they teach none other doctrine:" and to warn both the teachers and the hearers, "that they give no heed to fables and genealogies, which are endless, which breed questions, rather than godly edifying which is by faith." (1 Tim. i. 3, 4.)

Thus are the people of God called to try the truth, to judge between good and ill, between light and darkness. God hath made them the promise of his Spirit, and hath left unto them his word. They of Berea, when they heard the preaching of Paul, searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so as he taught them; and many of them believed. So do you: give heed to instruction, and

yet receive not all things without proof and trial, that they are not contrary to the wholesome doctrine of the word of God.

Keep that which is good.—When you have tried and found out the truth, be constant and settled in it. A wavering-minded man is unstable in all his ways. Follow the truth, and be not carried about with every wind of doctrine. The devil will come in the name of God, and change himself into an angel of light. Let him not take the love of the truth from you: let him not remove you from faith and a good conscience. Return not like swine unto your mire. God hath purged your hearts, and made them clean: except they be preserved, and kept occupied, the unclean spirit will return, and enter in, and dwell in you; so the last state of you shall be worse than the first.

We have great cause to hearken diligently to the apostle, to keep that is good. We see this day great confusion in all places. Satan would fain entangle us again with the error of the wicked, and seeketh to draw us from our stedfastness. Now is the time wherein God maketh some trial of his servants: now iniquity seeketh to have the upper hand. They seduce the people, and say, Here is Christ, there is Christ: here is the church, there is the church. God give us his Holy Spirit, to guide us in judgment, that we may discern the truth from falsehood, and know the blessed and gracious will of God: that we ma walk in his ways, and serve him in reverence and fear all the days of our life.

In this world, as there is a Jacob, so there is an Esau: as there are many that love Christ with an unfeigned heart, so there are many that serve Antichrist: and as there be many true professors of the truth of God, so there are many despisers of the same. This we may see here at home within this realm. We may see it, and mourn and lament for it in our hearts.

Their practices are opened: they have broken out into open rebellion, to the breach of the peace both of God and man. They say with their lips, God save Queen Elizabeth: yet they hold up their sword against her. Alas, what hath she deserved at their hands? She hath always dealt mercifully, without cruelty, without shedding of blood. God preserve her, that she may long reign over us, and bring all her enemies to confusion.

What pretence make they for this their doing? That hereby they seek to have religion reformed. Thanks be to God, religion is reformed far better than our fathers knew it these many hundred years. If those which lived before us, might have seen and heard as we see and hear, they would have rejoiced, and thought themselves happy.

But they would have the mass. What find they or see they in it, wherefore they should so desire it? Try all things, saith Paul: therefore, examine and try the mass. What do we learn by it? what doctrine, what godliness in life, what comfort for salvation? It is a dumb and deadly service. The people are forced to be at it, it is the very key of their religion: the people are bound to be present at mass, yet they neither receive any thing, nor eat, nor hear, nor understand any thing. You are wise, you have reason, you are the children of God: be you judges herein, and judge uprightly, for it is God's cause. Will they call this the Lord's Supper? Is this the sacrament of our redemption? Is this that which Paul received of the Lord, and delivered unto the church? Is this the shewing forth of the Lord's death until he come?

They would have the pope's authority restored. What is the pope? They say, he is the successor of Peter. What doth the pope, as Peter did? or what did Peter, as the pope doth? He is a mortal man: and cursed are they of God, that put their trust in man. He feedeth not the flock; he teacheth not the simple; he strengtheneth not the weak.

I will say no more. God make him a servant of Christ, and a faithful disposer of the mysteries of God!

They are offended at the marriage of the ministers of the church. Yet Gratian, their great master, saith: * 'The marriage of priests is not forbidden by any authority, either of the Law, or of the Gospel, or of the Apostles. The holy Fathers, that lived in the apostles' time, and shortly after, report that Peter, and all the other apostles, excepting only John, were married, and had wives. The prophet Isaiah was married, and yet he saw the Lord sitting upon an high throne. Moses was married, and yet he saw God face to face. Will they reform the prophets and the apostles? Will they account that to be unholy, which the apostle calleth honourable in all men? Ignatius, the scholar of St. John, said: † 'I wish to be found meet for God, as was Peter, and Paul, and the other apostles that were married.'

They paint their banner with the cross, and five wounds. Why bring they those arms against us? Do not we believe the cross of Christ? Do not we rejoice and comfort our hearts by the remembrance of his wounds? Do not we read, and shew forth to the people, the story of his passion? God knoweth it, and you can bear us witness, and they cannot deny it, that we make this work of our redemption, wrought by the passion of our Saviour Christ, the chief and principal rock and foundation of our faith. Therefore say we with the apostle, "God forbid that we should rejoice in any thing, but in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." (Gal. vi.14.) Nay rather, they are become our enemies, because we believe in Jesus Christ crucified: because we say, as God's word teacheth, that Jesus Christ is the only Advocate to the Father for our sins; and, that "he hath with one offering

* Copula sacerdotalis, nec Legali, nec Evangelicâ, nec Apostolicâ authoritate prohibetur.—*Decret.* xxvi. *Quæ.* 2. *Sors.*

† *Ignat. ad Philadelphienses.*

consecrated for ever them that are sanctified;" (Heb. x. 14.) and that "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." (1 John i. 7.) For this cause are they become our enemies.

Let us nothing fear their treacheries and attempts: let us keep that is good, and hold it fast until death. Now we have tasted the word of God, and have received the comfort of the Gospel, let us not despise it, nor be weary of it. Let us pray unto God, that he establish the love of his truth in us; and that he will open the eyes of their hearts, and bring them to be partakers of those mercies, which yet through ignorance they have despised.

VERSE 22.—*Abstain from all appearance of evil.*

Keep yourselves not only from doing those things which are evil, but also from all appearance of evil. Offend not the conscience of thy brother, that he may have no occasion to think evil of thee. Commit not adultery; and withdraw thyself from the company of such unthrifty, and light, and suspected persons: be not like to them that are such. Lay not out thy money to usury; nor do any thing whereby others may think so of thee: beware of uncharitable conveyance of thy money. Be not idolaters; and leave off to do any thing that may bring you into suspicion of idolatry: give not that honour unto any creature which is proper to God. Have no fellowship with their works; bear no appearance of liking their evil. Go not as they go: live not as they live. St. Paul reproveth the Galatians: "Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years: I am in fear of you, lest I have bestowed on you labour in vain." (Gal. iv. 10, 11.) So doth he the Colossians also: "If ye be dead with Christ from the ordinances of the world, why, as though ye lived in the world, are ye burdened with traditions? as, Touch not, taste not, handle not." (Col. ii. 20,21.) So do the idolaters: you should

not be like unto them. They are the children of darkness; you are the sons of light. They will not be like unto you, and forsake their false gods: why should you become like unto them, and forsake the God that made the heavens and the earth? You cannot make them ashamed of their errors, and embrace the truth: why then should you betray the truth, and be partakers with them in error?

The Christians in old time began to wear garlands made of bay. What harm might be in that? What is a garland, but a furniture for the head? What is bay, but a little tree, or bush? Yet the Fathers, that lived with them to teach them, said it was not lawful; not for that the thing itself was ill of itself, but for that they would not seem to follow idolaters. It had some appearance of evil. It was a ceremony and solemn fashion among the heathen: they would not be emboldened; and it would offend the hearts of many of the faithful, to see Christians follow the fashion of the heathen.

When king Antiochus sent unto Jerusalem, and to the cities of Judah, that they should follow the strange laws of the country; many chose rather to die, than to be defiled with unclean things, and to break the holy covenant which God had given them. (1 Mac. i. 44.)

Darius made a decree, whosoever should ask a petition of any god or man for thirty days, save of the king, he should be cast into the den of lions. Daniel would not be kept so long from the service of God. He would not dissemble: he would not hide his zeal, nor shew any appearance of ill. He prayed, and praised God, as he did before, and opened his chamber windows, that it might be seen. (Dan. vi. 10.)

Polycarp might have saved his life, if he would have dissembled. He would not; he could not. He saw it would have been an appearance of evil, and a discourage unto the

brethren: therefore spake he boldly,* 'I am a Christian.' And, being required to speak ill of Christ, he said,† 'I have served Christ these fourscore and six years, and he did never any thing hurt me: how may I speak ill, and blaspheme my king, which hath given me salvation?' This is my faith; Christ is my God: this is my religion; I am not ashamed to suffer death, rather than I will deny him, who suffered death in his own body to save me.

"It is good," saith St. Paul, "neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak." (Rom. xiv. 21.) Again he saith: "Now when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye offend against Christ. Wherefore, if meat offend my brother, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I should offend my brother." (1 Cor. viii. 12, 13.) He that hath once made a shipwreck, standeth watchful ever after, not only to escape that rock or sand, whereat he had loss before, but all other the like rocks and sands whatsoever.

Therefore abstain from all appearance of evil; be not like the wicked of this world. You are the salt of the earth: you should not be partners of their corruption, but powder and season them. You are the light of the world: you may not be partners of their darkness, but lighten and guide them. Dissemble not: serve God in the simplicity of your heart, and in the sight of all the world. Let it be written in your forehead, what you think in your heart. Why should any man be ashamed of God's truth?

VER. 23.—*Now the very God of peace sanctify you throughout: and I pray God, that your whole spirit, and soul, and*

* Christianus sum. † Octoginta et sex annos servivi ei, et nihil me læsit unquam; quomodo possum maledicere ei, et blasphemare regem meum, qui salutem mihi dedit?

body, may be kept blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our God is the God of peace. He giveth peace and quiet to his church. He doth muzzle the lion, amaze the tyrant, make blunt the sword, and quench the fire prepared against his servants. He giveth his sons peace and quietness among themselves : he abhorreth discord and malice between brethren. " God is love," saith St. John ; " and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him." (1 John iv. 16.) " He that loveth not his brother, abideth in death." (1 John iii. 14.) God hath made us all members of one body. There is no respect of persons with him, no difference of learned and unlearned, wise or foolish, rich or poor. His will is, that we all should be as one, of one mind, and that we should all think one thing, and speak one thing : that we should be one fold under one Shepherd, and with one mouth glorify the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. For this peace Christ prayed: " Sanctify them through thy truth." (John xvii.17.) Bless them : take away all bitterness and swelling from amongst them : make them citizens of thy heavenly Jerusalem, that they may live in peace, and love one another, and delight one in other. " That they all may be one, as thou, O Father, art one in me, and I in thee." (ver. 21.)

God is the God and giver of peace. Whence then cometh division, and dissension of minds? What is the cause that the whole world is so shaken with sects and troubles ? All are not the children of peace. Christ himself, the Lamb of God, in whose mouth there was no guile, came unto his own, and his own received him not. Cain is always against Abel. Esau will never love Jacob. The darkness and the light can never agree. This is the cause of all unquietness and trouble. " These things," saith Christ to his disciples, " have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace : in the world you shall have afflic-

tion." (John xvi. 33.) The wicked shall not only hate, but betray, and cause them to die, which profess the name of Christ. "Whosoever killeth you, will think he doth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me." (ver. 2, 3.)

The setting forth of the Gospel of Christ is that which the world cannot abide. It revealeth things that were hidden: it discloseth the covetousness of those who kept the people in ignorance, to make gain and merchandise of their souls: it overthroweth mighty buildings and holds of merits, of pardons, of masses, of purgatory, which, by the policy, and wisdom, and power of this world, were exalted against God. This is the only cause of all this strife and trouble.

We have need of peace: of the peace of conscience within ourselves; of peace from the rage and fury of the world; and of peace and love among those that are of God's household. Let us seek peace at the hands of God, and he will stablish us in the peace of his Gospel, and so give us the rest and peace of our souls.

Sanctify you throughout.—The God of peace bless you, and keep you under the shadow of his wings; that your whole spirit, and soul, and body, may be kept blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Here mark, that the apostle divideth man into three parts; the spirit, the soul, and the body: so that he seemeth to make the spirit one thing, and the soul another. How is it then that we divide man into two parts, the soul and the body, and say that he doth stand but of two parts? There is no difference: the matter is all one. For Paul divideth the soul into two parts: the first is reason and understanding, which he calleth the spirit; the other is will and affection, which he calleth the soul. For as God hath given us reason to see what is good; so hath he given us will to seek

after that which is good. Reason hath eyes: will is blind, and cannot see the way. Therefore will must be led and guided by reason: reason must go before; will must follow after. Therefore reason is compared to the husband, and will to the wife. If will take in hand to rule reason, it is no less disorder than if the wife will adventure or take upon her to rule her husband. Therefore in this place reason, which is the principal part of our soul, is called the spirit; and will, which is the other part, is called the soul. So the spirit is not a several substance; but the soul and the spirit are one soul, even as the body and the flesh are one body.

Thus therefore Paul prayeth for the church: The God of peace sanctify you throughout; that your spirit (your reason and understanding), your soul (your will and affection), your body (and your flesh), may altogether be pure and holy: that they may be found innocent and upright in the day of the Lord.

VERSE 24.—*Faithful is he which calleth you, which will also do it.*

He hath begun a good work in you: he will finish it. He will lead you from virtue to virtue, from strength to strength, from glory to glory. He hath called you; he will also keep you faithful until the day of the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. You are Christ's sheep: no man shall take you out of his hands. He hath not lost one of all them whom his Father had given him. He knoweth his sheep. None shall be confounded, that put their trust in him. There is no condemnation to them that be in Christ Jesus. He is faithful, he will perform this unto you; not for your merits, but for his own name and for his mercy sake. Because he is faithful, he will not despise the work of his own hands.

VERSE 25.—*Brethren, pray for me.*

I wrestle not with flesh and blood, but with the prince and power of darkness. My enemies are strong; they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: I am weak, and of no resistance. Our sufficiency is of him: without him we can do nothing. Pray for me, that he will put his word into my mouth; that I may be a vessel of his glory, to preach forth the glad tidings of his Gospel; that I may be a faithful minister of the New Testament; that I may disclose the mystery of our redemption; that his Holy Spirit will assist me, and make my travails fruitful.

VERSE 26.—*Greet all the brethren with an holy kiss.*

27.—*I charge you in the Lord, that this epistle be read unto all the brethren, the saints.*

Salute one another, in token of true and unfeigned love. And withhold not this epistle from any of the brethren. It is written for their sakes: let them hear it, that they may take comfort by it. How agreeth Paul in this charge with them that in no case would have the people read the holy Scriptures? that say, Ignorance is the mother of devotion? It is the word of God the Father: why should not the people of God understand it? It is the water that springeth out to everlasting life: why should the people of God be driven away, and not suffered to drink thereof? It is the light of the world: why should the people be hoodwinked, and kept that they should not look up and see it? why should they sit and perish in the darkness of death?

It is the will of God that all the people should know him, from the least to the greatest among them. St. Paul saith: "Whatsoever things are written aforetime, are written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." (Rom. xv. 4.) Christ saith: "This is life eternal, to know thee to be the only very God, and, whom thou hast sent, Jesus Christ." (John xvii. 3.)

Let us not forget these words of Paul : I charge you in the Lord, by his death, by his cross, by his blood, by the day of his appearance, that this epistle be read to the learned and unlearned, to the wise and simple, to the masters and to the servants ; to all our brethren, to all the sons of God.

VERSE 28.—*The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.*

God open your eyes, that you may behold the way of righteousness ; and direct you, that you may walk in it. Through his grace you have received the word, and it hath been fruitful in you : and by the same grace you shall continue in it for ever. His grace, and blessing, and mercy, be with you all. AMEN.

THE

SECOND EPISTLE OF ST. PAUL

TO THE

THESSALONIANS.

CHAPTER I.

VERSE 1.—*Paul, and Sylvanus, and Timotheus, unto the Church of the Thessalonians, which is in God our Father and in our Lord Jesus Christ.*

IN the former Epistle he wrote somewhat touching the latter day, and the coming of our Lord to judgment; and said, that that day shall come as a thief in the night: and therefore exhorted them to watch and pray, and to prepare themselves to be in a readiness. The false apostles did fondly and maliciously mistake his words; and devised means thereby to disquiet the minds of the faithful, and to trouble the Church of God. Thus could the prince of darkness, the old serpent and deceiving spirit, turn the truth of God into occasion of slander.

In the mean while the Apostle was far off from them at Athens. But when he heard of their case, he sent unto them this other Epistle, wherein he declareth more plainly that matter which before seemed doubtful, and seeketh to satisfy their hearts, and to remove them from all that error which they had conceived.

In discourse hereof, he taketh occasion to speak of Antichrist, of whom we hear much, and have had warning

often. He telleth us, that he shall come in working of signs and wonders: that he is the man of sin, which shall thrust himself into the place of Christ. He sheweth who is Antichrist, and how we may know him; what things he shall do; what credit he shall have in the world; and by what power he shall be overthrown and confounded. After this he speaketh of idleness, and of bodily labour, and requireth every man to live in the sweat of their brows, and in painful travail, as God hath ordained. Other comfortable and necessary doctrine is delivered in this Epistle, as will appear. The whole matter of the Epistle is so fit for these days in which we live, as if it were purposely written for us. For we live in the latter age of the world; and it cannot be but the end of all things is at hand, and that the glorious appearing of our Lord shall be shortly.

Paul, and Sylvanus, and Timotheus.—This Epistle was sent, not only from Paul, but also from Timothy and Sylvanus. These three were all guided by one Spirit, and had all one like care for the Church of God. Therefore he writeth thus: Paul, and Sylvanus, and Timotheus, the servants of God, chosen from our mothers' womb, and appointed to publish the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and to carry his name before kings and princes: and especially I Paul, which am your father, and have begotten you in Christ; which was sometimes a blasphemer, and did persecute the faithful; whom it pleased God to make a chosen vessel for himself; which am also hated of my brethren and kinsmen after the flesh, for the Gospel's sake; and which am ready to give my life for your behalf.

Unto the Church of the Thessalonians, which is in God our Father, &c.—You are, saith he, the beloved of God; you are his people, and he hath assured his mercy unto you: you have the promise and the earnest of the life to come. Here let us mark the state of that country, as it was then,

and compare it with itself as it is now. Then it was the church of God; for otherwise St. Paul would not so have called it. According to the grace of God given unto him, he laid the foundation, he planted and watered their hearts, and God gave the increase. So that they received the word in much affliction; and the word of the Gospel sounded from them, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but their faith towards God was spread also abroad in all quarters. In such sort were they a vessel sanctified unto honour, full of blessing, and full of the mercy and grace of God.

But what is become of that country? In what case standeth the church of Thessalonica at this day? It is now the synagogue of Satan, under the tyranny of the Turk, and such as are enemies of the cross of Christ. Such a change hath the right hand of the Lord wrought in that place, which hath sometimes been his holy tabernacle. I thought good to mark this, that we might understand how vain a thing it is to put confidence in cities or churches, or in the names of our fathers.

The church of Thessalonica, whose foundation was surely built by St. Paul himself, for which he was so careful, unto which he wrote special letters to commend their increase in godliness, and their stedfastness in the Gospel, is forsaken and laid waste. If the work which the Spirit of God wrought by the Apostle be decayed, whose work may we think shall stand?

Jeremy spake unto the people of the Jews, saying: "Trust not in lying words, saying, The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, this is the temple of the Lord." (Jer. vii. 4.) That temple God himself commanded to be built; the form and fashion thereof God himself devised and appointed: therein he placed his tabernacle, and set up his mercy-seat; therein he shewed forth his ma-

jesty, and the glory of his countenance. Yet, all this notwithstanding, God said by the prophet, Trust not in these words; they be lying words, and will deceive you.

As the Prophet spake of the temple at Jerusalem, so may it be said of any other church throughout the world. So may it be said of the church of Rome. We may say, Trust not in lying words, saying, The church of Rome, the church of Rome. Say not thus with yourselves, The church of Rome is built upon a rock, so surely, that it cannot be moved, or that no wind can shake it: say not, The faith of that church can never fail. These be lying words; trust not in them: for Christ never spake any such thing of the church of Rome. It never had promise of more special privilege, than was given to the church at Thessalonica. Read the Scriptures; behold the words of our Saviour, and consider them: you shall find no speech made of the church of Rome, nor any promise, or piece of promise, wherein he bindeth himself more to the church of Rome, than he hath done to other churches, or to this of Thessalonica.

Thessalonica was beautiful in the sight of God: the Lord of hosts had pitched his tents round about her; the name of the Most Holy was placed in the midst of her: she enjoyed like spiritual peace and prosperity, as did the Jerusalem of the Almighty; she was as a city fenced within itself. But the Lord hath taken away the light of his countenance from her: she hath forsaken the ways of righteousness; she hath left off to serve the Lord, and is become the place which the Lord hath forsaken. There is scarce any remnant left there of those which call upon the name of our salvation, and love the Lord Jesus with an unfeigned heart.

This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes. And is his hand shortened that he cannot, or is his zeal abated that he will not, in like severity deal with such as forsake him? If he spared not the natural branches, if

Jerusalem were overthrown because of her iniquities, it cannot be that he will spare other places that do the like, but that they shall also be cut off. This is it that our Saviour hath said in the Gospel by St. Matthew: "Therefore say I unto you, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and shall be given to a nation which shall bring forth the fruits thereof." (Matt. xxi. 43.) Such terrible and dreadful examples hath God laid before our eyes, to keep us in his fear, and in awe of his judgments.

VERSE 2.—*Grace be with you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.*

This is the salutation of Paul in all his Epistles: to say, I wish that the blessing, and favour, and love of God may light upon you. But for the better consideration hereof, and that we may know how earnestly we ought to pray unto God for this grace and peace the Apostle wishes to the churches, let us look into ourselves, and see how miserable we are, if we be left void of this grace, and if God take his Holy Spirit away from us. By nature what are we other than the bondslaves of sin? We are not able to lift up our eyes unto heaven, nor to believe in God, nor to praise him, nor to call upon his name. We are not sufficient of ourselves to think any thing, as of ourselves. Unless he open our lips, we cannot shew forth his praise: unless he heal our deafness, we cannot give ear to his word: unless he give us understanding hearts, we cannot take knowledge of his will. "Destruction and unhappiness," saith the Prophet David, "are in their ways, and the way of peace have they not known: there is no fear of God before their eyes." (Rom. iii. 16—18; Psal. xxxvi. 1.) speaking of such as had not received the favour and grace of God to guide and direct them. And by the prophet Malachi God uttereth his displeasure against them, saying: "I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of

hosts; neither will I accept an offering at your hands." (Mal. i. 10.)

Therefore the Apostle prayeth, that they may receive such measure of God's grace, as may quench in them the fiery darts of the wicked, and enable them to hold fast that worthy thing that is committed unto them, and may keep them holy and undefiled against the glorious coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

VERSE 3.—*We ought to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the love of every one of you towards another aboundeth;*
4.—*So that we ourselves rejoice of you in the church of God, because of your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye suffer.*

God hath wrought this good work of faith, and love, and patience in your hearts: he will make it prosper and increase. It is he which hath put this fire in you; and he will make it burn. He hath laid his leaven in the dough or meal of your heart; and will make it heave, and work, until all be leavened. He will make you abound more and more, and will bring to a good end the thing he hath begun.

Your faith groweth exceedingly.—This is the will of God, that we wax and increase in all holiness. Hereby we know whether we be of God, or no. We may not stand at a stay, but must be renewed. One saith, *In viâ virtutis qui non proficit, deficit:* 'Whosoever mendeth not himself in the practice of virtue, he groweth worse.' God hath placed us in a race to run: we must so run, that we may attain the prize. We are grafts of the Lord's planting: we must grow to the height and breadth of a tree, and bring forth fruit. We are pilgrims and strangers, and pass by the wilderness of this world into our heavenly resting-place:

we may not stay by the way, but must remove our tents, and continually march on forward, until that day come, when we shall enter into the land of promise.

So that we ourselves rejoice of you in the church of God, &c.—Your faith is not only true and pure, but settled and constant. For you continued stedfast in the midst of persecution: you have been tormented, and suffered afflictions in your body, by the hands of tyrants; yet could they never remove you from the faith in our Saviour Jesus Christ, nor from your obedience to the will of God. You know that "all which will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." (2 Tim. iii. 12.) Yet are you comforted, and say, as the prophet David: "The Lord is with me, therefore I will not fear what man can do unto me." (Psal. cxviii. 6.) You cannot forget who it is that said: "Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me, I will also deny him before my Father which is in heaven." (Matt. x. 32, 33.) "He that loseth his life for my sake, shall find it." (ver. 39.) "He that endureth unto the end, he shall be saved." (ver. 22.) And again: "Blessed shall ye be, when men revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you, for my sake, falsely. Rejoice and be glad, for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets, which were before you." (Matt. v. 11, 12.)

VERSE 5.—*Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for the which ye also suffer.*

6.—*For it is a righteous thing with God, to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you;*

7.—*And to you, which are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall shew himself from heaven, with his mighty angels,*

8.—*In flaming fire, rendering vengeance unto them that do not know God, and which obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:*

9.—*Which shall be punished with everlasting perdition, from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power,*

10.—*When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be made marvellous in all them that believe (because our testimony towards you was believed) in that day.*

Many are the troubles which the righteous men do suffer, but the Lord will deliver them. After Paul and Barnabas had preached the glad tidings of the Gospel, they confirmed the disciples' hearts, and exhorted them to continue in the faith, and said, "That we must through many afflictions enter into the kingdom of God." (Acts xiv. 22.) We must not, therefore, be afraid for any terror of them which trouble us for righteousness' sake; but rather, looking over and beyond them, we must rejoice and give thanks to God, who hath made us worthy not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for his sake. "For we know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle be destroyed, we have a building given of God, an house not made with hands, but eternal in the heavens." (2 Cor. v. 1.)

These persecutions and tribulations which you suffer, are a manifest token (saith the Apostle) of God's love towards you. For, "Whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth: and he scourgeth every son that he receiveth." (Heb. xii. 6.) The Prophets, and Apostles, and Martyrs, which were not only reviled and scourged, but beheaded, cut in pieces, drowned in the waters, consumed in the fire, or by any other devices of tyrants cruelly put to death, did by this way receive the manifest token of their happy and blessed estate, and by this way did enter into the kingdom of God. Athanasius, an ancient father, reckoneth the suffering of persecution to be a special note of a Christian man, say-

ing :* 'It is the part of Christians to be persecuted; but to persecute the Christians, it is the very office of Pilate and Caiaphas.'

The Lord is not unjust, but all his works are righteousness and truth. Their little and short tribulation in this life prepareth an eternal and exceeding weight of glory unto his servants. Though they sow in tears, they shall reap in joy. They shall be taken up into heaven, and shall see God face to face, and shall be crowned with glory and honour. As for the ungodly, it is not so with them: they may flourish for a time, and have great power and authority in this world; but the Lamb shall overcome them, and their end shall be according to their works. David saith, "Upon the ungodly he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, storm and tempest: this shall be their portion to drink." (Psal. xi. 6.)

When the Lord Jesus shall shew himself from heaven.—There are many which are ashamed of Christ, and of his word, in the presence of such as are enemies to the cross of Christ, and have countenance and authority in this world. But a time shall come, when Christ will shew himself from heaven, accompanied with his holy angels: then will he also be ashamed of them, and put them from his presence; then will he render vengeance to them that have hated his truth; they shall then know whose members they have killed, and whose word and gospel it was which they so despitefully reproached. Then the smoke of their torments shall ascend evermore, and they shall have no rest day nor night. In this manner shall God triumph in victory over the wicked, by judging them to everlasting destruction; and will shew himself wonderful in giving rest, and joy, and glory, and

* Cædi, Christianorum proprium est: cædere autem Christianos, Pilati et Caiaphæ officia sunt.—*Athanas. ad solitariam vitam agentes.*

everlasting blessedness to all those which love his truth, and believe in him.

VERSE 11.—*Wherefore we also pray always for you, that our God may make you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power:*

12.—*That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God, and of the Lord Jesus Christ.*

God bless that good thing which he hath begun in you, and keep you stedfast in the truth; that you look not back now after you have put your hand to the plough, and that you give no place to their dangerous and subtle persuasions who persecute you. Take heed to yourselves, and beware that you put not the word of God from you. He hath shewed you his goodness and mercy, in that he hath delivered you from the power of darkness, and hath translated you into the kingdom of his dear Son.

I make my prayer to God without ceasing for you always, that he will make you worthy of this heavenly calling, and that he will ever more and more fill you with the riches and abundance of his goodness and mercy, that through him you may be made perfect in all good works.

CHAPTER II.

VERSE 1.—*Now I beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our assembling unto him,*

2.—*That ye be not suddenly moved from your mind, nor troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter, as it were from us, as though the day of Christ were at hand.*

You are the children of those fathers, which have fallen from their stedfastness, and have been led into error: beware lest you also be carried away with every blast of false doctrine. The devil is subtle: his baits are pleasant: you are weak and simple; he will soon deceive you. Here let us consider how easily man may be deceived; that so we may know the corruption and weakness of our nature, and therefore what cause we have ever to walk warily, to take heed to our steps, and to pray unto God that he will incline our hearts unto his testimonies. When I say man may be deceived, I mean not boys, or children, or fools, or the simpler sort of men: but the learned, the wise, the politic; the kings and princes of the world; the teachers, the rulers also of the people.

When Adam was yet in paradise, and made the ruler over all the beasts of the field, and was full of the graces and blessings of God, he soon departed from the counsel of God, and gave ear to the serpent: so easily was he deceived. Israel was as the apple of the Lord's eye, a people whom the Lord loved, and to whom he gave their hearts' desire. He delivered them from Pharaoh, and with an outstretched arm led them through the Red Sea. Who would think so great mercies would ever be forgotten? or that such a people, so well instructed in the knowledge of God, and so often put in mind of their duty, should either the most part, or all of them, turn from God? Moses was

absent but awhile: he went aside to receive the tables of covenant. In the mean time they made unto themselves a molten calf, and worshipped it; they offered unto it, and said, "These be thy gods, O Israel, that have brought thee out of the land of Egypt." (Exod. xxxii. 4.) So easily were the wisest of them, and Aaron, and the whole multitude, deceived.

Their children after them forsook the Lord, and served Baal and Ashtaroth. (Judges ii. 13.) "They said to a tree, Thou art my father, and to a stone, Thou hast begotten me: they have turned their backs to me, and not their face;" saith God by the prophet Jeremiah. (Jer. ii. 27.) And was this the offence but of some small number of them? were they but few, or of the baser and simpler sort, whom the wicked spirit had thus seduced, to make them forsake the true and living God, and to give the glory due unto him to dumb creatures, and to the works of their own hands? No, they departed from God in great multitudes, with full consent and unity; they warranted their doings by antiquity, and by the custom of their fathers before them. The Prophet saith: "According to the number of thy cities were thy gods, O Judah: and to the number of the streets of Jerusalem, have ye set up altars of confusion, even altars to burn incense unto Baal." (Jer. xi. 13.) And in another place he saith: "A great multitude, even all the people that dwell in the land of Egypt, in Pathros, answered Jeremiah, saying, The word that thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the Lord, we will not hear of thee. But we will do whatsoever thing goeth out of our own mouth; as, to burn incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, as we have done, we and our fathers, our kings and our princes," &c. (Jer. xliv. 15—17.) Thus, even among that nation which God hath chosen unto himself, the apostasy was so great, the departure from true holiness was so universal, that not only every city, but every

street was defiled with their idolatry. And, besides the women which burnt incense to other gods, a great multitude, yea, all the people with one consent cried out against their preacher, refused to hear the word of God, and maintained their superstition.

The like may be said of the Scribes and Pharisees. They were wise, they were learned, and carried great shew of holiness; yet they loved darkness better than light: they were blind leaders of the blind; they despised the commandments of God for their own traditions. And not only they, but Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and people of Israel, gathered themselves together against the Lord, and against his Christ. (Acts iv. 26, 27.)

What should I speak of those Churches, which the Apostles of Christ planted, and watered, and confirmed in the truth? At Corinth, Paul preached the Gospel; they received it gladly: he thanketh God on their behalf, "that in all things they were made rich in him, in all kind of speech, and in all knowledge." (1 Cor. i. 5.) Yet soon after they abused the holy mysteries, they denied the resurrection of the dead, they became carnal, and had envying, and strife, and contention among themselves.

The Galatians rejoiced so much in him, that he writeth thus of them: "I bear you record, that, if it had been possible, you would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me." (Gal. iv. 15.) Yet they did not abide in the truth, but gave ear to false apostles, and were deceived. Therefore he reproveth them, saying, "O foolish Galatians, who have bewitched you, that you should not obey the truth? Are ye so foolish, that, after ye have begun in the spirit, ye would now be made perfect in the flesh?" (Gal. iii. 1; 3.) "Ye did run well: who did let you, that ye did not obey the truth?" (Gal. v. 7.) "I am in fear of you, lest I have bestowed on you labour in vain." (Gal. iv. 11.)

This frailty and weakness of our corrupt nature hath shewed itself forth, and hath appeared in all ages. We and our fathers have gone astray, and have followed after lies. "The Lord hath looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that would understand and seek God. All are gone out of the way; they are all corrupt: there is none that doeth good, no not one," saith the Prophet David. (Psal. xiv. 2, 3.) Therefore the Apostle beseecheth the church at Thessalonica, that they settle themselves upon a sure foundation, and that they be not removed from the truth. He putteth them in mind what they have heard, and of whom they have heard it, and exhorteth them to continue stedfast therein.

Neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter, as it were from us.—Let no man entice you, from the love of the truth, nor withdraw you, or remove you, from that blessed hope, unto which you be called; neither by pretence of revelation, which any would seem to receive of the Spirit of God; nor by pretence of any word of mine, as if I had so spoken; nor by any letter, given unto you in my name, as if I had so written. In these words, he doth not only strengthen them against such practices of crafty and false teachers, but giveth them therewithal a testimony of their constant abiding in the truth of the Gospel.

Otherwise, if the seducers had prevailed, and if the Thessalonians had yielded unto them, and received their error, he would then have framed his speech unto them after this manner: O suffer yourselves to be advised. You do not run well; you have lost the high-way. Give place to the Spirit of God; submit yourselves under his mighty hand; refuse not the calling whereby he hath called you. I could speak such things, wherewith you would be better pleased; but your case is such, it requireth rather free, and plain, and sharp reprehension, whereby you may be brought to consider and amend your errors, than fair

and smoothed speech, which might hold you still in your folly.

Seek therefore the kingdom of God, and the glory thereof, and seek not yourselves. Weigh truth and falsehood in an indifferent balance; so shall the heavier weight of the one soon betray the lightness of the other. What thing in the world so massy, and so weighty, as is the truth? Harden not your hearts, as did your fathers in the wilderness. It is no sin to yield unto God: it is no shame to lay apart all affection, and to change your mind to the denial of all ungodliness, and embracing of true holiness. The wise man saith, "There is a shame that bringeth sin, and a shame that bringeth worship and favour." (Eccl. iv. 21.)

In this sort it is likely the Apostle would have spoken, if need had so required. But now, seeing them forcibly assaulted, and that yet they strived with such good courage against the persuasions of the wicked; he commendeth their stedfastness, and exhorteth them by these words, not to yield unto their persecutors, nor to go from their faith in Christ Jesus.

Neither by spirit: that is, by revelation of the Spirit.—The Spirit of God wrought mightily, and bestowed sundry and great gifts upon men. Christ said to his disciples, "When they deliver you up, take ye no thought how or what ye shall speak; for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you." (Matt. x. 19, 20.) And again, saith he, "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever,—the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because the world seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." (John xiv. 16, 17.) The Holy Ghost shall be with you, to assist you, to teach you

all things, to direct your counsels, to lead you into all truth, and to preserve you from all error.

Now, as the Spirit of God was among the faithful, and distributed to every man several * gifts, as it seemed best to profit withal: so did the spirit of Satan wait upon the wicked, and possessed their hearts and bodies, and caused them to imagine, and to do, those things which were unseemly. He used them as instruments to disquiet the Church of God, and to cast into it the seed of error, of untruth, and dissension.

Of such spirits St. John giveth warning, saying: "Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they are of God; for many false prophets are gone into the world." (1 John iv. 1.) At what time Ahab would not believe the answer which the Prophet Micaiah made him, there came forth a spirit, and stood before the Lord, and said: "I will go out, and be a false spirit in the mouth of all his prophets." (1 Kings xxii. 22.)

This spirit ever walketh up and down, seeking whom he may devour, and blindeth the minds of many, that the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ may not shine unto them. Take heed that you be not deceived by any such, which shall seek to abuse you by pretence of revelation. Though they shall take upon them to tell you of the day or hour of the coming of our Lord, believe them not; for the false spirit is in the mouth of such prophets.

Nor by word.—Or, if any shall report, and go about to persuade you, that I have so spoken or taught in the congregations; or will boldly countenance out such matters, and tell you, saying, I was present, I heard his words and remember them, this was the doctrine which Paul preached: refuse him that is such an one, for he bringeth not the truth unto you, but deceiveth you with lying and vain fables.

* *Several;* that is, separate and distinct; "dividing to every man *severally* as He will." (1 Cor. xii. 11.)—EDITOR.

Nor by letter, as it were from us.—Again, it may be they which lie in wait to destroy you, for their better way, will counterfeit letters, and send them unto you in my name. This is a token in them, that they be past shame. Be not you carried away by any such pretence from that which we have preached unto you. We have not taught you that the day of Christ is at hand. Oh, then, be not so soon removed away unto another gospel, by them which trouble you, and intend to pervert the Gospel of Christ.

Many such slights and false devices have been used by deceiving spirits, to blind the eyes of the simple. There have been some, which have set abroad their own fantasies under the name of Adam, the first man that God created upon the face of the earth, and of Cain and Seth. Others have called their own dreams the Gospel of Thomas, and of Bartholomew, and of Barnaby, and of the Apostles of Christ.* St. Augustine saith of the Manichees:† 'The Manichees read secret hidden Scriptures, written, I know not by what cobblers of fables, under the name of the Apostles.' Such writings were never written by them, whose name they bear; but were wickedly and falsely counterfeited under their names by sundry heretics.

This is that, whereof our Saviour gave us warning: "Take heed that no man deceive you: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many." (Matt. xxiv. 4, 5.) Again, he saith: "If any shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there, believe it not; for there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets." (vers. 23, 24.) Into what shape cannot he transform himself, in whose name will not he craftily set forth his errors, which dareth falsely set himself in the place of the Son of God? This hath

* The Apocryphal Books, here alluded to, the reader will find in Jones's Canon of the New Testament.—EDITOR.

† Manichæi legunt Scripturas apocryphas, nescio à quibus sutoribus fabularum, sub nomine Apostolorum, scriptas.—*August. contra Faustum, lib.* 22. *cap.*80.

evermore been the practice of that old serpent, to change himself into the likeness of an angel of light; and, under the credit of holy men, to deceive the world with unholy and unwholesome things.

Since the time that the Church of God hath departed from her first faith, and would no longer be guided by the voice of the Gospel, what and how great forgeries have there been wrought! What epistles, and canons, and decretals, have been devised, to maintain several parts of false religion, and published under the name of Clemens, Cletus, Anacletus, and of others whereof these holy Fathers never thought! Thus have they cloaked themselves under the covert of the Apostles, and of the Fathers of the primitive Church, and have sought to win credit in the world by false shew of antiquity.

It is certain that the Son of man shall come with his holy angels, and shall reward every man according to that he hath done in this life. Then will he give sentence against the wicked, and will place the faithful at his right hand. In that day, "the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be utterly burned." (2 Pet. iii. 10.) "In that day, we which live and remain shall be caught up together with them (that are dead in Christ) in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air." (1 Thess. iv. 17.) "But of that day and hour knoweth no man; no not the angels of heaven, but my Father only," saith our Saviour Christ. (Matt. xxiv. 36.)

Now, it remaineth that we see, by occasion of this practice of the false Prophets, or false Apostles, of whom St. Paul here warneth the Thessalonians, how the wicked abuse the Holy Scriptures, and understand them contrary to their meaning. St. Peter said, "The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night;" (2 Pet. iii. 10.) even as Paul had written unto this people: as also it is spoken in the words

of Christ, "They shall see the Son of man come in the clouds, with power and great glory." (Matt. xxiv. 30.) The false Apostles use the same words, and wrest them to evil purpose; and take upon them to judge of the end of the world, and at what time the coming of Christ should be.

Christ said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up again." (John ii. 19.) There arose certain that did bear false witness against him, saying, We heard him say he would destroy this temple made with hands. They remembered that temple was forty and six years-building, and thought it impossible that he could rear it in three days. They took his words otherwise than he meant: they thought of the material temple of stone in Jerusalem; and he spake of the temple of his body.

Again, Christ saith, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church." (Matt. xvi. 18.) These are the words of Christ spoken unto Peter, after he had witnessed of him, that he is Christ the Son of the living God. Hereof they say, Peter is the rock; and the bishop of Rome is Peter's successor: he is the rock upon which the Church is builded, and shall stand stedfast for ever. But they understand the words contrary to the meaning. For, alas! who would conceive that God would build his Church upon a man, or upon any creature? Christ only is that Rock, whereupon his Church is settled. "Other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. iii. 11.)

Therefore Chrysostom expoundeth these words:* 'I will build my Church upon this rock; that is, upon this faith and confession.' Likewise St. Augustine:† 'Upon

* Super hanc petram ædificabo ecclesiam meam; id est, super fidem atque confessionem.—*Chrys. Hom.* 55. *in Matt.*

† Super hanc petram, quam confessus es, &c.—*Hom.* 13. *de Verbo Dom. sec. Matt.*

this rock which thou hast confessed, upon this rock which thou hast known, saying, Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God, will I build my Church.' That is, 'I will build my Church upon myself, which am the Son of the living God: I will not build myself upon thee, but I will thee upon me.'

Christ saith, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John iii. 3.) These words are most true. For by our own nature we be the vessels of God's wrath, and the children of damnation. Unless we be regenerate, and born anew of water and of the Holy Ghost, we cannot be saved. Yet Nicodemus, a wise man, a pharisee, and a ruler of the Jews, mistook this speech. It seemed strange unto him how a man might be born when he is old. "Can he enter," saith he, "the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? how can these things be?" Jesus answered, and said unto him, "Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?" (vers. 4; 9, 10.) This new birth must be from above, even by the working of the Holy Ghost.

Again, Christ saith: "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, you have no life in you." (John vi. 53.) The Jews heard him, but mistook his words: they did not understand his meaning. Therefore they said: This is an hard saying, who can abide the hearing of it? They reasoned among themselves how it might be, that either he could give them his flesh to eat, or that they could take his flesh and eat it, or take his blood to drink it. But when Jesus knew that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them: "Doth this offend you? It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing." (vers. 61; 63.)

Hereof Augustine saith:* 'They took the saying of Christ foolishly; they thought of it carnally, and imagined

* Acceperunt illud stultè, &c.—*August. in Psal.* xcviii.

that the Lord would cut off small pieces from his body, and give it to them. Therefore they said, This saying is hard. They were hard, and not the saying. For if they had been meek, and not hard, they would have said to themselves, This is not spoken without some cause: there is some mystery hidden under his words.' And again he saith :* 'Understand these things spiritually, which I have spoken unto you. You shall not eat (with the mouth of your body) this body that you see; nor shall you drink that blood which they shall shed, that shall crucify me. I have commended unto you some sacrament: understand it spiritually, and it shall quicken you.'

Thus we see the true meaning of Christ's words, and after what gross manner the Capernaites understood them. Let us beware we fall not into like error. Christ spake truly of his body, when he called it a temple: the Jews destroyed it, and in three days he did raise it up again. Mistake not his words; be not deceived. It is true that he said, "Upon this rock will I build my Church." Mistake him not: Christ himself is the rock, and not Peter. It is true that a man must be born anew, or else he cannot be saved. Mistake not this: hereby is meant not a bodily birth, but a renewing of the soul of man. It is truly said, that Christ's flesh is that bread which came from heaven, and giveth life to the world. But mistake it not: for this bread filleth not the body, but the mind: it requireth the hunger of the inner man. Even so is it true that the Apostle saith of the day of the Lord. Take heed you mistake him not, and fall into the error of the false apostles, which take upon them to appoint the time and hour, when the Son of man shall come unto judgment.

* Spiritualiter intelligite, quæ locutus sum. Non hoc corpus, &c.—*August. in Psal.* xcviii.

VERSE 3.—*Let no man deceive you by any means : for that day shall not come, except there come a departing first, and that man of sin be disclosed, even the son of perdition.*

The Church of God hath ever been under persecution and afflictions, as may appear by the stories of all ages : but God hath not failed to comfort them, and work their deliverance. Israel was in great bondage under Pharoah. They were put to great slavery, to chop straw, and to bake brick, &c. Their male children were slain before their faces. This was done unto them, that so they might be rooted out, and their name quite put out from the earth. It was high time for the Lord to put to his hand. They called upon him in their troubles, and he heard them. Then sent he Moses and Aaron, and delivered them : he opened the Red Sea, and gave them passage.

When the Philistines oppressed them, God sent them Gideon, Barak, Jehu, Deborah, and Sampson ; whom he endued with wisdom, and courage, and power to overcome their enemies, and to set them at liberty. What should I speak of Nebuchodonosor, Antiochus, Nero, Julian, and other tyrants ? They oppressed the servants of God, and kept them in great misery. But God looked down from heaven, and was their helper in the time of need : he brake the cords asunder, and delivered them. The more cruelty was intended or practised against them, the more glorious did God shew himself in the overthrow of their enemies.

Great oppressions and cruel persecutions were done upon the saints of God by these and other wicked princes. But the most cruel of any that ever were, or are, or shall be, is the cruelty of Antichrist. By him the Church of God shall suffer great tribulation, such as was not from the beginning of the world. And then shall his fury increase, and his tyranny be the greater, when his kingdom shall decay, and the days of his desolation shall be at hand.

Primasius saith :* 'Then shall Babylon come to the ground, when she shall last of all take power to persecute the saints of God.' For them will God arise, and will judge his own cause ; he will deliver the afflicted, and will slay Antichrist with the breath of his mouth. Hereof St. Gregory saith thus :† 'The Church, after these days of her affliction, shall afterwards, notwithstanding, be strengthened with great power and might of preaching.'

Except there come a departing first.—There must first be a departing from faith in the Church of God, and then shall be the coming of the Lord. There was one general departing in the days of Noah. All flesh had corrupt their ways : there was not any that did seek after righteousness. Then came the day of the Lord upon them : he poured out the waters, and they prevailed upon the earth, so that both man, and cattle, and worm, and the fowl of the heaven, were destroyed. There was a general departing of the Jews and people of God at Jerusalem. They made the house of God a den of thieves : they saved a thief, and crucified the Lord of glory. God had no delight in them, neither regarded their sacrifices. Christ said unto them : "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which have been sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not ! Behold your house is left unto you desolate." (Matt. xxiii. 37, 38.) "They shall not leave in thee one stone upon another, because thou knowest not the time of thy visitation." (Luke xix. 44.) Such a departing it shall be, whereof the Apostle speaketh ; and so general, that the Son of man, when he cometh, shall hardly find faith upon the earth.

But this departing is diversly taken. Some understand

* Tunc cadet Babylon, quando novissimè potestatem persequendi sanctos acceperit.—*Primas. in Apoc.* xvi.

† *Greg. in Job.* xxix. *lib.* 19. *cap.* 9.

it of the empire, that the kingdoms and countries which were before in subjection to that estate, shall depart from it, and that then Antichrist shall spring up. Others think that this is spoken of that departing, wherein the godly have carried themselves from the obedience of the Church of Rome.

But others more truly say, it is the departure from the doctrine, and religion, and love, and obedience of the Gospel of Christ Whereof in another place he saith: "In the latter times some shall depart from the faith, and shall give heed to spirits of error, and doctrines of devils, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with giving thanks of them which believe and know the truth." (1 Tim. iv. 1—3.) These men shall have a form of godliness, but shall deny the power thereof. They shall turn their ears away from the truth, and will incline their hearts to hear fables.

The words of the Apostle are plain, to shew that there shall be a departing. But, as we see, it is not agreed upon, what manner of departing this shall be, nor by whom it shall be wrought. Our adversaries lay it unto us, saying, You have wrought this departing: you have departed from the Church of Rome: you are they of whom St. Paul hath spoken: you are the founders of Antichrist. So say they: but would to God they and their fathers, and the Church of Rome, had not wrought this departure!

Bernard beheld the state, and pride, and disorders of the Church of Rome in his time; therefore said he:* 'It remaineth that the man of sin, that is, the son of perdition, be revealed; even the devil, which flieth not only in the day, but destroyeth in the noon-day; which is not only changed into an angel of light, but is exalted above all that is called

* Superest ut reveletur homo peccati, filius perditionis; non modò dæmonium diurnum, sed et meridianum; quod non solum transfiguratur in angelum lucis, sed extollitur supra omne quod dicitur Deus, aut quod colitur.—*Bern. Serm.* 6. *in Psal.* xci.

God, or that is worshipped.' And Gregory did see who they were that should work this departing, and make way for Antichrist; therefore said he:* 'I speak it boldly: whosoever calleth himself the universal priest, or desireth so to be called (as doth the Pope) in the pride of his heart, he is the forerunner of Antichrist.'

Now, that we may yet better know what manner of departure that shall be, let us consider what St. Paul speaketh of the Church of God, which was in his time. Unto the Corinthians he saith: "If all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is rebuked of all men, he is judged of all men, and so are the secrets of his heart made manifest, and so will he fall down on his face, and worship God, and say plainly, that God is in you indeed. How is it then, brethren? When you come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation: let all things be done unto edifying, &c. For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as we see in all the Churches.' (1 Cor. xiv. 24—26; 33.)

Blessed were they of God. All things among them were done to edifying. The holy Scriptures were read openly in the presence of the people: the people reverently kept silence, and gave ear, and understood the will of God, and submitted themselves unto it. The prayers were in a known tongue, so that the unlearned might understand them, and say, Amen. The holy mysteries were duly ministered. The people received the sacrament of the Lord's Supper under both kinds, as Christ hath instituted; and did all communicate together. Chrysostom, writing upon that chapter, saith:† 'Verily the Church then was a heaven, the

* Ego fidenter dico, &c.—*Greg. lib.* 6. *Epist.* 30.

† Verè tum Ecclesia cœlum fuit, &c.—*Chrys. Hom.* 36. *in* 1 *ad Cor.*

Spirit of God ordering all things, and directing all the heads of the church.'

In the time of Tertullian, the Christians still kept this manner. Therefore he saith :* ' We meet together at the reading of the holy Scriptures : we nourish our faith with those heavenly words : by them we raise up our hope, and settle our affiance and trust. Augustine, Chrysostom, Origen, and other ancient and godly Fathers, commended the reading of the Scriptures unto the people ; called upon them to read them themselves, or to get others to read unto them ; and that they would hear them not only in the Church, but also at home in their houses. They taught them the hurt and danger of ignorance ; that ignorance of the Scriptures hath been the cause of heresies, and that it hath brought in corruption of life and of manners. This was the order and usage of the Church in the time of the holy Apostles, and of our first Fathers. The people were guided by the word of God, they were made partakers of the holy mysteries, and all things were done in the Church to edifying. And the same order is this day restored, and practised in our churches.

Let us look into the Church of Rome, and behold the usage and behaviour thereof. Where shall we find that heavenly comeliness, which St. Paul requireth ? Where is the comfortable reading of Scriptures ? Where is the people taught their salvation in Christ Jesus ? Where is the brotherly meeting of all the congregation at the communion of the Lord's Supper ? May we say of Rome, that it holdeth fast the form and fashion of that Church, which Christ and his Apostles left unto us, and which the holy ancient Fathers continued ? Nay, rather, we may say of them, with Chrysostom, They may have the chests and coffers wherein the

* Coimus ad divinarum literarum commemorationem, fidem sanctis vocibus pascimus, spem erigimus, fiduciam figimus.—*Tertul. in Apologetico.*

treasure was sometimes kept; but the treasures they have not. We may say, It is not now a house of prayer, but a den of thieves. We may say, It shall no more be called Bethel, the house of God; but Bethaven, the house of vanity, or of lying.

Jupiter and Bacchus, and the idols of the heathen, were not so dishonoured of their worshippers, as the almighty and everlasting and only true God is dishonoured in that synagogue. I speak of it as it is now, and as it hath been these many years. For in the time of our elder Fathers, it had great testimony of true holiness. Ignatius called it *castissimam*, most chaste. Tertullian said, it was a happy Church, because the Apostles of Christ suffered martyrdom in it, and left their whole doctrine unto it. And in like sort did others give unto Rome, as it was in those times, reverend and worthy commendation. But now, saith he:* 'O Rome, how much art thou changed from the old Rome! thou which hast been the chief in all the world, art now the chief in all naughtiness.' They have forsaken the trade of life, and the love of the Gospel, which they of old time had in Rome; and therefore cannot be inheritors of their commendation.

When Chrysostom considered the state of the Church, as the Apostle speaketh of it unto the Corinthians, and did see how far the Church in his time swerved from that, he said:† 'We have now only the bare signs of those things. Again:‡ 'The Church, which is now, may be likened to a woman, which hath forsaken her wonted modesty, and hath only certain outward shews of that first felicity; and keepeth still the hutches and boxes of precious things, but

* O Roma, à Româ quantum mutata vetustâ es!
Nunc caput es scelerum, quæ caput orbis eras.

† Nunc verò vestigia tantùm rerum illarum tenemus.—*Chrysost. in* 1 *Cor.* xiv.

‡ Videtur Ecclesia hodiè mulieri, quæ mansuetudine veteri exciderit, similis, quæque symbola tantùm, &c.

lacketh the treasure which was in them. To such a woman may the Church this day be likened. I speak not this of the gifts, (for the matter were not so great, if we wanted them only,) but of life and of virtue.' And again he saith :* 'I will tell you of one other box of that treasure which our father left unto us, which is empty, and hath nothing left in it at this day. In times past they did sing altogether; so do we also: but then they were all of one mind, and of one heart: at this day you shall not find one man that agreeth with himself, there is such war and discord in all things everywhere. The name of peace is common in all places, but peace itself is nowhere to be found. Then men did use their houses like Churches: now men do use the Church as they use their house; nay, more profanely than any house.' Thus Chrysostom blamed the Church in his time, and layeth out their departing from the faith. He lived about 411 years after Christ.

What may we think he would say of the Church that hath been of latter years, if he had lived to see the deformity and abuses thereof? where, besides that they are not of one mind and of one heart, they suffer not the people all together to sing the praises of God: where they have not only emptied such boxes or hutches, wherein Christ left great treasures unto his Church; but have made light account of them, and have cast away the very pattern and images of true godliness. They drive away the people from reading the Scriptures, and reckon that as unlawful, as to cast the bread of the children unto dogs, or pearls before swine. They lead men from trust in the blood of Christ, and teach them to believe such things, and to put confidence in those creatures, which cannot profit or help them at all.

You may remember what prayers they used. But bless your ears: for they are words full of horrible blasphemy.

* Scrinium aliud paterni thesauri exinanitum hodie dicam, &c.

They said to the holy and blessed Virgin Mary, the mother of our Reedeemer and Saviour:* 'Our trust and hope we put in thee, O Virgin Mary; defend us everlastingly.' They say:† 'O happy mother, which dost purge us from our sins.' And:‡ 'The merits of holy Mary bring us to the heavenly kingdom.' Again:§ 'Thou art the mediator between God and man, the advocate for the poor, the refuge of all sinners.' O merciful Christ, what is become of thy passion? where is the price of thy blood? How are we led away from thee, to seek redemption in a creature! Again they say unto her: 'Thou art the lady of angels: thou art the queen of heaven. Command thy Son: shew thyself to be a mother.' He is thy son, thou art his mother: the mother may command, the child must obey.

Again, they turn all that is spoken, in the whole book of the Psalms of the prophet David, either of God or of Christ, and apply it to the Virgin Mary, and call that Psalter, *Psalterium Beatæ Mariæ*, 'the Psalter of blessed Mary.' Who will take the pains to peruse it, shall find that comfortable speech of our Saviour, "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and laden, and I will ease you," (Matt. xi. 28, 29.) thus blasphemously abused in the second Psalm:‖ 'Come unto her, all ye that travail and be heavily laden; and she will give rest and comfort unto your souls.'

Another saith, the kingdom of God is of two parts, of justice and of mercy. He reserveth justice to himself: and the other part, that is, mercy, he hath yeilded unto his mother. Therefore one of them playeth the proctor, and

* In te, Virgo Maria, confidimus; in te speramus: nos defendas in æternum.

† O felix puerpera, Nostra pians scelera.

‡ Sanctæ Mariæ merita ducant nos ad regna cœlestia.

§ Tu mediatrix Dei et hominum, advocata pauperum, refugium peccatorum.

‖ Venite ad eam omnes qui laboratis, et tribulati estis; et refrigerium et solatium dabit animabus vestris.—*Psalt. Beatæ Mariæ, Ps.* ii.

taketh upon him to shew the difference of those two courts, saying:* 'You must appeal from the court of God's justice, to the court of his Mother's mercy.' And is there not good cause he should give us this counsel, if it be true that he hath written,† 'No mercy cometh from heaven to the earth, but it must pass by the hands of Mary: for she is the mediator of our salvation, of our justification, of our reconciliation, and of our participation?'

What is blasphemy, if this be not blasphemy? They which will seem somewhat to blush at these things, will perhaps excuse this, and call it spiritual dalliance. Unhappy are they, and heavy judgment shall abide them, that in such sort dally and scorn the price of our redemption. O, let us open our eyes! We are the sons of God. God hath given us eyes to see, and ears to hear, and hearts to understand. Let us judge uprightly. It is God's cause. Whosever considereth these and such other great errors, must needs confess that the Church of Rome hath wrought that departing, whereof the Apostle speaketh. In the late Council of Trent, Cornelius the Bishop of Bitonto did something plainly acknowledge the great apostacy and departing of the Church of Rome, both in matters of faith, and in conversation and life. These be his words:‡ 'Would God they were not gone wholly with general consent from religion to superstition, from faith to infidelity, from Christ to Antichrist, from God to Epicurus; saying, with wicked heart and filthy mouth, There is no God. Neither hath there been this great while any Pastor or Pope that regarded these things. For they all (both Pope and Cardinals, and other) sought their own; and not so

* A foro justitiæ Dei appellandum est ad forum misericordiæ Matris ejus.—*Bernardinus in Mariali.*

† Nulla gratia venit de cœlo ad terram, nisi transeat per manus Mariæ. Est enim mediatrix salvationis, justificationis, reconciliationis, communicationis.

‡ Utinam à religione ad superstitionem, &c.

much as one of them sought for the things that pertain to Jesus Christ.'

Yet say they, there can be no departing from the faith in the Church of Rome; the faith thereof cannot fail. For Christ hath said: 'I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not.' (Luke xxii. 32.) And again: 'The gates of hell shall not prevail against it.' (Matt. xvi. 18.) Therefore in that place there can be no decay. This is the saying of some, who humble not themselves to know their error; who love the praise of men more than the praise of God; whose glory is their shame, who mind earthly things.

The Apostle saith, there shall be a departing; that it shall be not among the Jews and Infidels, but among those which were reckoned to be of the household of faith, and the children of God. What is it, from which they shall depart, or wherein the decay shall be? Doth he mean their riches, their gold and silver, and bread, &c.? No, but the doctrine of the Gospel, and faith in Christ. The pure words which as silver from the earth are tried and purified seven times in the fire, the well of water which springeth up into everlasting life, shall decay in the house of God. The people shall shut their ears that they may not hear the truth, and shall give heed unto spirits of error, and doctrines of devils, which speak lies through hypocrisy.

And let them not say that the Church of Rome cannot err. For where did Christ ever give, or where have the Apostles ever made mention of, any such privilege granted to that Church?

St. Peter saith: 'There were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you; which privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that hath bought them, and bring upon themselves swift damnation: and many shall follow their damnable ways, by whom the way of truth shall be evil

spoken of." (2 Pet. ii. 1, 2.) Paul warned the Church of God at Ephesus, not only that "after his departing grievous wolves should enter in among them:" but also, that "of themselves should men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw disciples after them." (Acts xx. 29.)

When Christ said; "When the Son of man shall come, shall he find faith upon the earth?" (Luke xviii. 8.) and when he told his disciples that "the abomination of desolation shall stand in the holy place:" (Matt. xxiv. 15.) when he warned them in this sort; "Then if any shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there, believe it not; for there shall arise false Christs, and false Prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders, so that, if it were possible, the very elect should be deceived:" (vers. 23, 24.) it is most evident he spake of that departing which should come, and should appear in the Church of God: which departing our forefathers did behold and mark in their times; and which hath of late years appeared so manifestly, that no man, who is not wilfully blind, can doubt thereof.

St. Paul knew not any such state of the Church of Rome, or any especial grant made unto it in such sort that it should never err. For unto the Church of Rome he writeth: "Boast not thyself: be not high-minded, but fear. For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. Through unbelief they are broken off, and thou standest by faith. Behold therefore the bountifulness and severity of God: towards them which have fallen, severity; but towards thee, bountifulness, if thou continue in his bountifulness: or else thou shalt also be cut off." (Rom. xi. 20—22.) That is, if he spared not the Jews his own people, how will he spare thee that art but a stranger? If thou continue not, thou shalt be cut off. It may be thou shalt also depart from the faith, as the Jews have done: then shalt thou be as a withered branch, and shalt not draw any moisture from the root: then will

God also forsake thee, and thy end shall be worse than the beginning. I trow, in saying thus, he said not, 'Thou shalt not err.'

If the Church of Rome cannot err, what need have they of that Church either of the Scriptures, or of the Fathers, or of Councils? Perhaps through this pride they grew first to despise the holy Scriptures, and would not direct their ways by them. They are high-minded, and boast themselves that they are as Mount Zion which shall not be moved.

Yet our Saviour likeneth the Church sometimes to sheep; as in the fifteenth of St. Matthew, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of Israel:" sometimes to children, which are simple, and soon beguiled: sometimes to a vine, which is weak, and easily thrown down: sometimes to the moon, which waxeth, and is also in wane, and many times giveth no light. The ancient Fathers compare the Church of God to no one thing so usually, as to a ship. And who knoweth not how a ship is tossed hither and thither? how it is in danger of sands, and of rocks, and of pirates, and in danger of drowning by leaking? If the sheep were not a straying kind of cattle, why should they need a shepherd? If little children could guide themselves, what need had they of a guider? If the vine did not hang down, and lie on the ground, what need were there of props, or of one to set it up? If there were no fear for the passage of a ship, if it could not miscarry, what would it need a pilot?

Let no man therefore say, the Church is safe for ever; it cannot err, it cannot decay. Such words are deceivable and lying words. For false prophets shall come. There shall be a desolation: there shall be a departing, even in the house of God: and that day of Christ shall not come, except there come a departing first, *and that man of sin be disclosed, even the son of perdition.*

VERSE 4.—*Which is an adversary, and exalteth himself against all that is called God, or that is worshipped: so that he doth sit in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.*

This the Apostle speaketh of Antichrist. He is the man of sin, and the son of perdition. It will be somewhat hard to treat of this matter, and to open the words of this Scripture. Whatsoever I shall speak, it will be ill taken of many, and many will doubt of the truth of my speeches: such affection they bear to him, whom the Apostle deciphereth to be Antichrist. Albeit, whatsoever I will utter in opening the Apostle's words, shall be such as the holy Scriptures and learned writings of the holy Fathers have left unto us, and the Church of God hath proved, and at this day doth prove, to be true.

God promised that Christ should come into the world, even the Shiloh, unto whom all the people should be gathered: and that he should be the hope of Israel, and deliver his people from their sins. God made promise of him to Adam, and to Abraham, David, &c. The Scriptures are full, and the prophets make often mention of this promise. Old men, and young men, and all the people waited for the fulfilling thereof, and said: "Send him whom thou wilt send." (Exod. iv. 13.) And again: "Ye heavens, send the dew from above, and let the clouds drop down with righteousness: let the earth open, and let salvation and justice grow forth." (Isa. xlv. 8.) And again: "God will come and save you." (Isa. xxxv. 4.)

Thus was every eye bent upon him, and every heart was waiting for his coming. "But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, that we might receive the adoption of the sons." (Gal. iv. 4.) "He was in the world, and the world knew him not: he came unto his own, and his own received him not." (John i. 10, 11.) "Light came into the world, and men loved darkness better

than light." (John iii. 19.) They to whom the promise was made, and which wished for him, and made all their common talk of the hope of his coming, when he came knew him not; they reviled him, and said: "Behold a glutton and a drinker of wine, a friend unto publicans and sinners." (Matt. xi. 19.) They called him Beelzebub, and a false prophet, and a seducer of the people. Him they did take by the hands of the wicked: they betrayed him; they denied the Holy One and Just: they hanged on a tree and killed the Lord of life.

Such was the receiving of Christ. This did they to him through ignorance. It was not given them to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven. They have not known the Father, nor, whom he hath sent, Jesus Christ. Therefore saith he: "I confess unto thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and learned, and hast revealed them to babes; even so, Father, because it so pleased thee." (Luke x. 21.)

Now, as the coming of Christ was, such is the coming of Antichrist. God hath foretold of his coming. Daniel hath foretold, (Dan. ix. 26.) Christ and his Apostles, Paul and John, have foretold it; the Scriptures and old Fathers make often mention hereof. There is none, neither old nor young, neither learned nor unlearned, but he hath heard of Antichrist. They hate his name, and detest him, before they know him.

But here you may mark the wonderful sleight and subtilty of Satan. The world shall look after the coming of Antichrist. He shall not fail but come. All men shall carry hatred against him and reckon him abominable: and yet their eyes shall be blinded, and their hearts deceived, so that they shall not know him. They shall hate his name, and embrace his doctrine. He shall cover himself with a cloak of holiness. They shall think they do good service unto Christ, but shall therein do service unto Antichrist.

The diverse fantasies of men have devised many sundry fond tales of the person of Antichrist. Some say he should be a Jew, of the tribe of Dan: some, that he should be born in Babylon: some, that he should be bred up in Bethsaida and Chorazin: some, that he should rise up in Syria: some, that Mahomet is Antichrist: some, that he should overthrow Rome: some, that he should build up the city of Jerusalem: some, that Nero was Antichrist: some, that he should be born of a friar and a nun: some, that he should continue but three years and a half: some, that he should turn trees upside down, with the tops in the ground, and should force the roots to grow upward, and then should flee up into heaven, and fall down, and break his neck. These tales have been craftily devised, to beguile our eyes; that, whilst we think upon these guesses, and so occupy ourselves in beholding a shadow or probable conjecture of Antichrist, he which is Antichrist indeed may unawares deceive us.

Except that man of sin be disclosed.—The Apostle seemeth to teach us of Antichrist, as if he should be one man, because he calleth him *the man of sin.* But we may not so take him. The manner of the Scriptures is, oftentimes, and in divers places, it speaketh that of many, which seemeth to be spoken but of one. So doth Daniel shew forth the kingdom and all the kings of Persia, in the name and likeness of a bear; (Dan. vii. 5.) and so describeth the state of other whole kingdoms in such particular names. And so doth the Spirit of God, in the Revelation, set down, under the name of the beast, the succession and continuance of many. (Rev. xiii. 2.) He meaneth not therefore, that Antichrist shall be any one only man, but one estate or kingdom of men, and a continuance of some one power and tyranny in the Church.

We read of Pharoah, a cruel tyrant, that he did persecute the people of God in Egypt: and of Nebuchodonosor, that he oppressed them, and brought them captives into Babylon:

and of Antiochus, that he likewise fought against them, and did overcome them, and led them captives into Macedonia. They all were mighty and cruel tyrants: yet one other shall come, whose cruelty shall be heavier, and whose continuance shall be longer, than was the cruelty or continuance of any of these; who shall work his purpose, not in Egypt, nor in Babylon, nor in Macedonia, but in the holy place, even in the Church of Christ, and in the house of God. And this state and continuance of persecution in the Church is the state of Antichrist.

But what shall he do, whereby he may be known? Paul saith: *Which is an adversary.* This shall be the mark whereby you may know him: he shall set himself against God, and against Christ; for he is an enemy of the cross of Christ. Why then (say you) are not the Jews, and Mahomet, and the Turks, either all or the most wicked of them, so called, seeing they utterly refuse all Christian religion? Because none of these sit in the temple of God, which is the place where Antichrist shall advance himself: and because Antichrist shall not in open shew set himself against Christ, as doth Mahomet, and the Turks, but subtilely and craftily, like an evil and ungracious servant. He will not openly speak his blasphemies, or spit at the Gospel of God, or defy the name of Christ: but he will call himself 'the servant of God;' perhaps, 'the Vicar of Christ;' and perhaps, 'the servant of God's servants;' or perhaps, 'the head, or the chief member, of the Church.' He shall say he is led with the zeal of God's house, and shall do nothing less: for he shall seek himself. He shall say, he seeketh the glory of God; when all that he doth is for the enriching and ambitious enlarging of his own worldly pomp and vanity.

In matters of princes, if any man take upon him the name of an ambassador, or deputy to a prince, having no commission thereto, and in this boldness presume to live, and raise a power, and force the subjects to follow him; although

he work all this under the name and by the colour of the prince's authority (as is the manner of rebels to do), yet he is a traitor, and his doings are not well thought of, because he dealeth in the prince's matters without warrant from the prince.

Even so Antichrist. He shall come in the name of Christ, yet will he do all things against Christ: and, under pretence and colour of serving Christ, he shall devour the sheep and people of Christ; he shall deface whatsoever Christ hath taught; he shall quench that fire which Christ hath kindled; he shall root up those plants which Christ hath planted; he shall undermine that house which Christ hath built. He shall be contrary to Christ: his faith contrary to the faith of Christ, and his life contrary to the life of Christ. Is any man desirous to know Antichrist? His coming shall be notable; it shall astonish the world. By this mark you may know him: he shall be contrary to Christ. To shew you at large this contrariety by comparison of things contrary in Christ and Antichrist, would take long time: it shall be sufficient we consider only some few, wherein they are manifestly contrary, that by them judgment may be made of the residue.

St. Paul saith: "With one offering hath he consecrated for ever them that are sanctified;" (Heb. x. 14.) and again: "We are sanctified by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once made. (ver. 10.) What is he then that saith, I make priests to offer a daily sacrifice for the sins of the people; by whom the offering up of the body of Christ is made every day? He is contrary to Christ; he is Anti-Christ.

St. Paul saith: "God hath appointed Christ over all things to be the head of the Church." (Eph. i. 22.) What is he then which saith: I am the head of the Church? which saith: All the Churches of God are knit in me: you must understand as I understand: you must hear with mine

cars, and see with mine eyes: I will govern and direct you? He is contrary to Christ: this is Antichrist.

Christ ordained that the Communion should be ministered under both kinds. (Matt. xxvi. 26, 27.) What is he then that delivereth it to the people but under one kind? He is contrary to Christ; he breaketh the first institution of the Lord's Supper; he is Antichrist.

Christ saith: "My kingdom is not of this world." (John xviii. 36.) What is he then which saith: I am Lord of lords, and King of kings: I have right to both swords: my power and authority reacheth over all the kingdoms of the world? He is contrary to Christ; he is Antichrist.

Christ washed his disciples' feet. (John xiii. 5.) What is he then that giveth his feet to be kissed of kings and emperors? He is contrary to Christ; he is Antichrist.

Christ paid tribute to Cæsar. (Matt. xvii. 27.) What is he then that exempteth himself and his clergy from the temporal sword and authority? He is contrary to Christ; he is Antichrist.

Christ allowed marriage, and reproved fornication. (Mark x. 8, 9.) What is he then that alloweth fornication, and forbiddeth marriage? He is contrary to Christ; he is Antichrist.

Christ saith; "Search the Scriptures." (John v. 39.) What is he then which saith, Give not that which is holy to dogs, neither cast pearls before swine: ye may not search the Scriptures? He is contrary to Christ; he is Antichrist. These be the certain and undoubted marks of Antichrist.

So that he doth sit in the temple of God.—That is, he is bold, and without force of any danger. He is not driven to hide himself in a corner: he is exalted in the eye and in the heart of the world. He beareth rule in the conscience of men. He hath the keys, to open and shut at his pleasure. He maketh kings and princes become his subjects: he

ruleth them, not by sword or spear only, but by pretence of religion : he telleth them, all things are put in subjection under his feet; that he is the vicar of Christ; that his word must be taken as the word of God. So he sitteth in the temple of God, as if he were God.

The godly preachers sit also in the temple of God. They are the ministers of Christ, and disposers of the secrets of God. There they expound the Scriptures, and shew the good and acceptable will of God. There they exhort, and teach, and reprove, and correct, and instruct the people in righteousness. Antichrist sitteth not in the Church after this sort. He teacheth not, nor exhorteth the people: he maketh that no part of his office. How sitteth he then? What shall he say? What shall he do?

The Apostle telleth us: *He exalteth himself against all that is called God, or that is worshipped.* He shall be honoured with the honour that is due unto God. He shall shine and glitter in gold and precious stones. He shall be carried upon the shoulders of men, and waited upon by kings, and princes, and great estates. So shall he be contrary to Christ.

Christ was humble and lowly. The Prophet in his own person speaketh of him: "I am a worm, and not a man: a shame of men, and the contempt of the people." (Psal. xxii. 6.) And the Apostle saith: "He humbled himself, and became obedient unto the death, even the death of the cross." (Phil. ii. 8.) Behold his parents, his birth, his cradle; behold his life, his disciples, his doctrine, and his death: all were witnesses unto his humility. He saith of himself: "The Son of man hath not whereon to rest his head. (Matt viii. 20.) And to his disciples he saith: "The Kings of the Gentiles reign over them, and they that bear rule over them are called Gracious Lords: but you shall not be so." (Luke xxii. 25.) And again: "Learn of me, that I am meek and

lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." (Matt. xi. 29.)

Now, on the other part, take view of Antichrist. Behold his birth, his place, his chair, his estate, his doctrine, his disciples, and all his life. You shall see nothing but pomp and glory. Gregory calleth him the king of pride. He is proud in life, proud in doctrine, proud in word, and proud in deeds. He is like unto Lucifer, and setteth himself before his brethren, and over nations and kingdoms. He maketh every knee to bow down to him and worship him: he maketh kings to bring him water, to carry his train, to hold his cup, to bear his dish, to lead his bridle, and to hold his stirrup. He claimeth power over heaven and earth: he saith he is Lord over all the world, the Lord of lords, and the King of kings; that his authority reacheth up into heaven, and down into hell; that he can command the angels of God; that he condemneth whom he will condemn; that he maketh saints at his pleasure; that whatsoever he blesseth, is blessed; and that it is cursed, whatsoever he curseth. He selleth merits, the forgiveness of sins, the sacrifice for the quick and the dead: he maketh merchandize of the souls of men. He layeth his filthy hands upon the Lord's anointed: he removeth kings, and deposeth the states and princes of the world. This is Antichrist. This is his power. Thus shall he work, and make himself manifest. So shall he sit in the temple of God. The people shall wonder at him, and shall have him in reverence. They shall say, "Who is like unto the beast?" (Rev. xiii. 4.) Who is so wise, so mighty, so godly, so virtuous, so holy, so like unto God? So intolerable and monstrous shall be his pride.

It were much for him to sit in the seat, and occupy the room, of an earthly king or emperor. But he shall take upon him the authority and the name of God, the name of the living Lord, the name of God which hath made heaven

and earth, even the name of God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. And in this pride he shall exceed all others that have been wicked. The Pharisees and the Scribes were wicked; yet none of them did sit in the temple of God, shewing himself that he was God. Arius, Nestorius, Montanus, Valentinus, were wicked heretics; yet they never took upon them the name of God. What should I say of this blasphemy? or in whom may we find the like? Mahomet was a Turk, and a false prophet, and a deceiver of the people; yet he took not upon him the name of God. This point and reach of ungodliness belongeth only to Antichrist. He shall sit in the place of God in judgments: he shall shew himself out of that place, as if he were God. Irenæus saith:* 'Whereas he is but a servant, he will be worshipped as if he were God.'

But some will say, Antichrist shall be mortal as other men, born of a mortal father and mother: he shall know that he shall die, and that he is but dust, and shall return again into dust; that he cannot make himself; no, that he cannot make the least and vilest of all creatures. How then will he proclaim himself to be an immortal God? How will he call himself God of heaven and earth? or God, which had no beginning, nor shall have any end? No, this is not the meaning of these words. He shall not so think of himself, nor so say. I will tell you after what sort he shall sit in the temple of God, and how the world shall receive him and reverence him as God.

He shall take to himself that supreme authority and prerogative, which appertaineth only to God by nature. Although he be but a man, yet in office he will be accounted as God. He shall compare his laws with the laws of God. He shall say his word is the word of God. Whatsoever he saith, he shall say, It is the voice of the Spirit of God; of the

* Quum sit servus, tamen adorari vult ut Deus.—*Irenæus, lib. 5, cap. penultimo.*

same authority, that is the Gospel of Christ: no man may break it; no man may touch the credit thereof: if any man withstand it, he must think he doth sacrilege, committeth blasphemy, and sinneth against the Holy Ghost. Again, he shall break the laws of God to uphold his own, and shall pull down God to set up himself.

Such shall be the power and authority of Antichrist: so shall he possess the consciences of the people: so shall he sit as an idol in their hearts: so shall he stand in the place of God, and shew himself that he is God. The people shall receive his doctrine, and believe his word. They shall fall down before him, and worship him. They shall say, "Who is like unto the beast?" (Rev. xiii. 4.) What creature is so beautiful as he? They shall honour him as God.

But what is he which hath suffered himself to be so called? Who is he which hath been called by the name of God? Of all the creatures which have professed the faith of Christ; of all the kings, or bishops, or priests, or lay-people that ever were in the Church of God; who ever required to be called by the holy name of God? or who ever liked well of them which so called him? Who hath been so wicked? who hath ever so much forgotten himself? In what place hath he dwelt? or what hath he been?

Here, methinketh I see the secret motions of your heart. You look that I should name THE BISHOP OF ROME; that it is he which hath suffered himself to be called by the name of God. I will not tell you in mine own words. Unless the Bishop himself so speak, I will not tell you. Mark then, and witness of my indifferency, whilst I speak hereof, that I follow not affection,* but deal uprightly. Therefore, I say again, unless the Bishop himself suffer himself to be called by the name of God, I will not say of him so.

Then let us see what he hath written of himself, and

* *Indifferency* means impartiality; *affection*, prejudice.—EDITOR.

what he hath suffered others to write. Pope Nicholas saith :* 'It is well known that the Pope was of the godly prince Constantine called God.' And therefore Pope Pius in his Bull saith :† 'No man dare obey her, or her will, or her commandments or laws, upon pain of our curse.'

The Pope was well content to suffer Christopher Marcellus, one of his parasites in the Council of Lateran, to say unto him :‡ 'Thou art another God in earth.' The Pope is content in such sort to have a division of tenures made between him and God, as the poet some time flatteringly wrote :§ 'The Emperor parteth his rule, and holdeth half with Jupiter.' In the Extravagants it is set down :‖ 'Our Lord God the Pope.' Mark these words : 'Our Lord God the Pope.' In them the Pope is called Lord, and is called God. O merciful Lord God, which from the heavens beholdest this vanity, how great is thy mercy in suffering it! I devise not this. His own books, his own doctors, his own decrees and decretals, speak it and set it down :¶ 'To believe that our Lord God the Pope might not decree as he decreed, it were a matter of heresy.' It is so written there ; he hath heard it, he hath seen it, he knoweth it is so ; yet he suffereth it to go abroad, and thereby suffereth himself to be called God.

* Constat summum Pontificem à pio principe Constantino Deum appellari.—*Dist.* 96. *Satis evidenter.*

† Nemo audeat obedire.—*Bulla Pii V. contra Eliza* 6.—"We do command and interdict all and every the noblemen, subjects, people, and others, as aforesaid, that they presume not to obey her, or her monitions, mandates, and laws : and those who shall act otherwise, we bind with the same sentence of anathema." *Sect.* 5.—EDITOR.

‡ Tu es alter Deus in terris.—*In Concilio Later. sess.* 4.

§ Divisum imperium cum Jove Cæsar habet.

‖ Dominus Deus noster Papa.—*Extravag. Joh.* 22. *cum interpr. in Glossâ.*

¶ Credere Dominum Deum nostrum Papam non potuisse statuere, prout statuit, hereticum censeretur.—*Ibid.* The Extravagants (*quas. extra Corpus Juris vagantes*) are constitutions, of Papal authority, not arranged in the body of Canon Law.—EDITOR.

He hath burnt many saints of God, and holy men, for no other cause but for the profession of the Gospel. He hath in many places burnt the holy Bible, and such books as teach nothing but godliness. Where did he ever burn? what speak I of burning? where may it appear that ever he controlled any for writing, or called in such speeches?

One of them seemeth to take shame of this shameless and blasphemous style or title. He seeketh friendly to temper, and qualify, and take up the matter:* 'Thou art neither God nor man; in a manner thou art neither of both, but rather a mean between both.' That is, thou art not so high as God, nor yet so base as man. Whom then shall we imagine him to be? Is he an archangel, or angel, or a spirit of the air? God give him grace to see his own vanity: that he may know he is but a miserable and mortal man; that he may know that a time shall come, when his hypocrisy and dissimulation shall be disclosed! God give him grace to become godly, as becometh the man of God: that he may indeed be the minister of Christ, and a disposer of the secrets of God: that he may serve God in truth, in holiness, and righteousness, all the days of his life!

But you say, that the Pope at this day is not called God: he rather abaseth himself, and writeth himself by a title of humility, and is called so: *Servus servorum*;† 'the servant of servants.' Be it so, that he is so called, and so written. Yet he is King of kings, and Lord of lords. This servant saith, I do make holy the unholy: I do justify the wicked: I do forgive sins: I open, and no man shutteth. This servant can say, Whosoever obeyeth not me, he shall be rooted out. This servant may dispense for any commandment of the Old and New Testament. 'This servant hath

* Nec Deus es, nec homo: quasi neuter es, inter utrumque.—*Clement. in Proœmio, in Glossâ.*

† *Extra. de Major. et Obedientiâ.*

Christ's lieutenantship, not only over things in heaven, over things in earth, and over things in hell, but also over the angels both good and bad.'* No man may judge this servant: for they say:† 'The Pope is exempted from all law of man.' And again:‡ 'Neither all the clergy, nor all the whole world, may either judge or depose the Pope.' Such a power this servant of servants claimeth to himself. What greater power may be given unto God? What angel, what archangel, ever had the like power?

And this power even at this day Pope Pius challengeth as proper to his seat: that he hath the authority which is due to Christ, over his Church; that no man may judge him, nor say he doth err, nor ask why he doth so. He is invested in the privilege of his Church, and loseth no one jot of his dignity. It is yet good at this day, which hath been set down:§ 'It is sin as great as sacrilege or church-robbing, to reason of any of the Pope's doings.' These be their own words. God knoweth, before whom we stand this day, they be their own words, and not mine. Thus doth he *sit in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.*

And therefore may we say, as sometime said Eusebius:‖ 'This is an evident token that they hate God, because they will have themselves called by the name of God.' Or as Gregory, who, speaking of Antichrist, said:¶ 'Whereas he is a cursed man, and not a spirit, he feigneth himself by lying to be a God.'

* *Summa Angel. in dictione Papa.—Extra. de Constitit.—Statuta Canonum.—Felinus.*

† Papa solutus est omni lege humanâ.—9. *Quæ.* 3. *Cuncta.*

‡ Nec totus clerus, nec totus mundus, potest Papam judicare, aut deponere.—*Pet. de Palude de Potest. Papæ. artic.* 4.

§ Sacrilegii instar esset, disputare de facto Papæ.—*Distinct.* 40. *Non nos: in Gloss.*

‖ Hoc est argumentum, eos odisse Deum, quòd velint seipsos appellari Deos.—*Euseb. de Præparat. lib.* 7.

¶ Cùm sit damnatus homo, et nequaquam spiritus, Deum se esse mentitur.—*Greg. in Job. lib.* 25. *ca.* 14.

VERSE 5.—*Remember ye not, that, when I was with you, I told you these things?*

Before I departed from you to go farther, to plant the Gospel in other Churches, I told you that Antichrist should come, and that he should oppress and confound the Church of Christ. Paul was chosen to be an Apostle. The office of an Apostle was not to rest in any one certain place, but to pass from country to country, from land to land, and to fill all the world with knowledge of the Gospel. And therein appeareth the difference between an Apostle and a Bishop: a Bishop had the charge of one certain Church, an Apostle had the charge over all the Churches.

But Paul was not tied to any one city, or island, or country. He had authority to preach to all cities and countries, to all lands and islands, from the east to the west. So did Christ appoint his Apostles: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel unto every creature." (Mark xvi. 15.) They were not sent to Jerusalem, nor to Samaria, nor to Ephesus, nor to Rome only: but into all the world. The whole world was their diocese and their province. So speaketh the Prophet David of them: "Their sound is gone forth through the earth: and their words into the ends of the world." (Psal. xix. 4.) This was the commission which our Saviour gave unto John and to James, to Paul and to Peter, and to the rest of the Apostles; that they should go into all the world. Therefore if any of the Apostles should have stayed in one only place, and have gone no further, he had offended, and done otherwise than Christ commanded.

Here we see how foully they are deceived, which say, Peter was Bishop of Rome, and did sit there five and twenty years. They that say so, know not what they say. It is an error. Christ made Peter an Apostle, and not to sit as a Bishop at Rome. He said unto Peter, "Go into all the world:" thou shalt be a witness unto me, unto the utmost

coasts of the earth: I send thee unto all the Churches, and not to one alone. The like charge received Paul: he travelled from Damascus to Arabia, from Arabia to Jerusalem, from Jerusalem to Illyricum, from Illyricum to Rome; and so from country to country, and from coast to coast; to make a pleasant perfume of the Gospel of God in all the world, that it might be unto them a savour of life unto life.

Therefore saith he to the Thessalonians: *Ye remember, that, when I was with you, I told you these things.*—The Spirit of God warned me to go farther. Other Churches required my presence: I was debtor unto them as unto you. Yet before I left you, I told you what dangers should ensue. It was mine office: I was bound so to do, lest you might be deceived. I told you Antichrist should come, even that man of sin, the son of perdition, which should destroy himself and others also. I told you he should be an adversary of the Gospel of Christ: that he should advance himself over all the kings and powers of the world: that he should sit as God in the holy place: that the people should give him place to sit in their hearts and in their consciences.

This warning the Apostle gave to the Thessalonians. The like warning he gave to other Churches where he taught the Gospel: and the same is also spoken unto us. They knew by his teaching that Antichrist should come. We know by the marks which he hath given to know Antichrist, that he is already come; and that the very same is come, which the Apostle describeth: that he is grown unto his fulness, and hath stalled himself in the place of God.

VERSE 6.—*And now ye know what withholdeth, that he might be revealed in his time.*

Paul seemeth not in these words to say, what letteth the coming of Antichrist: but what shall stay the coming of Christ. For so he maketh entry into his matter: "I beseech you by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye be not

troubled, as though the day of Christ were at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for the day of Christ shall not come, except there come a departing first, and that Antichrist be disclosed." (vers. 1—3.) Even so here he saith: Ye know what withholdeth Christ, and why he cometh not: even this, that Antichrist might first be revealed in his time. His time is appointed. The spring cometh not, until the winter have gone before: the night goeth before, and then the day cometh. And so shall not the glorious majesty of Christ's coming appear, before the dreadful and dangerous days of Antichrist shall come. There shall be no delivery, unless bondage go before.

Antichrist shall bring the world into bondage. He shall do violence to the saints of God: he shall be as a continual storm and darkness in the Church. The godly shall look up to heaven, and call for aid: they shall cry unto the Lord, and he will hear them. They shall say, Oh come, Lord Jesus; thy kingdom come; confound thine enemies. Then will he not stay: he will appear, and shew himself in glory. In the mean while, this is the cause of his stay, this letteth his coming: Antichrist must first come. This I take to be the Apostle's meaning. It agreeth with the beginning. It is simple, clear, and plain, and without danger of error.

Antichrist shall appear, not when he will; but he shall be revealed in his time. His time is the time of darkness: when shepherds and the guides of the people shall be careless; when the word shall be loathed; when the light shall be put out; when superstition shall reign; when ignorance shall have the upper hand; when the creature shall not be known from the Creator; when there shall be no fear of God, no regard of godliness; when the people shall not know neither wherefore they pray, nor whom they worship, nor in whom they believe. Then shall it appear that Antichrist is come; then he shall shew himself. This is his time.

VERSE 7.—*For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he which now letteth shall let, till he be taken out of the way.*

The mystery of iniquity doth already work.—Let us not be deceived. Antichrist shall certainly come, and shall draw many into error. As it was with Christ at his coming; He was in the world, He did the work of his Father, yet few knew him: so shall it be with Antichrist; he shall be in the world, he shall work his iniquity, and few shall know him.

Paul lived more than fifteen hundred years past, yet then he said, The mystery of iniquity doth already work. The devil is not idle, saith he; Antichrist even now worketh, whenas the blood of Christ was fresh, when as yet the Apostles, and many other witnesses of our redemption by Christ, were living. And St. John saith: "Even now are there many Antichrists come already." (1 John ii. 18.)

So soon was his foundation cast, his plot laid, his way prepared, and his work begun. So long since did Paul see some which delighted in the works of darkness; which were the enemies of the cross of Christ; which served their belly, and not the Lord: even then did he see that grievous wolves, not sparing the flock, should enter in among them. All these were the forerunners and the harbingers of Antichrist.

We may not think that Antichrist shall come as a robber by the high-ways, or like a murderer, or like a tyrant that burneth our houses, or sacketh our cities, or destroyeth our fields, or pulleth down all that is before him. We may not look that he should say, I am Antichrist, I am that man of sin, I am the son of perdition, I am the adversary, and am contrary to Christ. He shall not shew forth himself in such a sort; he shall not so speak of himself. He is subtle and cunning: he shall deceive the learned and the wise: he shall cast himself into a colour of holiness: he shall fast, he shall

pray, he shall give alms, and shew mercy: he shall walk as if he were a disciple of Christ: he shall counterfeit an angel of light. He shall go before, and the world shall follow him. So shall the mystery of iniquity work. His life, his religion, his doctrine, shall be close, and hid, and secret.

Antichrist worketh in mystery. Jerome saith:* 'The whole world mourned, and did marvel that they were possessed with the error of Arius:' that they denied the divinity of Christ before they were aware. This was a mystery. so shall the learned and wise be deceived. They shall honour Antichrist unawares. They shall say, we defy him and detest him, and yet shall fall down and worship him. This is a mystery. So secret shall his dealings be, it shall not be known to many. He shall walk in craftiness, and handle the world of God deceitfully: he shall mingle his lies with the truth of God; he shall mingle his poison with the wholesome food of our souls, so closely and subtilely, that it shall hardly be espied: he shall go forward by little and little, and so win credit, and convey himself into the hearts of the people. This is a mystery. Christ saith: "A man sowed good seed in his field; but while men slept, there came his foe, and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way." (Matt. xiii. 24, 25.) They grew together, and had both one like colour. The householder willed them to let both grow together till harvest come, lest with the tares they pluck up the wheat also. So shall be the coming of Antichrist. He shall come while men sleep, in the night of blindness, and of negligence, and of ignorance; and shall sow his tares with the Lord's wheat. They shall both grow up together. The day of the Lord shall reveal them, and set each part by itself. This is a mystery. And as it is secret, so it is long in working. This mystery began in the

* Ingemuit totus orbis, et Arianum se esse miratus est.—*Hieron. Dial. cont. Luciferian. cap.* 7.

days of the Apostles, and continueth on still unto our time: it is still in work.

But who be they, which follow his love; which yield themselves to him, and which shall be deceived? Are they poor men, or artificers, or labourers? Or are they unlearned and ignorant men? No, no: he shall deceive priests, bishops, archbishops, princes, kings, emperors; the gravest, the best learned, the wisest, the mightiest men in the world. He shall blind their eyes, and amaze their hearts. They shall run to him out of all parts of the earth: they shall fall down before him: they shall ask counsel of him: they shall say, Thou art the doctor of doctors, the father of fathers; thou art the comfort of the Church, thou art the light of the world, thou art most holy: all law, and all knowledge is hid in thy breast: we beseech thy holiness, shew us thy way, expound thou the law unto us, teach us how we may be saved: thou hast the key of knowledge; thy word is the word of truth. So shall they creep to Antichrist; so shall they pour out their souls before him; so shall they seek counsel at his mouth; so shall they fetch light at the prince of darkness.

This mystery, saith St. Paul, *doth already work*. It shall increase, and go forward, and grow to a perfection. A thorn, when it is young, is soft and gentle; ye may thrust at it with your finger, it will not hurt you: but after it waxeth and groweth hard and stubborn, it will pierce the flesh, and draw blood. A bear, when he is young, is harmless and innocent; ye may dandle it, and dally with it, as with a whelp; it hath no chambers* to gripe, no teeth to bite, nor paws to tear: but after, it will grow, and become fierce and cruel like the sire. A serpent, when it is young, is little and pretty; it hath no sting, nor poison; you may take it in your hand, and lay it in your lap, it will not hurt you:

* *Chambers;* probably *champers:* to *champ* is properly to devour with a hasty and violent action of the jaws.—EDITOR.

after, it will increase in venom, and grow in mischief, and be like itself; then it will shake the sting, and cast poison, and prove dangerous.

Such a thorn, such a bear, such a serpent is Antichrist. At the first he shall seem soft, and gentle, and pretty, and innocent. After, he shall grow fierce, and arm himself with sting and poison. But a thorn, though it be soft, is a thorn: a bear, though he be little, is a bear: a serpent, though he be pretty, is a serpent. Even so Antichrist, though he seem gentle, mild, and simple, yet is he Antichrist. He groweth by degrees, he will be like his sire; his paws will be dreadful, his mouth will be deadly.

Whosoever know the nature and working of an earthquake, how it groweth and how it worketh, know that at the first it is some little wind, gathered and kept in some hollow places of the earth: there it lieth close by, sometimes for many years, without giving forth any noise, without stirring or shaking. One may walk over it, and perceive nothing. After, it groweth strong and violent, it seeketh a way out, it forceth itself, it gathereth strength; and cometh abroad, it will stay no longer. Out it breaketh, and teareth the earth, and renteth rocks, overthroweth mountains, shaketh down towns and cities, swalloweth up whole rivers: it enflameth the air, raiseth thunder, roareth up into heaven, and astonisheth the world. Such is the working of an earthquake; so great and mighty at the end, so little and simple at the first.

Such shall be the mystery and coming of Antichrist. At the beginning he shall be like a little wind, and shall enter into the hollowness and darkness of the Church: but after, he shall shake the whole world. He shall shew forth himself at the first with countenance of devotion and holiness, that he may closely, and privily, and secretly wreath in himself. Few shall be able to understand the mystery of his dealing. After, he shall be opened, and appear as he is.

Who would think there were any evil in forcing of virginity, chastity, or single life? "He that is unmarried, careth

for the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord; that he may be holy both in body and also in spirit." (1 Cor. vii. 32; 34.) Would God it were so with all, that have taken the profession of single life! But the colour is fair. Hence hath it grown, that bishops, and priests, and young men, and maidens have continued single. This seemed strange, and a miracle, and a matter of great holiness.

But this is a mystery: this is a way to bring in Antichrist. Mark what St. Paul speaketh hereof: "They shall forbid to marry." (1 Tim. iv. 3.) Of whom speaketh he? Of Antichrist and his disciples. They shall forbid lawful marriage, as unholy, and as a state of life unfit for holiness. Yet Christ Jesus, the Son of God, did never forbid it. His Apostles were married, and had wives.

This, saith St. Paul, is a mark of Antichrist; by this shall he be known. Forbidding of marriage is a doctrine of devils: not of Christ or of God, but of devils. It is a gulf, it is a sea, it is a world, it is a hell of iniquity: and the vilest villany that ever crept into the Church of God. Jerome, expounding the words of Daniel, "He shall have no regard to the desires of women," (Dan. xi. 37.) saith:* 'The better exposition hereof is to apply these words to Antichrist, for that he shall pretend chastity, that he may deceive many.' This is the mystery of iniquity: this is the practice of Antichrist. He shall come with a cloak of counterfeited chastity, not with true chastity both in body and also in spirit, but with counterfeit chastity, and so shall deceive the hearts of many.

Who would think there were any evil in single communion? or why may not every body follow his own devotion, and receive the sacrament when he will? what harm is herein? It may seem to be done for the reverence unto the Sacrament, lest it should grow in contempt, if it were

* Facilior interpretatio est de Antichristo, quòd ideo simulet castitatem, ut plurimos decipiat.—*Hieron. in Daniel.* xi.

used often. These reasons are fair and fresh : but this is a mystery, and a practice of Antichrist. For by this means have they shut out the faithful people of God, and made them negligent and careless for the receiving of the Lord's Supper. They abused the church of the living God : the turned the remembrance of the death of Christ into a day-game : they made the people commit horrible and open idolatry, to worship the creature instead of the Creator, which is God blessed for ever.

Who would think there were any evil in the keys of the Church ? They are the expounding of the law, and the disclosing of the will of God. They are the chiefest comfort of our conscience. But Antichrist shall take these keys unto himself, and shall build up his own kingdom with them. He shall shut that God hath opened, and shall open that God hath shut. This is also the mystery of iniquity.

Who would think there were any evil in godly prayers of the Church ? Christ saith : "Watch and pray, for ye know not in what hour your Master will come." (Matt. xxiv. 42.) And again : "Pray thou to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth thee in secret shall reward thee openly." (Matt. vi. 6.) And again : "Ask, and ye shall receive : seek, and ye shall find : knock, and it shall be opened unto you." (Matt. vii. 7.) St. Paul saith : "Pray without ceasing." (1 Thess. v. 17.) The prophet David saith : "The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him faithfully. For the Lord will hear the praises of his saints, and deliver them when they call upon him." (Psalm cxlv. 18, 19.) These prayers shall Antichrist take to work his iniquity; and under pretence of them shall devour widows' houses; and shall make a net of them to fish and drag for all the riches of the world. This is also the mystery of iniquity.

Who would think there were so great evil in the doctrine of purgatory ? What if one thought that his father or friend died in some venial sin, and were chastised somewhile in

purgatory fire; and that he might be relieved by prayers? For this jolly* pretence and imagination have they thereof. What if one should so think? what hurt were it? Brethren, this is the mystery of all mysteries, and the secret of all secrets. In this standeth the countenance† and all the welfare of Antichrist. He hath impropried‡ the whole kingdom of purgatory to himself, and hath made it more gainful than heaven and earth. There he selleth prayers: there he maketh port-sale of bulls and pardons: there he selleth forgiveness of sins, *à culpâ et pœnâ*. He selleth the mercies of God, the blood of the martyrs, the works of supererogation, the merits of his fratries, the blood of Christ. There he selleth paradise, deliverance or assurance from hell, and entrance into heaven: he maketh merchandize of the souls of the people. This is the alonely§ mystery above all other mysteries.

Who would think there were an evil in the name of the Church? It is the witness-bearer unto the Gospel. It is the pillar of truth. It is the spouse of Christ. Yet, saith Christ, Antichrist shall come in my name. He shall seem holy; he shall talk of the Gospel; he shall carry the face of the Church, and receive many. This is a mystery.

Who would think it a matter of so great inconvenience, for a man to call the Bishop of Rome the greatest bishop, or the chiefest patriarch, and the highest judge, and to say that all appeals lie unto him? What hurt may this be? It seemeth a small matter, a matter of nothing. But it is a practice,‖ it is a secret, and a mystery. Hence flowed all the streams of vanity and presumption wherein he advanceth himself. Hence it is that he saith, I am above kings and

* *Jolly* (qu. *joli*, neat or pleasant;) a term applied to an ingenious and fanciful device.—EDITOR.

† *Countenance;* i. e. patronage and support.—EDITOR.

‡ *Impropried;* i. e. impropriated, or converted to his own profit.—EDITOR.

§ *Alonely;* i. e. only, eminent above all others.—EDITOR.

‖ *A practice;* i. e. a fraud or artifice.—EDITOR.

emperors. I am above general councils. I am above the whole Church of Christ. I am above the angels of God: I have power to command and to countermand them at my pleasure. I am the successor of Peter. I am the vicar of Christ. No man may judge me, whatsoever I do. I cannot err. General councils might err: the Apostles might err: the angels of God might err: but I cannot err. I have the fulness of power. The whole world is my diocese. Whosoever is saved, is under me: whosoever is not under me, is cursed of God. I am the light of the world. I can in a manner do whatsoever God can do. All these speeches are written, are printed, are published, and proclaimed abroad. This is a mystery of iniquity, this is a deep secret. These are the very ways and steps of Antichrist. God give us eyes to see them, and hearts that we may discern them!

Paul did see the mystery working even in that time he lived. John saith: "Diotrephes loveth to have the preeminence;" (3 John 9.) to lift up himself above his brethren, to be the head of the Church, and to bear a mastery. So Paul espied contentions in Corinth: "Every one of you saith, I am Paul's, and I am Apollo's, and I am Cephas', and I am Christ's." (1 Cor. i. 12.) These were the beginnings of Antichrist. But Paul saith: "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." (2 Cor. iv. 5.) So the true disciples of Christ reckon not themselves any thing, but the members one of another, but the ministers by whom the people believe, but witnesses chosen before of God, but such as are commanded to preach, but God's labourers.

Now let us consider these marks of Antichrist. Was there ever any which hath forbidden lawful marriage; and accounted it a state of life which is unclean, and not meet for his holiness: and deceived the world with counterfeit chastity? The same is Antichrist. For Jerome telleth us, Antichrist shall pretend chastity, that he may deceive

many: and Paul calleth forbidding of marriage the doctrine of devils.

Was there ever any which hath shut forth the faithful from the holy Communion, and hath made them careless for the receiving thereof? which hath defaced the Sacrament, abused the Church of God, and caused the people to give the honour of God unto a creature? This is the working of the mystery of iniquity: he is Antichrist.

Was there ever any which took the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and wrought to himself therewith a principality or kingdom in earth? Was there ever any which hath shut them out from the kingdom of God, to whom God hath opened it; and hath set free the consciences of those sinners, whom God hath not loosed? He is Antichrist.

Was there every any which beguiled the people, which devoured widows' houses under colour of long prayers, and hath used them as a net to fish for the treasures and riches of all the world? He is Antichrist.

Was there ever any which sold bulls, and pardons, and forgiveness of sins, and the mercies of God, and the merits of men, and the blood of the martyrs, and the passion of Christ the Son of God? Was there ever any that sold paradise, and heaven, and made sale of the souls of the people, and all for money? The same is Antichrist.

Was there every any which came in the name of Christ, with the shew of holiness, with the countenance of the Church, and hath shewed himself in all his life and doctrine contrary to Christ? He is Antichrist.

Was there every any which hath said, I am above kings and emperors, and the states of the world: I am above councils: I am above the whole church of Christ; and above the angels of God? No man may judge me: I cannot err: whosoever shall be saved, must be under me: if any shall not obey me, they are cursed before God: God and I have one judgment-seat; we sit together: I can do whatsoever God can do? He that thus saith, is Antichrist.

The mystery of iniquity doth work already, saith the Apostle.—He shall not open himself. Whatsoever he doth, he doth it in secret. So shall he advance himself; so shall he speak great things and blasphemies against the Highest; so shall he prevail and prosper; so shall he darken the heavens, and draw the third part of the stars after him; so shall he sit in the holy place, even in the seat of God: and all this shall he work under pretence of humility, and shall call himself the servant of servants.

Only he which now withholdeth, shall let, till he be taken out of the way.—Now the emperor holdeth the whole power and authority over the world; but it shall be taken away from him: and then shall Antichrist come, when all stops and lets shall be removed. Who is he that doth stop him, and let his coming? The emperor of Rome. So saith Tertullian, so Augustine, Ambrose, and Chrysostom. Antichrist shall possess a great part of the Roman empire: yet so long as the emperor shall stand and prosper, he will not suffer any part of his empire to be abated. So long as the emperor shall be able to bear himself, Antichrist shall never be able to grow: but a time shall come, when the empire of Rome shall be rent asunder; then the authority of the emperor shall decay, then Antichrist shall gather strength, and shall place himself where the emperor was. A traitor cannot usurp the crown so long as the right king is able to stand, and maintain his state. Antichrist is a traitor, a traitor both to God and man. When the emperor shall fall and decay, then he shall rise up. When the emperor becometh weak, then he shall grow strong. Therefore Paul saith, Antichrist shall not come yet, for the emperor letteth him: the emperor shall be removed, and then shall Antichrist come.

But before I proceed to say more of this division of the empire,—that we may come to the bottom of this matter, and so see the meaning of this prophecy evidently laid open before us,—I will shew more plainly and particu-

larly of Antichrist, who he shall be. It is a hard and doubtful thing, as are all prophecies: but mark well that shall be spoken. I will speak nothing without good warrant and authority of the old writers and fathers. I will tell you the conditions of Antichrist, and where he shall dwell: that known, it shall be no hard matter to know the rest.

Who shall he be, then, or of what condition, that we may know him? Some have said, he should be a Jew of the tribe of Dan: some, that Nero the bloody tyrant should rise again, and he should be Antichrist: some, that he should be a mighty persecutor, which should rage and range over the whole world, raise towers and castles, set on fire the church and oratories, and kill whomsoever he meeteth. Hippolytus saith, he shall be begotten by the devil, and himself shall be a devil. These devices were imagined and written many hundred years since, as every body were best able to devise. But these are fables, and have no ground. To say the truth, Antichrist shall neither be a Jew, nor Nero, nor one begotten by the devil. He shall be a Christian, he shall be a bishop, and a holy father, and a bishop of great shew and countenance in the world. Mark, he shall not be a king, nor an emperor, nor a tyrant, nor a temporal prince; but a bishop.

But how may this be known, that we may be certain of it? For you will charge my sayings with partiality, as if what should be spoken by me, might proceed of displeasure and malice. Who then hath so spoken or written, that we may believe him? Hear Gregory himself, a Bishop of Rome, what he recorded of this matter well nigh a thousand years ago:* 'The king of pride (that is Antichrist) is even at hand, and an army of priests is prepared: which is a wicked or horrible thing to be spoken.' Lo! both the

* Rex superbiæ prope est, et, quod dici nefas est, sacerdotum est præparatus exercitus.—*Greg. lib.* 4. *epist.* 38.

king, which is Antichrist, and his guard to wait upon him, a company of priests and clerks, of monks and friars, to attend upon him! And upon whom shall an army of priests attend, but upon a bishop?

If you say this is no plain proof, but forced, and wrested, because he nameth not a bishop, but a king of pride; hear him again:* 'I speak it boldly, whosoever either calleth himself the universal priest, or desireth so to be called (as doth thePope), in the pride of his heart he is the forerunner of Antichrist.' In this place he doth not only tell us Antichrist shall be a bishop, but also what manner of bishop. He shall be a bishop, and that bishop which shall claim universal authority: such a bishop as shall say, It is of the necessity of salvation, that every soul be subject to me: which shall say, It is plain that the Church is one, because in the universal church there is one supreme head, that is the Pope.

Sibylla saith,† this king shall be πολιόκρανος, that is, shall have a white head; and shall be called by a name much like to *pontus*. In which two marks of his head and name, whom can we find but a bishop; who weareth sosolemnly‡ a white mitre of silver, and adorned with precious stones, and in Latin is named *pontifex*. Again, Joachimus Abbas§ saith, he shall exalt himself above all that is called

* Fidenter dico, quòd quisquis se universalem sacerdotem vocat, vel vocari desiderat, in elatione suâ Antichristum præcurrit.—*Greg. lib.* 6. *epist.* 30.

† *Oraculorum, cap.* 8.—For an account of the Sibylline Oracles, the reader is referred to Cave's Historia Literaria. They appear to have been collected before A.D. 140, by converts to the Christian faith, employing such materials as they had at hand—histories and traditions, intermingled with passages of Scripture, and fragments of heathen oracles,—in the compilation.—EDITOR.

‡ *Solemnly*; i. e. on occasion of annual or customary ceremonies. —EDITOR.

§ Joachim, Abbot of Flora, in Calabria, lived in the 12th century. Besides Commentaries on Scripture, he issued a variety of Prophecies on the Papacy, which were printed at Venice, with emblematical devices, in 1589. Further information may be obtained from Dupin's Bibliothèque des Auteurs Ecclesiastiques.—EDITOR.

God; for he only shall be called Holy Lord, and Most Holy Pope. So that, for our direction, we hear not only of a king of pride, and his guard of priests; but we are learned that this king shall have a white head, and a name much like *pontus*, that is, shall be *pontifex*, a bishop. Gregory moreover hath said, he shall call himself, or desire to be called, an universal priest; and Joachimus, an Abbot, hath told us Antichrist shall be called Holy Lord, and Most Holy Pope.

But where shall Antichrist be resident? In what place shall we seek him? For if we look for him in one place, and he be in another, we shall not find him. Where then is he stalled? in what city? in what church? Some say in Babylon, some in Syria, some in Chaldea, some in Jerusalem upon Mount Sion; some in one place, some in another. These are but guesses, and bear no weight. Paul telleth us, he shall creep into the empire of Rome: so saith the Apostle, and so the Fathers. The empire shall be made waste, and then Antichrist shall come and invade the church. But the empire was great and wide, it reached over a great part of the world: it did contain England, France, Germany, Poland, Denmark, Italy, Illyricum, Macedonia, Thrace, Greece, Asia (Minor), Armenia, Egypt, Mauritania, and the rest of Africa. All these were parts of the empire of Rome. In what part, or in what city, or in what church of all these shall he sit?

St. John saith: "The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth." (Rev. xvii. 9.) Antichrist shall sit in a city built upon seven hills. Where shall we find such a city in the whole world? Is it Jerusalem, or Athens, or Constantinople, or Antioch? Where we find a city so built, that city is the place of Antichrist. There is none but one. The Spirit of God cannot lie. But which is that one? All writers, as well old as new, call that city Rome. Rome is built upon seven hills. They be yet standing. The names of the hills are

known to be these: Palatinus, Quirinalis, Aventinus, Cælius, Viminalis, Esquilius, Janicularis. The poet, speaking of this city, saith:*—

"Septemque una sibi muro circumdedit arces."

'And this one city hath compassed into itself with a wall seven high places.' Therefore Plutarch calleth it ἑπτάλοφος, of seven hills. They have used in Rome, in their general processions in gang-week,† to go to these seven hills, and to do some solemn piece of service at every of them. Rome is the city of seven heads; Rome is the city built upon seven hills: therefore the city which John describeth; and therefore it is the tabernacle and stall in which Antichrist shall sit.

Sibylla wrote two thousand years since, 'That the greatest terror and fury of his empire, and the greatest woe that he shall work, shall be by the banks of Tyber.'‡ And who is there that hath heard any thing of the situation of Rome, that doth not know it is built on the banks of Tyber? Irenæus, who lived well near fifteen hundred years ago, saith,§ the name of Antichrist, expressed by that number, shall be Latinus; that is, he shall sit in a city called Latium, that is Rome. Joachimus Abbas saith:¶ 'Antichrist is long since born in Rome, and yet shall be advanced higher in the Apostolic see.' Bernard saith:‖ 'The beast that is spoken of in the Book of Revelations, unto which beast is given a mouth to speak blasphemies, and to keep war against the saints of God, is now gotten into Peter's chair, as a lion prepared to his prey.' These words are clear as the sun-beams.

* Virgil; Georg. ii. 535.—EDITOR.

† *Gang-week*; i. e. Rogation-week, when the custom of perambulating the boundaries of parishes is still retained in England.—EDITOR.

‡ *Syb. Orac. cap.* 8.

§ *Iren. lib.* 5. *cap. ult.*

¶ Antichristus jampridem natus est Romæ, et altius extolletur in sede Apostolicâ.

‖ Bestia illa de Apocalypsi, cui datum est os loquens blasphemias, et bellum gerere cum sanctis, Petri cathedram occupat, tanquam leo paratus ad prædam.—*Bern. Epist.* 125.

St. John saith, Antichrist shall sit in a city built upon seven hills: that city is the city of Rome. Dame Sibylla saith, His greatest works shall be by the banks of Tiber: that city so built is the city of Rome. Irenæus saith, The name of Antichrist shall be Latinus: this name belongeth to the bishop of Rome. Bernard saith, The beast that is spoken of in the Revelation, is gotten into Peter's chair. John lived 1560 years since; Sibylla 2000; Irenæus about 1500; Joachimus Abbas 300: Bernard lived about 400 years since: and, by the testimony of all these, Antichrist shall be a bishop, and placed at Rome.

You marvel at this, how it should be possible that Antichrist should sit in Peter's chair. You hear who hath said it: and no wonder at all; for he shall sit in the place of God, in the holy place, in the church of Christ. So doth Augustine gather upon the Apostle's words:* 'For the temple of an idol, or of a devil, the Apostle would never call the temple of God.' And Jerome saith:† 'Antichrist shall sit in the temple of God, either at Jerusalem (as some imagine), or in the Church (as we more truly think), shewing himself as if he were Christ, and the Son of God.' Again he saith of him:‡ 'Antichrist shall tread under his feet all approved and true religion.' And St. Hilary saith:§ 'Is there any doubt but Antichrist shall sit in the same houses?' He shall sit in those houses and buildings, with which you are in love, and which you honour. And again he saith:‖ 'He shall be contrary to

* Non enim templum alicujus idoli, aut dæmonis, templum Dei Apostolus diceret.—*De Civit. Dei, lib.* 20. *cap.* 19.

† Antichristus sedebit in templo Dei, vel Hierosolymis (ut quidam putant), vel in Ecclesiâ (ut veriùs arbitramur), ostendens se, tanquam ipse sit Christus, et Filius Dei.—*Hieron. ad Algasiam. Quæst.* 11.

‡ *Ibid.*

§ Anne ambiguum est, Antichristum in iis esse sessurum?—*Hil. contra Auxentium.*

‖ Sub specie Evangelicæ prædicationis, Christo contrarius erit ut Dominus noster Jesus Christus degenetur, quum prædicari creditur.—*Ibid.*

Christ, under the colour of preaching the Gospel: so that our Lord Jesus Christ shall then be denied, when a man would think He is preached.' Thus we have seen who shall be Antichrist, and in what church he shall be: that he shall be a bishop, and shall be stalled or placed in Rome.

Now to return again to the words of the Apostle: *Only he which now letteth, shall let, till he be taken away.*—Now the emperor hath the rule over the world. Let him keep it. There shall a time come, when he shall lose his possessions: then Antichrist shall appear. When the empire shall be dismembered, and the kingdoms belonging to him shall depart from him, then shall be the coming of Antichrist. Who will look into the story of things and times past, shall perceive the meaning of the Apostle; and how the empire of Rome, being so great, is consumed and brought to nothing; and in what sort Antichrist, which was once so poor and simple, so little regarded, and obscure, might grow to be so great, and advance himself above kings and princes. The impoverishing of the one was the enriching of the other.

I told you that the empire of Rome contained sometimes a great part of the world; as England, France, Spain, Germany, &c. Where is England now? It is divided from, and is no part of, the empire. Where is France, Spain, Italy, Illyricum? Where is Rome itself? They are taken away from it, and are now no part of the empire. Where is Macedonia, Thracia, Græcia, Asia, Armenia, &c.? We cannot think of them but with heaviness. They be now under the Turk: they are taken away, and are no part of the empire. What is become of the great countenance which the emperor had in all the world? He is now in comparison nobody. What part of the empire is left unto him? Not one. He hath not left him one city or town. What is become of all which did belong to

him? They are dissolved, taken from him, and his estate is brought to nothing.

In the meanwhile Antichrist increased, and grew to wealth by spoil of the empire. The bishop of Rome hath at this day many countries and lordships. Poor Peter had none. How then came he by them? By the spoil of the empire. He hath the title of *Forum Julium*. Where hath he it, but out of the spoil of the empire? Where hath he so many countries, beginning at Lucca, and onward to the Alps, but by the spoil of the empire? He hath Ravenna, Forum Sempronii, Beneventum, and Spoletum. All these he hath by the spoil of the empire. He claimeth the kingdoms of Naples and of Sicily. He is the lord paramount. King Philip is his vassal, and payeth him tribute. He hath Rome itself. It did belong unto the emperor. How grew it to the bishop? whence hath he it? By the spoil of the empire.

We see, then, that the emperor is abated: that the bishop is increased; and so increased, that he hath made the emperor to be his man, to bear his train, to wait upon him, to kneel down, and to kiss his foot. This could he never bring to pass, while the empire stood whole, and the emperor was able to make his part good. But these things were done, that it might be fulfilled, which was spoken: "The kings of the earth shall give their strength and power to the beast," &c.: (Rev. xvii. 13.) "that they may agree together, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God be fulfilled." (ver. 17.)

Who that beast shall be, Augustine, writing upon the Psalms, very well declareth:* 'Thus it is written of Antichrist, that he shall conquer all kings, and obtain the kingdom himself alone.' And who it is, unto whom the kings

* Ita traditur de Antichristo, quòd omnes reges superaturus sit, .. solus regnum obtenturus.—*Aug. in Psal.* ix.

of the earth have given their kingdom, and which doth obtain the kingdom himself alone, if any man doubt, let him be advised by this saying of them which knew it well, and were not enemies to the bishopric of Rome. Johannes de Parisiis saith :* 'Some think that by reason of this donation (of Constantine) the Pope is the emperor and the lord of the world : and that thereby he hath power both to set up and also to put down kings, as an emperor.' And if this be too little, to say thus upon hearsay, the same saith further plainly :† 'All manner of temporal power was given immediately unto the Pope.' What other thing is it that Innocentius saith ? 'The emperor holdeth his empire of the Pope ; and therefore he is bound to swear homage and fealty to the Pope, as the vassal is bound to his lord.'

In this right Pope Adrian said : 'Behold, it is in our hand to bestow the empire upon whom we list.' Were not the state of the empire now decayed ; were not the prophecy of the Apostle now fulfilled ; were not the emperor (howsoever he have in a mystery a bare name left) taken away, as well in respect of the countries which he did hold, as of the authority, the rule, and power which he had over the world ; these proud speeches could never have been suffered.

Now, then, seeing the empire is so decayed and abased, and the bishop of Rome so highly advanced into his seat and authority (so highly, I say, that some are bold to say : 'The Pope hath the priesthood of all the whole world ;' and, 'The Pope is King of kings, and Lord of lords :') let Gregory, who hath otherwhere given great light to this prophecy, shew us hereby also to know who is Antichrist.

* *Johan. de Paris. de Potestat. Regiâ, cap.* 22.

† Omnis potestas sæcularis immediatè data est Papæ.

He saith:* 'Antichrist, when he shall come, shall conquer the highest estates and powers of this world.'

This whole matter is also expressed in the seventh of Daniel: "The fourth beast was fearful, and terrible, and very strong; it had great iron teeth; it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue under its feet: and it was unlike the beasts that were before it; for it had ten horns. And behold, there came up among them another little horn, which had eyes like a man, and a mouth speaking presumptuous things." (Dan. vii. 7, 8.) This beast is the empire of Rome, the greatest empire that ever was. It was divided into ten (or into sundry) kingdoms, as I shewed you, and as we see this day. The little horn is Antichrist.

The empire shall be divided and weakened: then Antichrist shall come. "He shall speak words against the Most High, and shall consume the saints of the Most High, and think that he may change times and laws; and they shall be given into his hand." (Dan. vii. 25.) Daniel saith, he shall speak words against the Most High, and shall think he may change times and laws; and they shall be given into his hand. Wherein he sheweth not only the pride and presumption of Antichrist, but that he shall also prevail for a time. Such a one there hath been, and yet is. He blasphemeth God, and murder eththe saints; hath changed times and laws,—the laws of God, and the laws of nature. He is Antichrist.

To make an end of this part for knowledge of Antichrist, who he shall be, in what place he shall dwell, and of that which should let his coming: let us remember he shall be no Jew nor heathen, but a Christian; and no king or temporal wight, but a bishop, an universal priest, and most holy pope. As Jerome, upon the words of the prophet,

* Antichristus veniens ipsas etiam summas hujus sæculi potestates obtinebit.—*Greg. in Job. lib.* 33. *cap.* 22.

O pastor et idolum, &c. "O idol shepherd, that," &c. (Zech. xi. 17.) saith:* 'I doubt nothing but that this foolish and unskilful shepherd is Antichrist, which should come towards the end of the world.' And further saith:† 'This shepherd is so wicked, that he is not called a worshipper of idols, but an idol itself: because he calleth himself God, and will be worshipped of all men.'

Let us remember we may not seek him in the streets, or in market-places, or in woods, or in the wilderness: but in the temple of God. There shall he sit, and hold the stern, and devise laws and canons; and shall rule the hearts and consciences of the people: there shall he shew his power, and put on him the cloak of simplicity, and of truth, and of holiness.

St. Augustine saith, Antichrist shall not only sit in the church of God, but also shall shew himself in outward appearance as if he himself were the Church itself:‡ 'Not that he sitteth in the temple of God, but he sitteth as the temple of God, as if he himself were the temple of God, which is the Church.' Let us remember what shall let his coming; even the safety of the emperor, and his continuance in that full power and estate wherein he then was. The decay of the empire shall make way for Antichrist. If therefore it be weakened, and hath been weakened any time since; if the kingdoms of the world be divided from it; that is an evident token that the coming of Antichrist is not stopped, but he hath come and shewed himself, and, by little and little, ever since such decay of the empire, hath

* Pastor stultus et imperitus haud dubitem quin sit Antichristus, qui in consummatione mundi dicitur esse venturus.—*Hieron. in Zech.* xi.

† Tam sceleratus est pastor, ut non idolorum cultor, sed ipse idolum nominetur; dum se appellat Deum, et vult ab omnibus adorari. —*Ibid.*

‡ Non in templo Dei, sed in templum Dei, sedeat; tanquam ipse sit templum Dei, quod est Ecclesia.—*De Civit. Dei, lib.* 20. *cap.* 19.

enlarged himself, and established his power over all countries and nations; as Chrysostom saith:* 'As long as the empire shall be had in awe, no man shall straightway submit himself to Antichrist: but after that the empire shall be dissolved, Antichrist shall invade the state of the empire standing void, and shall labour to pull unto himself the empire both of man and God.'

VERSE 8.—*And then shall that wicked man be uttered, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy him with the appearance of his coming.*

Antichrist shall be opened by little and little. All his devices and practices shall be disclosed, that they may appear and be seen of the world. He is in this place called ὁ ἄνομος, 'a man without order.' This is another peculiar note of Antichrist. He shall seek to be free, and go at liberty: he shall be tied to no law, neither of God nor of man. Let us once again look into the state of the church of Rome, to seek out this lawless man. There he sitteth that saith, 'I cannot err.'

Why is it said,† 'The Pope is exempted from all law of man?' And again, why must we expound any fact of the holy father for the best? and if it be theft, or any other thing that of itself is evil (as adultery or fornication), we must think it is done by the secret inspiration of God? Again, why say they,‡ 'The doings of the Pope are excused;' as Sampson's murders, as the Jews' robberies, and as the adulteries of Jacob? And again, why say they,§ 'Neither all the clergy, nor all the whole world,

* Donec illius imperii timor fuerit, &c.—*Chrys. Hom.* 4. *in* 2 *Thess.* ii.

† Papa solutus est omni lege humanâ?—*Extrav. de Constit. licet.* 9. *qu.* 3. *Cunct.*—*Jo. de Parisiis, de Pot. Reg. et Papali.*

‡ *Dist.* 40. *Non nos: in Glossâ.*

§ *Pet. de Palude, de Pot. Pp. Art.* 4.

may either judge or depose the Pope;' but because he is lawless?

Why is it said,* 'In such things as he willeth, his will standeth instead of reason, neither may any man say unto him, O sir, why do ye this;' but because he is lawless? Why is it said of him,† 'Although all the world would judge in any matter against the Pope, yet it seemeth we ought to stand to the judgment of the Pope, for he seemeth to have all the laws in the chest of his bosom;' but because he is ὁ ἄνομος, that lawless man? Why is it,‡ notwithstanding the Pope draw innumerable companies of people by heaps with him into hell, that yet no mortal man may once dare to reprove him, but because he is that lawless man?

Why is it said,§ 'The Pope may also change the very nature of things, in applying the substantial parts of one thing to another; and of nothing can make something; and of no sentence, may make a sentence: for he may dispense above the law, and of wrong may make right by correcting and changing the laws?' One Zabarella saith, they persuaded the bishops, that they might do all things; and therefore whatsoever they listed; yea, such things as are not lawful.

How could this have been wrought, but that the Scriptures should be fulfilled? This is he whom Paul describeth, that wicked lawless man. Thus he reigneth and ruleth; without law, without reason, without fear of God, without regard of man. He is exempted from all law, and

* In iis quæ vult, est ei pro ratione voluntas; nec est qui dicat illi, Domine, cur ita facis?—*Extrav. de Translat. Episc. Quanto: in Glossâ.*

† *Distinct.* 40. *Si Papa: in Glossâ.* ‡ *Ibid.*

§ Papa etiam rerum naturam immutat, substantialia alicujus rei applicando alteri, et de nihilo potest facere aliquid, et sententiam quæ nulla est aliquam facere. Ille enim potest supra jus dispensare, et de injustitiâ facere justitiam, corrigendo jura et mutando.—*De Trans. Episc. cap. Quanto: Glossa, tit.* 7.

his word is law to bind all the world. This is Antichrist. This is he of whom Daniel prophesied: "He shall think he may change laws and times;" (Dan. vii. 25.) the times of nature, and the laws which God himself hath ordained. This is he which hath carried himself so long time under the colour of holiness: this is he which hath beguiled and blinded the eyes of the world.

But, blessed be the name of our God, which is the God of truth, and the God of lights: his tyranny and treachery is now revealed, and therefore not regarded. Oh what mountains of money made he sometimes of pardons! His pardons were reputed the only safety and comfort of men's souls. He was not reckoned a Christian, whosoever sought them not. No man might lack them, neither in his life, nor after his death. But where are they now? what is become of them? who buyeth them? who regardeth the having of them? who reposeth his trust in them? Children make sport of them, and play with them in the streets. They see the filth of them, and the folly, and abhor them. How cometh this so to pass? The man of sin is revealed.

What a kingdom made he of purgatory! He shut out thence whom he listed: and released such as were there at his pleasure. He claimed power over the quick and dead. He sold the years, the days, and the months by round reckoning; a hundred, five hundred, and a thousand, and thousand thousands years of pardon. Of which folly his own canonists were ashamed. One of them saith:* 'Touching that Christ said unto Peter, Unto thee will I give the keys;' &c. we must understand this authority with a corn of salt, (otherwise it may be unsavoury.) Therefore certain of the Pope's pardons, that promise twenty thousand years, are foolish and superstitious.' This

* Nam quod dicitur Petro, Tibi dabo claves, &c.—*Jo. Major, in 4 Senten. dist.* 20. *qu.* 2.

was not given for nothing, but sold for money. Who had aught to give, had speedy dispatch: but poor souls that had nothing, or no friends to pay for them, should lie still. This was a wealthy kingdom. But now where is purgatory? who regardeth it? who careth for it? Children scorn it in their streets, and know it is a fable. How cometh this so to pass? The wicked or lawless man is revealed.

He was able to rule the whole world with a beck. His word stood as the word of God: no prince nor emperor durst withstand it. It was thought impossible that he should err. But now the world seeth his word is deceivable and vain: he erreth, and hath lived in great error. How few men will believe him! No prince will trust his word. Howsoever they whose eyes God hath not yet opened to see the truth, trust him in religion, in worldly matters they will not trust him. How cometh this so to pass? The man of sin is revealed.

What shall I say more? Behold round about the world, all places, and even Rome itself. The poor massing priest standeth a-cold, and can get no hire: the Pope's palls* lie a-rotting; his bulls go a-begging; his wares stand upon his hand; no wise man will buy them. Why? how cometh this to pass? The man of sin is revealed: all his deceit and treachery is revealed.

The Pope stirreth and striveth at this day all that he can. He excommunicateth and curseth: he sendeth out his bulls: he bloweth up seditions: he breedeth treasons: he raiseth subjects against their princes; he setteth princes upon their subjects: he imprisoneth and murdereth the saints of God: he shaketh and inflameth the whole world in his quarrels. But all in vain. Why so? how cometh

* *A pall* is the mantle of a Popish archbishop; consecrated at Rome, and delivered, with great ceremony, on the recognition of the new prelate.—EDITOR.

this to pass? There is no counsel, no wisdom, no fire, no sword, that shall prevail against the Lord. The man o sin, and his errors, are revealed. Men see, and know, and detest the blindness wherein they were led: the people forsake him over and over the world; "whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall abolish with the brightness of his coming."

VERSE 9.—*Even him, whose coming is by the effectual working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders,*

10.—*And in all deceivableness of unrighteousness among them that perish; because that they received not the love of the truth, that they may be saved.*

By the order of the Apostle's words, I should now speak of the overthrow of Antichrist: how and by what power he shall be confounded. (ver. 8.) But, because the two verses next following (9, 10.) speak yet of the state of Antichrist; by whose means he shall come, and of what countenance he shall be, and with whom he shall prevail; it shall be good we consider these things first, and then shew how he shall be destroyed.

When Christ came into the world, he came in the name of his Father, to save the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and to gather the flock that was scattered. Antichrist shall come in the name of the devil, to scatter, and disperse, and consume the flock of God's sheep.

His coming shall be by the effectual working of Satan. And what or who is Satan? He hath been a murderer from the beginning: through his envy came death into the world: he is the prince of this world; the prince of darkness; the father of lies; the spirit of pride; which hath said, I will ascend above the height of the clouds, and I will be like the Most High. He shall work, and inflame the heart

of Antichrist, and fill it with his spirit and wickedness; and shall make him the man of sin, and the son of perdition, full of vanity, and of pride, and of ungodliness; that he may mock the world, and blind the hearts of the people.

His coming shall be by the working of Satan: yet he shall make shew as if he came in the name of Christ. He shall come with fatherly looks, with holy countenance, and shall set himself in the holy place; but his whole endeavour shall be to deface the kingdom of Christ: which he shall practise to do, not by the leading of any angel or archangel, or by the power of God; but by the effectual working of Satan. He shall allege the doctors and fathers; he shall allege Peter and Paul, the holy Apostles of Christ; he shall allege Christ and God himself, as though his doings were warranted by them: he shall say, I am the buttress and pillar of the Church, my word is the word of God: he shall set up masses and sacrifices of his own: he shall take away the word of God: he shall teach the people to give divine honour to a weak creature.

But St. Paul in this place discloseth him and his doings, and layeth them open to the eyes of the faithful. He worketh not the work of an Evangelist, as did Peter, or other the Apostles: he taketh not power and authority either of God or of Christ: but *his coming is by the operation of Satan.* Therefore he foresheweth, Antichrist shall command to abstain from meats: he shall say, Touch not, taste not. He shall also forbid to marry: he shall say, Marriage is unholy, and unlawful, not convenient, not meet for holy profession.

Who would not think it a holy thing to abstain from meats, and to chastise the body? Who would not think it a holy thing to abstain from marriage, and to think of those things which belong to God? seeing holiness and devotion are a pleasant sacrifice to God. But yet it is not all so. Some shall speak lies through hypocrisy, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats. They shall depart

from the faith, and give heed to the spirits of error, and doctrines of devils. (1 Tim. iv. 1.) He saith it is the devil's gospel. They are canons and rules of Antichrist. Satan shall instruct him: Satan shall be the author and founder of that religion.

With all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and in all deceivableness of unrighteousness.—He shall need to be of great power and force, that shall encounter with God. Therefore the Apostle saith, he shall come with miracles and devices of Satan. Christ foretold that "False christs shall rise, and false prophets, and shall shew signs and wonders, to deceive, if it were possible, the very elect." (Mark xiii. 22.) Again he saith: "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not in thy name prophesied? and by thy name cast out devils? and by thy name done many great works? And then will I profess to them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity." (Matt. vii. 22.) These things shall Satan bring to pass under my name.

The Apostles wrought miracles, thereby to confirm the Gospel which they preached. As the Evangelist writeth: "The Lord wrought with them, and confirmed the word with signs that followed." (Mark xvi. 20.) And as the Apostle: "Salvation at the first began to be preached by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard Him, God bearing witness thereto with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to His will." (Heb. ii. 3, 4.) So shall Antichrist work miracles to overthrow the Gospel. "As Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth; men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. But they shall prevail no longer: for their madness shall be known to all men, as theirs also was." (2 Tim. iii. 8, 9.)

Aaron cast forth his rod before Pharoah and his servants, and it was turned into a serpent: and the charmers of Egypt did in like manner with their enchantments. (Exod. vii. 10—12.) Aaron smote the water, and all the water that

was in the river was turned into blood: and the enchanters of Egypt did likewise with their sorceries. (ver. 20—22.) And as Aaron caused frogs to come and cover the land, so the sorcerers did likewise with their sorceries. (Exod. viii. 6, 7.) "But the illusions of the magical arts came to nought," saith Solomon; "and it was a most shameful reproach for boasting their knowledge." (Wisd. xvii. 7.) So shall Antichrist come in, working signs and lying wonders, as did Jannes and Jambres, to deface the gospel and glory of God.

It is not said, he shall work wonders, but false lying wonders. But how can his miracles be false? If false, how be they miracles? If miracles, how be they false? They shall be false after two sorts: some are called false miracles, because they seem to be miracles, and are not; some are called false miracles, because they be used falsely to maintain his falsehood.

Of the first sort of false miracles, we have seen an infinite number in the days of our fathers in the kingdom of Antichrist. Then was there appearance of spirits, and visions of angels: our Lady came swimming down from heaven; poor souls came creeping and crying out of purgatory, and jetted abroad,* and kept stations, casting flakes of fire, and beset high ways, and bemoaned their cases, the pains and torments were so bitter. They sought for help, and cried for good prayers; they cried for *Diriges*, they cried for masses of *Requiem*, for masses of *Scala cœli*, for trentals† of masses. Hereof grew portsale of pardons, and hereof grew the province of Purgatory, the most gainful country that ever was under the city of Rome.

But these miracles were no miracles at all. They were devised by subtle varlets, and lazy lordanes,‡ for a

* *Jetted abroad;* i. e. stalked to and fro.—EDITOR.

† *Trentals*, or *trigintals;* a succession of masses, thirty in number, recited for some one object, according to an ordinance of Pope Gregory the Great.—EDITOR.

‡ *Lordanes*, or *lordings;* fellows affecting the airs of the great.—EDITOR.

purpose, to get money. Oftentimes the spirit hath been taken, and laid in the stocks; the angel hath been stript; the good lady hath been caught; the conveyance and the miracle hath appeared; the engines, and sleights, and the cause and manner of the working, hath been confessed.

In those days, idols could go on foot; roods* could speak; bells could ring alone; images could come down and light their own candles: dead stocks could sweat and bestir themselves; they could turn their eyes; they could move their hands; they could open their mouths; they could set bones, and knit sinews; they could heal the sick, and raise up the dead.

These miracles were conveyances and subtleties, and indeed no miracles. The trunks by which they did speak, the strings and wires with which they moved their faces and hands, all the rest of their treachery hath been disclosed. These be the miracles of which Paul speaketh; miracles in sight, but indeed no miracles.

The other sort of false miracles is, when such things as be indeed wrought and done, are untruly applied by Antichrist to maintain his falsehood. God giveth recovery to the diseased: the deaf receive their hearing; the blind receive their sight: he assuageth the tempests, and stayeth the rage of fire that it continue not. These things are done by the finger of God. Antichrist draweth us from so thinking of the mercy of God, and telleth us we have other friends to whom we are beholden, which have done so and so for us. It was this saint, saith he, it was that saint, that took pity of your case, and wrought the remedy for you. It was Apollonia, it was Genouefa, it was Sitha, it was our Lady. Such a saint is able to do much; such a saint can work miracles.

Hereof grew invocation of saints. Hereof it came to pass

* *Roods;* images of Christ on the cross.—EDITOR.

that each saint was assigned and allotted to his sundry charge and several office apart: St. Blase, for the choking; St. Roche, for the pestilence; Anthony, for the burning; Valentine, for the falling sickness; Romane, for madness; Apollonia, for the tooth-ache; Petronilla, for agues; and others, for other purposes: wherein it was wisely foreseen that they were so limited and ordered, lest perhaps any one might be over saucy, and encroach upon and trouble his fellows.

It was also foreseen that all saints should not have power to work in all places. Some wrought at Canterbury, some at Walsingham, some at York, some at Buxton; some in one place, some in another; some in the towns, some in the fields: even as Jeremiah said among the Jews, "According to the number of thy cities, were thy gods." (Jer. xi. 13.) Hereof grew pilgrimages, and worshipping of images, and kissing of relics. Hereof grew oblations, and enriching of abbeys. Every man had his peculiar saint, on whom he called. Every country was full of chapels: every chapel full of miracles: and every miracle full of lies.

These miracles are wrought by Antichrist. They are his tools wherewith he worketh: they are his weapons wherewith he prevaileth. They are full of lying, full of deceitfulness, and full of wickedness. So shall Antichrist prevail, and rule over the world. By these miracles he shall possess the ears, the eyes, and the hearts of many, and shall draw them after him.

He shall shadow the moon, and darken the sun, and make the third part of the stars of heaven to follow him. He shall change light into darkness, and darkness into light. He shall work in all things at his pleasure. If a man see well, he shall make him blind. This is a miracle. Such as are whole, he shall make sick: he shall infect them with leprosy, which before were clean. This is a miracle. He shall change the sense and feeling of nature: he shall make

the son hate the father, and shall make the father hate the the son, yea, to seek the death of his son. This is a miracle. He shall make the people mislike and doubt the word of God, and embrace his follies. This is a miracle.

These be the works of Antichrist, which he shall bring to pass. This shall he work *in all deceivableness of unrighteousness.* He shall come with all kinds and shifts of deceit. He shall come with shew of praying, with vizard of fasting, with companies of monks, friars, canons, and all kind and colour of holiness. He shall seek to prevail by threatening and by flattering, by fair means and by foul. He shall excommunicate, and release from excommunication: he shall promise forgiveness of sins, and life everlasting. He shall make boast of the Fathers, and ancient doctors; he shall make boast of the universal consent: he shall boast of general councils; he shall boast of Christ's Apostles, and of the Gospel of Christ, and of the word of God. So shall he falsely and deceitfully work himself credit, and beguile the world, in abusing the holy name of God. No kind of deceitfulness or subtlety, but he shall use it. So shall he make the people to seek upon him, and kings and emperors to fall down before him, and to say, Who is like unto the beast? Who is so wise, so learned, so holy, so wealthy, so mighty, and so catholic? Without him no man is to be reckoned holy or learned. Without him no man may traffic, buy, nor sell. Without him no man may read publicly in Universities; no man may preach to the people; no man may be accounted a Christian: no man may hope to be saved without him, without his leave and liking. Such wonders, such miracles shall he work; so shall he conquer and subdue the world.

Now, who they be which shall be deceived? in whom shall he prevail? *Among them that perish, because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved.* They shall be deceived by him, which perish; whose hearts are

not marked with the Spirit of God; whose names are not written in the book of life; in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds, that the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should not shine unto them: they shall follow him, and shall be the children of damnation, and shall have their reward with him. Be he learned or unlearned; be he king or subject; albeit he be holy, albeit he be catholic; Antichrist shall come unto him in all deceitfulness of unrighteousness, because he hath not received the love of the truth that he might he saved.

Here mark, he doth not say, Because they received not the truth; but he saith, Because they received not the love of the truth. Many in our days can speak thus, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth:" (Rom. i. 16.) "for it is the savour of life unto life." (2 Cor. ii. 16.) They can say: "There is given none other name under heaven, whereby we must be saved: neither is there salvation in any other than Jesus Christ," whom we have learned by the Gospel. (Acts iv. 12.) Many will confess, there was never more nor better teaching since the time of the Apostles. They seem to receive the truth: but they are like the horse and mule, in whom is no understanding. They receive it, because the prince receiveth it, and because the politic laws of countries establish it. They are carried away with the sway of the world. They hear it with their ears: (nay, I would God they would lend their ears to the hearing of it:) but with their hearts they do not hear. They have no feeling of the word of God, and of the truth. They weigh it not, they love it not. They consider not what it is, nor from whom it is sent. They know not that it is the water of life, and the bread which is sent from heaven. They have no taste, nor savour, nor pleasure in it.

Therefore it shall be taken from them, and given to a nation which shall bring forth the fruits thereof. They

shall be cast into utter darkness, and the last state of them is worse than the first. "It had been better fo them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment given unto them." (2 Pet. ii. 21.) It should not be charged upon them for their damnation: for our Saviour saith, "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they should not have had sin; but now have they no cloak for their sin." (Joh. xv. 24.) They find no sweetness in the word of God; they are not converted by it that they may be saved: they have no pleasure in the ways of the Lord; they have no comfort to know his will.

These be the bond-slaves of Satan: these be they upon whom shall come the abomination of desolation: these be they against whom Satan and Antichrist shall prevail, because they have not received the love of the truth. They have not received it into their hearts, that they might be saved. They had no hearts to feel it, they had no eyes to see it.

VERSE 11.—*And therefore God shall send them strong delusions, that they should believe lies;*

12.—*That all they might be damned which believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.*

The Spirit of God is the Spirit of truth, and giveth light into our hearts, and maketh us behold that blessed hope, and rejoice in the knowledge of his will. Therefore the prophet David maketh prayer: "O God, renew a right spirit within me; and take not thy Holy Spirit from me." (Psal. li. 10, 11.) And again: "O Lord my God, lighten mine eyes that I sleep not in death." (Psal. xiii. 3.) And again he saith: "With thee is the well of life, and in thy light shall we see light." (Psal. xxxvi. 9.)

Without this Spirit we are but flesh and blood; even

void of sense and understanding. "The natural man perceiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him." (1 Cor. ii. 14.) "No man knoweth the things of God, but the Spirit of God." (ver. 11.) "And those things which God hath prepared for them that love him, He hath revealed unto us by his Spirit." (vers. 9, 10.) Christ saith: "No man cometh to me, except the Father draw him." (Joh. vi. 44.) Unless a man be born from above, unless God print and seal his heart with his finger, he shall not be able to see the kingdom of God.

Now, if we have the word of God before our eyes, and regard it not, nor be thankful for it, nor set price by it, God in his justice will withdraw it from us. Then shall we delight in darkness, and have pleasure in error: our latter end shall be more dreadful than was our first beginning. This is it which Paul saith: *God shall send them strong delusion.* That is, his Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth, shall depart from their hearts, and the power of Satan shall dwell with them, and wholly possess them. This is the just judgment of God. "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light." (John iii. 19.) They forsake the light, and delight in darkness; and this is their condemnation. They will not understand, nor seek after God, that they may be reformed. The prophet saith: "Because he loved cursing, it shall come unto him: and because he loved not blessing, so shall it be far from him." (Psal. cix. 17.) God will strike them with blindness. They shall be astonished. They shall fall into rebuke, and the snares of the devil. They shall be drowned in perdition and destruction.

So great shall be the power of error. Men shall not only be deceived, but shall be deceived mightily and strongly. They shall desire to be deceived, and shall bear a deadly hatred against him, whosoever shall seek to reform them. They shall harden their hearts against God and his holy

word: they shall stop their ears, and not hearken to his counsel: they shall not open their eyes to behold the destruction which is to come upon them.

So great and so mighty shall be the delusion: so deadly shall be the cloud and blindness of their hearts. They shall be given over unto a reprobate mind. They shall be filthy, and increase in filthiness. Such shall be the power of Satan, such shall be the power of error and deceitfulness. They shall despise the glorious gospel of Christ: therefore God shall forsake them, and give them over to follow Antichrist.

God hath this day sent the light and comfort of his holy word into the world. Many godly men have desired to see that we see, and to hear that we do hear. Blessed be the name of the Lord, which hath in mercy visited us! We beseech him to bless the work that he hath begun. St. Paul saith: "The grace of God, that bringeth salvation to all men, hath appeared." (Tit. ii. 11.) And to the Colossians he saith: "The Gospel is come unto you, even as it is unto all the world." (Col. i. 6.) And again: "Have they not heard? No doubt their sound went through all the earth, and their words into the ends of the world." (Rom. x. 18.) The poor receive the glad tidings of the Gospel. God hath visited and redeemed his people.

But yet the Apostle saith: "They have not all believed our Gospel: for Esaias saith, Lord, who shall believe our report?" (Rom. x. 16.) And again saith the prophet Isaiah: "I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people, which walked in a way that was not good." (Isa. lxv. 2.) Wisdom crieth in the streets: "I have called and ye refused, I have stretched out mine hand, and none would regard." (Prov. i. 24.) Such is the power of Satan; so shall he stop their ears, that they shall not hear nor understand what is spoken in the name of the Lord.

Paul is a true prophet, and foretold long before that which we may now behold with our eyes: "In the latter times some shall give heed unto spirits of error." (1 Tim. iv. 1.) They shall be as men without sense or feeling; they shall forsake the truth, and betake themselves to follow lies and fables. Even they shall do this, which shall sit in the Church of God; who shall profess and carry the name of Christ.

Christ ministered his last supper in both kinds. (Luke xxii. 19, 20.) St. Paul telleth the Corinthians: "As often as ye shall eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye shall shew the Lord's death till he come." (1 Cor. xi. 26.) That this institution of Christ should be kept in the Church until the end of the world, the Apostles received this order, the holy Fathers and Martyrs used it. But now many, even too, too many, will not so have it, nor so use it. They will not follow the example of the Fathers, nor of Martyrs, nor of the Apostles, nor keep the ordinance of Christ. So strong a delusion hath bewitched them.

The people of God were taught to pray in the vulgar tongue, that their hearts might give consent, and their mouths say, Amen. This order did Peter, and Paul, and John, and James, and the godly Fathers keep. There is not one of them that took order for the contrary. But now there are some risen up, which, in despite of Christ and his Apostles, say, Prayers shall be made in a strange tongue, either Latin or Greek: the people shall not understand what they hear: they shall not know what it is which they themselves say. Their hearts cannot give consent thereto; their mouths cannot say, Amen. The example of the Apostles, the commandment of Christ, the comfort of the people, the confusion of the church, nothing moveth them. So great and mighty is the power of error.

The people worship a creature instead of the Creator, who is God over all, blessed for ever. They see they do amiss, yet continue it, and find no fault. They see wherein their

fathers were deceived, yet they say they could not be deceived. They see many and foul abuses, yet seek not to redress them. For they say, We will walk in the ways of our forefathers: we will believe as they believed, howsoever they believed: we will do as they did, whatsoever they did: we will not hear the word of the Lord. Thus shall they delight in darkness, and loathe the light: they will be deceived, and will not see the truth. So mighty and so terrible is the power of error.

They be learned in philosophy and in the tongues: they be learned in the laws: they be learned in physic, learned in the doctors, and learned in stories.* They are skilful to buy and sell, to purchase land to enrich themselves, and to provide for their children. They have knowledge in all things else; but themselves, and the truth of God, and the way of salvation, they have not known.

A thief, when he is taken, blusheth. A harlot is ashamed of her filthiness, and a drunkard of his beastliness. But they that are such, have hardened their faces; they cannot blush. Whatsoever they have said or done, either openly or in secret, by hypocrisy or cruelty, by rapine or treachery, in offering pardons to sale, in deceiving the people of God, in accusing the righteous, and condemning the innocent, they cannot repent, they know no shame. So great is the power of error.

Christ saith unto them: "The publicans and the harlots shall go before you into the kingdom of God." (Matt. xxi. 31.) They consider that they have done amiss: but you are wilful in your blindness. Oh the depth of the wisdom and knowledge of God! Who is wise, and considereth this? They strive against the manifest truth, they strive against their own conscience, they strive against the Spirit of God. This is that sin which shall never be forgiven, neither in this world, nor in the world to come.

* *Stories;* i. e. histories, whether authentic or fabulous.—EDITOR

Therefore saith Paul, *that all they might be damned, which believed not the truth*.—All shall be damned, which believed not. Then let no man say, I will follow the example of my fathers, I will do as the greater part doth. So many and so many, for so many years, in so many places, have been on this side. The judgment of God standeth not in the multitude, but in the truth. Whosoever shall set themselves against his holy will, be they never so many, they shall be damned.

Let such mark well what Ignatius, who lived in the time of the Apostles, hath said:* 'I have heard some which say, Unless I find the gospel in them of old time, I will not believe it. But unto such I say, that Jesus Christ is unto me antiquity; whom to disobey is manifest and unpardonable destruction.' Let no man say, I hope I do well, my meaning is good, I have a desire to please God: I believe well, I do my conscience: if I do amiss, God will regard my simplicity. Let no man say so. St. Augustine saith:† 'It is certain that a foolish faith not only doth no good, but also hurteth.' If thou believe not the truth, thou dwellest in lying; thou art the child of the devil, which is a liar, and the father thereof. "The mouth which speaketh lies, slayeth the soul." (Wisd. i. 11.) Thy faith is no faith; it is but a wilful opinion, it is but an error; for it is not according to the truth, it is not built upon the rock, it is not grounded on the word of God.

Change thine error. "Faith is by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Rom. x. 17.) Receive the truth, believe the truth, and love the truth. Otherwise, if thou refuse the bread of life, and feed on poison; if thou forsake

* Audivi quosdam dicentes, Si non invenero evangelium in antiquis, non credam. Talibus autem ego dico, quia mihi antiquitas Jesus Christus est; cui non obedire, manifestus et irremissibilis interitus est.—*Ignatii Epist.* 5. *ad Philadel.*

† Aug. qu. 43. in Question. Veter. et Novi Testam.

the water of life, and dig unto thyself a cistern that will hold no water; thou shalt lead thy days in wilfulness, and shalt die in sin: thy blood shall be upon thine own head. Thou shalt not see the glory of God; death and damnation shall be thy meed: because thou hadst pleasure in wickedness, and didst not give thy heart to receive, and love, and believe the truth.

Now it remaineth that we hear how Antichrist shall be overthrown. We have seen his pomp and pride, his might and power; that he overlooketh all the world, bindeth all kings and princes and nations to keep his laws, and is himself exempted from all laws of God or man. So mighty and so marvellous is his power: who can declare it? He is called of his own side, *Stupor mundi*, 'The gaze-stock, or wonder of the world;' something less than God, something more than man. But being in all this estate, in the midst of his *Pontificalibus*, so fast mortised, so high built up to the skies, so surely shored, so strongly beset on every side, he shall be suddenly shaken down, and become the shame of the world.

How may this be done? Being so mortised, so built, so shored, and so beset, who shall shake him down? What power shall consume him? Shall it be the great power of kings, or of emperors? They shall give their power and authority to the beast, and fight with the Lamb; (Rev. xvii. 13, 14.) that is, against Christ. Shall it be the authority of bishops and cardinals, and great clerks? All they are linked and joined to him. Shall it be the wisdom and drift of counsellors, and men of law? They be the feed men, and sworn to him. Shall it be the violence and conspiracy of the people? They shall kneel down to him, and honour him, and reverence him as an angel of God. If neither the power of doctors, nor of bishops, nor of archbishops; if not the power of counsellors, and men at law; if not the power of the kings and princes of the world; if

not the power and commotion of the people; if all these shall not abolish him,—what power then is it, wherewith he shall be consumed? It shall be the power of God which shall be revealed from above: *The Lord shall consume him with the spirit of his mouth.*

These words are diversely taken. Some expound them thus: God shall appoint the great angel Michael to set upon Antichrist, and he shall destroy him. Others take these words to be spoken of the day of judgment: and then this shall be fulfilled, when Christ shall say, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire;" (Matt. xxv. 41.) that this is the spirit of the Lord's mouth, wherewith he shall be consumed.

But the Apostle speaketh of the preaching of the Gospel: that God, by his word, which is mighty to do all that whereunto He appointeth it, shall make his doings manifest, and let all the world see, that he was not sent of God; that he did never set forth the glory of God; that he hath not sought the salvation of the people; that in matters of faith, and in all his life, he is adversary to Christ. This is that breath which shall descry his errors and vanities: that is that spirit which shall consume the kingdom of Antichrist. This overthrow is already begun, as our eyes may behold this day.

In like sort speaketh Isaiah the prophet: "He shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked." (Isa xi. 4.) Princes make their conquests by power and strength, by fire, and sword, and engines of war; but God shall beat down his adversary with the rod of his mouth, by the true preaching of his word. His word is mighty: it is his sword; it is his mace: it is the rod of his mouth: it is the breath of his lips. It is of great force; no strength shall withstand it: it shall smite the earth, it shall slay the wicked.

St. Paul saith: "We do not war after the flesh: for the weapons of our warfare are mighty through God to cast down holds." (2 Cor. x. 3, 4.) This sword hath hewn

down, in many places, the cruelty, tyranny, simony, insatiable greediness, the errors, ignorance, darkness, vanities, hypocrisy, superstition, and idolatry, which have been brought into the Church, and used by Antichrist. These were the pillars, and strength, and glory of his kingdom.

And here mark the Apostle's speech. He saith not, God shall convert Antichrist, or change his heart that he may be saved: but he saith, "Whom the Lord shall consume." God's word is almighty. By his word he can do whatsoever pleaseth him. He can make the deaf to hear, and the blind to see. He was able to call the thief upon the cross unto repentance. He was able to raise up Lazarus out of his grave. He is able of stones to raise up children to Abraham. He can throw down every high thing, that is exalted against the glory of God: and will bring kings and princes, and the rulers of the earth, to the obedience of Christ. But of Antichrist it is said: "The Lord shall consume him." Such is the hardness and blindness of his heart, he will not receive the love of the truth, he will not believe the truth of God, that he might be saved. Therefore destruction shall come upon him.

Hereby we are taught what to think, or hope, of reformation of the abuses and errors of the Church of Rome. They have been advertised of them not only by the professors of the Gospel; but also many of themselves have spoken for reformation of sundry abuses. They have kept many councils and assemblies. They have promised redress. They have sat in consultation many years. What one thing have they reformed? See and look over their acts and sessions: they be abroad in print. Hitherto they have reformed nothing; no, not their pardons; no, not their stews: they have hardened their hearts, and set themselves against the Highest. Therefore shall the glory of the Lord shew itself in their destruction. With the breath of His lips they shall be consumed, and brought to nothing.

And shall abolish with the brightness of his coming.—The

Lord shall come, and shall make his enemies his footstool. Then the sun shall be black as a sackcloth, and the moon shall be like blood. There shall be an earthquake. Kings, and great men, and rich men, and every bond-man and free-man, shall hide themselves in dens: they shall say to the hills, and mountains, and rocks, Fall upon us, and hide us from the presence of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.

Then shall Antichrist be quite overthrown. Then his kingdom shall be utterly abolished, and have an end. Then it shall appear who hath sought the glory of Christ, who hath followed the doctrine of the Gospel, and who hath done the true endeavour of a faithful shepherd: then it shall appear who is the wolf, who scattereth and spoileth the flock. St. Jerome saith:* 'The cup of the Lord's right hand (which is the Lord and Saviour) shall compass him about, when he shall slay him with the breath of his mouth, and shall destroy him with the brightness of his coming. Then all the ignominy and shame which he hath heaped upon himself with thoughts, deeds, and words, shall fall upon his glory and pomp: insomuch that he shall be afterwards as vile and contemned of all men, as he was before reputed or highly esteemed of them.'

This might suffice touching the ruin and fall of Antichrist: yet I will add to that hath been spoken, the manner of the fight, and of the victory, and of the triumph which shall follow. The fight is doubtful and dangerous: the victory shall be glorious: the triumph shall be joyful. Here let us call to remembrance the wars which tyrants and ungodly princes have made against the people of God, and what hath followed.

Sennacherib, the great king of the Assyrians, came up against Jerusalem with horses and chariots, and infinite numbers of picked soldiers. The whole country of Jewry was in

* Circumdabit eum calix dextræ Domini, &c.—*Hieron. lib. i. in Habak. ii.*

agony: all the people were astonished with fear to see so many enemies, and themselves so few; to see the enemies so strong, and themselves so weak. They knew not neither where to seek aid, nor how to escape the present danger. Suddenly the Lord sent his angel from heaven to relieve his people. In one night he smote, in the camp of the Assyrians, an hundred four-score and five thousand, which were all dead corpses. (2 Kings xix. 35.) The residue were scattered, and ran away straggling: they knew not where to hide their head. King Sennacherib went his way, and returned: and when he was in safety at home, and worshipping his God Nisroch in the temple, Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons slew him.

Remember the cruel wars which Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, made against God's people. He took their city, spoiled their temple, sacked Jerusalem, and gave the prey to his soldiers. He took the nobles, and gentlemen, and merchants, and yeomen, and led them captives: some of them he took with him to Babylon, and some he sold for money. So great and so terrible was his victory. In the midst of all his pomp, God bereft him of his wit, and astonied * him with deadly madness. He was driven from men, and did eat grass as the oxen; and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown as eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws." (Daniel iv. 33.) He imagined that he was an ox; that he had hoof, and horn, and hair as oxen. He therefore forsook his palace, his princely apparel and dainty fare, and lay abroad, and fed with beasts. So did God avenge the cause of his people.

Who hath not heard of the war which Pharoah had against the Israelites? The battle was strange, and the victory sudden. The people of God were beset with dangers on every side. The wilderness had shut them in. Before

* *Astonied*, or *astoned*; i. e. stunned, or astonished: the word is used several times in the authorized version of the Bible, as well as by many of our best writers from Chaucer to Milton.—EDITOR.

their faces they saw the raging sea, that they could not escape it; behind their backs they did behold Pharoah with his army march after them. If they went forward, they must needs be drowned; if they retired, they must needs be slain. Their enemies were mighty, and they were weak. Suddenly God divided the waters, and made the sea dry land; so that the children of Israel went through the midst of the sea upon dry ground, safely as through a meadow. Pharoah followed after with his sword and spear, to work his fury. Then the sea returned to his course, and drowned the chariots, and horsemen, and all the host of Pharoah; there remained not one of them alive. (Exod. xiv. 28.) Their carcases lay afloat upon the water, and were cast in heaps upon the shore. Such shall be the end of those that hate the Lord. So shall He make his name triumph over all the world.

Let us imagine a battle of two mighty princes, both of great power and of great courage. They meet together in the field, they join battle, both sides encounter together, either part is bent to beat down the other. What an horror is it to hear the braying of horses, the sound of trumpets, the thunder of drums, the roaring of guns, the clashing of swords, the groaning and mournful voice of them which are slain, and the crying and trembling of the people!

Now let us by this make some resemblance of the battle between Christ and Antichrist, between Christ the Son of God, and Antichrist the son of the devil. Either of them is well prepared: they are both mighty, and have both of them soldiers, and knights to attend upon them.

Antichrist shall come from the earth, for all his glory is upon the earth; his power shall be the power of Satan. Christ shall come from the heavens above, even from the bosom of his Father.

What cognisance shall they give? How and by what difference shall their soldiers be discerned? The ensign of Christ shall be everlasting truth: the ensign of Antichrist

shall be falsehood and vanity, and all deceitfulness. By these marks shall either be known.

With what soldiers shall they make their field? They that shall follow Christ, are pure and simple, who have forsaken themselves, their goods, and their lives, and tremble at the word of God. The men of war which fight with Antichrist, and follow him, shall be mighty kings and princes, and powers, and states of the world, as St. John hath said; Rev. xvii. 10—12. And Gregory hath said: 'An army of priests is prepared to wait upon the king of pride.' And hereby may you know him.

What armour shall they have, and with what weapons shall they fight? Antichrist shall furnish his men with spear, and sword, and fire. He shall rejoice in killing, in burning, and in shedding of blood. Christ shall send his men into the field, naked, and armed with patience. They shall take up their cross, and follow Him, ready to suffer whatsoever shall be laid upon them. Their weapons shall be prayers and weeping.

What shall be the pretence of this fight? Antichrist shall come in his own name, to maintain and exalt himself. Christ shall come in his Father's name, to maintain the glory of his Father. What shall they seek? wherefore fight they? what is it they shall desire to maintain? Antichrist shall desire to maintain his own traditions: Christ shall maintain the holy word of God. Christ shall procure the glory of his Father: Antichrist shall maintain his own glory.

In what place shall this battle be? upon what downs or plain, or in what country? Neither in hill, nor in any plain, but in the hearts of the people. There shall the war be: there shall it be fought.

If it were possible, the elect should be confounded. His assault shall be so terrible, that many shall be offended in Christ: many shall deny Christ: many shall be ashamed of him: and the love of many shall wax cold. But blessed is he which continueth to the end.

We have heard briefly of Christ and Antichrist; their estates, their several cognisances, what bands of men they shall have, what armour they shall bear, by what title they shall claim, what they shall seek, and where the fight shall be,—that it shall be made in the consciences of the people. There shall Antichrist sit, there shall he be worshipped as God: there they shall call him the Holy and Most Holy Father: there shall be given to him the power of heaven and earth: there he himself shall rouse himself, and be settled, and shall say, I sit as a prince, I shall never be removed, I cannot fall.

But Christ shall blow him down with the breath of his mouth, and shall abolish him with the brightness of his coming. Christ shall have the upper hand, and destroy him: even that Christ, whom they made the reproach and scorn of the people; whom they reviled, calling him drunkard, and companion unto publicans and harlots; which was so poor and simple; which was oppressed and afflicted, and yet opened not his mouth; which was brought as a sheep to the slaughter, and was killed.

St. John had a revelation, and did see Jesus Christ the Son of God. "And He had in his right hand seven stars, and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword." (Rev. i. 16.) It was sharp and mighty: it "entereth through even to the dividing asunder of the soul and the spirit, and of the joints and the marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." (Heb. iv. 12.) So we see the breath of the mouth of Christ is a sword. This sword shall overthrow Antichrist.

Remember how Dagon fell on his face upon the ground before the ark of the Lord; how he could not stand; how, at that presence, the head and the two palms of his hands were cut off upon the threshold with a fall. (1 Sam. v. 3, 4.) So shall Antichrist fall at the presence of Christ: his arms and his head shall be broken off, and he shall not stand.

Remember that Aaron cast forth his rod before Pharoah

and his servants, and it was turned into a serpent. So did the charmers of Egypt: they cast down every man his rod, and they were also turned into serpents. But Aaron's rod devoured their rods, and consumed them to nothing. (Exod. vii. 11, 12.) Even so shall the truth of Christ consume and bring to nothing the falsehood of Antichrist.

All his glory shall be scattered as the chaff which the wind driveth away, as a thin foam is scattered away with a storm, and as the smoke which is dispersed with the wind, and as the darkness which cannot abide the sight of the sun: it shall be consumed, it shall be defaced, it shall not stand. At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is mighty, to the glory of God the Father: that he is worthy to receive glory, and honour, and power.

But who may better disclose this mystery, and the fall of Antichrist, than John the Evangelist, which leaned on Jesus' bosom, whom Jesus loved, and which was endued with wisdom from above? Let us hear him. "I saw," saith he, "an angel fly in the midst of heaven, having an everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people: saying, with a loud voice, Fear God, give glory to Him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven and earth, and the sea and the fountains of waters. And there followed another angel, saying, It is fallen, it is fallen, Babylon the great city: for she made all nations to drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. And the third angel, following them, said with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead or on his hand, the same shall drink the wine of the wrath of God, and shall be tormented in fire and brimstone, before the holy angels, and before the Lamb: they shall have no rest day nor night." (Rev. xiv. 6—11.)

Again: "the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air, and there came a loud voice out of the temple of heaven from the throne, saying, It is done: (that is, it is concluded, judgment is given, it shall stand for ever.) And there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and there was a great earthquake. And the great city was rent into three parts, and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath." (Rev. xvi. 17—19.)

"Then one of the angels talked with me, saying, Come, I will shew thee the damnation of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters, with whom have committed fornication the kings of the earth; and the inhabitants of the earth are drunken with the wine of her fornication." (Rev. xvii. 1, 2.) And in the same chapter he saith: "These have all one mind, and shall give their power and authority to the beast; (that is, to Antichrist.) Thus the kings and all princes (as squires to his body) shall fight against the Lamb. But the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings." (vers. 13, 14.)

"I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great power, so that the earth was lightened with his glory; and he cried out mightily with a loud voice, saying: It is fallen, it is fallen, Babylon the great city (the harbour and palace of Antichrist), and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of all foul spirits." (Rev. xviii. 1, 2.) "And I heard another voice from heaven say, Go out of her, my people, (believe her not, do not as she commandeth you,) that ye be not partakers in her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins are come up into heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. Reward her even as she hath rewarded you, and give her double according to her works; and in the cup that she hath filled unto you, fill her the double. Inasmuch as she glorified herself, and lived in pleasure, so much give you to her torment and sorrow. For she saith in her heart, I sit being alone: the world is mine;

no ill shall touch me. Therefore shall her plagues come at one day, death, and sorrow, and famine, and she shall be burnt with fire; for strong is the Lord God which will condemn her. And the kings of the earth which have committed fornication and lived in pleasure with her, shall bewail her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning; and shall stand afar off for fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, the great city Babylon, the mighty city; for in one hour is thy judgment come! And the merchants of the earth shall weep and wail over her: for no man buyeth their ware any more; the ware of gold and silver, and of precious stones, and of pearls, and of fine linen, and of purple, and of silk, and of scarlet, and of all manner of thyine-wood, and of all vessels of ivory, and of all vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and of iron, and of marble, and of cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and servants, and souls of men." (vers. 4—13.) No man any more shall buy her parchment, wax, and seals: no man shall buy her orders, her dispensations, pluralities, totquot, non-residence, perinde valere.* No man shall buy her concubines, her oil, salt, holy water, holy bread: no man shall buy her palls, her agnos Dei, her jubilees, masses, trentals, and pardons: no man shall any more buy of her forgiveness of their sins, and life everlasting. No man shall regard her, no man shall buy, or seek to get, this merchandise of her any more. The merchants of these wares shall stand afar off, for fear of her plagues, and say: Alas, that great city was clothed in reins,† and scarlet, and purple, and gold, and diamonds, and precious stones; in one hour is all thy glory stript from thee! O, what city under heaven was like unto thee? Thou wast the great city,

* These are the names of various Papal licences, subject to much abuse.—EDITOR.

† *Reins;* probably trappings, the emblems and decorations of government.—EDITOR.

the noble and the holy city! "Then a mighty angel took up a stone, like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, With such violence shall the great city Babylon be cast, and shall be found no more: (she shall be out of remembrance, they shall seek the place where she stood, and not find her.) The voice of harpers and musicians shall no more be heard in her: the light of a candle shall shine no more in her. Her merchants, officers, and votaries, were the great men of the earth; and by her enchantments were all nations deceived. And in her was found the blood of the prophets, and of the saints, and of all that were slain upon earth." (vers. 21—24.)

"Then I heard a great voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying: Hallelujah! salvation, and glory, and honour, and power be to the Lord our God. For He hath condemned the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants shed by her hand. And again they said, Hallelujah! And the smoke rose up for evermore; and the four-and-twenty elders fell down, and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen, Hallelujah! Then a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants both small and great. And I heard like the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of strong thunderings, saying, Hallelujah! for our Lord God Almighty hath reigned." (Rev. xix. 1—7.) Let us be glad and rejoice, and give glory to Him: for she is fallen, she is fallen, Babylon that great city; there she lieth, the mother of filth and fornication. There lieth Antichrist the man of sin, the son of perdition, which is an adversary, which hath sat in the temple of God, and exalted himself above all that is called God: that wicked and lawless man lieth there. The Lamb, the root of Jesse, the lion of the tribe of Judah, hath overcome, and gotten the victory. He is worthy to receive the glory and honour. Then shall the apostles, and the prophets, and the angels say, Praise,

and honour, and glory be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for evermore. We thank thee, we give thanks to thee, O God, which art, and wast, and shalt be. Thou hast avenged the blood of the prophets and martyrs: thou hast destroyed them that have defiled the earth. Thy name be blessed for ever! Amen, Hallelujah! Such glee and triumph shall be in heaven for the overthrow of Antichrist.

Thus have I, by occasion of the Apostle's words, spoken of the coming and of the kingdom of Antichrist. And, lest we might be deceived as touching his person, I have said what he should be, what things he shall do, of what estate he shall be, what countenance he shall carry, in what place he shall sit, at what time shall be his coming, by what means he shall prevail, who they be that shall believe in him, what power shall beat him down, what end he shall have, what triumph shall follow upon his fall.

I have told you that he shall be the overthrow of the world, the confusion of the church, the son of perdition: that he shall destroy himself, and be the destruction of others.

I have told you he shall be a reverend father, and wear a mitre; and be a bishop, and a bishop of bishops. So saith Gregory, so Jerome, so Augustine, and Bernard, and others. And cannot we tell who it is, that calleth himself an universal bishop, the bishop of all churches? Do we not hear of such an one? Do we not know him? Whatsoever he be, wheresoever he dwell, what countenance soever he bear, he is Antichrist.

I have told you he shall sit in the temple of God, in the consciences of the people: that the people shall hear, credit, follow, and honour him, as if he were God; and think it sin and damnation to break his lore.*

I have told you where he shall be stalled, where his chief

* His *lore*; i. e. his instruction, or tradition.—EDITOR.

place shall be, where he may be seen. St. John saith, he shall sit in a city built upon seven hills; that city is the city of Rome. Rome is so built: Rome is set upon seven hills. Dame Sibylla saith, Antichrist shall sit by the water of Tiber: and Tiber is a river that runneth by Rome. Joachimus Abbas saith, Antichrist is long since born at Rome, and shall be advanced in the Apostolic see: he is born, and sheweth himself, not at Babylon, not at Constantinople, but at Rome. These be plain speeches. If any man doubt this, let him read their books: they be extant abroad. Antichrist shall sit in Peter's chair, and Rome shall be the seat of his kingdom.

I have told you he shall come when the state and majesty of the empire shall be weakened. Antichrist shall possess the emperor's lands, and bear the sword, and wear his crown, and shall make the emperor fall down, and worship him, and kiss his feet. Hath there ever been any such bishop in the world? Hath there, I say, ever been any such? If ever there were any such, St. Paul saith, the same is Antichrist.

I told you the world shall fall down, and reverence him, and shall seek life and salvation at his hands. John saith, they shall cry, "O, who is like the beast?" Who is like our holy father? who is so wise, so learned, so holy? They shall follow him whithersoever he shall lead them: they shall eat whatsoever he will give them. And they which shall do thus are such as have no feeling, no care, no love to the truth of God. Therefore God forsaketh them, and leaveth them to follow lies.

I told you he shall prevail by falsehood, and by feigned miracles; by bulls, by pardons, by purgatories, and by such other devices and shifts of Satan.

I told you he shall be contrary to Christ, in sacraments, in sacrifice, in prayers, in life, in doctrine, in religion, in the whole form and order of the Church. He shall shut that Christ hath opened: he shall open that Christ hath shut.

He shall curse that Christ hath blessed; and bless that Christ hath cursed. No man shall be accounted faithful, no man Catholic, no man the son of the church, no man may be saved, without him. Such credit and countenance shall he bear.

I told you he shall be confounded and beaten down by the force and power of God's mighty word. His word is omnipotent. It shall disclose the works of darkness: it shall hew down idolatry, superstition, and the whole kingdom of Antichrist, as our eyes do see this day. Blessed be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, his mighty hand hath wrought these things: he hath triumphed in the name of his Christ. He will bless the things he hath begun. He will overthrow the whole power of Antichrist by his presence, and by the glory of his coming. Then shall it appear who is the successor of Peter, who is the true vicar of Christ, and who is Antichrist.

VERSE 13.—*But we ought to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because that God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and the faith of truth:*

14.—*Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

God hath chosen you from the beginning: his election is sure for ever. The Lord knoweth who are his. You shall not be deceived with the power and subtilty of Antichrist; you shall not fall from grace, you shall not perish.

This is the comfort which abideth with the faithful, when they behold the fall of the wicked: when they see them forsake the truth, and delight in fables; when they see them return to their vomit, and to wallow again in the mire. When we see these things in others, we must say, Alas, they are examples for me, and they are lamentable examples.

Let him that standeth, take heed that he fall not. But God hath loved me, and hath chosen me to salvation. His mercy shall go before me, and his mercy shall follow in me. His mercy shall guide my feet, and stay me from falling. If I stay by myself, I stay by nothing; I must needs come to ground. Although all the world should be drowned with the waves of ungodliness, yet will I hold by the boat of his mercy, which shall safely preserve me. If all the world be set on fire with the flame of wickedness, yet will I creep into the bosom of the protection of my Lord; so shall no flame hurt me. He hath loved me, he hath chosen me, he will keep me. Neither the example nor the company of others, nor the enticing of the devil, nor mine own sensual imaginations, nor sword, nor fire, is able to separate me from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. This is the comfort of the faithful. So shall they wash their hands in the blood of the Lamb.

Therefore saith Paul, You are my children; I have begotten you in Christ: God hath given you unto me: He hath made the gospel which is come unto you by my ministry, fruitful in you: *I ought to give God thanks always for you.* Whatsoever falleth upon others, although others fall and perish, although they forsake Christ and follow after Antichrist, yet God hath loved you, and given his Son for you: He hath chosen you and prepared you to salvation, and hath written your names in the book of life.

But how may we know that God hath chosen us? how may we see this election? or how may we feel it? The Apostle saith, *through sanctification, and the faith of truth:* these are tokens of God's election. Have you received the gospel? It is the light of the world; it teacheth us to know that God is God, and that we are his people. The credit you give to the gospel is a witness of your election.

We believe whatsoever God speaketh, because it is

the word of God: for His word is truth. We believe that Christ is the Lamb of God, that He hath taken away the sins of the world; because it is the word of God. (John i. 29.) We believe that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin; because it is the word of God. (1 John . 7.) We believe Christ came to save sinners; because it is the word of God. (Matth. ix. 2.) We believe God will defer his wrath, and will shew mercy for himself, for his own name's sake; because it is the word of God. (Isai. xlviii. 9.) We believe they that trust in the Lord shall not be confounded; because it is the word of God. (Psalm xxii. 5.) We believe we are saved by grace through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast: because it is the word of God. (Eph. ii. 8, 9.) We believe that without faith it is impossible to please God; and again, that faith cometh by hearing; and again, that it is the gift of God: because it is the word of God. (Heb. xi. 6; Rom. x. 17; Phil. ii. 13.) It is the truth.

We believe that Antichrist shall be confounded, and bereft of all his glory; because the word of the Lord hath spoken it. (Rev. xviii. xix.) His word is righteousness and truth. We will always believe that is true: therefore we cannot but believe the word of God.

Faith knoweth no falsehood; it beholdeth the truth only: and not all truth, but the truth of God. It is not settled upon vanities, nor upon errors. Unless it be truth by the word of God, whatsoever thou holdest in opinion is not to be called faith. The Turk is settled in errors: he persuadeth himself he is rightly settled; he calleth his opinions faith and belief. Yet this is not faith, because it is not the faith of truth; it hath not the word of God to assure it.

Therefore when men will say, Believe our masses, believe our sacrifices, believe our transubstantiations and our real presences; believe us whatsoever we say, believe that we

cannot err; believe that you are in a good belief, if you say you believe as the Church believeth, though you know not how or what the Church believeth: they abuse and mock the people of God. There is no truth in this doctrine: it never passed out of the mouth of God. God ordained not masses, nor that the priest should offer sacrifice for the quick and dead. Therefore it is no matter of faith; it is folly and vanity, it is ungodliness, it is error: it hath no substance. He that receiveth such doctrine, maketh much of a shadow; he cannot hold it.

Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. The word of God is truth. The gospel is the word of God, and the power of God to save them that believe.

The belief of the gospel is laid up in our hearts by the Spirit of God: he bringeth us to the knowledge of the truth. This Spirit beareth witness unto our spirit, that we are the sons of God. This Spirit teacheth us to withdraw our minds from worldly cares, to call our doings to a reckoning, to think of the dreadful day of judgment, to repent for our former sins, and to serve God in holiness and righteousness. This Spirit sheweth us the mercy of God, helpeth us to pray and prayeth for us, is our Comforter, helpeth our infirmities, and maketh us know the things that are given us of God.

This did David see, when he prayed, "Create a clean heart in me, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." (Psalm li. 10.) My heart is sinful, my heart is foul: renew it with thy Spirit; thy Spirit is right, he shall make my heart clean. Again: "Take not thy Holy Spirit from me." (ver. 11.) I am thy servant, and the son of thy handmaiden: turn thy face away from my sins; behold me, and receive me in thy mercy. "Restore me to the light of thy countenance. Open thou my lips, and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise. Establish me with thy free Spirit." (vers. 12; 14.)

This strength we gather in God by his Spirit. This comforteth us in all temptations, and beareth witness with our spirit, that we be the children of God; that God hath chosen us, and doth love us, and hath prepared us to salvation; that we are the heirs of his glory; that God will keep us as the apple of his eye, that he will defend us, and we shall not perish.

VERSE 15.—*Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and keep all the instructions which ye have been taught, either by word or by our epistle.*

God hath set you in a race: let no man hinder you, let no man keep you from the goal. Stand fast, and keep that doctrine which you have received. When I was present with you, I taught you by word of mouth; when I was away from you, I taught you by letters. I am careful for you. I bear you in my heart, and love you in Christ Jesus. He hath given me charge over you, he will require you at my hands. I have cleansed and garnished your hearts by the word of truth: take heed, take heed the wicked spirit come not, and bring seven spirits worse than himself, and enter in, and dwell with you, and the end of you be worse than the beginning.

Remember Lot's wife: she went not forth straight in the way appointed her, but looked back behind her; and she became a pillar of salt, and so continueth unto this day. A terrible example to those who have set their hand to the plough, and look back again, and have made themselves unworthy the kingdom of heaven! God will forsake such, and make their hearts hard as a stone.

You are the corn of the Lord's field; God hath blessed you: grow then, and be fruitful until the harvest, that you may be gathered into the Lord's barn. You are the light of God, which God himself hath kindled: let no puff

of wind put you out. You are the house of God; God hath built you upon a rock: let no violence nor tempestuous weather beat you down.

I have spoken to you, I have written to you; I have shewed you the whole counsel of God. The word which I spake to you is the word of God. I testify before the Lord, and call God to witness unto my soul, that it is the truth of God, and not any device of man. You did believe it; you received it not as the word of men, but, as it is indeed, the word of God.

Become not now unfaithful, although you spy many infirmities in your teachers; although you see them fall into offences, and wax covetous, and give evil example in their life and conversation. Although you see the faith of many shaken, and that they have put away from them a good conscience, and turn back from the love of the gospel which they once seemed to profess, and so are gone out from among you; yet stand you upright. Hold fast the doctrine which you have received, and continue in the things which you have learned, and be persuaded that they are able to make you wise unto salvation, through the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

Christ saith, "Woe be to the world because of offences: whosoever shall offend one of these little ones, which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." (Matt. xviii. 6, 7.) And again, he saith, "Blessed is he which is not offended in me." (Matt. xi. 6.) Therefore work your own salvation in trembling and in fear. Blessed is he that abideth with Christ in temptations, and continueth faithful unto the end.

VERSE 16.—*Now the same Jesus Christ our Lord, and our God even the Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation, and good hope through grace,*

17.—*Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every word and good work.*

After his exhortation that they would stand fast, and continue faithful unto the end, he turneth himself to God, and prayeth Him to look upon them mercifully down from heaven, and to fulfil the work begun, and to increase and multiply his grace in them.

So ought all preachers and servants of God to do in their sermons. For, alas! what are we, what is our word, what is our labour, without the assistance of God? We are only the voice of a crier in the wilderness: we call upon the people to prepare the way of the Lord, and to make his paths straight: we give warning, that the Lord is even at hand. He that teacheth is nothing; he that planteth is nothing; he that watereth is nothing: our tongue is nothing; our word is nothing; our wit* is nothing: Peter is nothing; Paul is nothing. It is God which openeth the hearts of the people, and maketh them tremble at his words: it is God which giveth the increase, and maketh his word to be of force.

The Prophet saith: "The Lord gave the word: great was the company of preachers." (Psalm lxviii. 11.) It is the work of God, both to make his word mighty, and to make the people to receive it, and yield unto it. He giveth us hearts to feel the comfort of his word, and to yield our obedience in doing as the word requireth. For He is the Father of lights, from whom all gifts are poured down upon us. We are the children of Adam: we are flesh and blood, and nothing but vile clay and ashes. Our eyes are dim, our senses dull, and our hearts heavy. Christ telleth us truly: "Without me ye can do nothing;" (John xv. 5.) neither hear the word, nor believe it.

* Our *wit;* that is, our intellect, or ingenuity, or judgment.—EDITOR.

I mark your presence, that you are many gathered together this day in this place. Every man seemeth to stand with bent countenance, and earnest looks, and desirous to learn. And albeit I which speak am but a worm, unworthy to creep upon the earth; yet the word which we have heard is the word of God, the word of comfort, and the word of life. But God knoweth in all this company how many have ears to hear.

In the Acts of the Apostles, when God opened their hearts, they understood the Scriptures: before, they heard, and knew not what they heard. (Luke xiv. 45.) Paul preached: Lydia, a woman which sold purple, heard him: the Lord opened her heart, that she hearkened unto Paul: then she understood his words, and believed. (Acts xvi. 14.) This comfort is of God, who hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation; he will give you understanding hearts, and will stablish you in every word and good work.

CHAPTER III.

VERSE 1.—*Furthermore, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free passage, and be glorified, even as it is with you.*

PRAY for me, that I may be a faithful servant, doing the will of God from my heart; that he will open my mouth boldly to publish the secret of the Gospel, and to declare the riches and glory of his kingdom. For of myself I am nothing: I have not the key of David, I cannot give light unto the world, and am not able to open the hearts of the people.

That the word of God may have free passage.—He saith not, Pray for us, that my word may have pas-

sage; or that my name may be spoken of and glorified; or that the people may behold my doings, and talk of me. For "we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Christ's sake." (2 Cor. iv. 5.) I am but an unprofitable servant. I am the poor ox that treadeth out the wheat: I am the poor crier to proclaim the will of the Lord.

Pray you that the word of the Lord may have free passage; that the Gospel of Christ may be glorified, that the hearts of the people may be ready and greedy to receive it; that the kingdom of heaven suffer violence, and the violent take it by force; that the word may so possess the hearts of the people, as fire hath passage through stubble; that it may shine as the sun-beams over all the world; that it may be known from east to west, and from north to south.

In this sort pray that the word may have a glorious entrance into you, and also among others. Herein shall appear the love you have to the saints, and the zeal you bear to the house of God, when you wish others to be partakers of this blessedness with you: when you seek not your own glory, but the building of the Church of Christ: when you pray that God will be merciful to others, as unto you; that a light may be given to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death; that they may know the time of their visitation.

Such a prayer made David: "God be merciful unto us, and bless us, and cause his face to shine among us: that they may know thy way upon earth, thy saving health among all nations. Let the people praise thee, O God, let all the people praise thee." (Psal. lxvii. 1—3.) Thus did Jeremiah pray: "Turn thou us unto thee, O Lord, and we shall be turned." (Lam. v. 21.) Give us a new heart and a new spirit: incline our hearts unto thy testimonies, that we may know and fear thy name.

So did Christ teach us to pray: "Hallowed be thy name,"

(Matt. vi. 9.) among the infidels which know thee not: let thy name be had in reverence among all people: "thy kingdom come, thy will be done." (ver. 10.) There is no other God but only thou: let all the earth come and worship thee. Even so must we also pray, that the word of God may have free passage, and his name be glorified in all places.

VERS. 2.—*And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and evil men: for all men have not faith.*

3.—*But the Lord is faithful, which will establish you, and keep you from all evil.*

4.—*And we are persuaded of you through the Lord, that ye both do, and will do, the things which we command you.*

5.—*And the Lord guide your hearts to the love of God, and the waiting for of Christ.*

From unreasonable and evil men:—which conspire against the Lord and his Anointed; which blaspheme that good name that is called upon us. Such were Jannes and Jambres, which resisted Moses in the time of the law. Such were they, in the time of the prophets, which said: "The word that thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the Lord, we will not hear it of thee. But we will do whatsoever thing goeth out of our own mouth; as, to burn incense to the queen of heaven, as we have done, both we and our fathers, our kings and our princes." (Jer. xliv. 16, 17.) Such were, in the time of the Gospel, the Scribes and the Pharisees, "which made the commandment of God of no authority by their tradition:" (Matt. xv. 16.) which turned darkness into light, and light into darkness. Such was Alexander the coppersmith. Such were others. The whole scriptures are full of such. They were false prophets, false apostles, false brethren. They caused division in the Church. They went out to preach in the name of Christ, but inwardly they were ravening wolves.

Such were in the days of our fathers, and such there are in our days: such Jannes' and Jambres', such idol-worshippers, such scorners of God's word, such Scribes and Pharisees, such Alexanders, such false prophets, false apostles, and false brethren, we have more than a good many in our days. They pretend the Gospel: no man more. In company of Protestants, they will be Protestants; in company of others, they are quite become contrary. They come to the church, and receive the holy communion: they resort secretly to corners, where they hear mass. They like the one, and like the other. They like the light, and they love darkness, and make no difference between them. These are ready to serve Christ, and also ready to serve Antichrist: faithful neither to God, nor to Baal. And this is among many counted the highest point of wisdom, to be able so to colour and hide himself, that you shall not know what profession he is of, to what Church he joineth himself, what religion he holdeth, whose word or Gospel he followeth, in what God he believeth. Such there are: and they only be the singular men, reckoned the fine wits and cunning fellows of the world.

This is to be lamented, that, in a Christian estate, there should be any such: that they, at whose hands God shall require a straiter account than of others, because He hath given them the use of greater talents,—either of wit, or of learning, or of preferment, or of riches,—should so mispend the good gifts of God, or use his talents to such evil purpose, that they, more than all other, should devise means how to deny Christ among men, and, as much as in them lieth, to seek to crucify again the Lord of glory.

The Jews deal not so wickedly, the Turks deal not so traitorously. The Jew, although his case be miserable, and his heresies dangerous, yet he is earnest in his folly: he will not dissemble his profession. The Turk is faithful unto Mahomet, and will not deny or forsake him.

These false brethren and dissembling Christians are worse than Jews and Turks. They are void of conscience, void of faith, void of fear, of shame, and of the grace of God. They are filthy swine, shameless dogs, and the enemies of the cross of Christ. These hinder the passage of the Gospel, and blaspheme the holy word of their salvation, and do all that in them lieth to abolish the light of God's truth. St. Paul telleth us, "All men have not faith:" many hearts be naked and void of faith; many seem to live, and yet are dead.

Howsoever these men carry out their doings in this life, they cannot mock God. He knoweth who are his. Christ shall say unto these cunning-witted dissemblers, "Depart from me, ye hypocrites, I know you not. You shall receive your portion with the devil and his angels."

Pray that we may be delivered from such unreasonable and evil men: that they stop not the free passage of the Gospel; that they may have no power against the glory of God. Then shall it appear that God is faithful in all his words, and holy in all his works; that his truth and mercy shall last for ever. He will establish us in all goodness, and defend us from all evil: he will keep us from all the power of Satan; he will keep us from all temptation, that the wicked shall not prevail against us.

And we are persuaded of you through the Lord, that ye both do, and will do, the things which we warn you of.—You know what commandments we gave you by the Lord. I spake unto you the will of God, and not mine own. I was unto you but a messenger, to deliver unto you such an errand as God sent unto you: I hope ye have received it in such duty as becometh, and that you both do, and will hereafter, obey it. I am your physician: the receipt which I have given you is sovereign, and shall work your health: I trust it tarrieth with you, and you brook it well. I have spoken unto you in the name of God: His name is holy:

He will cause that my labour shall not be in vain, but will make it fruitful in you.

Although all men have not faith, yet all men are not void of faith. Although there be many the children of this world, yet there be some the children of light. He that is of God, heareth the word of God. They that be the sons of God, are obedient to the wisdom of God their Father.

God guide your hearts, that you may love him: that you may know what good God hath wrought unto your souls: that you may see the depth of his mercy: that in all your tribulation and adversity under the cross, and in your death, you may look for the day of Christ; when the trumpet shall be sounded, the graves shall be opened, the dead bodies shall come forth, and we shall be taken up into the clouds. Then shall he change our vile body, that it may be like his glorious body: then shall we be like the angels of God; we shall see God face to face, and rest with him for ever.

VERSE 6.—*We warn you, brethren, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh inordinately, and not after the instruction which he received of us.*

The kingdom of God is like to a draw-net cast into the sea, that gathereth of all kind of things: (Matt. xiii. 47.) it is like a field, wherein groweth both corn and weeds. (ver. 26.) Sundry virgins went out to wait upon the spouse: some were wise, some were foolish; some had oil in their lamps, some had none. Many came to the marriage: some had their wedding-garment, some lacked it. Many are called, but few are chosen. Some bear the name of Christians, yet live in usury to the spoil and undoing of their brethren. Some bear the name of Christians, yet live in adultery and

fornication, as the heathen which know not God. These be they, through whom the name of God is evil spoken of.

Therefore, saith Paul, I warn you, that you withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh inordinately. Forsake him, refuse his company, eat not with him, drink not with him, that so he may be ashamed of his filthiness. Receive him not to your house, nor bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed, is partaker of his evil deeds.

Have you no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but even reprove them rather. A little leaven doth leaven the whole lump. The wrath of God shall come, not only upon those which commit wickedness, but also upon all those which consent to the working thereof. Among the Corinthians one had committed incest, and taken his father's wife. St. Paul saith, "Let such one be delivered unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." (1 Cor. v. 5.)

Deliver him up to Satan. Mark his words, and in what case he speaketh them. For they that delight in wickedness, and are sold over unto sin; which are filthy, and increase in filthiness; they are not of God, they have no part in the Church of God. The devil and Satan hath power over them: therefore deliver them up unto Satan.

The reward of sin is death: the soul which hath sinned shall die. For this cause hath the Church of God ordained excommunication; that he which hath done wickedly may be ashamed: that others who are guiltless may be afraid: and that the heavy displeasure of God may be avoided.

We warn you (saith he) *in the name of the Lord.*—You know me, and my name, and that I am an Apostle of Christ. But the commandment which I give you is in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. I warn you, by the glorious day of his coming, that you withdraw yourselves from every one that liveth inordinately. Receive him not to your com-

pany, bid him not God speed, that you be not partakers of his evil; that he may know his filthiness, and be ashamed.

Yet let us pray for such, that they may be sorry; that they may know whom they have offended, and turn again unto the Lord. For God would not the death of a sinner, but rather that he repent of his wickedness, and live. The mercy of God is above all his works.

VERSE 7.—*For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves inordinately among you;*

8.—*Neither took we bread of any man for nought: but we wrought with labour and travail night and day, because we would not be chargeable to any of you:*

9.—*Not because we have not authority, but that we might make ourselves an example unto you to follow us.*

10.—*For even when we were with you, this we warned you of, that if there were any which would not work, that he should not eat.*

11.—*For we hear that there are some which walk among you inordinately, and work not at all, but are busy-bodies.*

12.—*Therefore them that are such, we warn and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that they work with quietness, and eat their own bread.*

13.—*And ye, brethren, be not weary in well-doing.*

Here Paul maketh his speech against those, who, under the pretence of the Gospel, lived idly, and would not labour. Take an example of me: I lived not idly, I earned my bread, I was not chargeable to any. Do you as you have us for an example. So ought the servants of God to live, that their well-doing may be a pattern for the people to follow.

St. Paul telleth Timothy, "A bishop must be unreproachable:" (1 Tim. iii. 2.) He saith not, *without sin;* for no man is without sin: but, *without rebuke.* And

again: "Let no man despise thy youth; but be unto them that believe an example in word, in conversation, in love, in spirit, in faith, and in pureness." (1 Tim. iv. 12.) And unto Titus, the Bishop of Candia, he saith: "In all things shew thyself an example of good works, with uncorrupt doctrine, with gravity, integrity, and with the wholesome word which cannot be condemned; that he which withstandeth may be ashamed, having nothing concerning you to speak evil of." (Tit. ii. 7, 8.)

So, in this place to the Thessalonians, he saith, You behold my conversation, how I have lived among you: be ye followers of me; let me be the pattern for you to follow. Such should be the speech of all those who are bishops and ministers of the Church of God. They must walk so uprightly, that they may be unto all others the patterns of good life, of liberality, of mercy, and of love. They must carry the ark of the Lord, that the people may follow them.

We behaved not ourselves inordinately, &c.—Whereas I was an Apostle of Christ, the first-fruits of the Gospel, a chosen vessel, called from above, and set apart from mine own business to be the ambassador of God into the world, and had so much to do; yet I used my hands, and pained my body, to get my bread. I lived like one of Adam's children in travail of my body, and sought my bread in the sweat of my brows.

Not that I might not lawfully have lived upon you, and have required my maintenance at your hands. It was lawful for me to have done so: for the workman is worthy of his hire. God hath appointed, that he which teacheth the Gospel, shall live by the Gospel.

This matter St. Paul reasoneth with the Corinthians: "Have we not power to eat and drink? or have we not power to lead about a wife, a sister, as well as the rest of the Apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas? Who goeth a warfare at any time at his own cost? who

planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?" (1 Cor. ix. 4—7.) I might eat and drink at your charge, and require charges of you for me and mine. I am the soldier of God; Christ is my captain: I have planted the vine of the Lord of hosts among you: I have fed you; you are the sheep of the house of Israel. The hire due to the soldier, the fruit whereof he should eat which keepeth the vine, and the milk which Christ's sheep yield to their feeder, is nothing else but your charitable benevolence towards the servants of Christ. Again: "It is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn." (ver. 9.) He travaileth for thee, that thou mayest live: suffer him to lick a little for his pains. We are the Lord's oxen; we thresh forth his corn. "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we reap your carnal things?" (ver. 11.) We are God's husbandmen: we travail and take pains; we plough, we sow, we harrow; we are abroad in wind and weather, in storm, in hail, in lightning and thunder. No man knoweth the care the poor husbandman taketh. Winter nor summer, our work is never at an end. Now, if we by our labour minister to you the bread which cometh from heaven, is it much that you give us the bread of the earth? "Do you not know, that they which wait at the altar, are partakers with the altar?" (ver. 13.) It hath so seemed good unto God: it is his appointment, he hath established it by his law; and it is most agreeable to the law of reason and nature.

Yet this is also to be weighed in the consideration hereof; that whosoever asketh the pay of a soldier, must buckle his armour, and go a warfare. He that drinketh the wine, must plant the grape: he that requireth milk, must feed the flock: he that will not be muzzled, must thresh the corn. He that reapeth carnal things, must sow spiritual things: he that requireth the bread of the earth, must minister to his hearers the bread of heaven: he that will live

of the sacrifice, or of the altar, or of the gospel, must offer the sacrifice, wait upon the altar, and teach the gospel.

He that teacheth not the gospel, nor careth for the teaching; he that serveth not the altar, nor careth for the serving; he that goeth not on warfare, that planteth not, that feedeth not; that thresheth not, that plougheth not, that travaileth not, that taketh no pains, that abideth not lighting, thunder, wind, weather, storm, and hail; he that careth not to do these things, I can make no account of him. He is not within Paul's reckoning. The workman is worthy of his hire: but what right hath he to the hire, which is not a workman?

I might, saith he, have received maintenance at your hands. But I took nothing, that I might be an example for you to follow; that none should live idly, but that they work with quietness, and eat their own bread. Idleness is the mother of all mischief. An idle pack* is as if he were already dead. His feet serve him not to travel: his hands help him not to work: his eyes serve him not to see his estate: his heart regardeth not the time and misery of his age. Beggary falleth upon him, and gnaweth his bones; but he feeleth it not: for he is as if he were already dead.

Solomon saith: "He that followeth idleness, hath no understanding." (Prov. xii. 11.) And again: "He that followeth idleness, shall be filled with poverty." (Prov. xxviii. 19.) He is unprofitable to himself and unto others: his children shall beg at every door. Again he saith: "The slothful will not plough because of winter: he shall beg in summer, but have nothing." (Prov. xx. 4.) That is; men that have received increase of God's blessing by taking pains, shall deny bread unto such, and upbraid them for their idleness. and so drive them to labour. They

* *A pack* is, properly, a deceiver; thence a loose lazy sort of fellow, an incumbrance on his family and neighbourhood.—EDITOR.

will say, as it is devised* that the ant said, in like case, to the grasshopper: 'In the summer thou didst nothing but sing, therefore thou mayest starve in the winter.'

These extremities be great, if a man will weigh them advisedly. Yet Ecclesiasticus saith further: "Idleness bringeth much evil." (Ecclus. xxxiii. 27.) It is an evil teacher. He that doth nothing, is ill occupied. The mind of man is ever stirring, and doing somewhat: if it be not doing well, it is doing ill.

Water is clear and fair, fresh and comfortable: yet if it stand still in a hole, or be kept long in a vessel whence it hath no issue, it will rot, and smell, and be unwholesome. Even so it fareth with the sons of Adam: if they have nothing to do, no way to bestow their wit, they will rot and prove unwholesome, and devise mischief all the day long.

What is it that filleth the prisons, and bringeth so many to the gallows, and causeth so many parents to bewail the untimely death of their children, but idleness? When the poor wretches have received their judgment, and come to the place of execution, and stand on the ladder, what counsel give they to young men and to children, but to beware of idleness? What is cause of such and so many diseases in the body? Ask the physicians, and they will tell you, idleness. Whereof rise mutterings in cities against magistrates? whereof rise rebellions in kingdoms against princes? You can give no greater cause thereof, than idleness.

"Behold," saith the Lord, "this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness." (Ezek. xvi. 49.) This was it that called for fire down from heaven, and wasted so many cities into ashes. Christ saith: "Of every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give an account thereof at the day of judgment." (Matt. xii. 36.) If we shall make account for our idle

* *Devised;* i. e. invented by way of fable.—EDITOR.

words, what shall we do for our idle hands, for our idle feet, for our idle body, for our idle soul? What account for all our idleness shall we make at the day of judgment?

We warned you (saith the Apostle) *that if any would not work, the same should not eat.*—This is a hard saying. Yet saith Paul, I myself have kept it. I have fulfilled it in mine own body. He doth not say, If any be sick, or weak, or impotent, and cannot work; but, If any be idle, and will not work; to such an one give not to eat: that so he may see the danger of idleness, "and work with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth." (Eph. iv. 28.) It is not lawful to give them the bread of the Church, and the alms ordained for relief of the poor. This bread they may not eat.

But you will say, Kings and counsellors, bishops, preachers, and all other sorts of learned men, neither plough, nor sow, nor hedge, nor ditch, nor use such painful labour of the body: they sit at rest, and live idly. They that so think, are deceived. The toil which princes take, and the great cares wherewith they are occupied, pass all other cares in the world.

St. Paul calleth the office of a bishop a good work. (1 Tim. iii. 1.) If a bishop or minister study the scriptures, preach the gospel, catechise the children, and take a care of the souls of God's people: if he sow the Lord's field, feed the Lord's flock, thresh the Lord's corn, and walk before the people carefully: if he have the care of the churches, and can say with the Apostle, Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burnt not? (2 Cor. xi. 28, 29.) any offence that is given to my brother, is to me as a fire, or as a torment: if he be instant in season and out of season: if he do the work of an evangelist, and make his ministry fully known: (2 Tim. iv. 2; 5.) he shall find himself occupied, and not be idle.

The master of the ship seemeth to be idle, to sit still, and

to do nothing. He stirreth not the pump, he driveth not the oars, he soundeth not the deep, he rideth not the ropes, he scaleth not the shrouds, he runneth not hither and thither, forward or backward, under the hatches or above. He sitteth still, holdeth his peace, and looketh upon the loadstar, and in appearance doth nothing. But his labour passeth all the rest. Without his labour, all the pains which the other mariners take, were lost. Were it not for his labour, the ship would soon strike upon rocks, and be stayed in the sands, and they all should perish.

Even so fareth it in the state of princes, and of their counsellors: they seem to do nothing, yet they do all things which is for the peace, and the wealth, and the safeguard of all the people.

Be not weary in well-doing.—Many occasions do discourage you to do well. The world is full of lets: but be you stedfast, unmoveable, and abundant always in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as you know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord. Stand fast, and keep the instructions which you have been taught. Distribute to the necessity of the saints. Do good unto all men, especially to them that be of the household of faith.

Live not after the lusts of men in wantonness, drunkenness, and gluttony, and in abominable idolatry. Though they speak evil of you, because you run not with them unto the same excess of riot; though the devil cast you into prison, and there you have tribulation; be you faithful unto death. They that have afflicted you, shall give an account to the righteous judge: and the afflictions which you suffer in this present time, are not worthy of the glory which shall be shewed unto you.

VERSE 14.—*If any man obey not this our saying, note him by a letter, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.*

15.— *Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.*

You have been taught not only what you shall believe, but also how you ought to live. Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only. If any despise and will not follow our doctrine, forsake him, and let him have no fellowship with you: that so he may be ashamed, and repent, and turn again to the obedience of Christ. But lay apart all bitterness, and anger, and wrath. Reprove him, but hate him not. Kill the sin that is in him by all the means you can, for it is the work of the devil: but recover again the man that did offend, and restore him, if it be possible, by exhortation, and by your prayers made for him: for he is the creature of God.

Here I have good occasion to speak of excommunication, a principal part of the discipline of the Church: a matter which many know not, which some do foully abuse and over lightly give forth, and which many regard not as they ought. It cutteth us off from the body of Christ, and removeth us from the fellowship of the gospel. Let no man despise it. It is the sword of God, the power of the Holy Ghost, the discipline of Christ: it is an ordinance which the Church hath received from above.

By it the goats are divided from the lambs, the weed from the good corn, and the sons of God from the sons of Belial. It hath continued from the beginning, and hath been used in the Church of Christ, in the synagogue of the Jews, in the law of Moses, and before Moses received the law: among the patriarchs, and the prophets, and the apostles of Christ.

Christ saith: "If thy brother trespass against thee," in doing any wickedness, "go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he hear thee, thou hast won thy brother. But if he hear thee not, take yet with thee one or

two. And if he will not vouchsafe to hear them, tell it unto the Church :" publish it and make it known. "And if he refuse to hear the Church also," if he continue wilful, and stand in his wickedness, " let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican." (Matt. xviii. 15—18.) This form of excommunication our Saviour hath set down, whereby the wicked and ungodly are removed from the Church of Christ.

So St. Paul speaketh of him that lived in filthiness with his father's wife : that they give him no comfort in wickedness, but take away the evil from among them. " Let such an one, (saith he) be delivered unto Satan, for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of our Lord Jesus." (1 Cor. v. 5.) " Company not together with fornicators. If any that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, with such an one eat not." (vers. 9 ; 11.) Let him be put away from the company of the faithful. So did St. Paul excommunicate Hymeneus and Alexander, " and delivered them to Satan, that they might learn not to blaspheme." (1 Tim. i. 20.)

In the law of Moses, God commanded the children of Israel to put out of the host every leper; that they should neither eat, nor drink, nor walk abroad, nor come to church, nor offer sacrifice, nor make their prayers with the people. Such one, whithersoever he went, hid his face, rent his clothes, gave warning to avoid his company and to fly from him, because he was foul and filthy. His hands were filthy, and made the water unclean ; his breath was corrupt, and infected the air. So miserable was his case. This was a kind of excommunication : in such sort were the filthy divided from the clean. (Num. v. 2—4.)

God also set down this ordinance to Abraham, that every uncircumcised man-child should be cut off from his people, because he hath broken the covenant. (Gen xvii.

14.) This ordinance of excommunication God hath appointed against idolaters, against fornicators, and crafty deceivers, and other such like offenders, in the seven and twentieth of Deuteronomy: "Cursed be the man that shall make any carved or molten image, an abomination unto the Lord, the work of the hand of the craftsman, and putteth it in a secret place: and all the people shall answer and say, Amen. Cursed be he that maketh the blind go out of the way: and all the people shall answer and say, Amen." (Deut. xxvii. 15, 16.)

This is excommunication. This is the use of the keys. This is that of which Christ spake: "He that heareth you, heareth me: and he that despiseth you, despiseth me: and he that despiseth me, despiseth Him that sent me." (Luke x.16.) And, "Whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted: and whosesoever sins ye retain, they are retained." (John xx. 23.) "Whatsoever ye bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven." (Matt. xviii. 18.) That which you say shall be confirmed; it shall continue and stand for ever.

If any therefore be excommunicate from the Church, and removed from the fellowship of the Gospel, and from the hope of the life to come; let him humble himself, and pray unto God, that He will open his eyes, and that he may see in what case he standeth. Let him lay forth his heart in the sight of God, and consider his fault, and behold his misery, and think thus with himself:—

I was sometimes the child of God, and a member of his body: I was a branch of the vine which God hath planted, and a sheep of his pasture. But now, alas! I am divided from the pastures of life. I am fruitless and withered, and cut off from that blessed vine: I receive no moisture from that heavenly root. I am no more a member of the body of Christ. I am out of paradise, and have no joy or pleasure. I am out of the temple, and cannot offer any sacri-

fice. I am fallen from that heavenly Jerusalem, from the city of God, from the fellowship of the saints, and cannot kneel down, nor lift up my hands, nor make my prayers. God will not hear me: I am none of his: I am as a heathen and a publican: I cannot think of those things which are on high above.

But why art thou cut off from thy brethren, and banished out of the flock of Christ? Because of thine ungodliness and looseness of life. Because thou hast offended heaven and earth, and hast offended against the Church of God, and lived in fornication and adultery: and both thy body and thy mind are defiled. Thou art unworthy to dwell in the house of God: his house is holy.

By what authority is this done? Thou must not think that the judge or the officer doth it. It is not the judgment of any mortal man. It is the judgment of the almighty and everlasting God. It is his hand that bringeth this to pass against thee: it is his word, it is his key. His hand is mighty, his work shall stand, his word is forcible: his key is the key of David; it openeth, and no man shutteth; it shutteth, and no man openeth. God is departed from thy heart: his Spirit will not dwell in a filthy soul: there is no agreement between God and Belial. Thy soul is void of grace, and of the fear of God.

What becometh of thee in this case? Whither dost thou go? into what misery dost thou fall? Into the gulf of death; into the seat of pestilence, and the power of Satan, and the snares of the devil; and into a reprobate mind. Thy heart followeth him: thy soul serveth him. He is the father of all the children of disobedience, and his children follow him. Thou art filthy, and increasest in filthiness. The fear of God is not before thee. Thou dost not acknowledge thy sin, because of the blindness of thy heart.

Wreak not thyself upon thy neighbour that accused thee; nor upon the judge that pronounced sentence against thee.

The sentence is none of his: this is not his work; he hath not judged thee. The hand of God is stretched forth to thy punishment: it is thine own life and wickedness which forceth judgment upon thee. The judge sitteth in the place of God, in the seat of justice: he cannot bless that God hath cursed: he must needs do right and equity.

He seeth the abomination of thy life; he seeth the filthiness which thou hast done in the house of God, and therefore saith, *In nomine Dei, &c.* In the name of the living God, and of Jesus Christ before whom I stand, and before whom all flesh shall appear; by the authority of his word, and by the power of the Holy Ghost, I divide thee from the fellowship of the Gospel, and declare that thou art no more a member of the body of Christ. Thy name is put out of the book of life: thou hast no part in the life to come: thou art not in Christ, and Christ is departed from thee. I deliver thee to Satan, the prince of darkness. Thy reward shall be in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone. Thou shalt sterve,* and wither, and not abide. The grace of God is taken out of thy heart. The face of the Lord is against all them that do evil; they shall not taste of his mercy.

As for the judge and minister, which giveth sentence against thee, he mourneth and lamenteth for thee. When he striketh thee, he striketh himself. We are all one flesh and one blood, and altogether make one body, and are one another's members. Therefore, when he doth excommunicate thee from the brethren, he cutteth off an arm from his own body.

Jeremiah dealt roughly with the people that offended God, and threatened them that the enemy should come upon them, the sword should devour them, and they

* *Sterve; i. e.* perish.—EDITOR.

should be utterly destroyed: yet he wished that he had a stream of tears, that his heart might have wherewith to mourn for their transgressions.

David prayeth that God will stretch forth his hand upon the wicked: "Scatter them abroad by thy power, and put them down, O Lord our shield." (Ps. lix. 11.) Again: "Let them be chaff before the wind, and let the angel of the Lord scatter them." (Ps. xxxv. 5.) And again: "Let their table be a snare before them, and their prosperity their ruin." (Ps. lxix. 22.) Again: "Let his prayer be turned into sin:" (Ps. cix. 7.) aid him not, hear him not when he calleth unto thee. Yet he saith: "I saw the transgressors, and was grieved, because they kept not thy word:" (Ps. cxix. 158.) I pined away, and consumed to death; the grief was so deadly unto my soul.

Christ cried out, Woe upon Chorazin and Bethsaida, upon the Scribes and Pharisees. Yet when he came nigh to Jerusalem, he wept over it, saying, "Oh if thou hadst even now at the least in this thy day known those things which belong unto thy peace! but now are they hid from thee." (Luke xix. 42.) Thine enemies shall make thee even with the ground; they shall not leave in thee a stone upon a stone, because thou knowest not the time of thy visitation. Even such a sorrow also had St. Paul for those that offended God: "Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?" (2 Cor. xi. 29.) My body is shaken, and my heart is wounded for them; such a care have I for the church of God.

It is reported of John the Evangelist,* that he commended a young man to the education of a certain Bishop nigh to Ephesus. And when he heard that he was fled, and followed the company of such as were dissolute, riotous, and given over to all manner lewdness, he was careful for him,

* Euseb. lib. 3. cap. 23.

and sought him out; and came to the place where he and his ill company were. When the young man knew him, he was astonished, and fled away from him. But the old man followed him, and cried, O my child! turn again, turn unto me; I am thy father, I have begotten thee in Christ Jesus. I come not to hurt thee; there is yet hope of salvation; I will make answer unto Christ for thee. Fall to the ground, hold up thy hands, ask mercy of God; he is merciful, and will receive you. At these words the young man cast down his weapons, and trembled, and wept bitterly, and was converted.

When David heard of the destruction of that wicked wight Absalom, he wrung his hands, and wept, saying: "O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom; would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!" (2 Sam. xviii. 33.)

Such a care, such a love and zeal hath a godly minister over his people, if he be a true pastor, which hath taken his calling from God, and hath due consideration of his charge. He weepeth for the sins of the people, as did Jeremiah: he gushed out into tears, and consumeth away, as David, because of the ungodly: he is wounded at heart, and trembleth, as Paul, to see them perish. He seeketh for them, calleth after them, that they may return to him, as did John the Evangelist: and is willing to die for their sake, if so be he might redeem them, as David was for Absalom.

The people are his children, he is their father. Albeit they be wicked and filthy, yet he presenteth himself before God for them, and poureth forth his prayers, and saith: Sanctify them, O Lord, sanctify them with thy truth; thy word is truth. Let their hearts see the wrath to come, and thy heavy displeasure, which they have deserved, and which hangeth over their heads. They are thine: save them, and let not Satan prevail against them. Turn them, O Lord, and they shall be turned. Give them a new heart, and renew

a clean spirit in them, that they may fear thee all the days of their life. Turn away the captivity of their souls: bring them to the fellowship of the Gospel: make them lively stones meet for thy building: build up the walls of Jerusalem.

So careful is a good minister for the people of his charge, be they never so ungodly. Yea, the more they lack the comfortable grace of God, the more must be his care for them. This is that St. Paul saith, Have no company with such, to encourage him: yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.

VERSE 16.—*Now the Lord of peace give you peace always by all means. The Lord be with you all.*

17.—*The salutation of me Paul, with mine own hand, which is the token in every Epistle: so I write.*

18.—*The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.*

I need not commend peace unto you. It is the guard and strength of mighty princes: it is the nurse and fosterer of the Church of God: it is the wealth and prosperity of the world: it is the comfort and quietness of our conscience: it is truce taken with God and man, and our own selves.

I need not to tell you who is the worker of peace. You know God is the God of peace. Worldly peace seemeth to be made up by the will and liking of men: but God moveth their hearts, and establisheth it. But the peace of the heart, and quietness of mind, passeth all understanding. The power, and wisdom, and strength, and riches of all the world are not able to make it. It is the glory of God, that He alone is the God of peace.

I pray for you, that nothing may be done among you to the hindrance of peace: but that it abide with you al-

ways, not for a while; not in prosperity only, but in persecution; in your death, and for ever. If God be with you you shall have peace. And if you love one another, and keep his word, God will come to you, and love you, and abide with you, and give you the comfort of his peace.

The salutation of me Paul.—He gave them warning before of false apostles, who came in his name, and pretended his word, or his letter: therefore now he telleth them, how they shall know certainly, whether such epistles as they receive be his; written or sent by him.

In every epistle that I send, saith he, to the Churches, or to any the brethren, I write mine own name, and send this greeting written with mine own hand, which now I send to you all: *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.* AMEN.

THE END.

AN INDEX,

CONTAINING

THE PRINCIPAL MATTERS IN THE EXPOSITION.

(Two of the references marked thus * are supplied from a contemporary addition to the present Table in MS.—EDITOR.)

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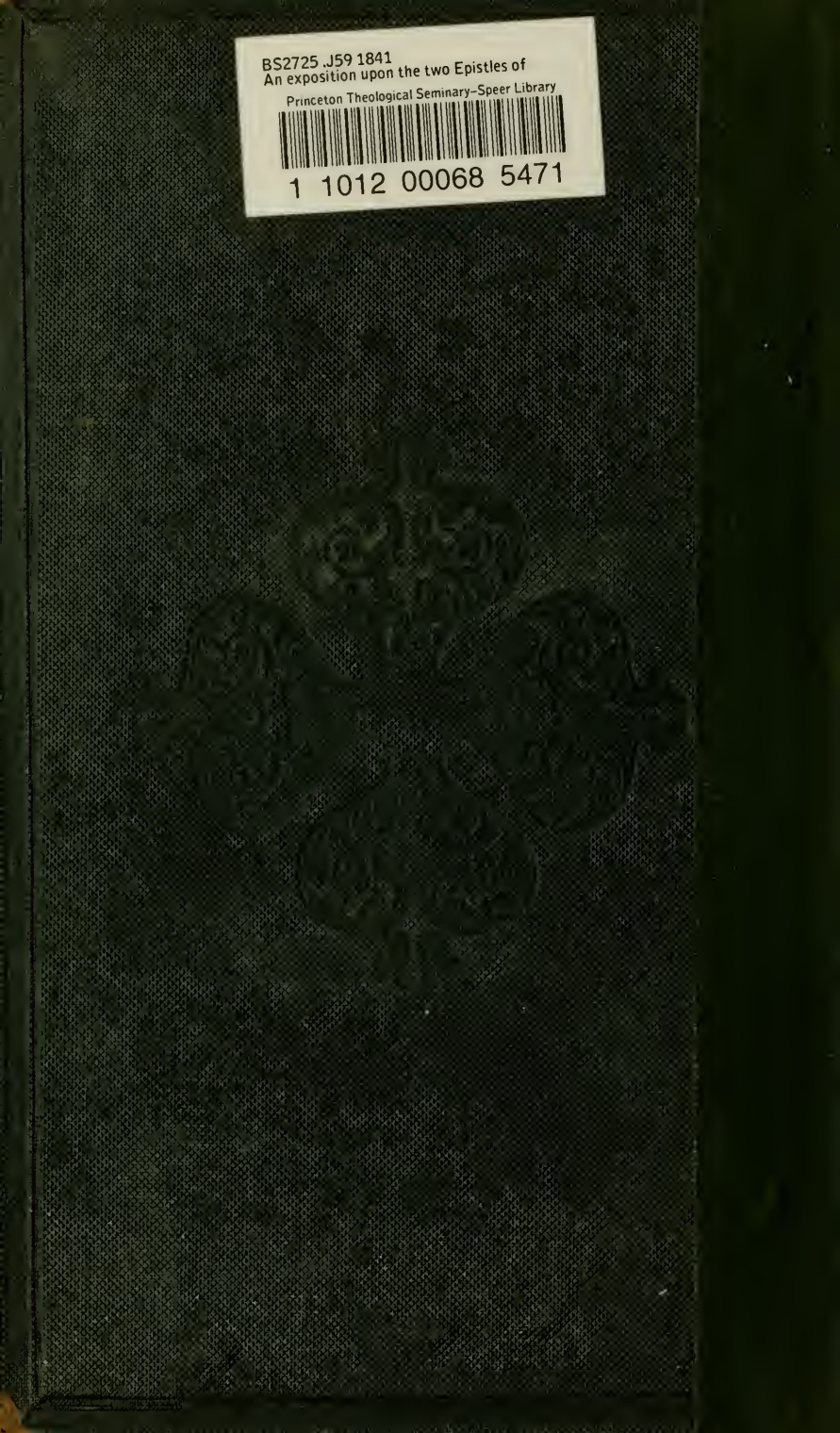
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