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A PRIEST TO THE TEMPLE
Or, The Country Parson

By

GEORGE HERBERT

With an Introduction
and Brief Notes

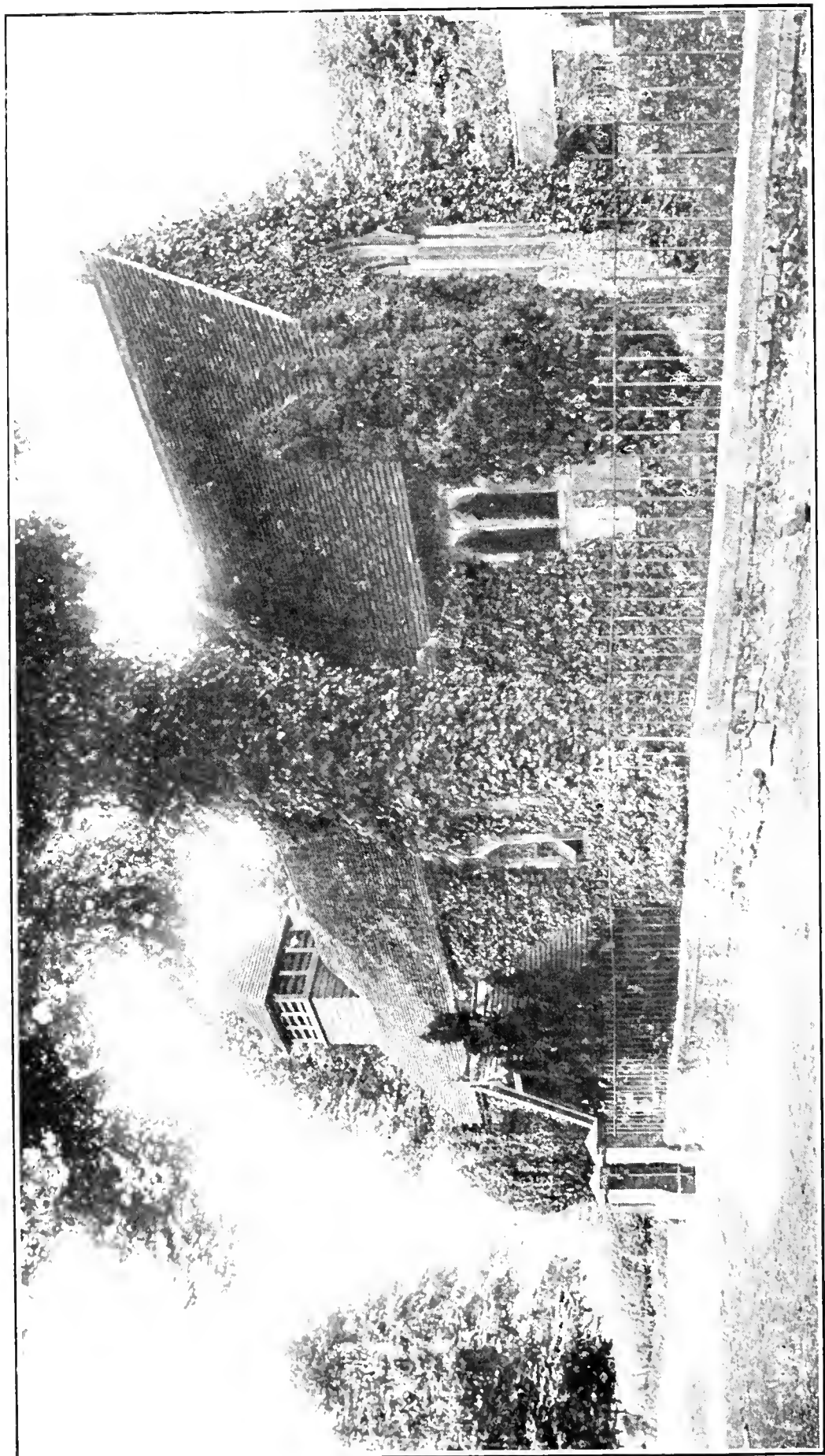
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The Bishop of North Carolina

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THE LITTLE CHURCH AT BEMERTON

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A Priest to the Temple

Or, The Country Parson

His Character and
Rule of Holy Life

By
GEORGE HERBERT

With an Introduction and Brief Notes

By
The Bishop of North Carolina

NEW YORK
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This edition of the Country Parson is dedicated to the memory of Joseph Blount Cheshire, D. D., sometime Rector of Calvary Church, Tarborough, and Trinity Church, Scotland Neck, in the Diocese of North Carolina; who, during a ministry of nearly sixty years, illustrated by his life and work the best qualities of the Country Parson, in his Character and Rule of Holy Life.

INTRODUCTION

THIS is believed to be the first edition of George Herbert's "Country Parson," published in America separate from his Poems. Notwithstanding the very high quality of Herbert's poetry it is not of a character to be very widely appreciated. His prose, however, is wholly free from the faults which mar his verse, and it deserves an attention which of late years it has not received. Certainly this is the case with "A Priest to the Temple, or the Country Parson, his Character and Rule of Holy Life." It is not too much to say of it that for beauty and truth to nature, for its combination of the ideal and the practical, for its presentation of an almost heavenly perfection in terms of human experience, it has not its equal in the religious literature of our language. It gives us the very "form and matter" of Christian Priesthood, so conceived and presented as to make the best feel humbled in com-

paring himself with such a standard, while at the same time it comforts and encourages the weakest, and by a sweet and loving compulsion it helps and guides both in their holy endeavors. Its simplicity and unaffectedness, its directness of purpose, the practical good sense of its rules and suggestions, its genuine humility and sympathy, its condescension to human weakness yet with loyalty to divine righteousness, its absolute fidelity to truth and duty, its heavenly wisdom, and clear vision, are embodied in that quality of English prose which we love and admire but can no longer write or speak.

Thirty-five years ago a "briefless barrister" in a great city, with no special intentions towards the ministry, I bought one wintry night at a shabby curb-stone book stall, lighted by a smoking kerosene torch, a dingy little volume, containing Bishop Hall's Satires, in which, at that period of my life, I was much interested. Sitting down a few minutes later in my solitary lodging to examine my purchase, I found that it contained also Herbert's English works. Pickering's two beautiful volumes of Herbert had stood on the shelves of my father's library as far back as I could remember, but I had never looked into

them. In the dingy little book, bought for a few cents, my eye chanced to light upon a sentence in the first chapter of the Country Parson. My interest was aroused. I read on and on, until I had read it through without being able to stop. The impression made upon me by that first reading, years have not effaced. I have never ceased to wonder that such a book should be so little known and used. Since I have had the responsibility of ordaining and sending out Country Parsons, I have bought every copy I could find, and have given them to young clergymen. I cannot but believe that, in bringing out this edition of Herbert's beautiful treatise on the pastoral office, the publisher is conferring a real benefit upon the Church.

It were bootless to point out the many lessons which may here be learned. The Country Parson needs no interpreter. One point of his teaching, however, may be mentioned and emphasized. In his chapter, "The Parson Praying," Herbert coins a word. He says that the Country Parson is not only careful to render with clearness and reverence his own part in the public service of the Church, but he often instructs his people how to carry themselves in divine worship, as to pos-

ture, attentiveness, and manner of responding ; that he teaches them to answer “gently and pausably, thinking what they say.” The dictionaries give no other example of this word *pausably*. Herbert made it because he needed it. That is how good words come ; and this word, with reference to Herbert’s use of it, is a golden word. It is the key to open the beauty and effectiveness of the Prayer Book considered as a manual of common worship. Unfortunately the thing signified is as rare as the word. How many of the Clergy have ever given one half hour to instructing their people how they should bear themselves, sitting, standing, kneeling, in the public service ; and how they should respond so as to make the service really an act of common worship, and not the mere public commingling in dissonant murmur of individual, unrelated devotions ? They seem to think, with Dogberry, that reading (in the public service at least) comes by nature. In fact common worship is necessarily an artificial act, and is possible only by the observance of some fixed rule. That rule Herbert reveals in his unique word. The service must be read *pausably*. This is necessary, in the first place, to bring out the true significance

of the words, as well as the wonderful rhythmical quality of the language of the Prayer Book. As well disregard the *cæsura* in a Latin hexameter, as the musical colon in the Psalms and Canticles. But, more important still, the people must be taught to speak with *one voice*, so that they may plainly perceive that they are engaging in a common act; and their response should thus be one audible expression of their united faith, hope, and love. And this speaking with *one voice* by a great congregation can only be accomplished when the people are taught to read "pausably, thinking what they say." This can be done, and in some very rare instances it has been done, by virtue of this very suggestion of the "Country Parson." And no one, who has heard a congregation thus read the service, will doubt the value of this advice, or the accuracy with which Herbert has made the word fit the case.

Almost equally judicious and helpful are his suggestions as to preaching, catechizing, visiting, and other points of pastoral duty, when applied with discrimination, remembering that the letter killeth, and that it is the spirit that giveth life. And these lessons come in such gentle, persuasive

tones, and are so full of the genuine meekness and humility of a subdued and sanctified spirit, that it is hard not to be touched and influenced by them.

Many changes have passed over the face of the world since George Herbert lived and wrote, but he goes below the surface, and touches the permanent facts and qualities of human life. No intelligent and earnest young clergyman can study his life and work, for that is what we have portrayed in the pages of his "Country Parson," without feeling himself both reproved and helped. As Barnabas Oley, to whom we owe its first publication, says of it, "which (methinks) is not a book of thirty-seven chapters, but a bill of seven times thirty-seven indictments against thee and me; a strange *Speculum Sacredotale*, . . . a living pure looking glass in most exact proportions of beauty, that should both present itself as a body of unblemished perfections, and shew all the beholder's deformities at once."

A picture of Herbert's Church at Bemerton is given as the frontispiece of this volume. It seats, if I remember aright, but few more than forty persons. In this plain little country church George Herbert, poet, scholar, orator,

divine, the kinsman of Sidney, the friend of Bacon, honored with the special notice and favor of the king, the familiar associate of the noblest and highest in the land, whose best blood and lineage he shared,—here in this little church he counted it a blessed privilege to lead the worship of his rustic parishioners, to minister to them in their homely joys and sorrows, and to form them in purity and devotion. Many said then, and we may be tempted to think now, that he was made for better things and for a more extended influence. But who, among the great ones of his day, served God and man more faithfully, or accomplished by his life a work which in the end shall prove to have been greater and more enduring? The picture of the little church at Bemerton illustrates the beautiful lesson, taught us by the Country Parson, of doing a great work in a little compass; of not being eager for large things and a wider field. Wherever we may be, and however narrow the limitations of our parochial boundaries, all the world lies next to us, if we have the inner power to reach out and touch and help the world.

A word should be said of the three beautiful volumes of George Herbert, edited by Prof.

George Herbert Palmer, of Harvard University, and issued from the press of Messrs. Houghton, Mifflin & Co., in 1905. They leave nothing to be desired by those who would possess Herbert's complete English works, edited as very few even of our greatest poets have been edited, and illustrated by biographical and critical studies which set before us both the man and the author more appreciatively and more adequately than had ever been done before. These volumes are a credit to American scholarship, and, as coming from one who avows himself a Puritan, they are a notable testimony to the essential value and charm of the life and work of the High Church Anglican poet and priest.

I have to acknowledge most gratefully the kindness of Professor Palmer and of his publishers, extended in connection with the preparation of this edition of "The Country Parson." The brief footnotes are mostly taken from Professor Palmer's work.

Perhaps the Country Parson might better have been left to speak for himself, without the delay of this introduction. But I could not deny myself the pleasure, afforded me by the publisher, of commending to my younger brethren of the

Clergy a book, which I believe they cannot read without much pleasure and profit both to themselves and to their people.

JOS. BLOUNT CHESHIRE.

Monday before Easter, 1908.

THE AUTHOUR TO THE READER

BEING desirous (thorow the Mercy of God) to please Him for whom I am and live, and who giveth mee my Desires and Performances, and considering with my self That the way to please him is to feed my Flocke diligently and faithfully, since our Saviour hath made that the argument of a Pastour's love, I have resolved to set down the Form and Character of a true Pastour, that I may have a Mark to aim at ; which also I will set as high as I can, since hee shoots higher that threatens the Moon then hee that aims at a Tree. Not that I think, if a man do not all which is here expressed, hee presently sinns and displeases God, but that it is a good strife to go as farre as wee can in pleasing of him who hath done so much for us. The Lord prosper the intention to my selfe, and others who may not despise my poor labours, but add to those points which I have observed until the Book grow to a compleat Pastorall.

GEO. HERBERT.

1632.

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A PRIEST TO THE TEMPLE: OR,
THE COUNTRY PARSON, HIS
CHARACTER, ETC.

I

OF A PASTOR

A PASTOR is the Deputy of Christ for the reducing of Man to the Obedience of God. This definition is evident, and contains the direct steps of Pastorall Duty and Aucturity. For first, Man fell from God by disobedience. Secondly, Christ is the glorious instrument of God for the revoking¹ of Man. Thirdly, Christ being not to continue on earth, but after hee had fulfilled the work of Reconciliation to be received up into heaven, he constituted Deputies in his place, and these are Priests. And therefore *St. Paul* in the beginning of his Epistles professeth this, and in the first to the *Colossians*² plainly avoucheth that he *fills up that which is behinde of the afflictions of Christ in his flesh for his Bodie's sake, which is the Church.* Wherein is contained the complete defi-

¹ Revoking—calling back.

² Colossians, 1: 2, 4.

A PRIEST TO THE TEMPLE

dition of a Minister. Out of this Chartre of the Priesthood may be plainly gathered both the Dignity thereof and the Duty: The Dignity, in that a Priest may do that which Christ did, and by his auctority and as his Vicegerent. The Duty, in that a Priest is to do that which Christ did and after his manner, both for Doctrine and Life.

II

THEIR DIVERSITIES

OF Pastors (intending mine own Nation only, and also therein setting aside the Reverend Prelates of the Church, to whom this discourse ariseth not) some live in the Universities, some in Noble houses, some in Parishes residing on their Cures. Of those that live in the Universities, some live there in office, whose rule is that of the Apostle : Rom. 12: 6. *Having gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith ; or ministry, let us wait on our ministring ; or he that teacheth, on teaching, etc., he that ruleth, let him do it with diligence, etc.* Some in a preparatory way, whose aim and labour must be not only to get knowledg, but to subdue and mortifie all lusts and affections ; and not to think that when they have read the Fathers or Schoolmen, a Minister is made and the thing done. The greatest and hardest preparation is within. For, *Unto the ungodly, saith God, Why dost thou*

preach my Laws, and takest my Covenant in thy mouth? *Psal.* 50 : 16. Those that live in Noble Houses are called Chaplains, whose duty and obligation being the same to the Houses they live in as a Parson's to his Parish, in describing the one (which is indeed the bent of my Discourse) the other will be manifest. Let not Chaplains think themselves so free as *many of them do*, and because they have different Names think their Office different. Doubtlesse they are Parsons of the families they live in and are entertained to that end, either by an open or implicate Covenant. Before they are in Orders, they may be received for Companions or discoursers; but after a man is once Minister, he cannot agree to come into any house where he shall not exercise what he is, unlesse he forsake his plough and look back. Wherefore they are not to be over-submissive and base, but to keep up with¹ the Lord and Lady of the house, and to preserve a boldness with them and all, even so farre as reprove to their very face when occasion calls, but seasonably and discreetly. They who do not thus, while they remember their earthly Lord, do much forget their heavenly; they wrong the Priest-

¹ Keep up with—stand up to.

hood, neglect their duty, and shall be so farre from that which they seek with their over-submissivenesse and cringings that they shall ever be despised. They who for the hope of promotion neglect any necessary admonition or reproofe, sell (with *Judas*) their Lord and Master.

III

THE PARSON'S LIFE

THE Countrey Parson is exceeding exact in his Life, being holy, just, prudent, temperate, bold, grave in all his wayes. And because the two highest points of Life, wherein a Christian is most seen, are Patience and Mortification : Patience in regard of afflictions, Mortification in regard of lusts and affections, and the stupifying and deading of all the clamorous powers of the soul, therefore he hath thoroughly studied these, that he may be an absolute Master and commander of himself for all the purposes which God hath ordained him. Yet in these points he labours most in those things which are most apt to scandalize his Parish. And first, because Countrey people live hardly, and therefore as feeling their own sweat, and consequently knowing the price of mony, are offended much with any who by hard usage increase their travell,¹ the Countrey Parson is very circumspect

¹ Travell—travail, care and labor.

in avoiding all coveteousnesse, neither being greedy to get, nor niggardly to keep, nor troubled to lose any worldly wealth ; but in all his words and actions slighting and disesteeming it, even to a wondring that the world should so much value wealth, which in the day of wrath hath not one dramme of comfort for us. Secondly, because Luxury ¹ is a very visible sinne, the Parson is very carefull to avoid all the kinds thereof, but especially that of drinking, because it is the most popular vice ; into which if he come, *he prostitutes himself* both to shame and sin, and by having *fellowship with the unfruitfull works of darknesse* he disableth himself of authority *to reprove them*. For sins make all equall whom they finde together ; and then they are worst who ought to be best. Neither is it for the servant of Christ to haunt Innes, or Tavernes, or Ale-houses, *to the dishonour of his person and office*. The Parson doth not so, but orders his Life in such a fashion that when death takes him, as the Jewes and *Judas* did Christ, he may say as He did, *I sate daily with you teaching in the Temple*. Thirdly, because Countrey people (as indeed all honest men) do much esteem their word, it being the

¹ Luxury—freedom in living, lack of bodily discipline.

Life of buying and selling and dealing in the world; therefore the Parson is very strict in keeping his word, though it be to his own hinderance, as knowing that if he be not so, he wil quickly be discovered and disregarded; neither will they beleve him in the pulpit whom they cannot trust in his Conversation. As for oaths and apparell, the disorders thereof are also very manifest. The Parson's yea is yea, and nay nay; and his apparrell plaine, but reverend and clean, without spots, or dust, or smell; the purity of his mind breaking out and dilating it selfe even to his body, cloaths, and habitation.

IV

THE PARSON'S KNOWLEDG

THE Countrey Parson is full of all knowledg. They say it is an ill Mason that refuseth any stone ; and there is no knowledg but, in a skilfull hand, serves either positively as it is or else to illustrate some other knowledge. He condescends even to the knowledge of tillage and pastorage, and makes great use of them in teaching, because people by what they understand are best led to what they understand not. But the chief and top of his knowledge consists in the book of books, the storehouse and magazene of life and comfort, the holy Scriptures. There he sucks and lives. In the Scriptures hee findes four things : Precepts for life, Doctrines for knowledge, Examples for illustration, and Promises for comfort. These he hath digested severally. But for the understanding of these the means he useth are first, a holy Life ; remembring what his Master saith, that *if any do God's will, he shall know of the Doctrine, John 7* ; and assuring him-

self that wicked men, however learned, do not know the Scriptures, because they feel them not, and because they are not understood but with the same Spirit that writ them. The second means is prayer, which if it be necessary even in temporall things, how much more in things of another world, where the well is deep and we have nothing of our selves to draw with? Wherefore he ever begins the reading of the Scripture with some short inward ejaculation, as, *Lord, open mine eyes, that I may see the wondrous things of thy Law, etc.*¹ The third means is a diligent Collation of Scripture with Scripture. For all Truth being consonant to it self and all being penn'd by one and the self-same Spirit, it cannot be but that an industrious and judicious comparing of place with place must be a singular help for the right understanding of the Scriptures. To this may be added the consideration of any text with the coherence thereof, touching what goes before and what follows after, as also the scope of the Holy Ghost. When the Apostles would have called down fire from Heaven, they were reprov'd, as ignorant of what spirit they were. For the Law required one thing, and the

¹ Psalm 119 : 18.

Gospel another ; yet as diverse, not as repugnant ; therefore the spirit of both is to be considered and weighed. The fourth means are Commenters and fathers who have handled the places controverted, which the Parson by no means refuseth. As he doth not so study others as to neglect the grace of God in himself and what the Holy Spirit teacheth him, so doth he assure himself that God in all ages hath had his servants, to whom he hath revealed his Truth as well as to him ; and that as one Countrey doth not bear all things, that there may be a Commerce, so neither hath God opened or will open all to one, that there may be a traffick in knowledg between the servants of God for the planting both of love and humility. Wherefore he hath one Comment at least upon every book of Scripture, and ploughing with this and his own meditations he enters into the secrets of God treasured in the holy Scripture.

THE PARSON'S ACCESSARY KNOWLEDGES

THE Countrey Parson hath read the Fathers also, and the Schoolmen, and the later Writers, or a good proportion of all, out of all which he hath compiled a book and body of Divinity, which is the storehouse of his Sermons and which he preacheth all his Life, but diversely clothed, illustrated, and enlarged. For though the world is full of such composures, yet every man's own is fittest, readiest, and most savory to him. Besides, this being to be done in his younger and preparatory times, it is an honest joy ever after to looke upon his well spent houres. This Body he made by way of expounding the Church Catechisme, to which all divinity may easily be reduced. For it being indifferent in it selfe to choose any Method, that is best to be chosen of which there is likelyest to be most use. Now Catechizing being a work of singular and admirable benefit to the Church of God, and a thing required under Canonick obedience,¹ the expounding of our Catechisme must needs be the

¹ And still required.

most usefull forme. Yet hath the Parson, besides this laborious work, a slighter forme of Catechizing, fitter for country people ; according as his audience is, so he useth one or other, or sometimes both, if his audience be intermixed. He greatly esteemes also of cases of conscience, wherein he is much versed. And indeed herein is the greatest ability of a Parson to lead his people exactly in the wayes of Truth, so that they neither decline to the right hand nor to the left. Neither let any think this a slight thing. For every one hath not digested when it is a sin to take something for mony lent, or when not ; when it is a fault to discover another's fault, or when not ; *when the affections of the soul in desiring and procuring increase of means or honour, be a sin of covetousnes or ambition, and when not ; when the appetites of the body in eating, drinking, sleep, and the pleasure that comes with sleep, be sins of gluttony, drunkenness, sloath, lust, and when not, and so in many circumstances of actions.* Now if a shepherd know not which grass will bane, or which not, how is he fit to be a shepherd ? Wherefore the Parson hath throughly canvassed al the particulars of humane actions, at least all those which he observeth are most incident to his Parish.

VI

THE PARSON PRAYING

THE Countrey Parson, when he is to read divine services, composeth himselfe to all possible reverence : lifting up his heart and hands and eyes, and using all other gestures which may expresse a hearty and unfeyned devotion. This he doth, first, as being truly touched and amazed with the Majesty of God before whom he then presents himself ; yet not as himself alone, but as presenting with himself the whole Congregation, whose sins he then beares and brings with his own to the heavenly altar to be bathed and washed in the sacred Laver of Christ's blood. Secondly, as this is the true reason of his inward feare, so he is content to expresse this outwardly to the utmost of his power ; that being first affected himself, hee may affect also his people, knowing that no Sermon moves them so much to a reverence, which they forget againe when they come to pray, as a devout behaviour in the very act of praying. Accordingly his voyce is humble, his words treata-

ble¹ and slow ; yet not so slow neither as to let the fervency of the supplicant hang and dy between speaking, but with a grave liveness, between fear and zeal, pausing yet pressing, he performs his duty. Besides his example, he, having often instructed his people how to carry themselves in divine service, exacts of them all possible reverence, by no means enduring either talking, or sleeping, or gazing, or leaning, or halfe-kneeling, or any undutifull behaviour in them, but causing them when they sit, or stand, or kneel, to do all in a strait and steady posture, as attending to what is done in the Church, and every one, man and child, answering aloud both Amen and all other answers which are on the Clerk's and people's part to answer ; which answers also are to be done not in a hudling, or slubbering fashion, gaping, or scratching the head, or spitting even in the midst of their answer, but gently and pausably,² thinking what they say ; so that while they answer, *As it was in the beginning, etc.*, they meditate as they speak that God hath ever had his people that have

¹ Treatable—with proper emphasis and enunciation.

² Pausably—with deliberation, observing the proper pauses, and the rhythmical structure of the language.

glorified him as wel as now, and that he shall have so for ever. And the like in other answers. This is that which the Apostle calls a reasonable service, *Rom. 12*, when we speak not as Parrats, without reason, or offer up such sacrifices as they did of old, which was of beasts devoyd of reason ; but when we use our reason, and apply our powers to the service of him that gives them. If there be any of the gentry or nobility of the Parish who sometimes make it a piece of state not to come at the beginning of service with their poor neighbours, but at mid-prayers, both to their own loss and of theirs also who gaze upon them when they come in, and neglect the present service of God, he by no means suffers it, but after divers gentle admonitions, if they persevere, he causes them to be presented.¹ Or if the poor Church-wardens be affrighted with their greatness, notwithstanding his instruction that they ought not to be so, but even to let the world sinke so they do their duty ; he presents them himself, only protesting to them that not any ill will draws him to it, but the debt and obligation of his calling, being to obey God rather than men.

¹ Presented ; *i. e.*, to the Bishop, or his Archdeacon, for disturbing the service.

VII

THE PARSON PREACHING

THE Countrey Parson preacheth constantly, the pulpit is his joy and his throne. If he at any time intermit, it is either for want of health or against some great Festivall, that he may the better celebrate it, or for the variety of the hearers that he may be heard at his returne more attentively. When he intermits, he is ever very well supplied by some able man who treads in his steps and will not throw down what he hath built; whom also he intreats to press some point that he himself hath often urged with no great success, that so in the mouth of two or three witnesses the truth may be more established. When he preacheth, he procures attention by all possible art, both by earnestnesse of speech—it being naturall to men to think that where is much earnestness there is somewhat worth hearing—and by a diligent and busy cast of his eye on his auditors, with letting them know that he observes who marks and who not; and with particulariz-

ing of his speech now to the younger sort, then to the elder, now to the poor and now to the rich. This is for you, and This is for you ; for particulars ever touch and awake more than generalls. Herein also he serves himselfe of the judgements of God, as of those of antient times so especially of the late ones, and those most which are nearest to his Parish ; for people are very attentive at such discourses, and think it behoves them to be so, when God is so neer them and even over their heads. Sometimes he tells them stories and sayings of others, according as his text invites him ; for them also men heed and remember better than exhortations, which though earnest yet often dy with the Sermon, especially with Countrey people ; which are thick, and heavy, and hard to raise to a poynt of zeal and fervency, and need a mountaine of fire to kindle them, but stories and sayings they will well remember. He often tels them that Sermons are dangerous things, that none goes out of Church as he came in, but either better or worse ; that none is careless before his Judg, and that the word of God shal Judge us. By these and other means the Parson procures attention ; but the character of his Sermon is Holiness. He is not

witty, or learned, or eloquent, but Holy. A Character that *Hermogenes*¹ never dream'd of, and therefore he could give no precepts hereof. But it is gained first, by choosing texts of Devotion not Controversie, moving and ravishing texts, whereof the Scriptures are full. Secondly, by dipping and seasoning all our words and sentences in our hearts before they come into our mouths, truly affecting and cordially expressing all that we say ; so that the auditors may plainly perceive that every word is hart-deep. Thirdly, by turning often and making many Apostrophes to God, as, Oh Lord blesse my people and teach them this point ; or, Oh my Master, on whose errand I come, let me hold my peace and doe thou speak thy selfe ; for thou art Love, and when thou teachest all are Scholers. Some such irradiations scatteringly in the Sermon carry great holiness in them. The Prophets are admirable in this. So Isa. 64 : *Oh that thou would'st rent the Heavens, that thou would'st come down, etc.* And *Jeremy*, Chapt. 10, after he had complained of the desolation of *Israel*, turnes to God suddenly : *Oh Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself, etc.* Fourthly, by frequent wishes of the

¹ Hermogenes, an ancient Rhetorician.

people's good and joying therein, though he himself were with Saint *Paul* even sacrificed upon the service of their faith. For there is no greater sign of holinesse then the procuring, and rejoycing in another's good. And herein St. *Paul* excelled in all his Epistles. How did he put the *Romans* in all his prayers! *Rom.* 1 : 9. And ceased not to give thanks for the *Ephesians*, *Eph.* 1 : 16. And for the *Corinthians*, *chap.* 1 : 4. And for the *Philippians* made request with joy, *chap.* 1 : 4. And is in contention for them whither to live or dy, be with them or Christ, *verse* 23 ; which, setting aside his care of his Flock, were a madnesse to doubt of. What an admirable Epistle is the second to the *Corinthians* ! how full of affections ! he joyes and he is sorry, he grieves and he gloryes, never was there such care of a flock expressed save in the great shepherd of the fold, who first shed teares over *Jerusalem* and afterwards blood. Therefore this care may be learn'd there and then woven into Sermons, which will make them appear exceeding reverend and holy. Lastly, by an often urging of the presence and majesty of God, by these or such like speeches : Oh let us all take heed what we do. God sees us, he sees whether I speak as I ought or you

hear as you ought ; he sees hearts as we see faces ; he is among us ; for if we be here, hee must be here, since we are here by him and without him could not be here. Then turning the discourse to his Majesty : And he is a great God and terrible, as great in mercy so great in judgement. There are but two devouring elements, fire and water ; he hath both in him. His voyce is as the sound of many waters, *Revelations* 1. And he himselfe is a consuming fire, *Hebrews* 12. Such discourses shew very Holy. The Parson's Method in handling of a text consists of two parts : first, a plain and evident declaration of the meaning of the text ; and secondly, some choyce Observations drawn out of the whole text, as it lyes entire and unbroken in the Scripture it self. This he thinks naturall and sweet and grave. Whereas the other way of crumbling a text into small parts, as, the Person speaking or spoken to, the subject and object, and the like, hath neither in it sweetnesse, nor gravity, nor variety ; since the words apart are not Scripture but a dictionary, and may be considered alike in all the Scripture. The Parson exceeds not an hour in preaching, because all ages have thought that a competency, and he that profits not in

that time will lesse afterwards ; the same affection which made him not profit before making him then weary, and so he grows from not relishing to loathing.

VIII

THE PARSON ON SUNDAYS

THE Country Parson as soon as he awakes on Sunday Morning presently falls to work, and seems to himself so as a Market-man is when the Market day comes, or a shop-keeper when customers use to come in. His thoughts are full of making the best of the day and contriving it to his best gaines. To this end, besides his ordinary prayers, he makes a peculiar one for a blessing on the exercises of the day: That nothing befall him unworthy of that Majesty before which he is to present himself, but that all may be done with reverence to his glory and with edification to his flock, humbly beseeching his Master that how or whenever he punish him it be not in his Ministry. Then he turnes to request for his people that the Lord would be pleased to sanctifie them all, that they may come with holy hearts and awfull mindes into the Congregation, and that the good God would pardon all those who come with lesse prepared hearts then they ought. This done, he sets himself to the Con-

sideration of the duties of the day ; and if there be any extraordinary addition to the customary exercises, either from the time of the year, or from the State, or from God by a child born or dead, or any other accident, he contrives how and in what manner to induce¹ it to the best advantage. Afterwards when the hour calls, with his family attending him he goes to Church, at his first entrance *humbly adoring and worshipping the invisible majesty and presence of Almighty God*, and blessing the people either openly or to himselfe. Then having read divine Service twice fully, and preached in the morning and catechized in the afternoone, he thinks he hath in some measure, according to poor and fraile man, discharged the publick duties of the Congregation. The rest of the day he spends either in reconciling neighbours that are at variance, or in visiting the sick, or in exhortations to some of his flock by themselves, whom his Sermons cannot or doe not reach. And every one is more awaked when we come and say, Thou art the man. This way he findes exceeding usefull and winning ; and these exhortations he cals his privy purse, even as Princes have theirs, besides ther publick disburs-

¹ Induce—bring in.

ments. At night he thinks it a very fit time, both sutable to the joy of the day and without hinderance to publick duties, either to entertaine some of his neighbours or to be entertained of them, where he takes occasion to discourse *of such things as are both profitable and pleasant, and to raise up their mindes to apprehend God's good blessing to our Church and State; that order is kept in the one and peace in the other, without disturbance or interruption of publick divine offices.* As he opened the day with prayer, so he closeth it, humbly beseeching the Almighty to pardon and accept our poor services and to improve them that wee may grow therein, and that our feet may be like hindes' feet, ever climbing up higher and higher unto him.

IX

THE PARSON'S STATE OF LIFE

THE Country Parson considering that virginity is a higher state then Matrimony, and that the Ministry requires the best and highest things, is rather unmarried then married. But yet as the temper of his body may be, or as the temper of his Parish may be, where he may have occasion to converse with women and that among suspicious men, *and other like circumstances considered*, he is rather married then unmarried. Let him communicate the thing often by prayer unto God, and as his grace shall direct him so let him proceed. If he be unmarried and keepe house, he hath not a woman in his house, but findes opportunities of having his meat dress'd and other services done by men-servants at home, and his linnen washed abroad. If he be unmarried and sojourne, he never talkes with any woman alone, but in the audience of others, and that seldom, and then also in a serious manner, never jestingly or sportfully. *He is very*

circumspect in all companyes, both of his behaviour, speech, and very looks, knowing himself to be both suspected and envyed. If he stand steadfast in his heart, having no necessity, but hath power over his own will, and hath so decreed in his heart that he will keep himself a virgin, he spends his dayes in fasting and prayer and blesseth God for the gift of continency, knowing that it can no way be preserved but only by those means by which at first it was obtained. He therefore thinkes it not enough for him to observe the fasting dayes of the Church and the dayly prayers enjoyned him by auctority, which he observeth out of humble conformity and obedience, but adds to them, out of choyce and devotion, some other dayes for fasting and hours for prayers; and by these hee keeps his body tame, serviceable, and healthfull; and his soul fervent, active, young, and lusty as an eagle. He often readeth the Lives of the Primitive Monks, Hermits, and virgins, and wondreth not so much at their patient suffering and cheerfull dying under persecuting Emperours, (though that indeed be very admirable) as at their daily temperance, abstinence, watchings, and constant prayers, and mortifications in the times of peace and prosperity. To put on the profound humility and the exact temperance of our Lord Jesus, with

other exemplary vertues of that sort, and to keep them on in the sunshine and noone of prosperity he findeth to be as necessary, and as difficult at least, as to be cloathed with perfect patience and Christian fortitude in the cold midnight stormes of persecution and adversity. He keepeth his watch and ward night and day against the proper and peculiar temptations of his state of Life, which are principally these two, Spirituall pride, and Impurity of heart. Against these ghostly enemies he girdeth up his loynes, keepes the imagination from roving, puts on the whole Armour of God, and by the vertue of the shield of faith he is not afraid of the pestilence that walketh in darkenesse, [carnall impurity,] nor of the sicknesse that destroyeth at noone day, [Ghostly pride and self-conceit]. Other temptations he hath which, like mortall enemies, may sometimes disquiet him likewise; for the humane soule being bounded and kept in in her sensitive faculty, will runne out more or lesse in her intellectuall. Originall concupisence is such an active thing, by reason of continuall inward or outward temptations, that it is ever attempting or doing one mischief or other. Ambition, or untimely desire of promotion to an higher state or place, under colour of accommodation or necessary provision, is a common temptation to

men of any eminency, especially being single men. Curiosity in prying into high speculative and unprofitable questions is another great stumbling block to the holinesse of Scholers. These and many other spirituall wickednesses in high places doth the Parson fear, or experiment,¹ or both; and that much more being single then if he were marryed; for then commonly the stream of temptation is turned another way, into Covetousnesse, Love of pleasure, or ease, or the like. If the Parson be unmarried and means to continue so, he doth at least as much as hath been said. If he be marryed, the choyce of his wife was made rather by his eare² then by his eye; his judgement, not his affection, found out a fit wife for him, whose humble and liberall disposition he preferred before beauty, riches, or honour. He knew that (the good instrument of God to bring women to heaven) a wise and loving husband could out of humility, produce any speciall grace of faith, patience, meeknesse, love, obedience, etc., and out of liberality make her fruitfull in all good works. As hee is just in all things, so is he to his wife also, counting nothing so

¹ Experiment—experience.

² By the impression her character has made upon those who speak of her.

much his owne as that he may be unjust unto it. Therefore he gives her respect both afore her servants and others, and halfe at least of the government of the house, reserving so much of the affaires as serve for a diversion for him ; yet never so giving over the raines but that he sometimes looks how things go, demanding an account, but not by the way of an account. And this must bee done the oftner or the seldomer according as hee is satisfied of his Wife's discretion.

X

A PARSON IN HIS HOUSE

THE Parson is very exact in the governing of his house, making it a copy and modell for his Parish. He knows the temper and pulse of every person in his house, and accordingly either meets with ¹ their vices or advanceth their vertues. His wife is either religious, or night and day he is winning her to it. In stead of the qualities of the world, he requires onely three of her: first, a trayning up of her children and mayds in the fear of God, with prayers and catechizing and all religious duties. Secondly, a curing and healing of all wounds and sores with her owne hands; which skill either she brought with her or he takes care she shall learn it of some religious neighbour. Thirdly, a providing for her family in such sort as that neither they want a competent sustentation nor her husband be brought in debt. His children he first makes Christians and then Common-wealths-men; the one he owes to his heavenly Countrey, the other to his earthly,

¹ Meets with—confronts, opposes.

having no title to either except he do good to both. Therefore having seasoned them with all Piety, not only of words in praying and reading, but in actions, in visiting other sick children and tending their wounds, and sending his charity by them to the poor, and sometimes giving them a little money to do it of themselves, that they get a delight in it and enter favour with God, who weighs even children's actions, 1 *Kings* 14 : 12, 13 ; he afterwards turnes his care to fit all their dispositions with some calling, not sparing the eldest, but giving him the prerogative of his Father's profession, which happily¹ for his other children he is not able to do. Yet in binding them prentices (in case he think fit to do so) he takes care not to put them into vain trades and unbefitting the reverence of their Father's calling, such as are tavernes for men and lace-making for women ; because those trades for the most part serve but the vices and vanities of the world, which he is to deny and not augment. However, he resolves with himself never to omit any present good deed of charity in consideration of providing a stock for his children ; but assures himselfe that mony thus lent to God is placed

¹ Happily—haply, perhaps.

surer for his children's advantage then if it were given to the Chamber of *London*.¹ Good deeds and good breeding are his two great stocks for his children ; if God give anything above those and not spent in them, he blesseth God and lays it out as he sees cause. His servants are all religious ; and were it not his duty to have them so, it were his profit, for none are so well served as by religious servants, both because they do best and because what they do is blessed and prospers. After religion, he teacheth them that three things make a compleate servant : Truth, and Diligence, and Neatnesse or Cleanliness. Those that can read are allowed times for it, and those that cannot are taught ; for all in his house are either teachers or learners or both, so that his family is a Schoole of Religion, and they all account that to teach the ignorant is the greatest almes. Even the wals are not idle, but something is written or painted there which may excite the reader to a thought of piety ; especially the 101 *Psalm*, which is expressed in a fayre table as being the rule of a family. And when

¹ By the custom of London the estates of freemen of the city dying intestate were vested in the corporation, and the Mayor and Aldermen were guardians of the minor children.

they go abroad, his wife among her neighbours is the beginner of good discourses, his children among children, his servants among other servants; so that as in the house of those that are skill'd in Musick all are Musicians; so in the house of a Preacher all are preachers. He suffers not a ly or equivocation by any means in his house, but counts it the art and secret of governing to preserve a directnesse and open plainnesse in all things; so that all his house knowes that there is no help for a fault done but confession. He *himselfe* or his *Wife* takes account of Sermons and how every one profits, comparing this yeer with the last; and besides the common prayers of the family, he straitly requires of all to pray by themselves before they sleep at night and stir out in the morning, and knows what prayers they say, and till they have learned them makes them kneel by him; esteeming that this private praying is a more voluntary¹ act in them then when they are called to others' prayers, and that which when they leave the family they carry with them. He keeps his servants between love and fear, according as hee findes them, but gen-

¹ Voluntary—more involving the action of their own will in the prayer.

erally he distributes it thus : to his Children he shewes more love than terrour, to his servants more terrour than love, but an old good servant boards a child.¹ The furniture of his house is very plain, but clean, whole, and sweet, as sweet as his garden can make ; for he hath no mony for such things, charity being his only perfume, which deserves cost when he can spare it. His fare is plain and common, but wholesome ; what hee hath is little, but very good ; it consisteth most of mutton, beefe, and veal. If he addes anything for a great day or a stranger, his garden or orchard supplies it, or his barne and back-side ;² he goes no further for any entertainment lest he goe into the world, esteeming it absurd that he should exceed who teacheth others temperance. But those which his home produceth he refuseth not, as coming cheap and easie, and arising from the improvement of things, which otherwise would be lost. Wherein he admires and imitates the wonderfull providence and thrift of the great householder of the world. For there being two things which as they are unuseful to man, the one for smalnesse, as crums and scat-

¹ Boards a child—counts as.

² Back-side—back-yard, *i. e.*, for fowls, etc.

tered corn and the like ; the other for the foulness, as wash and durt and things thereinto fallen ; God hath provided Creatures for both : for the first, poultry ; for the second, swine. These save man the labour and doing that which either he could not do or was not fit for him to do, by taking both sorts of food into them, do as it were dresse and prepare both for man in themselves, by growing themselves fit for his table. The Parson in his house observes fasting dayes ; and particularly, as Sunday is his day of joy so Friday his day of Humiliation, which he celebrates not only with abstinence of diet but also of company, recreation, and all outward contentments ; and besides, with confession of sins and all acts of Mortification. Now fasting days containe a treble obligation : first, of eating lesse that day then on other dayes ; secondly, of eating no pleasing or over-nourishing things, as the Israelites did eate sowre herbs ; thirdly, of eating no flesh, which is but the determination of the second rule by Authority to this particular. The two former obligations are much more essentiall to a true fast then the third and last ; and fasting dayes were fully performed by keeping of the two former, had not Authority interposed ; so

that to eat little, and that unpleasant, is the naturall rule of fasting, although it be flesh. For since fasting in Scripture language is an afflicting of our souls, if a peece of dry flesh at my table be more unpleasant to me then some fish there, certainly to eat the flesh and not the fish is to keep the fasting day naturally. And it is observable that the prohibiting of flesh came from hot Countreys where both flesh alone, and much more with wine, is apt to nourish more then in cold regions, and where flesh may be much better spared and with more safety then elsewhere, where both the people and the drink being cold and flegmatick, the eating of flesh is an antidote to both. For it is certaine that a weak stomack, being prepossessed with flesh, shall much better brooke and bear a draught of beer then if it had taken before either fish, or rootes, or such things; which will discover it selfe by spitting, and rheume, or flegme. To conclude, the Parson, if he be in full health, keeps the three obligations, eating fish or roots, and that for quantity little, for quality unpleasant. If his body be weak and obstructed, as most Students are, he cannot keep the last obligation nor suffer others in his house that are so to keep it; but only the two former, which

also in diseases of examination (as consumptions) must be broken : For meat was made for man, not man for meat. To all this may be added, not for emboldening the unruly but for the comfort of the weak, that not onely sicknesse breaks these obligations of fasting but sicklinese also. For it is asunnatural to do any thing that leads me to a sicknesse to which I am inclined, as not to get out of that sicknesse when I am in it by any diet. One thing is evident, that an English body and a Student's body are two great obstructed vessels ; and there is nothing that is food, and not phisick, which doth lesse obstruct then flesh moderately taken ; as being immoderately taken, it is exceeding obstructive. And obstructions are the cause of most diseases.

XI

THE PARSON'S COURTESIE

THE Countrey Parson owing a debt of Charity to the poor and of Courtesie to his other parishioners, he so distinguisheth that he keeps his money for the poor and his table for those that are above Alms. Not but that the poor are welcome also to his table, whom he sometimes purposely takes home with him, setting them close by him and carving for them, both for his own humility and their comfort, who are much cheered with such friendlineses. But since both is to be done, the better sort invited and meaner relieved, he chooseth rather to give the poor money, which they can better employ to their own advantage and sutablely to their needs, then so much given in meat at dinner. Having then invited some of his Parish, hee taketh his times to do the like to the rest, so that in the compasse of the year hee hath them all with him ; because countrey people are very observant of such things, and will not be perswaded

but being not invited they are hated. Which perswasion the Parson by all means avoyds, knowing that where there are such conceits there is no room for his doctrine to enter. Yet doth hee oftenest invite those whom hee sees take best courses, that so both they may be encouraged to persevere and others spurred to do well, that they may enjoy the like courtesie. For though he desire that all should live well and vertuously not for any reward of his, but for vertue's sake, yet that will not be so ; and therefore as God, although we should love him onely for his own sake yet out of his infinite pity hath set forth heaven for a reward to draw men to Piety, and is content if at least so they will become good ; So the Countrey Parson, who is a diligent observer and tracker of God's wayes, sets up as many encouragements to goodnesse as he can, both in honour, and profit, and fame ; that he may, if not in the best way, yet any way make his Parish good.

XII

THE PARSON'S CHARITY

THE Countrey Parson is full of Charity ; it is his predominant element. For many and wonderfull things are spoken of thee, thou great Vertue. To Charity is given the covering of sins, 1 *Pet.* 4 : 8 ; and the forgiveness of sins, *Matthew* 6 : 14, *Luke* 7 : 47 ; the fulfilling of the Law, *Romans* 13 : 10 ; the life of faith, *James* 2 : 26 ; the blessings of this life, *Proverbs* 22 : 9, *Psalms* 41 : 2 ; and the reward of the next, *Matth.* 25 : 35. In brief, it is the body of Religion, *John* 13 : 35, and the top of Christian vertues, 1 *Corin.* 13. Wherefore all his works relish of Charity. When he riseth in the morning, he bethinketh himselfe what good deeds he can do that day, and presently ¹ doth them ; counting that day lost wherein he hath not exercised his Charity. He first considers his own Parish, and takes care that there be not a begger or idle person in his Parish, but that all bee in a competent way of

¹ Presently—immediately.

getting their living. This he affects either by bounty, or perswasion, or by authority, making use of that excellent statute which bindes all Parishes to maintaine their own. If his Parish be riche, he exacts this of them ; if poor, and he able, he easeth them therein. But he gives no set pension to any ; for this in time will lose the name and effect of Charity with the poor people, though not with God. For then they will reckon upon it, as on a debt ; and if it be taken away, though justly, they will murmur and repine as much as he that is disseized of his own inheritance. But the Parson having a double aime, and making a hook of his Charity, causeth them still to depend on him ; and so by continuall and fresh bounties, unexpected to them but resolved to himself, hee wins them to praise God more, to live more religiously, and to take more paines in their vocation, as not knowing when they shal be relieved ; which otherwise they would reckon upon and turn to idlenesse. Besides this generall provision, he hath other times of opening his hand: as at great Festivals and Communions, not suffering any that day that he receives to want a good meal suting to the joy of the occasion. But specially

at hard times and dearths he even parts his Living and life among them, giving some corn outright, and selling other at under rates; and when his own stock serves not, working those that are able to the same charity, still pressing it in the pulpit and out of the pulpit, and never leaving them till he obtaine his desire. Yet in all his Charity he distinguisheth, giving them most who live best, and take most paines, and are most charged. So is his charity in effect a Sermon. After the consideration of his own Parish he enlargeth himself, if he be able, to the neighbourhood; for that also is some kind of obligation. So doth he also to those at his door, whom God puts in his way and makes his neighbours. But these he helps not without some testimony, except the evidence of the misery bring testimony with it. For though these testimonies also may be falsified, yet considering that the Law allows these in case they be true, but allows by no means to give without testimony, as he obeys Authority in the one, so that being once satisfied he allows his Charity some blindness in the other; especially since of the two commands we are more enjoined to be charitable then wise. But evident miseries have

a naturall priviledge and exemption from all law. When-ever hee gives any thing and sees them labour in thanking of him, he exacts of them to let him alone and say rather, God be praised, God be glorified; that so the thanks may go the right way, and thither onely where they are onely due. So doth hee also before giving make them say their Prayers first, or the Creed and ten Commandments, and as he finds them perfect rewards them the more. For other givings are lay and secular, but this is to give like a Priest.

XIII

THE PARSON'S CHURCH

THE Countrey Parson hath a speciall care of his Church, that all things there be decent and befitting his Name by which it is called. Therefore, first he takes order that all things be in good repair: as walls plaistered, windows glazed, floore paved, seats whole, firm, and uniform; especially that the Pulpit and Desk, and Communion Table and Font, be as they ought for those great duties that are performed in them. Secondly, that the Church be swept and kept cleane, without dust or Cobwebs, and at great festivalls strawed,¹ and stuck with boughs, and perfumed with incense.² Thirdly, that there be fit and proper texts of Scripture everywhere painted, and that all the painting be grave and reverend, not with light colours or foolish anticks. Fourthly, That all the books appointed by Authority be there, and those not torne, or

¹ Strawed—spread with rushes or straw, both for comfort in cold weather, and to protect the floors.

² This does not imply any ceremonial use of incense.

fouled, but whole ; and clean, and well bound ; and that there be a fitting and sightly Communion cloth *of fine linnen, with an handsome and seemly Carpet of good and costly Stuffe or Cloth, and all kept sweet and clean, in a strong and decent chest, with a Chalice and Cover, and a Stoop or Flagon, and a Bason for Almes and offerings ; besides which he hath a Poor-man's box conveniently seated, to receive the charity of well minded people and to lay up treasure for the sick and needy.* And all this he doth not as out of necessity, or as putting a holiness in the things, but as desiring to keep the middle way between superstition and slovenliness, and as following the Apostle's two great and admirable Rules in things of this nature : The first whereof is, *Let all things be done decently and in order ;* The second, *Let all things be done to edification,* 1 Cor. 14. For these two rules comprize and include the double object of our duty, God, and our neighbour : the first being for the honour of God, the second for the benefit of our neighbour. So that they excellently score out the way, and fully and exactly contain, even in externall and indifferent things, what course is to be taken ; and put them to great shame who deny the Scripture to be perfect.

XIV

THE PARSON IN CIRCUIT

THE Countrey Parson upon the afternoons¹ in the weekdays takes occasion sometimes to visite in person now one quarter of his Parish, now another. For there he shall find his flock most naturally as they are, wallowing in the midst of their affairs ; whereas on Sundays it is easie for them to compose themselves to order, which they put on as their holy-day cloathes, and come to Church in frame, but commonly the next day put off both. When he comes to any house, first he blesseth it, and then as hee finds the persons of the house imployed so he formes his discourse. Those that he findes religiously imployed, hee both commends them much and furthers them when hee is gone, in their imployment : as, if hee findes them reading, hee furnisheth them with good books ; if curing poor people, hee supplies them with Receipts and in-

The fore-noon being the time of study for the Parson.

structs them further in that skill, shewing them how acceptable such works are to God, and wishing them ever to do the Cures with their own hands and not to put them over to servants. Those that he finds busie in the works of their calling, he commendeth them also : for it is a good and just thing for every one to do their own busines. But then he admonisheth them of two things : first, that they dive not too deep into worldly affairs, plunging themselves over head and eares into carking and caring ; but that they so labour as neither to labour anxiously, nor distrustfully, nor profanely. Then they labour anxiously when they overdo it, to the loss of their quiet and health ; then distrustfully, when they doubt God's providence, thinking that their own labour is the cause of their thriving, as if it were in their own hands to thrive or not to thrive. *Then they labour profanely, when they set themselves to work like brute beasts, never raising their thoughts to God, nor sanctifying their labour with daily prayer ; when on the Lord's day they do unnecessary servile work, or in time of divine service on other holy days, except in the cases of extreme poverty, and in the seasons of Seed-time and Harvest.* Secondly, he adviseth them so to

labour for wealth and maintenance as that they make not that the end of their labour, but that they may have wherewithall to serve God the better and to do good deeds. After these discourses, if they be poor and needy whom he thus finds labouring, he gives them somewhat ; and opens not only his mouth but his purse to their relief, that so they go on more cheerfully in their vocation, and himself be ever the more welcome to them. Those that the Parson findes idle, or ill employed, he chides not at first, for that were neither civill nor profitable ; but always in the close, before he departs from them. Yet in this he distinguisheth. For if he be a plaine countryman, he reproveth him plainly ; for they are not sensible of finenesse. If they be of higher quality, they commonly are quick and sensible, and very tender of reproof ; and therefore he lays his discourse so that he comes to the point very leasurely, and oftentimes, as *Nathan* did, in the person of another, making them to reprove themselves. However, one way or other, he ever reproveth them, that he may keep himself pure and not be intangled in others' sinnes. Neither in this doth he forbear though there be company by. For as when the offence is particular and against mee, I

am to follow our Saviour's rule and to take my brother aside and reprove him ; so when the offence is publicke and against God, I am then to follow the Apostle's rule, 1 *Timothy* 5 : 20, and to *rebuke openly* that which is done openly. Besides these occasionall discourses, the Parson questions what order is kept in the house : as about prayers morning and evening on their knees, reading of Scripture, catechizing, singing of Psalms at their work and on holy days ; who can read, who not ; and sometimes he hears the children read himselfe and blesseth, encouraging also the servants to learn to read and offering to have them taught on holy-dayes by his servants. If the Parson were ashamed of particularizing in these things, hee were not fit to be a Parson ; but he holds the Rule that Nothing is little in God's service. If it once have the honour of that Name, it grows great instantly. Wherefore neither disdaineth he to enter into the poorest Cottage, though he even creep into it and though it smell never so lothsomly. For both God is there also and those for whom God dyed ; and so much the rather doth he so as his accesse to the poor is more comfortable then to the rich ; and in regard of himselfe, it is more humiliation. These are the Parson's

generall aims in his Circuit ; but with these he mingles other discourses for conversation sake, and to make his higher purposes slip the more easily.

THE PARSON COMFORTING

THE Countrey Parson, when any of his cure is sick, or afflicted with losse of friend, or estate, or any ways distressed, fails not to afford his best comforts, and rather goes to them and sends for the afflicted, though they can and otherwise ought to come to him. To this end he hath thoroughly digested all the points of consolation, as having continuall use of them, such as are from God's generall providence extended even to lillyes; from his particular to his Church; from his promises, from the examples of all Saints that ever were; from Christ himself, perfecting our Redemption no other way then by sorrow; from the Benefit of affliction, which softens and works the stubborn heart of man; from the certainty both of deliverance and reward, if we faint not; from the miserable comparison of the moment of griefs here with the weight of joyes hereafter. *Besides this, in his visiting the sick or otherwise afflicted, he followeth the Churches counsell, namely, in*

perswading them to particular confession, labouring to make them understand the great good use of this antient and pious ordinance, and how necessary it is in some cases. He also urgeth them to do some pious charitable works as a necessary evidence and fruit of their faith, at that time especially; the participation of the holy Sacrament, how comfortable and Sovereigne a Medicine it is to all sinsick souls; what strength and joy and peace it administers against all temptations, even to death it selfe, he plainly and generally¹ intimateth to the disaffected or sick person, that so the hunger and thirst after it may come rather from themselves then from his perswasion.

¹ Generally, *i. e.*, in general terms, not with a too particular and personal application.

XVI

THE PARSON A FATHER

THE Countrey Parson is not only a father to his flock but also professeth himselfe throughly of the opinion, carrying it about with him as fully as if he had begot his whole Parish. And of this he makes great use. For by this means when any sinns, he hateth him not as an officer but pityes him as a Father. And even in those wrongs which either in tithing or otherwise are done to his owne person hee considers the offender as a child and forgives, so hee may have any signe of amendment.¹ So also when after many admonitions any continue to be refractory, yet hee gives him not over, but is long before hee proceede to disinheriting,² or perhaps never goes so far, knowing that some are called at the eleventh houre ; and therefore hee still ex-

¹ Chaucer says of his " poor Parson of a town," "*Ful loth were him to curse for his tythes.*"

² Disinheriting, *i. e.*, by excommunication, excluding from the Church.

pects and waits, least hee should determine¹ God's houre of coming; which as hee cannot, touching the last day, so neither touching the intermediate days of Conversion.

¹ Determine—bring to an end.

XVII

THE PARSON IN JOURNEY

THE Countrey Parson, when a just occasion calleth him out of his Parish (which he diligently and strictly weigheth, his Parish being all his joy and thought) leaveth not his Ministry behind him, but is himselfe where ever he is. Therefore those he meets on the way he blesseth audibly, and with those he overtakes or that overtake him hee begins good discourses, such as may edify, interposing sometimes some short and honest refreshments which may make his other discourses more welcome and lesse tedious. And when he comes to his Inn he refuseth not to joyne, that he may enlarge the glory of God to the company he is in by a due blessing of God for their safe arrival, and saying grace at meat, and at going to bed by giving the Host notice that he will have prayers in the hall, wishing him to informe his guests thereof, that if any be willing to partake, they may resort thither. The like he doth in the morning, using pleasantly the

outlandish¹ proverb, that *Prayers and Provender never hinder journey*. When he comes to any other house, where *his kindred or other relations give him any authority over the Family*, if hee be to stay for a time, hee considers diligently the state thereof to Godward, and that in two points: First, what disorders there are either in Apparell, or Diet, or too open a Buttery, or reading vain books, or swearing, or breeding up children to no Calling, but in idleness or the like. Secondly, what means of Piety, whether daily prayers be used, Grace, reading of Scriptures, and other good books, how *Sundayes, holy-days, and fasting days* are kept. And accordingly as he finds any defect in these, hee first considers with himselfe what kind of remedy fits the temper of the house best, and then hee faithfully and boldly applyeth it; yet seasonably and discreetly, by taking aside the Lord or Lady, or *Master and Mistres* of the house, and shewing them cleerly that they respect them most who wish them best, and that not a desire to meddle with others' affairs, but the earnestnesse to do all the good he can moves him to say thus and thus.

¹ Outlandish ; from the more remote regions.

XVIII

THE PARSON IN SENTINELL

THE Countrey Parson, where ever he is, keeps God's watch: that is, there is nothing spoken or done in the Company where he is but comes under his Test and censure.¹ If it be well spoken or done, he takes occasion to commend and enlarge it; if ill, he presently lays hold of it, least the poyson steal into some young and unwary spirits and possesse them even before they themselves heed it. But this he doth discretely, with mollifying and suppling words: This was not so well said as it might have been forborn; We cannot allow this. Or else if the thing will admit interpretation: Your meaning is not thus, but thus; or, So farr indeed what you say is true and well said, but this will not stand. This is called keeping God's watch, when the baits which the enemy lays in company are discovered and avoyded. This is to be on God's side and be true to his party. Besides, if he perceive in

¹ Censure—judgment.

company any discourse tending to ill, either by the wickedness or quarrelsomenesse thereof, he either prevents it judiciously or breaks it off seasonably by some diversion. Wherein a pleasantness of disposition is of great use, men being willing to sell the interest and ingagement of their discourses for no price sooner then that of mirth; whither the nature of man, loving refreshment, gladly betakes it selfe, even to the losse of honour.

XIX

THE PARSON IN REFERENCE

THE Countrey Parson is sincere and upright in all his relations. And first, he is just to his Countrey : as when he is set at ¹ an armour or horse, he borrowes them not to serve the turne, nor provides slight and unusefull, but such as are every way fitting to do his Countrey true and laudable service when occasion requires. To do otherwise is deceit, and therefore not for him, who is hearty and true in all his wayes, as being the servant of him in whom there was no guile. Likewise in any other Countrey-duty he considers what is the end of any Command, and then he suits things faithfully according to that end. Secondly, he carryes himself very respectfully ² as to all the Fathers of the Church, so especially to his Diocesan, honouring him both in word and behaviour and resorting unto him in any difficulty, either in his studies or in his Parish. He

¹ Set at—assessed, for the public service.

² Respectively, *i. e.*, giving due respect to each.

observes Visitations, and being there makes due use of them, as of Clergy councils for the benefit of the Diocese. And therefore before he comes, having observed some defects in the Ministry, he then either in Sermon, if he preach, or at some other time of the day, propounds among his Brethren what were fitting to be done. Thirdly, he keeps good Correspondence with all the neighbouring Pastours round about him, performing for them any Ministeriall office which is not to the prejudice of his own Parish. Likewise he welcomes to his house any Minister, how poor or mean soever, with as joyfull a countenance as if he were to entertain some great Lord. Fourthly, he fulfills the duty and debt of neighbourhood to all the Parishes which are neer him. For the Apostle's rule, *Philip. 4*, being admirable and large, that *we should do whatsoever things are honest, or just, or pure, or lovely, or of good report, if there be any vertue, or any praise*; and Neighbourhood being ever reputed, even among the Heathen, as an obligation to do good, rather then to those that are further, where things are otherwise equall, therefore he satisfies this duty also. Especially if God have sent any calamity either by fire or famine to any neighbouring

Parish, then he expects no Briefe ;¹ but taking his Parish together *the next Sunday* or *holy-day* and exposing to them the uncertainty of humane affairs, none knowing whose turne may be next, and then when he hath affrighted them with this exposing the obligation of Charity and Neighbour-hood, he first gives himself liberally and then incites them to give ; making together a summe either to be sent, or, which were more comfortable, all together choosing some fitt day to carry it themselves and cheere the Afflicted. So if any neighbouring village be overburdened with poore and his owne lesse charged, he findes some way of releeving it and reducing the Manna and bread of Charity to some equality, representing to his people that the Blessing of God to them ought to make them the more charitable, and not the lesse, lest he cast their neighbours' poverty on them also.

¹ Brief, *i. e.*, formal notice or request.

XX

THE PARSON IN GOD'S STEAD

THE Countrey Parson is in God's stead to his Parish, and dischargeth ¹ God what he can of his promises. Wherefore there is nothing done either wel or ill whereof he is not the rewarder or punisher. If he chance to finde any reading in another's Bible, he provides him one of his own. If he finde another giving a poor man a penny, he gives him a tester for it, if the giver be fit to receive it ; or if he be of a condition above such gifts, he sends him a good book or easeth him in his Tithes, telling him when he hath forgotten it, This I do because at such and such a time you were charitable. This is in some sort a discharging of God as concerning this life, who hath promised that Godlinesse shall be gainfull ; but in the other, God is his own immediate paymaster, rewarding all good deeds to their full proportion. *The Parson's punishing of sin and*

¹ He feels himself God's servant and agent, to perform God's promises to them in the measure of his ability.

vice is rather by withdrawing his bounty and courtesie from the parties offending, or by private or publick reproof, as the case requires, then by causing them to be presented¹ or otherwise complained of. And yet as the malice of the person or hainousness of the crime may be, he is carefull to see condign punishment inflicted; and with truly godly zeal, without hatred to the person, hungreth and thirsteth after righteous punishment of unrighteousnesse. Thus both in rewarding vertue and in punishing vice, the Parson endeavoureth to be in God's stead, knowing that Countrey people are drawne or led by sense more then by faith, by present rewards or punishments more then by future.

¹ To the Bishop or his Archdeacon, at their visitation.

XXI

THE PARSON CATECHIZING

THE Countrey Parson values Catechizing highly. For there being three points of his duty, the one to infuse a competent knowledge of salvation in every one of his Flock ; the other to multiply and build up this knowledge to a spirituall Temple ; the third to inflame this knowledge, to presse and drive it to practice, turning it to reformation of life by pithy and lively exhortations ; Catechizing is the first point, and but by Catechizing the other cannot be attained. Besides, whereas in Sermons there is a kind of state, in Catechizing there is an humblesse very sutable to Christian regeneration, which exceedingly delights him as by way of exercise upon himself, and by way of preaching to himself for the advancing of his own mortification. For in preaching to others he forgets not himself, but is first a Sermon to himself and then to others, growing with the growth of his Parish. He useth and preferreth the ordinary Church-

Catechism, partly for obedience to Authority, partly for uniformity sake, that the same common truths may be every where professed; especially since many remove from Parish to Parish, who like Christian Souldiers are to give the word and to satisfie the Congregation by their Catholick answers. He exacts of all the Doctrine of the Catechisme: of the younger sort, the very words; of the elder, the substance. Those he Catechizeth publickly, these privately, giving age honour according to the Apostle's rule, 1 *Tim.* 5 : 1. He requires all to be present at Catechizing: first, for the authority of the work; Secondly, that Parents and Masters, as they hear the answers prove, may when they come home either commend or reprove, either reward or punish. Thirdly, that those of the elder sort, who are not well grounded, may then by an honourable way take occasion to be better instructed. Fourthly, that those who are well grown in the knowledg of Religion may examine their grounds, renew their vowes, and by occasion of both inlarge their meditations. When once all have learned the words of the Catechisme, he thinks it the most usefull way that a Pastor can take to go over the same, but in other

words. For many say the Catechisme by rote, as parrats, without ever piercing into the sense of it. In this course the order of the Catechisme would be kept, but the rest varied. As thus in the Creed: How came this world to be as it is? Was it made, or came it by chance? Who made it? Did you see God make it? Then are there some things to be beleevd that are not seen? Is this the nature of believe? Is not Christianity full of such things as are not to be seen, but beleevd? You said, God made the world; Who is God? And so forward, requiring answers to all these, and helping and cherishing the Answerer by making the Question very plaine with comparisons, and making much even of a word of truth from him. This order being used to one would be a little varied to another. And this is an admirable way of teaching, wherein the Catechized will at length finde delight, and by which the Catechizer, if he once get the skill of it, will draw out of ignorant and silly¹ souls even the dark and deep points of Religion. *Socrates* did thus in Philosophy, who held that the seeds of all truths lay in every body, and accordingly by questions well ordered he

¹ Silly—uneducated.

found Philosophy in silly Tradesmen. That position will not hold in Christianity, because it contains things above nature ; but after that the Catechisme is once learn'd, that which nature is towards Philosophy the Catechisme is towards Divinity. To this purpose some dialogues in *Plato* were worth the reading, where the singular dexterity of *Socrates* in this kind may be observed and imitated. Yet the skill consists but in these three points : First, an aim and mark of the whole discourse whither to drive the Answerer, which the Questionist must have in his mind before any question be propounded, upon which and to which the questions are to be chained. Secondly, a most plain and easie framing the question, even containing in vertue ¹ the answer also, especially to the more ignorant. Thirdly, when the answerer sticks, an illustrating the thing by something else which he knows, making what hee knows to serve him in that which he knows not : As, when the Parson once demanded after other questions about man's misery, Since man is so miserable, what is to be done ? And the answerer could not tell ; He asked him again, what he would do if he were in a ditch ? This

¹ In virtue—in effect, as we say, *i. e.*, “a leading question.”

familiar illustration made the answer so plaine that he was even ashamed of his ignorance ; for he could not but say he would hast out of it as fast he could. Then he proceeded to ask whether he could get out of the ditch alone, or whether he needed a helper, and who was that helper. This is the skill, and doubtlesse the Holy Scripture intends thus much when it condescends to the naming of a plough, a hatchet, a bushell, leaven, boyes piping and dancing ; shewing that things of ordinary use are not only to serve in the way of drudgery, but to be washed and cleansed and serve for lights even of Heavenly Truths. This is the Practice which the Parson so much commends to all his fellow-labourers ; the secret of whose good consists in this, that at Sermons and Prayers men may sleep or wander ; but when one is asked a question, he must discover what he is. This practice exceeds even Sermons in teaching. But there being two things in Sermons, the one Informing, the other Inflaming ; as Sermons come short of questions in the one, so they farre exceed them in the other. For questions cannot inflame or ravish ; that must be done by a set, and laboured, and continued speech.

XXII

THE PARSON IN SACRAMENTS

THE Countrey Parson being to administer the Sacraments, is at a stand with himself how or what behaviour to assume for so holy things. Especially at Communion times he is in a great confusion, as being not only to receive God, but to break and administer him. Neither findes he any issue in this but to throw himself down at the throne of grace, saying, Lord, thou knowest what thou didst when thou appointedst it to be done thus ; therefore doe thou fulfill what thou didst appoint ; for thou art not only the feast, but the way to it. At Baptisme, being himselfe in white, he requires the presence of all, and Baptizeth not willingly but on Sundayes or great dayes.¹ Hee admits no vaine or idle names, but such as are usuall and accustomed. Hee says that prayer with great devotion where God is thanked for calling us to the knowledg of his grace, Baptisme being a blessing that the world hath not the like. He

¹ As the rubrick requires.

willingly and cheerfully crosseth the child, and thinketh the Ceremony not onely innocent but reverend. He instructeth the God-fathers and God-mothers that it is no complementall or light thing to sustain that place, but a great honour and no less burden, as being done both in the presence of God and his Saints, and by way of undertaking for a Christian soul. He adviseth all to call to minde their Baptism often ; for if wise men have thought it the best way of preserving a state to reduce it to its principles by which it grew great, certainly it is the safest course for Christians also to meditate on their Baptisme often (being the first step into their great and glorious calling) and upon what termes and with what vowes they were Baptized. At the times of the Holy Communion he first takes order with the Church-Wardens that the elements be of the best, not cheape or course,¹ much lesse ill-tasted or unwholesome. Secondly, hee considers and looks into the ignorance or carelessness of his flock, and accordingly applies himselfe with Catechizings and lively exhortations, not on the Sunday of the Communion only (for then it is too late,) but the Sunday, or Sundayes before the Communion,

¹ Course—course.

or on the Eves of all those dayes. If there be any who, having not received yet, is to enter into this great work, he takes the more pains with them, that hee may lay the foundation of future Blessings. The time of every one's first receiving is not so much by yeers as by understanding, particularly the rule may be this: When any one can distinguish the Sacramentall from common bread, knowing the Institution and the difference, hee ought to receive, of what age soever. Children and youths are usually deferred too long, under pretence of devotion to the Sacrament, but it is for want of Instruction; their understandings being ripe enough for ill things, and why not then for better? But Parents and Masters should make hast in this, as to a great purchase¹ for their children and servants; which while they deferr, both sides suffer: the one, in wanting many excitings of grace; the other, in being worse served and obeyed. The saying of the Catechism is necessary, but not enough; because to answer in form may still admit ignorance. But the Questions must be propounded loosely and wildely, and then the

¹The old meaning of purchase is something acquired by our own act as distinguished from that which is inherited.

Answerer will discover what hee is. Thirdly, For the manner of receiving, as the Parson useth all reverence himself, so he administers to none but to the reverent. The Feast indeed requires sitting, because it is a Feast; but man's unpreparednesse asks kneeling. Hee that comes to the Sacrament hath the confidence of a Guest, and hee that kneels confesseth himself an unworthy one and therefore differs from other Feasters; but hee that sits, or lies, puts up to ¹ an Apostle. Contentiousnesse in a feast of Charity is more scandall then any posture. Fourthly, touching the frequency of the Communion, the Parson celebrates it, if not duly once a month, yet at least five or six times in the year: as, at Easter, Christmase, Whitsuntide, afore and after Harvest, and the beginning of Lent. And this hee doth not onely for the benefit of the work, but also for the discharge of the Church-wardens; who being to present all that receive not thrice a year, if there be but three Communions, neither can all the people so order their affairs as to receive just at those times, nor the Church-Wardens so well take notice who receive thrice and who not.

¹Puts up to—makes himself equal with.

XXIII

THE PARSON'S COMPLETENESSE

THE Countrey Parson desires to be all to his Parish, and not onely a Pastour, but a Lawyer also, and a Physician. Therefore hee endures not that any of his Flock should go to Law, but in any Controversie that they should resort to him as their Judge. To this end he hath gotten to himself some insight in things ordinarily incident and controverted, by experience and by reading some initiatory treatises in the Law, with *Dalton's* Justice of Peace and the Abridgements of the Statutes, as also by discourse with men of that profession, whom he hath ever some cases to ask when he meets with them ; holding that rule that to put men to discourse of that wherein they are most eminent is the most gainfull way of Conversation. Yet when ever any controversie is brought to him he never decides it alone, but sends for three or four of the ablest of the Parish to hear the cause with him, whom he makes to deliver their opinion first ; out of which he gath-

ers, in case he be ignorant himself, what to hold ; and so the thing passeth with more authority and lesse envy. In Judging, he followes that which is altogether right ; so that if the poorest man of the Parish detain but a pin unjustly from the richest, he absolutely restores it as a Judge ; but when he hath so done, then he assumes the Parson and exhorts to Charity. Neverthelesse, there may happen sometimes some cases wherein he chooseth to permit his Parishioners rather to make use of the Law then himself ; As in cases of an obscure and dark nature, not easily determinable by Lawyers themselves ; or in cases of high consequence, as establishing of inheritances ; or Lastly, when the persons in difference are of a contentious disposition and cannot be gained, but that they still fall from all compromises that have been made. But then he shews them how to go to Law, even as Brethren and not as enemies, neither avoyding therefore one another's company, much less defaming one another. Now as the Parson is in Law, so is he in sicknesse also : if there be any of his flock sick, hee is their Physician, or at least his Wife, of whom in stead of the qualities of the world he asks no other but to have the skill of healing a wound or helping

the sick. But if neither himselfe nor his wife have the skil, and his means serve, hee keeps some young practitioner in his house for the benefit of his Parish, whom yet he ever exhorts not to exceed his bounds, but in tickle¹ cases to call in help. If all fail, then he keeps good correspondence with some neighbour Phisician, and entertaines him for the Cure of his Parish. Yet is it easie for any Scholer to attaine to such a measure of Phisick as may be of much use to him both for himself and others. This is done by seeing one Anatomy,² reading one Book of Phisick, having one Herball by him. And let *Fernelius*³ be the Phisick Authour, for he writes briefly, neatly, and judiciously; especially let his Method of Phisick be diligently perused, as being the practicall part and of most use. Now both the reading of him and the knowing of herbs may be done at such times as they may be an help and a recreation to more divine studies, Nature serving Grace both in comfort of diversion and the benefit of application when need requires;

¹ Tickle—ticklish, as in edition of 1671.

² Either a dissection, or an anatomical diagram of the human body.

³ An eminent French physician.

as also by way of illustration, even as our Saviour made plants and seeds to teach the people. For he was the true householder, who bringeth out of his treasure things new and old ; the old things of Philosophy, and the new of Grace ; and maketh the one serve the other. And I conceive our Saviour did this for three reasons : first, that by familiar things he might make his Doctrine slip the more easily into the hearts even of the meanest. Secondly, that labouring people (whom he chiefly considered) might have every where monuments of his Doctrine, remembering in gardens his mustard-seed and lillyes ; in the field, his seed-corn and tares ; and so not be drowned altogether in the works of their vocation, but sometimes lift up their minds to better things, even in the midst of their pains. Thirdly, that he might set a Copy for Parsons. In the knowledge of simples, wherein the manifold wisdom of God is wonderfully to be seen, one thing would be carefully observed : which is, to know what herbs may be used in stead of drugs of the same nature, and to make the garden the shop. For home-bred medicines are both more easie for the Parson's purse, and more familiar for all men's bodies. So, where the Apothecary useth either

for loosing, Rubarb, or for binding, Bolearmena,¹ the Parson useth damask or white Roses for the one, and plantaine, shepherd's purse, knot-grasse for the other, and that with better successe. As for spices, he doth not onely prefer home-bred things before them, but condemns them for vanities and so shuts them out of his family, esteeming that there is no spice comparable, for herbs, to rosemary, time, savoury, mints; and for seeds, to Fennell and Carroway seeds. Accordingly, for salves his wife seeks not the city, but prefers her garden and fields before all outlandish gums. And surely hyssope, valerian, mercury, adder's tongue, yerrow, melilot, and Saint *John's* wort made into a salve; And Elder, camomill, mallowes, comphrey and smallage made into a Poultis, have done great and rare cures. In curing of any, the Parson and his Family use to premise prayers, for this is to cure like a Parson, and this raiseth the action from the Shop to the Church. But though the Parson sets forward all Charitable deeds, yet he looks not in this point of Curing beyond his own Parish, except the person bee so poor that he is not able to reward the Phisician; for as hee is Charitable, so he is just

¹ An astringent earth.

also. Now it is a justice and debt to the Commonwealth he lives in not to inroach on other's Professions, but to live on his own. And justice is the ground of Charity.

XXIV

THE PARSON ARGUING

THE Countrey Parson, if there be any of his parish that hold strange Doctrins, useth all possible diligence to reduce¹ them to the common Faith. The first means he useth is Prayer, beseeching the Father of lights to open their eyes, and to give him power so to fit his discourse to them that it may effectually pierce their hearts and convert them. The second means is a very loving and sweet usage of them, both in going to and sending for them often, and in finding out Courtesies to place on them; as in their tithes or otherwise. The third means is the observation what is the main foundation and pillar of their cause, wherein they rely; as if he be a Papist, the Church is the hinge he turnes on; if a Scismatick, scandall. Wherefore the Parson hath diligently examined these two with himselfe, as what the Church is, how it began, how it proceeded, whether it be a

¹ Reduce—lead back.

rule to it selfe, whether it hath a rule, whether having a rule, it ought not to be guided by it ; whether any rule in the world be obscure, and how then should the best be so, at least in fundamentall things, the obscurity in some points being the exercise of the Church, the light in the foundations being the guide ; The Church needing both an evidence, and an exercise. So for Scandall : what scandall is, when given or taken ; whether, there being two precepts, one of obeying Authority, the other of not giving scandall, that ought not to be preferred, especially since in disobeying there is scandall also ; whether things once indifferent being made by the precept of Authority more then indifferent, it be in our power to omit or refuse them. These and the like points hee hath accurately digested, having ever besides two great helps and powerfull perswaders on his side : the one, a strict religious life ; the other an humble, and ingenuous search of truth ; being unmoved in arguing and voyd of all contentiousnesse : which are two great lights able to dazle the eyes of the mis-led, while they consider that God cannot be wanting to them in Doctrine to whom he is so gracious in Life.

THE PARSON PUNISHING

WHENSOEVER the Countrey Parson proceeds so farre as to call in Authority, and to do such things of legall opposition either in the presenting or punishing of any as the vulgar ever consters¹ for signes of ill will, he forbears not in any wise to use the delinquent as before in his behaviour and carriage towards him, not avoyding his company or doing any thing of averse-nesse, save in the very act of punishment. Neither doth he esteem him for an enemy, but as a brother still, except some small and temporary estranging may corroborate the punishment to a better subduing and humbling of the delinquent; which if it happily take effect, he then comes on the faster, and makes so much the more of him as before he alienated himselfe; doubling his regards, and shewing by all means that the delinquent's returne is to his advantage.

¹ Consters—construes.

XXVI

THE PARSON'S EYE

THE Countrey Parson at spare times from action, standing on a hill and considering his Flock, discovers two sorts of vices and two sorts of vicious persons. There are some vices whose natures are always cleer and evident, as Adultery, Murder, Hatred, Lying, etc. There are other vices whose natures, at least in the beginning, are dark and obscure : as Covetousnesse and Gluttony. So likewise there are some persons who abstain not even from known sins ; there are others who when they know a sin evidently, they commit it not. It is true indeed they are long a knowing it, being partiall to themselves and witty to others who shall reprove them from it. A man may be both Covetous and Intemperate, and yet hear Sermons against both and himselfe condemn both in good earnest. And the reason hereof is because the natures of these vices being not evidently discussed, or known commonly, the beginnings of them are not easily observable. And

the beginnings of them are not observed because of the suddain passing from that which was just now lawfull to that which is presently unlawfull, even in one continued action. So a man dining, eats at first lawfully ; but proceeding on, comes to do unlawfully, even before he is aware ; not knowing the bounds of the action, nor when his eating begins to be unlawfull. So a man storing up mony for his necessary provisions, both in present for his family and in future for his children, hardly perceives when his storing becomes unlawfull. Yet is there a period for his storing, and a point or center when his storing, which was even now good, passeth from good to bad. Wherefore the Parson being true to his businesse, hath exactly sifted the definitions of all vertues and vices ; especially canvassing those whose natures are most stealing and beginnings uncertaine. Particularly concerning these two vices, not because they are all that are of this dark and creeping disposition, but for example sake and because they are most common, he thus thinks : first, for covetousnes, he lays this ground, Who-soever when a just occasion calls, either spends not at all, or not in some proportion to God's blessing upon him, is covetous. The reason of the

ground is manifest, because wealth is given to that end to supply our occasions. Now if I do not give every thing its end, I abuse the Creature, I am false to my reason which should guide me, I offend the supreme Judg in perverting that order which he hath set both to things and to reason. The application of the ground would be infinite ; but in brief, a poor man is an occasion, my countrey is an occasion, my friend is an occasion, my Table is an occasion, my apparell is an occasion ; if in all these, and those more which concerne me, I either do nothing, or pinch, and scrape, and squeeze blood undecently to the station wherein God hath placed me, I am Covetous. More particularly, and to give one instance for all, if God have given me servants, and I either provide too little for them or that which is unwholesome, being sometimes baned¹ meat, sometimes too salt, and so not competent nourishment, I am Covetous. I bring this example because men usually think that servants for their mony are as other things that they buy, even as a piece of wood, which they may cut, or hack, or throw into the fire, and so they pay them their wages all is well. Nay, to descend yet more particu-

¹Baned—spoiled, or diseased.

larly, if a man hath wherewithall to buy a spade, and yet hee chuseth rather to use his neighbour's and wear out that, he is covetous. Nevertheless, few bring covetousness thus low, or consider it so narrowly, which yet ought to be done, since there is a Justice in the least things, and for the least there shall be a judgment. Countrey-people are full of these petty injustices, being cunning to make use of another and spare themselves. And Scholers ought to be diligent in the observation of these, and driving of their generall Schoole rules ever to the smallest actions of Life ; which while they dwell in their bookes, they will never finde, but being seated in the Countrey and doing their duty faithfully, they will soon discover ; especially if they carry their eyes ever open and fix them on their charge, and not on their preferment. Secondly, for Gluttony, The Parson lays this ground, He that either for quantity eats more than his health or imployments will bear, or for quality is licorous after dainties, is a glutton ; as he that eats more than his estate will bear, is a Prodigall ; and he that eats offensively to the Company, either in his order or length of eating, is scandalous and uncharitable. These three rules generally comprehend the faults of

eating, and the truth of them needs no prooffe ; so that men must eat neither to the disturbance of their health, nor of their affairs (which, being overburdened or studying dainties too much, they cannot wel dispatch), nor of their estate, nor of their brethren. One act in these things is bad, but it is the custome and habit that names a glutton. Many think they are at more liberty then they are, as if they were masters of their health, and so they will stand to the pain all is well. But to eat to one's hurt comprehends, besides the hurt, an act against reason, because it is unnaturall to hurt one's self ; and this they are not masters of. Yet of hurtfull things, I am more bound to abstain from those which by mine own experience I have found hurtfull then from those which by a Common tradition and vulgar knowledge are reputed to be so. That which is said of hurtfull meats extends to hurtfull drinks also. As for the quantity, touching our employments, none must eat so as to disable themselves from a fit discharging either of Divine duties or duties of their calling. So that if after Dinner they are not fit (or un-weeldy) either to pray or work, they are gluttons. Not that all must presently work after dinner (For they rather must not work,

especially Students, and those that are weakly), but that they must rise so as that it is not meate or drinke that hinders them from working. To guide them in this there are three rules: first, the custome and knowledg of their own body, and what it can well disgest; The second, the feeling of themselves in time of eating, which because it is deceitfull; (for one thinks in eating, that he can eat more, then afterwards he finds true); The third is the observation with what appetite they sit down. This last rule joynd with the first never fails. For knowing what one usually can well disgest and feeling when I go to meat in what disposition I am, either hungry or not, according as I feele my self either I take my wonted proportion or diminish of it. Yet Phisicians bid those that would live in health not keep an uniform diet, but to feed variously, now more, now lesse. And *Gerson*,¹ a spirituall man, wisheth all to incline rather to too much than to too little; his reason is, because diseases of exinanition are more dangerous then diseases of repletion. But the Parson distinguisheth according to his double aime, either

¹ John Gerson (1363-1429) Chancellor of the University of Paris.

of Abstinence a moral vertue or Mortification a divine. When he deals with any that is heavy and carnall, he gives him those freer rules ; but when he meets with a refined and heavenly disposition, he carryes them higher, even sometimes to a forgetting of themselves, knowing that there is one who when they forget remembers for them ; As when the people hungred and thirsted after our Saviour's Doctrine, and tarryed so long at it that they would have fainted had they returned empty, He suffered it not ; but rather made food miraculously then suffered so good desires to miscarry.

XXVII

THE PARSON IN MIRTH

THE Countrey Parson is generally sad, because hee knows nothing but the Crosse of Christ, his minde being defixed¹ on and with those nailes wherewith his Master was. Or if he have any leisure to look off from thence, he meets continually with two most sad spectacles, Sin, and Misery, God dishonoured every day and man afflicted. Neverthelesse, he somtimes refresheth himself, as knowing that nature will not bear everlasting droopings, and that pleasantnesse of disposition is a great key to do good ; not onely because all men shun the company of perpetuall severity, but also for that when they are in company instructions seasoned with pleasantness both enter sooner and roote deeper. Wherefore he condescends to humane frailties both in himselfe and others, and intermingles some mirth in his discourses occasionally according to the pulse of the hearer.

¹Defixed—firmly fixed.

XXVIII

THE PARSON IN CONTEMPT

THE Countrey Parson knows well that both for the generall ignominy which is cast upon the profession, and much more for those rules which out of his choysest judgment hee hath resolved to observe, and which are described in this Book, he must be despised ; because this hath been the portion of God his Master and of God's Saints his Brethren, and this is foretold that it shall be so still until things be no more. Nevertheless, according to the Apostle's rule he endeavours that none shall despise him ; especially in his own Parish he suffers it not to his utmost power ; for that where contempt is, there is no room for instruction. This he procures, first, by his holy and unblameable life, which carries a reverence with it even above contempt. Secondly, by a courteous carriage and winning behaviour : he that wil be respected, must respect ; doing kindnesses but receiving none, at least of those who are apt to despise ; for this argues a height and

eminency of mind which is not easily despised, except it degenerate to pride. Thirdly, by a bold and impartial reproof even of the best in the Parish, when occasion requires ; for this may produce hatred in those that are reprov'd, but never contempt either in them, or others. Lastly, if the contempt shall proceed so far as to do any thing punishable by law, as contempt is apt to do, if it be not thwarted, *the Parson having a due respect both to the person and to the cause, referreth the whole matter to the examination and punishment of those which are in Authority ;* that so the sentence lighting upon one, the example may reach to all. But if the Contempt be not punishable by Law, or being so the Parson think it in his descretion either unfit or bootlesse to contend, then when any despises him, he takes it either in an humble way, saying nothing at all ; or else in a slighting way, shewing that reproaches touch him no more then a stone thrown against heaven, where he is and lives ; or in a sad way, grieved at his own and others' sins, which continually breake God's Laws and dishonour him with those mouths which he continually fills and feeds ; or else in a doctrinall way, saying to the contemner, Alas, why do you thus ? you hurt your selfe, not me ; he

that throws a stone at another hits himselfe ; and so between gentle reasoning and pitying he overcomes the evill ; or lastly, in a Triumphant way, being glad and joyfull that hee is made conformable to his Master ; and being in the world as he was, hath this undoubted pledge of his salvation. These are the five shields wherewith the Godly receive the darts of the wicked ; leaving anger and retorting and revenge to the children of the world, whom another's ill mastereth and leadeth captive without any resistance, even in resistance to the same destruction. For while they resist the person that reviles, they resist not the evill which takes hold of them and is farr the worse enemy.

XXIX

THE PARSON WITH HIS CHURCH-WARDENS

THE Countrey Parson doth often, both publickly and privately instruct his Church-Wardens what a great Charge lyes upon them, and that indeed the whole order and discipline of the Parish is put into their hands. If himselfe reforme anything, it is out of the overflowing of his Conscience, whereas they are to do it by Command and by Oath. Neither hath the place its dignity from the Ecclesiasticall Laws only, since even by the Common Statute-Law they are taken for a kinde of Corporation, as being persons enabled by that Name to take moveable goods or chattels, and to sue and to be sued at the Law concerning such goods for the use and profit of their Parish; and by the same Law they are to levy penalties for negligence in resorting to church, or for disorderly carriage in time of divine service. Wherefore the Parson suffers not the place to be vilified or debased by being cast on the lower ranke of people, but invites and urges the best

unto it, shewing that they do not loose or go lesse but gaine by it ; it being the greatest honor of this world to do God and his chosen service, or as *David* says, to be even a door-keeper in the house of God. Now the Canons being the Church-Warden's rule, the Parson adviseth them to read or hear them read often, as also the visitation Articles which are grounded upon the Canons, that so they may know their duty and keep their oath the better. In which regard, considering the great Consequence of their place and more of their oath, he wisheth them by no means to spare any, though never so great ; but if after gentle and neighbourly admonitions they still persist in ill, to present them ; yea though they be tenants, or otherwise ingaged to the delinquent. For their obligation to God and their own soul is above any temporall tye. Do well and right, and let the world sinke.

XXX

THE PARSON'S CONSIDERATION OF PROVIDENCE

THE Countrey Parson considering the great aptnesse Countrey people have to think that all things come by a kind of naturall course, and that if they sow and soyle their grounds, they must have corn; if they keep and fodder well their cattel, they must have milk and Calves; labours to reduce them to see God's hand in all things, and to beleeve that things are not set in such an inevitable order but that God often changeth it according as he sees fit, either for reward or punishment. To this end he represents to his flock that God hath and exerciseth a three-fold power in everything which concernes man. The first is a sustaining power, the second a governing power, the third a spirituall power. By his sustaining power he preserves and actuates every thing in his being, so that corne doth not grow by any other vertue then by that which he continually supplyes, as the corn needs it; without which supply the corne would instantly dry

up, as a river would if the fountain were stopped. And it is observable that if anything could presume of an inevitable course and constancy in their operations, certainly it should be either the sun in heaven or the fire on earth, by reason of their fierce, strong, and violent natures ; yet when God pleased, the sun stood stil, the fire burned not. By God's governing power he preserves and orders the references of things one to the other, so that though the corn do grow and be preserved in that act by his sustaining power, yet if he suite not other things to the growth, as seasons and weather and other accidents by his governing power, the fairest harvests come to nothing. And it is observable, that God delights to have men feel and acknowledg and reverence his power, and therefore he often overturnes things when they are thought past danger ; that is his time of interposing : As when a Merchant hath a ship come home after many a storme which it hath escaped, he destroyes it sometimes in the very Haven ; or if the goods be housed, a fire hath broken forth and suddenly consumed them. Now this he doth that men should perpetuate and not break off their acts of dependance, how faire soever the opportunities

present themselves. So that if a farmer should depend upon God all the yeer, and being ready to put hand to sickle shall then secure himself and think all cock-sure ; then God sends such weather as lays the corn and destroys it ; or if he depend on God further, even till he imbarn his corn, and then think all sure ; God sends a fire, and consumes all that he hath ; For that he ought not to break off, but to continue his dependance on God, not onely before the corne is inned, but after also ; and indeed to depend and fear continually. The third power is spirituall, by which God turnes all outward blessings to inward advantages. So that if a Farmer hath both a faire harvest, and that also well inned and im-barned and continuing safe there, yet if God give him not the Grace to use and utter ¹ this well, all his advantages are to his losse. Better were his corne burnt then not spirituallly improved. And it is observable in this, how God's goodnesse strives with man's refractorinesse. Man would sit down at this world ; God bids him sell it and purchase ² a better. Just as a Father, who hath

¹ Utter—spend, or dispose of.

² Purchase—seek to obtain, as *ante* page 272. The word had not originally its present sense of buying for a consideration.

in his hand an apple and a piece of Gold under it; the Child comes, and with pulling gets the apple out of his Father's hand; his Father bids him throw it away and he will give him the gold for it, which the Child utterly refusing, eats it and is troubled with wormes. So is the carnall and wilfull man with the worm of the grave in this world, and the worm of Conscience in the next.

XXXI

THE PARSON IN LIBERTY

THE Countrey Parson observing the manifold wiles of Satan (who playes his part sometimes in drawing God's Servants from him, sometimes in perplexing them in the service of God) stands fast in the Liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free. This Liberty he compasseth by one distinction, and that is, of what is Necessary and what is Additionary. As for example : It is necessary, that all Christians should pray twice a day, every day of the week, and four times on Sunday,¹ if they be well. This is so necessary and essentiall to a Christian that he cannot without this maintain himself in a Christian state. Besides this, the Godly have ever added some houres of prayer, as at nine, or at three, or at midnight, or as they think fit and see cause, or rather as God's spirit leads them. But these prayers are not necessary, but addition-

¹ Four times on Sunday : that is twice in private and twice in the appointed services of the Church.

ary. Now it so happens that the godly petitioner upon some emergent interruption in the day, or by oversleeping himself at night, omits his additional prayer. Upon this his mind begins to be perplexed and troubled, and Satan, who knows the exigent,¹ blows the fire, endeavouring to disorder the Christian and put him out of his station, and to enlarge the perplexity, untill it spread and taint his other duties of piety, which none can perform so well in trouble as in calmness. Here the Parson interposeth with his distinction, and shews the perplexed Christian that this prayer being additional, not necessary, taken in, not commanded, the omission thereof upon just occasion ought by no means trouble him. God knows the occasion as well as he, and He is as a gracious Father, who more accepts a common course of devotion than dislikes an occasional interruption. And of this he is so to assure himself as to admit no scruple, but to go on as cheerfully as if he had not been interrupted. By this it is evident that the distinction is of singular use and comfort, especially to pious minds, which are ever tender and delicate. But here there are two Cautions

¹ Exigent—exigency.

to be added. First, that this interruption proceed not out of slacknes or coldness, which will appear if the Pious soul foresee and prevent such interruptions, what he may before they come, and when for all that they do come he be a little affected therewith, but not afflicted or troubled ; if he resent it to a mislike, but not a griefe. Secondly, that this interruption proceede not out of shame. As for example : A godly man, not out of superstition, but of reverence to God's house, resolves whenever he enters into a Church to kneel down and pray, either blessing God that he will be pleased to dwell among men ; or beseeching him, that whenever he repaires to his house, he may behave himself so as befits so great a presence ; and this briefly. But it happens that neer the place where he is to pray he spyes some scoffing ruffian, who is likely to deride him for his paines. If he now shall either for fear or shame break his custome, he shall do passing ill. So much the rather ought he to proceed as that by this he may take into his Prayer humiliation also. On the other side, if I am to visit the sick in haste and my neerest way ly through the Church, I will not doubt to go without staying to pray there (but onely, as I passe,

in my heart) because this kinde of Prayer is
additionary, not necessary, and the other duty
overweighs it. So that if any scruple arise, I
will throw it away, and be most confident that God
is not displeas'd. This distinction may runne
through all Christian duties, and it is a great
stay and setling to religious souls.

XXXII

THE PARSON'S SURVEYS

THE Countrey Parson hath not onely taken a particular Servey of the faults of his owne Parish, but a generall also of the diseases of the time, that so when his occasions carry him abroad or bring strangers to him he may be the better armed to encounter them. The great and nationall sin of this Land he esteems to be Idleness; great in it selfe, and great in Consequence. For when men have nothing to do, then they fall to drink, to steal, to whore, to scoffe, to revile, to all sorts of gamings. Come, say they, we have nothing to do, lets go to the Tavern, or to the stews or what not. Wherefore the Parson strongly opposeth this sin, wheresoever he goes. And because Idleness is twofold, the one in having no calling, the other in walking carelesly in our calling, he first represents to every body the necessity of a vocation. The reason of this assertion is taken from the nature of man, wherein God hath placed two great Instruments,

Reason in the soul and a hand in the Body, as ingagements of working ; So that even in Paradise man had a calling, and how much more out of Paradise, when the evils which he is now subject unto may be prevented, or diverted by reasonable employment. Besides, every gift or ability is a talent to be accounted for and to be improved to our Master's Advantage. Yet is it also a debt to our Countrey to have a Calling, and it concernes the Common-wealth that none should be idle, but all busied. Lastly, riches are the blessing of God and the great instrument of doing admirable good ; therefore all are to procure them honestly and seasonably, when they are not better imployed. Now this reason crosseth not our Saviour's precept of selling what we have, because when we have sold all and given it to the poor, we must not be idle, but labour to get more that we may give more, according to *St. Paul's* rule, *Ephes. 4 : 28*, *1 Thes. 4 : 11, 12*. So that our Saviour's selling is so far from crossing *Saint Paul's* working that it rather establisheth it, since they that have nothing are fittest to work. Now because the onely opposer to this Doctrine is the Gallant who is witty enough to abuse both others and himself, and who is ready to ask if he shall

mend shoos, or what he shall do? Therefore the Parson unmoved sheweth that *ingenuous and fit* employment is never wanting to those that seek it. But if it should be, the Assertion stands thus: All are either to have a Calling or prepare for it. He that hath or can have yet no employment, if he truly and seriously prepare for it, he is safe and within bounds. Wherefore all are either presently to enter into a Calling, if they be fit for it, and it for them; or else to examine with care and advice what they are fittest for, and to prepare for that with all diligence. But it will not be amisse in this exceeding usefull point to descend to particulars, for exactnesse lyes in particulars. Men are either single, or married. The married and house-keeper hath his hands full, if he do what he ought to do. For there are two branches of his affaires: first, the improvement of his family by bringing them up in the fear and nurture of the Lord; and secondly, the improvement of his grounds, by drowning¹ or draining, stocking or fencing, and ordering his land to the best advantage both of himself and his neighbours. The *Italian* says, None fouls his hands in his own businesse; and it is an honest

¹ Drowning—flooding.

and just care, so it exceeds not bounds, for every one to imploy himselfe to the advancement of his affairs, that hee may have wherewithall to do good. But his family is his best care, to labour Christian soules and raise them to their height, even to heaven ; to dresse and prune them, and take as much joy in a straight-growing childe or servant as a Gardiner doth in a choice tree. Could men finde out this delight, they would seldome be from home ; whereas now, of any place, they are least there. But if after all this care well dispatched, the house-keeper's Family be so small and his dexterity so great that he have leisure to look out, the Village or Parish which either he lives in or is neer unto it is his imployment. Hee considers every one there, and either helps them in particular or hath generall Propositions to the whole Towne or Hamlet of advancing the publick Stock, and managing Commons or Woods, according as the place suggests. But if hee may bee of the Commission of Peace, there is nothing to that.¹ No Common-wealth in the world hath a braver Institution then that of Justices of the Peace. For it is both a security to the King, who hath so many dispersed Officers at

¹ Nothing to that—nothing equal to that.

his beck throughout the Kingdome accountable for the publick good, and also an honourable Im-
ployment of a Gentle or Noble-man in the Coun-
try he lives in, inabling him with power to do
good, and to restrain all those who else might
both trouble him and the whole State. Where-
fore it behoves all who are come to the gravitie
and ripenesse of judgement for so excellent a
Place not to refuse, but rather to procure it.
And whereas there are usually three Objections
made against the Place : the one, the abuse of it
by taking petty-Countrey-bribes ; the other, the
casting of it on mean persons, especially in some
Shires ; and lastly, the trouble of it ; These are so
far from deterring any good man from the place
that they kindle them rather to redeem the Dig-
nity either from true faults or unjust aspersions.
Now for single men, they are either Heirs or
younger Brothers. The Heirs are to prepare in
all the forementioned points against the time of
their practice. Therefore they are to mark their
Father's discretion in ordering his House and
Affairs, and also elsewhere when they see any re-
markable point of Education or good husbandry,
and to transplant it in time to his own home
with the same care as others when they meet with

good fruit get a graffe of the tree, enriching their Orchard and neglecting their House. Besides, they are to read Books of Law and Justice, especially the Statutes at large. As for better Books of Divinity, they are not in this Consideration, because we are about a Calling and a preparation thereunto. But chiefly and above all things, they are to frequent Sessions and Sizes ; for it is both an honor which they owe to the Reverend Judges and Magistrates to attend them, at least in their Shire, and it is a great advantage to know the practice of the Land ; for our Law is Practice. Sometimes he may go to Court, as the eminent place both of good and ill. At other times he is to travell over the King's Dominions, cutting out the Kingdome into Portions, which every yeer he surveys peece-meal. When there is a Parliament, he is to endeavour by all means to be a Knight or Burgess there ; for there is no School to ¹ a Parliament. And when he is there, he must not only be a morning man,² but at Committees also ; for there the particulars are exactly discussed which are brought from thence to the House but in generall. When none of these oc-

¹ To—equal to.

² One who attends only the regular morning sessions.

casions call him abroad, every morning that hee is at home he must either ride the Great Horse¹ or exercise some of his Military gestures. For all Gentlemen that are not weakned and disarmed with sedentary lives are to know the use of their Arms ; and as the Husbandman labours for them, so must they fight for and defend them when occasion calls. This is the duty of each to other, which they ought to fulfill. And the Parson is a lover and exciter to justice in all things, even as *John the Baptist* squared out to every one (even to Souldiers) what to do. As for younger Brothers, those whom the Parson finds loose and not ingaged into some Profession by their Parents, whose neglect in this point is intolerable and a shamefull wrong both to the Commonwealth and their own House ; To them, after he hath shewed the unlawfulness of spending the day in dressing, Complementing, visiting and sporting, he first commends the study of the Civill Law, as a brave and wise knowledg, the Professours whereof were much imployed by Queen *Elizabeth*, because it is the key of Commerce and discovers the Rules of forraine Nations. Secondly, he commends the

¹The Great Horse—a war horse, ridden in full armor for exercise and practice.

Mathematicks as the only wonder working knowledg, and therefore requiring the best spirits. After the severall knowledg of these, he adviseth to insist and dwell chiefly on the two noble branches thereof, of Fortification and Navigation; The one being usefull to all Countreys, and the other especially to Ilands. But if the young Gallant think these Courses dull and phlegmatick, where can he busie himself better then in those new Plantations¹ and discoveryes which are not only a noble but also, as they may be handled, a religious imployment? Or let him travel into *Germany* and *France*, and observing the Artifices and Manufactures there, transplant them hither, as divers have done lately to our Countrey's advantage.

¹ The American Colonies just beginning to be of importance.

XXXIII

THE PARSON'S LIBRARY

THE Countrey Parson's Library is a holy Life ; for besides the blessing that that brings upon it, there being a promise that if the Kingdome of God be first sought all other things shall be added, even it selfe is a Sermon. For the temptations with which a good man is beset, and the ways which he used to overcome them, being told to another, whether in private conference or in the Church, are a Sermon. Hee that hath considered how to carry himself at table about his appetite, if he tell this to another, preacheth ; and much more feelingly and judiciously then he writes his rules of temperance out of bookes. So that the Parson having studied and mastered all his lusts and affections within, and the whole Army of Temptations without, hath ever so many sermons ready penn'd as he hath victories. And it fares in this as it doth in Physick : He that hath been sick of a Consumption and knows what recovered him, is a Physitian so far as he meetes with the

same disease and temper ; and can much better and particularly do it then he that is generally learned, and was never sick. And if the same person had been sick of all diseases and were recovered of all by things that he knew, there were no such Physician as he, both for skill and tenderesse. Just so it is in Divinity, and that not without manifest reason : for though the temptations may be diverse in divers Christians, yet the victory is alike in all, being by the self-same Spirit. Neither is this true onely in the military state of a Christian life, but even in the peaceable also ; when the servant of God, freed for a while from temptation, in a quiet sweetnesse seeks how to please his God. Thus the Parson, considering that repentance is the great vertue of the Gospel and one of the first steps of pleasing God, having for his owne use examined the nature of it is able to explaine it after to others. And particularly having doubted sometimes whether his repentance were true, or at least in that degree it ought to be, since he found himselfe sometimes to weepe more for the losse of some temporall things then for offending God, he came at length to this resolution, that repentance is an act of the mind not of the Body, even as the Originall signifies ; and

that the chiefe thing which God in Scriptures requires is the heart and the spirit, and to worship him in truth and spirit. Wherefore in case a Christian endeavour to weep and cannot, since we are not Masters of our bodies, this sufficeth. And consequently he found that the essence of repentance, that it may be alike in all God's children (which as concerning weeping it cannot be, some being of a more melting temper then others) consisteth in a true detestation of the soul, abhorring and renouncing sin, and turning unto God in truth of heart and newnesse of life ; Which acts of repentance are and must be found in all God's servants. Not that weeping is not usefull where it can be, that so the body may joyn in the grief as it did in the sin ; but that, so the other acts be, that is not necessary ; so that he as truly repents who performes the other acts of repentance, when he cannot more, as he that weeps a floud of tears. This Instruction and comfort the Parson getting for himself, when he tels it to others becomes a Sermon. The like he doth in other Christian vertues, as of faith and Love, and the Cases of Conscience belonging thereto, wherein (as Saint *Paul* implyes that he ought, *Romans 2*) hee first preacheth to himselfe, and then to others.

XXXIV

THE PARSON'S DEXTERITY IN APPLYING OF REMEDIES

THE Countrey Parson knows that there is a double state of a Christian even in this Life, the one military, the other peaceable. The military is when we are assaulted with temptations either from within or from without. The Peaceable is when the Divell for a time leaves us, as he did our Saviour, and the Angels minister to us their owne food, even joy and peace and comfort in the holy Ghost. These two states were in our Saviour, not only in the beginning of his preaching, but afterwards also, as *Mat. 22 : 35*, He was tempted ; And *Luke 10 : 21*, He rejoyced in Spirit ; And they must be likewise in all that are his. Now the Parson having a Spirituall Judgement, according as he discovers any of his Flock to be in one or the other state, so he applies himselfe to them. Those that he findes in the peaceable state, he adviseth to be very vigilant and not to let go the raines as soon as the horse goes easie. Particularly he

counselleth them to two things : First, to take heed lest their quiet betray them (as it is apt to do) to a coldnesse and carelesnesse in their devotions, but to labour still to be as fervent in Christian Duties as they remember themselves were when affliction did blow the Coals. Secondly, not to take the full compasse and liberty of their Peace : not to eate of all those dishes at table which even their present health otherwise admits ; nor to store their house with all those furnitures which even their present plenty of wealth otherwise admits ; nor when they are among them that are merry, to extend themselves to all that mirth which the present occasion of wit and company otherwise admits, but to put bounds and hoopes to their joyes ; so will they last the longer, and when they depart, returne the sooner. If we would judg ourselves, we should not be judged ; and if we would bound our selves, we should not be bounded. But if they shall fear that at such or such a time their peace and mirth have carryed them further than this moderation, then to take *Job's* admirable Course, who sacrificed lest his Children should have transgressed in their mirth. So let them go and find some poor afflicted soul, and there be

bountifull and liberall; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased. Those that the Parson finds in the military state, he fortifyes and strengthens with his utmost skill. Now in those that are tempted, whatsoever is unruly falls upon two heads: either they think that there is none that can or will look after things, but all goes by chance or wit;¹ Or else, though there be a Great Governour of all things, yet to them he is lost; as if they said, God doth forsake and persecute them, and there is none to deliver them. If the Parson suspect the first and find sparkes of such thoughts now and then to break forth, then without opposing directly (for disputation is no cure for Atheisme) he scatters in his discourse three sorts of arguments: the first taken from Nature, the second from the Law, the third from Grace. For Nature, he sees not how a house could be either built without a builder, or kept in repaire without a house-keeper. He conceives not possibly how the windes should blow so much as they can, and the sea rage as much as it can, and all things do what they can, and all not only without dissolution of the whole, but also of any part, by taking away so much as the usuall seasons of

¹ Wit—cunning.

summer and winter, earing¹ and harvest. Let the weather be what it will, still we have bread, though sometimes more, sometimes lesse ; where-with also a carefull *Joseph*² might meet. He conceives not possibly how he that would beleve a Divinity, if he had been at the Creation of all things, should less beleve it seeing the Preservation of all things. For preservation is a Creation ; and more, it is a continued Creation, and a creation every moment. Secondly for the Law, there may be so evident though unused a proof of Divinity taken from thence, that the Atheist or Epicurian can have nothing to contradict. The Jewes yet live and are known ; they have their Law and Language bearing witness to them, and they to it ; they are Circumcised to this day, and expect the promises of the Scripture ; their Countrey also is known, the places and rivers travelled unto and frequented by others, but to them an unpenetrable rock, an unaccessible desert. Wherefore if the Jewes live, all the great wonders of old live in them, and then who can

¹Earing : and old word for plowing ; as Genesis 45 : 6, "five years in which there shall neither be *earing* nor harvest" ; and Isaiah 30 : 24, "the young asses that *ear* the ground."

²Genesis 41 : 35.

deny the stretched out arme of a mighty God? especially since it may be a just doubt whether, considering the stubbornnesse of the Nation, their living then in their Countrey under so many miracles were a stranger thing then their present exile and disability to live in their Countrey. And it is observable that this very thing was intended by God, that the Jewes should be his proof and witnesses, as he calls them, *Isaiah* 43 : 12. And their very dispersion in all Lands was intended not only for a punishment to them, but for an exciting of others by their sight to the acknowledging of God and his power, *Psalme* 59 : 11. And therefore this kind of Punishment was chosen rather then any other. Thirdly, for Grace : Besides the continuall succession (since the Gospell) of holy men, who have born witness to the truth (there being no reason why any should distrust Saint *Luke*, or *Tertullian*, or *Chrysostome*, more than *Tully*, *Virgill*, or *Livy*,) There are two Prophecies in the Gospel which evidently argue Christ's Divinity by their success : ¹ the one concerning the woman that spent the oyntment on our Saviour, for which he told that it should never be forgotten, but with the

¹ Success—fulfilment.

Gospel it selfe be preached to all ages, *Matth.* 26 : 13. The other concerning the destruction of *Jerusalem*, of which our Saviour said that that generation should not passe till all were fulfilled, *Luke* 21 : 32. Which *Josephus* his story confirmeth, and the continuance of which verdict is yet evident. To these might be added the Preaching of the Gospel in all Nations, *Matthew* 24 : 14, which we see even miraculously effected in these new discoveries, God turning men's Covetousnesse and Ambitions to the effecting of his word. Now a prophesie is a wonder sent to Posterity, least they complaine of want of wonders. It is a letter sealed and sent, which to the bearer is but paper, but to the receiver and opener is full of power. Hee that saw Christ open a blind man's eyes, saw not more Divinity then he that reads the woman's oyntment in the Gospell or sees *Jerusalem* destroyed. With some of these heads enlarged and woven into his discourse at severall times and occasions, the parson setleth wavering minds. But if he sees them neerer desperation than Atheisme, not so much doubting a God as that he is theirs, then he dives unto the boundlesse Ocean of God's Love and the unspeakable riches of his loving kindnesse. He hath one argument

unanswerable. If God hate them, either he doth it as they are Creatures, dust and ashes, or as they are sinfull. As Creatures he must needs love them, for no perfect Artist ever yet hated his owne worke. As sinfull, he must much more love them; because notwithstanding his infinite hate of sinne, his Love overcame that hate, and with an exceeding great victory which in the Creation needed not, gave them love for love, even the son of his love out of his bosome of love. So that man, which way soever he turnes, hath two pledges of God's Love, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established: the one in his being, the other in his sinfull being; and this as the more faulty in him, so the more glorious in God. And all may certainly conclude that God loves them till either they despise that Love or despaire of his Mercy. Not any sin else but is within his Love; but the despising of Love must needs be without it. The thrusting away of his arme makes us onely¹ not embraced.

¹ Onely—and that alone.

XXXV

THE PARSON'S CONDESCENDING

THE Countrey Parson is a Lover of old Customs, if they be good and harmlesse ; and the rather, because Countrey people are much addicted to them, so that to favour them therein is to win their hearts, and to oppose them therein is to deject them. If there be any ill in the custome that may be severed from the good, he pares the apple and gives them the clean to feed on. Particularly he loves Procession¹ and maintains it, because there are contained therein 4 manifest advantages : First, a blessing of God for the fruits of the field ;¹ Secondly, justice in the Preservation of bounds ; Thirdly, Charity in loving walking and neighbourly accompanying one another, with reconciling of differences at that time, if there be any ; Fourthly, Mercy in

¹A custom anciently observed on the Rogation Days of marching in procession around the boundaries of the parish — "*beating the bounds.*"

²The Rogation Day Prayers are "*for fruitful seasons.*"

releiving the poor by a liberall distribution and largesse, which at that time is or ought to be used. Wherefore he exacts of all to bee present at the perambulation, and those that withdraw and sever themselves from it he mislikes and reproves as uncharitable and unneighbourly ; and if they will not reforme, presents them. Nay, he is so farre from condemning such assemblies, that he rather procures them to be often, as knowing that absence breedes strangeness, but presence love. Now Love is his business and aime ; wherefore he likes well that his Parish at good times invite one another to their houses, and he urgeth them to it. And somtimes, where he knowes there hath been or is a little difference, hee takes one of the parties and goes with him to the other, and all dine or sup together. There is much preaching in this friendliness. Another old Custome there is of saying, when light is brought in, God send us the light of heaven. And the Parson likes this very well ; neither is he affraid of praising or praying to God at all times, but is rather glad of catching opportunities to do them. Light is a great Blessing and as great as food, for which we give thanks ; and those that thinke this superstitious, neither know

superstition nor themselves. As for those that are ashamed to use this forme, as being old and obsolete and not the fashion, he reformes and teaches them, that at Baptisme they professed not to be ashamed of Christ's Cross, or for any shame to leave that which is good. He that is ashamed in small things, will extend his pusillanimity to greater. Rather should a Christian Souldier take such occasions to harden himselfe and to further his exercises of Mortification.

XXXVI

THE PARSON BLESSING

THE Countrey Parson wonders that Blessing the people is in so little use with his brethren, whereas he thinks it not onely a grave and reverend thing, but a beneficial also. Those who use it not do so either out of niceness,¹ because they like the salutations and complements and formes of worldly language better; which conformity and fashionableness is so exceeding unbefitting a Minister that it deserves reproof not refutation; Or else because they think it empty and superfluous. But that which the Apostles used so diligently in their writings, nay, which our Saviour himselfe used, *Marke* 10 : 16, cannot be vain and superfluous. But this was not proper to Christ or the Apostles only, no more then to be a spirituall Father was appropriated to them. And if temporall Fathers blesse their children, how much more may and ought Spirituall Fathers? Besides, the Priests of the old

¹ Niceness—concern for worldly refinements.

Testament were commanded to Blesse the people, and the forme thereof is prescribed, *Numb.* 6. Now as the Apostle argues in another case: if the Ministration of condemnation did bless, how shall not the ministration of the spirit exceed in blessing? The fruit of this blessing good *Hannah* found, and received with great joy, 1 *Sam.* 1 : 18, though it came from a man disallowed by God; for it was not the person, but Priesthood, that blessed; so that even ill Priests may blesse.¹ Neither have the Ministers power of Blessing only, but also of cursing. So in the old Testament *Elisha* cursed the children, 2 *Kin.* 2 : 24; which though our Saviour reprov'd as unfitting for his particular who was to show all humility before his Passion, yet he allows in his Apostles. And therefore St. Peter used that fearful imprecation to *Simon Magus*, *Act.* 8: *Thy money perish with thee*, and the event confirm'd it. So did *St. Paul*, 2 *Tim.* 4 : 14, and 1 *Tim.* 1 : 20. Speaking of *Alexander* the Coppersmith, who had withstood his preaching, *The Lord* (saith he) *reward him according to his works*. And again, of *Hymeneus* and *Alexander* he saith, he had *delivered them to Satan*, *that they might learn not to Blaspheme*.

¹ The 26th Article of Religion.

The formes both of Blessing and cursing are expounded in the Common-Prayer-book : the one in, The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, etc. and, The Peace of God, etc. The other in generall, in the Commination.¹ Now blessing differs from prayer in assurance, because it is not performed by way of request, but of confidence and power, effectually applying God's favour to the blessed by the interesting of that dignity wherewith God hath invested the Priest, and ingaging of God's own power and institution for a blessing. The neglect of this duty in Ministers themselves hath made the people also neglect it ; so that they are so far from craving this benefit from their ghostly Father that they oftentimes goe out of church before he hath blessed them. In the time of Popery the Priest's *Benedicite* and his holy water were over highly valued, and now we are fallen to the clean contrary, even from superstition to coldnes and Atheism. But the Parson first values the gift in himself, and then teacheth his parish to value it. And it is observable that if a Minister talke with a great man

¹The Ash Wednesday, "*Commination, or Denouncing of God's Anger and Judgments against Sinners,*" in the English Prayer Book.

in the ordinary course of complementing language, he shall be esteemed as ordinary complementers; but if he often interpose a Blessing when the other gives him just opportunity, by speaking any good, this unusuall form begets a reverence and makes him esteemed according to his Profession. The same is to be observed in writing Letters also. To conclude, if all men are to blesse upon occasion, as appears *Rom.* 12: 14, how much more those who are spiritual Fathers?

XXXVII

CONCERNING DETRACTION

THE Countrey Parson perceiving that most when they are at leasure make others' faults their entertainment and discourse, and that even some good men think so they speak truth they may disclose another's fault, finds it somewhat difficult how to proceed in this point. For if he absolutely shut up men's mouths and forbid all disclosing of faults, many an evill may not only be, but also spread in his Parish without any remedy (which cannot be applyed without notice) to the dishonor of God and the infection of his flock, and the discomfort, discredit, and hinderance of the Pastor. On the other side, if it be unlawful to open faults, no benefit or advantage can make it lawfull ; for we must not do evill that good may come of it. Now the Parson taking this point to task, which is so exceeding useful and hath taken so deep roote that it seems the very life and substance of Conversation, hath proceeded thus far in the discussing of it. Faults

are either notorious or private. Again notorious faults are either such as are made known by common fame (and of these, those that know them may talk, so they do it not with sport but commiseration); or else such as have passed judgment and been corrected either by whipping, or imprisoning, or the like. Of these also men may talk, and more, they may discover them to those who know them not; because infamy is a part of the sentence against malefactours which the Law intends, as is evident by those which are branded for rogues, that they may be known; or put into the stocks, that they may be looked upon. But some may say, though the Law allow this the Gospel doth not, which hath so much advanced Charity and ranked backbiters among the generation of the wicked, *Rom.* 1:30. But this is easily answered: As the executioner is not uncharitable that takes away the life of the condemned, except besides his office he add a tincture of private malice in the joy and hast of acting his part; so neither is he that defames him whom the Law would have defamed, except he also do it out of rancour. For in infamy all are executioners, and the Law gives a malefactour to all to be defamed. And as malefactors may lose and forfeit their

goods or life, so may they their good name and the possession thereof, which before their offence and Judgment they had in all men's brests; for all are honest till the contrary be proved. Besides, it concerns the Common-Wealth that Rogues should be known and Charity to the publick hath the precedence of private charity. So that it is so far from being a fault to discover such offenders that it is a duty rather, which may do much good and save much harme. Nevertheless, if the punished delinquent shall be much troubled for his sins and turne quite another man, doubtlesse then also men's affections and words must turne, and forbear to speak of that which even God himself hath forgotten.

THE AUTHOR'S PRAYER BEFORE SERMON

O ALMIGHTY and ever-living Lord God ! Majesty, and Power, and Brightnesse and Glory ! How shall we dare to appear before thy face, who are contrary to thee, in all we call thee ? for we are darknesse, and weaknesse, and filthinesse, and shame. Misery and sin fill our days ; yet art thou our Creatour, and we thy work. Thy hands both made us, and also made us Lords of all thy creatures ; giving us one world in ourselves, and another to serve us ; then didst thou place us in Paradise, and wert proceeding still on in thy Favours untill we interrupted thy Counsels, disappointed thy Purposes, and sold our God, our glorious, our gracious God, for an apple. O write it ! O brand it in our foreheads for ever : for an apple once we lost our God, and still lose him for no more ; for money, for meat, for diet : But thou, Lord, art patience, and pity, and sweetnesse, and love ; therefore we sons of men are not consumed. Thou hast exalted thy mercy above

all things, and hast made our salvation, not our punishment, thy glory ; so that then where sin abounded, not death, but grace superabounded. Accordingly when we had sinned beyond any help in heaven or earth, then thou saidst, Lo, I come ! Then did the Lord of life, unable of himselfe to die, contrive to do it. He took flesh, he wept, he died ; for his enemies he died ; even for those that derided him then and still despise him. Blessed Saviour ! many waters could not quench thy love, nor no pit overwhelme it ! But though the streams of thy blood were currant through darknesse, grave, and hell, yet by these thy conflicts, and *seemingly* hazards, didst thou arise triumphant, and therein madst us victorious.

Neither doth thy love yet stay here ! for this word of thy rich peace and reconciliation thou hast committed, not to Thunder or Angels, but to silly and sinful men ; even to me, pardoning my sins, and bidding me go feed the people of thy love.

Blessed be the God of Heaven and Earth ! who onely doth wondrous things. Awake, therefore, my Lute and my Viol ! awake all my powers to glorifie thee ! We praise thee, we blesse thee, we

magnifie thee for ever! And now, O Lord, in the power of thy Victories, and in the wayes of thy Ordinances, and in the truth of thy Love, Lo, we stand here, beseeching thee to blesse thy word, wherever spoken this day throughout the universall Church. O make it a word of power and peace, to convert those who are not yet thine and to confirme those that are; particularly blesse it in this thy own Kingdom, which thou hast made a Land of light, a storehouse of thy treasures and mercies. O let not our foolish and unworthy hearts rob us of the continuance of this thy sweet love, but pardon our sins and perfect what thou hast begun. Ride on, Lord, because of the word of truth and meeknesse and righteousnesse, and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things. Especially, blesse this portion here assembled together; with thy unworthy Servant speaking unto them. Lord Jesu! teach thou me that I may teach them. Sanctifie and inable all my powers, that in their full strength they may deliver thy message reverently, readily, faithfully, and fruitfully! O make thy word a swift word, passing from the ear to the heart, from the heart to the life and conversation; that as the rain returns not empty, so neither may thy word, but accomplish

that for which it is given. O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, hearken, and do so for thy blessed Son's sake, in whose sweet and pleasing words, we say, Our Father, etc.

PRAYER AFTER SERMON

BLESSED be God, and the Father of all mercy, who continueth to pour his benefits upon us ! Thou hast elected us, thou hast called us, thou hast justified us, sanctified, and glorified us. Thou wast born for us, and thou livedst and diedst for us. Thou hast given us the blessings of this life, and of a better. O Lord, thy blessings hang in clusters, they come trooping upon us ! they break forth like mighty waters on every side. And now, Lord, thou hast fed us with the bread of life ; so man did eat Angels' food. O Lord, blesse it ! O Lord, make it health and strength unto us, still striving and prospering so long within us, untill our obedience reach thy measure of thy love, who hast done for us as much as may be. Grant this, dear Father, for thy Son's sake, our only Saviour ; To whom with thee and the Holy Ghost, three Persons, but one most glorious, incomprehensible God, be ascribed all Honour, and Glory, and Praise, ever. Amen.

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